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Reedsport schools go online after virus exposure

The World

REEDSPORT — Students in Reedsport public schools are headed back online for at least two weeks after a COVID-19 case was reported in the district, according to an announcement from the Reedsport School District.

Students throughout the district returned to all-online instruction Tuesday, and will remain under that model until at least Nov. 30, the district said.

“After speaking with the (public health department) about the status of our community and forecasting cases in the near future, I am concerned about the health and safety of our students and staff,” Superintendent Jon Zwemke wrote in the release.

The change came after the district learned of a staff member who tested positive for



The World file photo

Reedsport Community Charter School

COVID-19 on Monday. Contact tracers are communicating with students and staff members who may have come in contact with the staff member to inform them of further steps, the district said.

The district also said it’s assessing the staff member’s mask use, social distancing and

activities.

Some district services will still be offered while students are in online classes. Meal delivery will continue as scheduled, but district buildings will not serve food.

WiFi hotspots will be available at their designated school

bus parking locations, a list of which is available on the district’s website. Students who left materials at school should email their school offices to arrange a time to pick them up, the district said.

“(The switch to online learning) will provide us the neces-

sary time to quarantine effected individuals, deep clean our facilities, monitor the COVID cases and prepare for a safe return for staff and students,” Zwemke wrote.

Douglas County has seen an increase in COVID-19 cases in recent weeks. The latest state school reopening metrics show that the two-week period ending Nov. 7 far exceeded the previous two week periods in both cases per 100,000 residents and test positivity, the data points which determine if schools can expand their in-person activities.

According to Oregon’s new school metrics, districts in the county are in a “transition” phase, meaning they can’t open any more classrooms to in-person instruction and should consider sending more students to online learning if cases continue to trend upward.

Stalled by the tide



John Gunther, The World

The El Conquistador sits in Coos Bay on Tuesday after it was grounded by low tide while being moved from a dock in Coos Bay to Empire. Read more about the vessel’s storied history in Saturday’s edition of The World.

North Bend approves funding for officers

JOHN GUNTHER
The World

NORTH BEND — In a quick vote Tuesday night, the North Bend City Council approved funding for three police officers for the rest of the fiscal year by taking money from the fund for the city’s pool, which has been closed since March because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The unanimous vote wasn’t a surprise. The council discussed several times early in the summer using money from the pool fund to pay for the three officers so the city could continue round-the-clock police coverage after voters in May cut the city’s \$30 public service fee to \$15, a loss of revenue to the city estimated at \$785,000 a year.

The resolution approved by the council Tuesday moves \$375,050 from the pool fund to the police fund for the rest of the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

The money doesn’t completely empty out the pool fund. A total of 107,331 remains in the fund, to cover expenses for maintaining the building. There also is \$150,000 in pool improvement funds.

The city had earlier essentially decided to keep the pool closed for the fiscal year because of expected increased costs and loss of expected revenue due restrictions caused by the pandemic.

The money being transferred to the police department includes pool expenses for personnel, including salaries and related social security, health insurance and retirement for the pool manager as well as money for lifeguards, lights and power, water, heating and building and plant supplies.

Because the issue had been discussed repeatedly, it wasn’t discussed extensively at either the Monday work session or the Tuesday council meeting.

Also on Tuesday, the council made a presentation to Fire Chief Jim Brown for 30 years of service to the city.

“I want to congratulate Jim Brown for his 30 years of service,” Councilor Timm Slater said, adding that such service is not uncommon. “We have excellent employees that like to be where they are and like to be part of the city. They grow in their roles and they grow leaders around them.”

Brown expressed thanks to the fire chief who hired him 30 years ago and to the residents for supporting him and the department.

“Thank you to the citizens of North Bend for allowing me to come out for the last 30 years

Please see **Funding**, Page 2

High-end subdivision approved

ZACK DEMARS
The World

COOS BAY — The Coos Bay planning commission approved the development of a high-end subdivision Tuesday night. The developers plan to turn the property into up to 13 homes in the city’s northwest corner.

Brad Woodruff, the president of Red Moon Development & Construction, hopes to begin construction as soon as possible.

The property’s location makes it complex: It sits at the end of Maxwell Avenue, on the bluffs just south of the North Bend Airport, where the Coos Bay city limits abut North Bend’s. The property is all technically in Coos Bay, but will use North Bend’s sewer line, per an agreement with the city.

Red Moon, Woodruff’s firm, is headquartered in Scottsdale,

Arizona, but is involved with several other projects in Coos Bay, including the 400-home Timber Cove project on Lindy Lane. Originally from Seattle, Woodruff said he enjoys the people and environment on the South Coast.

“The people are nice in Coos Bay and North Bend, that’s refreshing,” Woodruff said.

Plus, Woodruff said the area has potential, with possible economic and population growth on the horizon.

“I think there’s a good opportunity here,” Woodruff said.

The approval comes with a number of conditions, including certain permits, easements and environmental standards that must be satisfied prior to construction.

“We’ve gone through all of the conditions of approval and thing that they’re great. We accept

all of them and will work with the public works department to gain the necessary approvals for each one of these lots,” Hailey Sheldon, a representative of the developer, told the planning commission. “The applicant intends to put large and beautiful single-family homes on these lots.”

Unlike the Timber Cove project, which will bring 400 or more manufactured homes to market in the next few years for around \$100,000 a piece, affordability isn’t the goal of the Bluffs project. The single-family homes, each with bay views, will likely cost at least \$875,000, Woodruff said.

The homes in the gated community will be designed, built and priced one at a time to allow developers to adjust to market conditions, according to planning documents. The developers will

still have to go through the building permit process for each home they build.

Developers have also requested a vacation of a portion of Maxwell Avenue, though access to the property would be through Connecticut Street.

Planning commission members were supportive of the subdivision, approving it 6-0.

“It’s hard to argue with it, we get the taxes out of it and North Bend takes care of all the other stuff,” Commissioner Jim Berg said.

“It’s a good use of that property,” Commission Chair Rex Miller added. “I’m glad to see something happening.”

There’s a 15-day appeal period of the Planning Commission’s approval of the subdivision for issues based on the commission’s criteria, city planner Debbie Erler said Tuesday.

Democrats retain control of House, majority shrinks

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrats clinched two more years of controlling the House on Tuesday but with a potentially razor-thin majority, a bittersweet finale to last week’s elections that has left them divided and with scant margin for error for advancing their agenda.

The party has now nailed down at least 218 seats, according to The Associated Press, and could win a few others when more votes are counted. While that assures command of the 435-member chamber, blindsided

Democrats were all but certain to see their current 232-seat majority shrink after an unforeseen surge of Republican voters transformed expected gains of perhaps 15 seats into losses potentially approaching that amount.

“We have the gavel, we have the gavel,” said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., who seems all but certain to continue in that role. While she bemoaned Democrats’ losses in districts where GOP votes proved “almost insurmountable,” she told report-

ers last week, “We’ve lost some battles but we’ve won the war.”

By retaining the House, Democrats will control the chamber for four consecutive years for only the second time since 1995, when Republicans ended 40 years of Democratic dominance.

Yet though Joe Biden won the presidential election, there was a strong chance Republicans would keep Senate control. That would force Democrats to scale back their dreams of sweeping health care, infrastructure and other initiatives, instead needing

compromises with the GOP.

As the bad news sunk in, Rep. Cheri Bustos, D-Ill., who led House Democrats’ campaign committee, announced Monday she wouldn’t seek another term leading that organization. Democrats said privately she would have lost had she again sought the post, for which the party’s lawmakers vote.

Republicans have been heartened by the House results, which many believe position them for a strong run for the majority in the

Please see **House**, Page 2

Governor warns of health care crisis due to virus surge

MAX KIRKENDALL
Lincoln City News Guard

Oregon Governor Kate Brown was joined Tuesday by doctors and nurses from around the state to send a clear message to Oregonians: COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations are threatening the state's health care systems, and help is needed to flatten the curve.

During the Tuesday press conference, Gov. Brown addressed some of the challenges that Oregon hospitals are starting to face as cases skyrocket.

"We all know that COVID-19 cases are surging across Oregon," Gov. Brown said. "Over the weekend, we saw daily case rates near a thousand and yesterday I announced that nine Oregon counties will be starting a two week pause as of Wednesday on social activities to help us slow the spread of COVID-19."

Gov. Brown said their fears of the virus spreading in the winter months is starting to come to fruition, but the goal is still to continue saving lives and avoid overwhelming health care systems. To do that, the state is ensuring that they have enough hospital beds, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and staff to provide life-saving care.

"This is very serious, Oregon is headed on the wrong road," Gov. Brown said. "While we have plans in place to share beds and ventilators if necessary, that needs to be a last resort. We cannot and should not be relying on the fact that our hospital systems can withstand a surge. Instead, we should be working together to ensure they don't have to."

Dr. Dana Hargunani, Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), said that over the past three weeks, Oregon has gained more than 10,000 new COVID-19 cases and the death toll has risen to 737.

"The trend is clear and very concerning, and sadly the pace of deaths continues to march along with dozens of Oregonians lost each week," Dr. Hargunani said.

Additionally, Oregon has had a 57 percent increase in hospitalizations since Nov.

3 and an 83 percent increase in the past four weeks. As of right now, the state has 146 available adult intensive care unit (ICU) beds, 701 available beds that are not ICU, 130 beds for ICU pediatric patients and 116 for non-ICU pediatric patients. The state has increased its ventilator capacity since the spring, with 762 available.

Over the course of the pandemic, Dr. Hargunani said they've learned a lot and have relied on communication and coordination between health care systems throughout the state.

"Since the H1N1 pandemic, we've been working closely with hospitals around the state to prepare for emergencies just like COVID-19," Dr. Hargunani said. "While COVID-19 has been larger and longer lasting than we could have ever anticipated, we found that our foundational learning has helped us in the early days when we first saw these cases."

Dr. Hargunani said Oregon is now better prepared to handle a surge in patients, and through partnerships, the state has been able to facilitate help where it is needed. Evidence of that was seen during the September wildfires as hospitals were able to move evacuated patients to other hospitals fairly routinely.

But although the health care system is better prepared than it was at the start of the pandemic, Dr. Hargunani said it has its limits.

"We need to rely on Oregonians to help us manage the virus by taking steps to limit spread," Dr. Hargunani said. "Oregonians are worn out. Tired of a year with limited social connections and so many difficulties of all types. Our health care workers have felt this too, even as they continue to face this virus on a daily basis."

Doctors from around the state provided a brief update on how they are handling the sudden surge in cases, including Jeff Absalon, MD CMO, of St. Charles Hospital in Central Oregon. Dr. Absalon said they are 'very concerned,' as case counts and hospitalizations are doubling, reaching the highest level of patients since the pandemic started.

Dr. Absalon said they

have developed surge plans to send patients to outlying hospitals and currently have a good number of supplies. However, staffing has been an issue, as they have looked at delaying elective surgeries or potentially shutting them down if necessary, to fulfill staffing requirements.

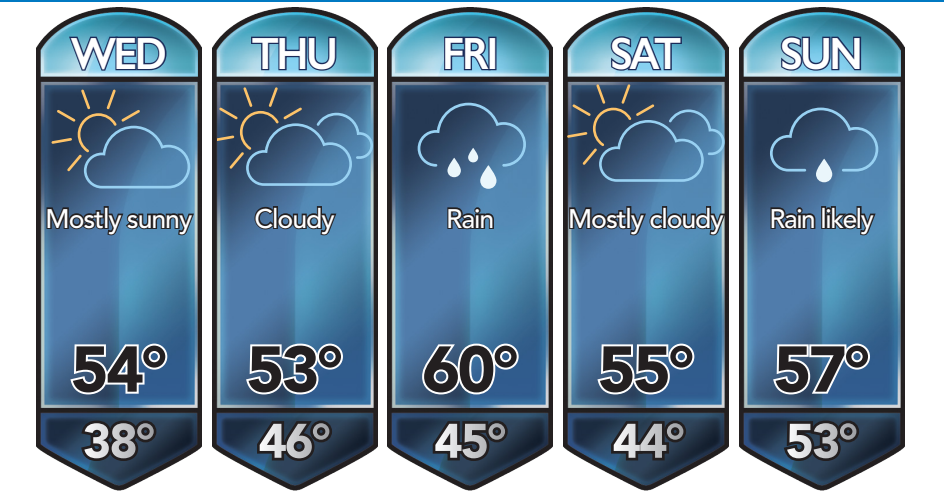
"If you do your part to slow the spread of this virus, you are directly helping our frontline healthcare workers," Dr. Absalon said. "Many of these workers are balancing full time work with parenting and teaching responsibilities in this current environment. We need them rested, we need them available to help you and all of those in need when care is necessary."

Jeff Grebosky, MD, CMO at Asante Hospital in Southern Oregon said they've seen a 162 percent rise in cases/hospitalizations the past few weeks and don't expect that to change in the near future. He urged everyone to follow safety guidelines such as washing your hands regularly, wearing a face covering, keeping physical distance from others and staying home when you feel sick.

Jennifer Burrows, RN, BN, RSc, MBA and Chief Nursing Officer at Providence Medical Centers said they saw a jump from 34 to 58 COVID-19 inpatients the past few weeks. Providence was the first hospital system to care for a COVID-19 patient, and since then Burrows said they have been able to conduct trial runs, provide faster care for patients and analyze data to better serve the public.

"I know we are tired ... we're all tired," Burrows said. "I'm the mother of children in the Portland Public School system being taught virtually, I'm the wife of a husband who has worked remotely since March, I'm one of those people in the grocery store working harder to accomplish my weekly to-do list than I did a year ago. But I'm also a nurse and a voice for the professional clinical team that wants to be ready and able to effectively care for you if you need our services."

"We need your help with this, we need you to make wise choices."



House

From Page 1

2022 elections. They also bolstered their distressingly low number of women representatives from 13 to at least 26, a record for the GOP, according to the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University, and were adding new ethnic minority lawmakers as well.

"The Republican coalition is bigger, more diverse, more energetic than ever before," House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., said the day after the election.

Democrats went into Election Day with a 232-197 House advantage, plus an independent and five open seats. With some races remaining undecided, it was possible that in the new Congress that convenes in January they'll have the smallest majority since Republicans had just 221 seats two decades ago.

Democrats secured the majority after The Associated Press declared three winners late Tuesday: incumbents Kim Schrier in Washington, Tom O'Halleran in Arizona and Jimmy Gomez in California.

A tight majority could cause headaches for Pelosi, empowering any determined group of lawmakers to pressure her on what bills should be considered or look like. But sometimes, a slender margin can help unify a party because its members know they must stick together to achieve anything.

Democratic moderates and progressives clash periodically, and while the moderates are more numerous, the progressives' ranks include influential social media stars like Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y.

Underscoring that tension, House Democrats vented during a three-hour conference call last week in which both factions blamed the other for rhetoric and policies they said proved costly in the campaign.

"We should be honest that this was not a good outcome," Rep. Tom Malinowski, D-N.J., a moderate freshman, said in an interview. He said terms like "defunding the police" hurt Democrats by making it sound like they oppose law enforcement, and said they shouldn't speak "as if we were talking to woke progressives in neighborhoods where 90% of the votes are for Democrats."

Rep. Pramila Jayapal, D-Wash., a progressive leader, said in an interview that Democrats need to discuss "how we talk about some of these issues that are critical to different parts of our base." But with moderates complaining that the GOP hurt Democrats by repeatedly accusing them of pushing socialism, Jayapal said such accusations "will be used against us no matter what we say."

Democrats believed they'd pick up seats, especially in suburbs, because of a decisive fundraising edge, President Donald Trump's unpopularity and exasperation over the pandemic. Many Republicans and independent polls supported that expectation.

But with some races still uncalled, Democrats haven't defeated a single GOP incumbent and failed to capture open GOP-held seats in Texas, Missouri and Indiana they thought they'd win.

Instead, they've lost at least seven incumbents: six freshmen from states including Florida, Oklahoma and South Carolina

plus 30-year veteran Rep. Collin Peterson from rural Minnesota. And while they successfully defended most of their 29 districts that Trump carried in his 2016 victory, they saw stronger than expected performances by GOP candidates all around the country.

"With President Trump on the ballot, it just drove enormous turnout that was almost impossible to surmount," said Rep. Elissa Slotkin, D-Mich., a reelected freshman.

"The country has become more polarized and divided," said Rep. Gerald Connolly, D-Va. "If you're running in alien territory, you're always at risk of failure."

So far, Democrats' only pickups were three open seats from which Republicans retired. Two were in North Carolina, where court-ordered remapping made the districts strongly Democratic, and one was outside Atlanta.

Going into the election, Democrats envisioned strengthening their moderate wing, since most districts they seemed likely to capture were closely divided between GOP and Democratic voters. But they ended up suffering losses in those same type of districts, meaning it was mostly moderates who lost.

"In electoral politics, moderates are the beachfront property," said Jim Kessler, an official with Third Way, a centrist Democratic group. "And if there's flooding, they're the ones that get washed away."

Illustrating that, the Blue Dog Coalition of the most conservative House Democrats, whose membership has dwindled in recent years, lost at least six of its roughly two dozen members.

Southwestern Oregon Workforce Investment Board meets Nov. 19

COOS BAY — The Board of Directors of the Southwestern Oregon Workforce Investment Board will hold a quarterly meeting by Zoom on Thursday, Nov. 19.

The meeting begins at noon and topics include consideration of strategic plan, audit presentation, updates from staff on current activ-

ities and financial reports, and other routine business.

Accommodations for those with disabilities will be made available upon request.

Contact info@sowib.org for accommodations request or to access the Zoom link.

The Southwestern Oregon Workforce Invest-

ment Board is a nonprofit organization that works to maximize regional collaboration, effective innovation and coordinated investment of public and private resources to optimize equitable access to family sustaining employment.

To learn more about the organization, visit www.sowib.org.

Funding

From Page 1

when you are having a very bad day and hopefully make that day a little better," he said. "Thank you to the city council and to everyone we've worked with. You have a fantastic fire department ... that does a fantastic job for all the citizens."

Rick Wetherell, who is retiring as mayor, and Slater, who was not reelected to another term on the

council, both also spoke briefly of the future of the city.

"There is a new day dawning in North Bend's government," Wetherell said. "It's going to be brighter. There is no doubt about that."

Slater, who has served two different stints on the council, as well as a stretch as mayor, said when he was first appointed to the council in 1981, there were members with various backgrounds but a common purpose, a trend that

has continued since.

"The main focus was not only to have the city run well that particular year, but also to be better in the future," he said. "That's what aligned everybody together."

He encouraged the new council members who will start after the election is certified by Coos County to have a vision for what the city should be and work together to achieve it.

"There's many wonderful things that we can accomplish," he said.

NORTHWEST STOCKS

Closing and 8:30 a.m. quotes		
Stock	Close	8:30
Intel	45.43	46.12
Kroger	31.92	31.99
Microsoft	211.14	215.98
Nike	127.70	128.20

NW Natural	51.44	49.95
Skywest	36.41	35.50
Starbucks	93.89	94.98
Umpqua Hldgs	14.28	13.80
Weyerhaeuser	27.75	28.39
Xerox	21.62	21.11

Levi Strauss	17.32	16.97
Dow Jones closed at 29,442.50		
NASDAQ closed at 11,558.60		
S&P 500 closed at 3,544.84		
Provided by Coos Bay Edward Jones		

LOTTERY

MegaMillions
Nov. 10
23-45-53-58-62
Megaball: 13
Multiplier: x5
Jackpot: \$165 million

Powerball
Nov. 7
14-16-37-48-58
Powerball: 18
Multiplier: x2
Jackpot: \$158 million

Megabucks
1-11-14-19-21-22
Jackpot: \$4.3 Million

Win For Life
Nov. 9
44-63-66-68

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Fishing, environmental groups sue over Umpqua River Dam

PORTLAND (AP) — A coalition of environmental and fishing groups are suing a water district in southern Oregon over an aging, privately owned dam that they say hinders the passage of struggling salmon populations in the pristine North Umpqua River.

The lawsuit, filed Friday in U.S. District Court in Eugene, asks a judge to order the Winchester

Water Control District to build a new fish ladder and make major repairs to Winchester Dam, which dates to 1890 and is on the National Register of Historic Places. The dam is one of the oldest in Oregon.

The aging fish ladder on the 130-year-old dam blocks the progress of migrating Oregon Coast coho salmon — a federally protected species — as

well as spring and fall Chinook, summer and winter steelhead, cutthroat trout and Pacific Lamprey, according to the lawsuit. There’s also no record that the water district has rights to hold and store water behind the dam under state law, the lawsuit said.

Dominic M. Carollo, the water district’s attorney, did not return a call for comment Tuesday.

The North Umpqua River is pristine fish habitat and is cherished by environmentalists and anglers alike, said Jim McCarthy, with Water-Watch of Oregon, one of the plaintiffs. The 167 miles (268 kilometers) of river above the dam are some of the highest-quality fish habitat in the state, he said, and are a key part of the coastal fishing industry.

Oregon reports another 771 cases

The World

PORTLAND —The Oregon Health Authority reported another 771 new confirmed and presumptive cases of COVID-19 as of 12:01 a.m. Tuesday.

The new cases brought the state’s total since the pandemic began to 51,909 and included eight in Coos County and 18 in Douglas County. There was one new case in Curry County.

The state also reported three new deaths, raising the total to 737.

The new cases were reported in the following counties: Baker (7), Benton (13), Clackamas (110), Clatsop (2), Columbia (3), Coos (8), Crook (9), Curry (1), Deschutes (30), Douglas (18), Grant (3), Harney (3), Hood River (2), Jackson (56), Jefferson (7), Josephine (3), Klamath (7), Lane (49), Lincoln

(3), Linn (18), Malheur (15), Marion (90), Multnomah (151), Polk (15), Umatilla (23), Union (8), Wallowa (1), Wasco (2), Washington (95), and Yamhill (19).

Oregon’s 735th COVID-19 death is a 73-year-old man in Deschutes County who tested positive on Oct. 31 and died on Nov. 9, at St. Charles Medical Center Bend. He had underlying conditions.

Oregon’s 736th COVID-19 death is a 94-year-old woman in Washington County who tested positive on Oct. 30 and died on Nov. 9, at her residence. She had underlying conditions.

Oregon’s 737th COVID-19 death is a 94-year-old man in Marion County who tested positive on Oct. 22 and died on Nov. 9, at his residence. He had underlying conditions.

Portland man sentenced in attack

PORTLAND (AP) — A 26-year-old man has been sentenced to 20 months in prison for beating the driver of a truck that crashed near an August protest in downtown Portland, Oregon. The incident inflamed tensions that were already high over near-nightly racial justice protests and drew even more national attention to the city.

Marquise Love plead-

ed guilty to third-degree assault and felony riot and was sentenced Monday, according to a statement from the Multnomah County District Attorney’s Office.

Love was captured on video chasing the truck’s driver and knocking him unconscious on Aug. 16 as a protest unfolded nearby. The video of the attack circulated widely

online but it’s still unclear exactly what led up to the incident.

Love was identified by police and turned himself in several days after the attack. He has since expressed “genuine remorse” and apologized to victim Adam Haner, according to prosecutor Mike Schmidt. Haner agreed to the terms of Love’s plea deal, Schmidt said.

“The video of this assault is violent and shocking. It outraged our community and nation. We are fortunate that the victim’s injuries were not as severe as it first appeared they may have been,” Schmidt said. “This is a proper resolution. Marquise Love is accepting responsibility for his actions and the punishment.”

Final week of hurricane season brings new storms

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — Just when you thought it should be safe to go back to the water, the record-setting tropics are going crazy. Again.

Tropical Storm Eta is parked off the western coast of Cuba, dumping rain. When it finally moves again, computer models and human forecasters are befuddled about where it will go and how strong it will be.

Meanwhile, Tropical Storm Theta — which formed overnight and broke a record as the 29th named Atlantic storm of the season — is chugging east toward Europe on the cusp of hurricane status. The last time there were two named storms churning at the same time this late in the year was in December 1887, Colorado State University hurricane researcher Phil Klotzbach said.

But wait there’s more. A tropical wave moving across the Atlantic somehow survived the mid-November winds that usually decapitate storms. The system now has a 70% chance of becoming the 30th named storm. That’s Iota on your already filled scorecard. If it forms, it is heading generally toward the same region of Central America that was hit by Eta.

Never before have three named storms been twirling

at the same time this late in the year, Klotzbach said. Hurricane records go back to 1851, but before the satellite era, some storms were likely missed.

“Someone didn’t give the tropics the memo that its mid-November. This map doesn’t look normal,” said University of Miami hurricane researcher Brian McNoldy. “Usually by this time of year, the season is basically over. Now we’ve got the 28th, 29th and maybe 30th storm going on at the same time.”

Generally fewer than one storm forms in the Atlantic hurricane basin in November but not this year, said Mike Brennan, branch chief for hurricane specialists at the hurricane center.

For the moment, the biggest threat and biggest conundrum is Eta, which struck Nicaragua as a Category 4 hurricane, killing more than 100 people from Mexico to Panama. By Tuesday afternoon, it was lingering just north of the Yucatan Channel between Cuba and Mexico, with top winds of 60 mph (95 kmh).

Eta continued to swell rivers and flood coastal zones in Cuba. Some 25,000 people were evacuated with no reports of deaths, but rainfall continued, with total accumulations of up to 25 inches (63 centimeters) predicted.

The rain kept falling

Tuesday in South Florida, where as much as 23 inches were expected to accumulate. Eta barely hit land late Sunday as it blew over Lower Matecumbe Key on its way into the Gulf of Mexico, but the storm dumped water over densely populated neighborhoods from Monroe to Palm Beach counties. McNoldy has logged more than 90 inches of rain at his Miami house this year, a record.

“Once the ground becomes saturated, there’s really no place for the water to go,” Fort Lauderdale Mayor Dean Trantolis said.

“Now I have fish in my yard and everything, it’s rough,” Davie resident Troy Rodriguez said.

The problem with forecasting Eta is the lack of steering currents that push or pull a storm. Eta’s ultimate track depends on how strong it gets because weaker and stronger storms are steered by different parts of the atmosphere, scientists said.

A report from the National Hurricane Center included the line that forecasters have “little confidence in the long-range track forecast.”

The map of computer model tracks for Eta looks like a “squashed spider,” Klotzbach said, referring to the many outstretched lines that trace its possible movement.

US hits record number for COVID-19 hospitalizations

NEW YORK (AP) — The U.S. hit a record number of coronavirus hospitalizations Tuesday and surpassed 1 million new confirmed cases in just the first 10 days of November amid a nationwide surge of infections that shows no signs of slowing.

The new wave appears bigger and more widespread than the surges that happened in the spring and summer — and threatens to be worse. But experts say there are also reasons to think the nation is better able to deal with the virus this time around.

“We’re definitely in a better place” when it comes to improved medical tools and knowledge, said William Hanage, a Harvard University infectious-disease researcher.

Newly confirmed infections in the U.S. were running at all-time highs of well over 100,000 per day, pushing the total to more than 10 million and

eclipsing 1 million since Halloween. There are now 61,964 people hospitalized, according to the COVID Tracking Project.

Several states posted records Tuesday, including over 12,600 new cases in Illinois, 10,800 in Texas and 7,000 in Wisconsin.

Deaths — a lagging indicator, since it takes time for people to get sick and die — are climbing again, reaching an average of more than 930 a day.

Hospitals are getting slammed. And unlike the earlier outbreaks, this one is not confined to a region or two.

“The virus is spreading in a largely uncontrolled fashion across the vast majority of the country,” said Dr. William Schaffner, an infectious-disease expert at Vanderbilt University.

Governors made increasingly desperate pleas for people to take the fight against the virus more

seriously.

In an unusual prime-time speech hours after Wisconsin set new records for infections and deaths, Democratic Gov. Tony Evers announced that he was advising people to stay in their houses and businesses to allow people to work remotely, require masks and limit the number of people in stores and offices.

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, a Democrat, ordered bars and restaurants to close at 10 p.m., and Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds, a Republican, said she will require masks at indoor gatherings of 25 or more people, inching toward more stringent measures after months of holding out.

While deaths are still well below the U.S. peak of about 2,200 per day back in April, some researchers estimate the nation’s overall toll will hit about 400,000 by Feb. 1, up from about 240,000 now.

Eta prepares to hit Florida again

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — Eta regained hurricane strength Wednesday morning as Florida braced for a second hit from the storm along the Gulf of Mexico coast near the heavily-populated Tampa Bay region.

The storm’s maximum sustained winds increased to around 75 mph (120 kph) off Florida’s southwest coast as it moved northward.

Forecasters at the National Hurricane Center in Miami issued a hurricane watch for a 120-mile (193-kilometer) stretch that includes Tampa and St. Petersburg. The storm has been in the Gulf of Mexico since crossing over South Florida on Sunday.

The latest hurricane watch extends from Anna Maria Island, which is south of St. Petersburg, to Yankeetown.

The latest forecast prompted school officials in Pinellas and Pasco counties, which includes St. Petersburg, to send students home early Wednesday.

Both counties announced schools would remain closed Thursday.

In Pasco County, officials set up four do-it-yourself locations for people to fill sandbags. In Tampa, the Busch Gardens theme park announced it is closed Wednesday and several Veterans Day events in the area were canceled.

A coronavirus testing site at Tropicana Field was also closed Wednesday.

Eta was about 130 miles west-southwest of Fort Myers early Wednesday and moving at 15 mph (24 kph).

The hurricane center said “life-threatening storm surge” is possible early Thursday, and forecasters advised residents to heed warnings from local officials. Tropical storm-force winds are expected in the area by late Wednesday.

Forecasts call for more rain from the storm system over parts of already drenched South Florida.

“Never seen this, never, not this deep,” said An-

thony Lyas, who has lived in his now-waterlogged Fort Lauderdale neighborhood since 1996. He described hearing water and debris slamming against his shuttered home overnight as the storm crossed Florida.

The storm first hit Nicaragua as a Category 4 hurricane and killed nearly 70 people from Mexico to Panama, before moving into the Gulf of Mexico early Monday near where the Everglades meet the sea, with maximum sustained winds of 50 mph (85 kph).

“It was far worse than we could’ve ever imagined, and we were prepared,” said Arbie Walker, a 27-year-old student whose Fort Lauderdale apartment was filled with 5 or 6 inches (13 to 15 centimeters) of water.

There was nowhere for the water to go across much of South Florida, which had already experienced nearly 14 inches (35 centimeters) of rain in October.

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren

LETTER-WRITING FADES AWAY WHEN NEEDED MORE THAN EVER

DEAR ABBY: Would you please address again the importance of expressing gratitude via a handwritten note when a generous gift has been given? We grandparents would love it to be acknowledged by our grandchildren. Some of them are better than others at this. My take is that their parents, although they were taught properly, didn’t take the time to emphasize the importance of expressing gratitude.

I don’t accept the notion that “people just don’t do that anymore.” When I give a generous gift to a newlywed couple or a grandchild, the money came out of my bank account. I want to know my gift was received and appreciated. I have almost reached the point where, in the future, I will respond “not able to attend” and send nothing when I know the odds of it being acknowledged are practically nil and the couple is, for instance, a distant relative. Abby, is that letter-writing publication of yours still available? It’s obviously still needed. -- DISGUSTED IN ALBUQUERQUE

DEAR DISGUSTED: Yes, my Letters booklet is still available. The issues you raise are ones I hear about often from readers. However, you may be judging these folks a bit harshly. Many people put off writing letters because they don’t know how to express their feelings via the written word and fear they will say the wrong thing. They think a thank-you note must be long and flowery when, in fact, short and to the point is more effective.

That is the reason why “How To Write Letters for All Occasions” was written. It contains samples of thank-you letters for birthday gifts, shower gifts and wedding gifts, as well as the ones that arrive around holiday time. It also

includes letters of congratulations and ones regarding difficult subjects, such as the loss of a parent, a spouse or a child. It can be ordered by sending your name and address, plus a check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds), to: Dear Abby Letters Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price. With the holiday season fast approaching, this is the perfect time to reply with a handwritten letter, note or well-written email.

Because letter composition is not always effectively taught in the schools, my booklet can serve as a helpful tutorial -- not only a valuable tool for parents to use in teaching their children to write using proper etiquette, but also a handy guide for anyone who puts off writing because they don’t know what to say.

DEAR ABBY: Is weekly intimacy unusual at 72 years of age? -- WONDERING IN TEXAS

DEAR WONDERING: Not for someone who has a partner who is willing and able.

DEAR VETERANS:
For your service to our nation, I salute you. My thanks to each of you on this Veterans Day. You are the personification of patriotism, self-sacrifice and dedication to our country. Today I would also like to recognize your families for the sacrifices they, too, have made. -- Love, ABBY

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.

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"Have I reflected on it? There's not a day that goes by that I don't reflect on it," Cash said. "Being in this position we

Voting by the Baseball Writers' Association of America concluded before the beginning of the playoffs. Rick Renteria, let go by the Chicago White Sox after the team made the postseason for the first time since 2008, finished second in the AL, followed by

“They’re just different. The first one feels personal and this one feels more like a team thing,” Mattingly said, “and that’s why I’m proud of it because we’ve struggled for a couple years and for us to move forward is important, and I think this is a sign that we’re heading

“Over 100 losses, that’s the tough part,” Mattingly said. “It just feels good that we’re moving

Tampa Bay had a \$29 million prorated payroll as of Aug. 1, which ranked 28th out of 30 teams. Still, the Rays won the AL East for the first time since 2010.

CONFERENCE SUPREMACY: The Southeastern Conference, Big Ten and Pac-12 each have five teams in the preseason poll. The ACC has four, with the Big East and Big 12 each having two. The Missouri Valley and West Coast Conference each have one program in the Top 25. It's the first time since 2015 that two mid-major teams were ranked in the preseason poll.