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Postal Service agrees to reverse changes

HELENA, Mont. (AP) — The U.S. Postal Service agreed Wednesday to reverse changes that slowed mail service nationwide, settling a lawsuit filed by Montana Gov. Steve Bullock during a pandemic that is expected to force many more people to vote by mail.

The lawsuit filed against Postmaster General Louis DeJoy and the U.S. Postal Service on Sept. 9 argued changes implemented in June harmed access to mail services in Montana, resulting in delayed delivery of medical prescriptions, payments, and job applications, and impeding the

ability of Montana residents to vote by mail.

The postal service agreed to reverse all changes, which included reduced retail hours, removal of collection boxes and mail sorting machines, closure or consolidation of mail processing facilities, restriction of late or extra trips for timely mail delivery, and banning or restricting overtime.

The agreement also requires the Postal Service to prioritize election mail.

The settlement agreement was reached a day ahead of a hearing in the U.S. District Court

in Great Falls. It applies to all states.

“Montanans never gave up this fight and as a result, we are ensuring stability through and beyond the election by immediately restoring the mail services folks rely on, whether it’s receiving vital medication or ensuring they can pay their bills on time,” Bullock said in a statement.

A spokesperson for the U.S. Postal Service did not immediately respond to an email seeking comment.

Many more voters are expected to vote by mail this November to limit the spread of

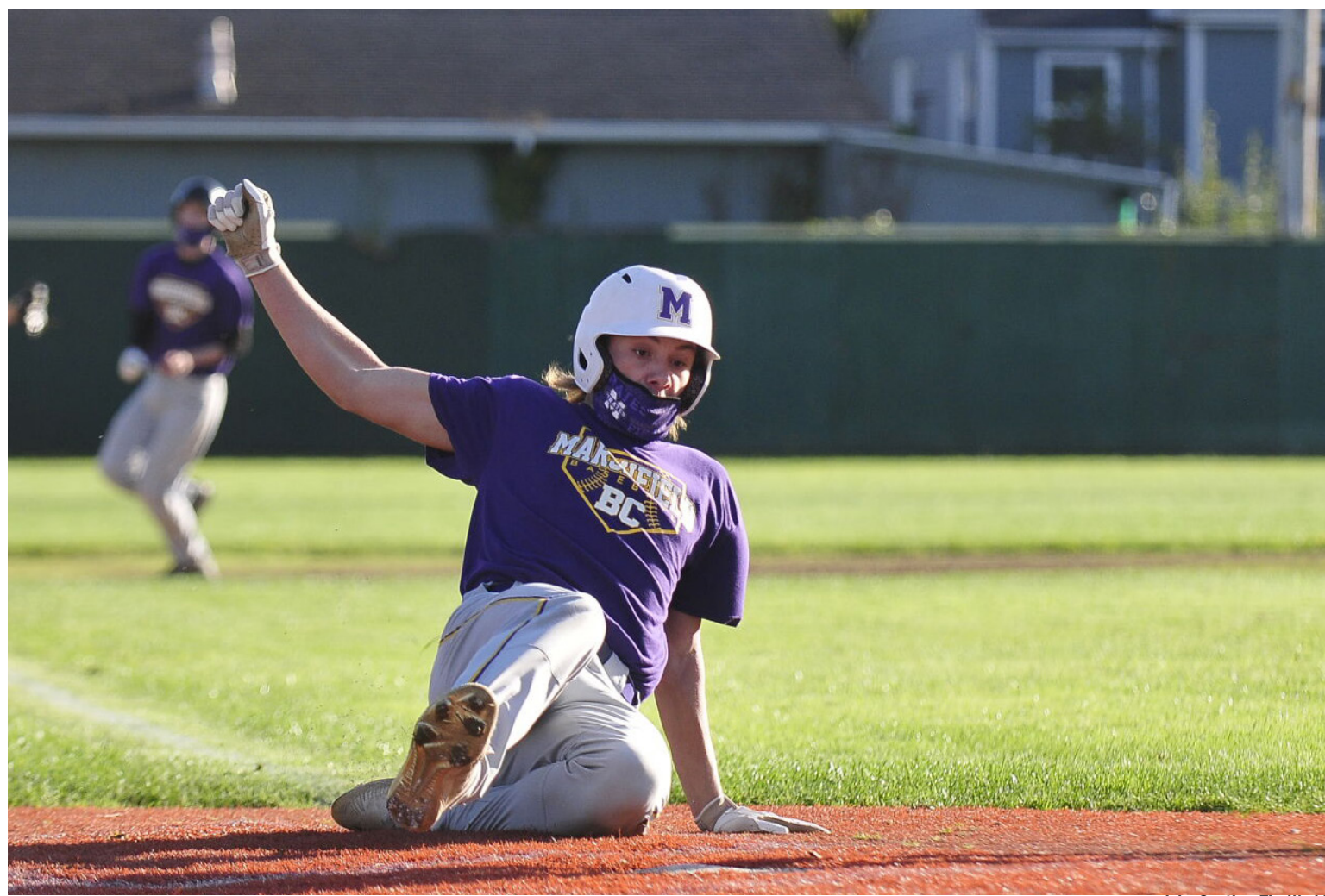
the COVID-19 pandemic. The majority of Montana counties are holding elections by mail, after a directive by Bullock permitted them to do so to limit the spread of the coronavirus. Bullock is running for a seat in the U.S. Senate.

The agreement comes after a federal judge temporarily blocked the controversial Postal Service changes on Sept. 17, calling the changes “a politically motivated attack on the efficiency of the Postal Service” before the November election.

Judge Stanley Bastian in Yakima, Washington, issued the

nationwide preliminary injunction sought by 14 states that brought forward a separate suit against the Trump administration and the U.S. Postal Service. The 14 states, led by Democratic attorneys general, expressed concern that delays might result in voters not receiving ballots or registration forms in time.

Following a national uproar last month, DeJoy, a major donor to President Donald Trump and the GOP, announced he was suspending some of the changes, including the removal of mail collection boxes, but other changes remained in place.



Marshfield’s Cobin Bouska slides into home plate to score a run during Wednesday’s game against North Bend at Clyde Allen Field. The two schools have been playing a series of games against each other the past few weeks. Read more about their progress in Saturday’s print edition of The World.

Trump, Biden have dueling town halls tonight

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump and challenger Joe Biden will compete for TV audiences in dueling town halls instead of meeting face-to-face for their second debate as originally planned.

The two will take questions in different cities on different networks Thursday night: Trump on NBC from Miami, Biden on ABC from Philadelphia. Trump backed out of plans for the presidential faceoff originally scheduled for the evening after debate organizers shifted the format to a virtual event following Trump’s coronavirus diagnosis.

As the pace of the campaign speeds up in its final weeks, the two candidates first are taking care of other electoral necessities Thursday: Trump has a mid-day rally in battleground North Carolina, and Biden is raising campaign cash at a virtual event.

Trump has also been trying to shore up support from constituencies that not so long ago he thought he had in the bag: big business and voters in the red state of Iowa.

In a Wednesday morning address to business leaders, he expressed puzzlement that they would even consider supporting Biden, arguing that his own leadership was a better bet for a strong economy. Later, the president held his third campaign

rally in three nights, this time in Iowa, a state he won handily in 2016 but where Biden is making a late push.

Trump claimed to be leading in the most recent Iowa poll he saw. “For me to only be up six, I’m a little bit concerned,” he asserted. Multiple polls have shown a much closer race.

Biden, for his part, held a virtual fundraiser from Wilmington, Delaware, and used his appearance to say that Trump was trying to rush through Amy Coney Barrett, his nominee for the Supreme Court, to help his efforts to repeal the Obama health care law, calling that “an abuse of power.”

Trump used his economic address Wednesday to play up his administration’s commitment to lowering taxes and deregulation of industry, and he didn’t hide his frustration with signs that some in the business community are tilting to Biden.

“I know I’m speaking to some Democrats, and some of you are friends of mine,” Trump said in a virtual address to the Economic Clubs of New York, Florida, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Pittsburgh and Sheboygan, Wisconsin. Should Biden be elected, he continued, “you will see things happen that will not make you happy. I don’t understand your thinking.”

The former vice president

has collected more than \$50 million in campaign contributions from donors in the securities and investment sectors, according to the private nonpartisan Center for Responsive Politics. During his decades in the Senate representing Delaware, a center for the credit card and banking industries, Biden built relationships and a voting record in the business sector that has raised suspicion on the left but provides Wall Street with a measure of ease at the prospect of a Biden administration.

After being sidelined by the coronavirus, Trump resumed a breakneck schedule this week, with aides saying he is expected to travel and host campaign rallies every day through Nov. 3. Trump has appeared hale in his public appearances since reemerging from quarantine, though at moments during his economic address on Wednesday his voice was raspy.

In Iowa, Trump tossed away his tie and donned a red hat to fight off the stiff breeze on the airport tarmac. He made a direct appeal to the state’s farmers, saying that he was responsible for \$28 billion in aid designed to help offset damage stemming from his trade war with China. “I hope you remember that on Nov. 3,” Trump said.

But after years of farmers supporting him despite the trade

war, some Republicans say Trump’s renewable fuel policy has sown some doubt.

Trump’s Environmental Protection Agency granted dozens of waivers to petroleum companies seeking to bypass congressional rules requiring the level of the corn-based fuel additive ethanol that gasoline must contain. He has recently denied more waiver requests, but the EPA’s previous action removed about 4 billion gallons of ethanol demand, resulting in the closure — at least temporarily — of more than a dozen ethanol plants in Iowa.

While mostly laying low on Wednesday, Biden has stepped up campaign travel in the past week, with visits to Arizona, Nevada, Florida and Pennsylvania. The former vice president isn’t introducing new themes in his pitch that he’s a steady alternative to Trump. Biden and his aides believe the president’s scattershot campaign messaging since his COVID-19 diagnosis proves the core of Biden’s case.

Trump’s return to Iowa came as he has been forced into playing defense following a widely planned performance in the first debate and his illness. Republicans have raised alarm that enthusiasm among Trump’s base has waned slightly after the one-two punch of those events, casting his reelection into doubt.

Earth sets new heat record for September

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Earth sweltered to a record hot September last month, with U.S. climate officials saying there’s nearly a two-to-one chance that 2020 will end up as the globe’s hottest year on record.

Boosted by human-caused climate change, global temperatures averaged 60.75 degrees (15.97 Celsius) last month, edging out 2015 and 2016 for the hottest September in 141 years of recordkeeping, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said Wednesday. That’s 1.75 degrees (0.97 degrees Celsius) above the 20th century average.

This record was driven by high heat in Europe, Northern Asia, Russia and much of the Southern Hemisphere, said NOAA climatologist Ahira Sanchez-Lugo. California and Oregon had their hottest Septembers on record.

Earth has had 44 straight Septembers where it has been warmer than the 20th century average and 429 straight months without a cooler than normal month, according to NOAA. The hottest seven Septembers on record have been the last seven.

That means “that no millennial or even parts of Gen-X has lived through a cooler than normal September,” said North Carolina state climatologist Kathie Dello, herself a millennial.

What’s happening is a combination of global warming from the burning of coal, oil and natural gas and natural variability, Sanchez-Lugo said. But the biggest factor is the human-caused warming, she and Dello said.

The globe set this record despite a La Nina, which is a

Please see **Heat Record**, Page 2

Reedsport police vehicle among federally funded projects

REEDSPORT — The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural Development program will fund a new police vehicle in Reedsport, according to a release from Senator Jeff Merkley’s office.

The \$36,300 awarded to the city is part of a Community Facilities Disaster Grant, and will come along with a number of other grants awarded to Oregon’s rural communities, the release said.

Also in Douglas County, the City of Winston will get \$137,200 to update its police department facilities. The Ma-

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Space probe makes first fly-by of Venus

BERLIN (AP) — A spacecraft bound for Mercury swung by Venus on Thursday, using Earth’s neighbor to adjust its course on the way to the solar system’s smallest and innermost planet.

Launched almost two years ago, the European-Japanese probe BepiColombo took a black-and-white snapshot of Venus from a distance of 17,000 kilometers (10,560 miles), with some of its own instruments in

the frame.

The fly-by is the second of nine so-called planetary gravity assists that the spacecraft needs for its seven-year trip to Mercury. The first, around Earth, took place in April.

The European Space Agency has described the 1.3 billion-euro (\$1.5 billion) mission as one of its most challenging yet. Mercury’s extreme temperatures, the intense gravity pull of the

sun and blistering solar radiation make for hellish conditions.

BepiColombo will make one more fly-by of Venus and six of Mercury itself to slow down before its arrival in 2025. Once there, the spacecraft will split in two, releasing a European orbiter nicknamed Bepi that will swoop into Mercury’s inner orbit while Mio, built by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, gathers data from a greater distance.

Both probes are designed to cope with temperatures varying from 430 degrees Celsius (806 degrees Fahrenheit) on the side facing the sun, and -180 degrees Celsius (-292 F) in Mercury’s shadow.

Researchers hope the Bepi-Colombo mission will help them understand more about Mercury, which is only slightly larger than Earth’s moon and has a massive iron core.

Oregon Health Authority reports three more COVID-19 deaths

THE WORLD

PORTLAND — COVID-19 has claimed three more lives in Oregon and nearly 400 new cases were reported statewide, the Oregon Health Authority said Wednesday.

OHA reported 390 new confirmed and presumptive cases as of 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, bringing the state's total since the pandemic began to 38,160.

The cases reported Wednesday were in the following counties: Benton (3), Clackamas (27), Clatsop (1), Columbia (1), Coos (3), Crook (2), Deschutes (7), Douglas (8), Jackson (28), Jefferson (2), Josephine (2), Klamath (2), Lane (60), Lincoln (2), Linn (5), Malheur (11), Marion (63), Multnomah (88), Polk (4), Umatilla (14),

Wallowa (1), Washington (51), and Yamhill (5).

The three deaths raised the state's death toll to 608.

Oregon's 606th COVID-19 death is a 93-year-old man in Multnomah County who tested positive on Sept. 18 and died on Oct. 2 at Adventist Health Portland. He had underlying conditions.

Oregon's 607th COVID-19 death is an 80-year-old woman in Wasco County who tested positive on Sept. 18 and died on Oct. 12 at Providence St. Vincent Medical Center. She had underlying conditions.

Oregon's 608th COVID-19 death is an 82-year-old woman in Washington County who tested positive on Oct. 5 and died on Oct. 13 at Providence St. Vincent Medical Center. She had

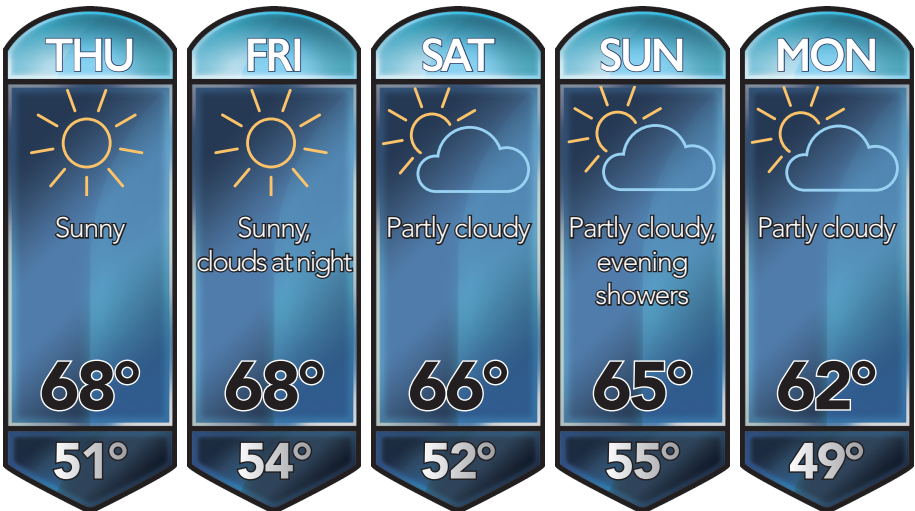
underlying conditions.

Weekly report

On Wednesday, OHA also released its Weekly Report which showed that during the week of Oct. 5 through Oct. 11, OHA recorded 2,418 new cases of COVID-19 infection — up 18% from last week's tally of 2,055 and the highest weekly total reported in Oregon to date.

The number of Oregonian's newly tested during the week rose 26% to 28,490. The percentage of tests that were positive rose slightly to 6.4% from 6.3% a week earlier. During the week, 27 new deaths were increase from 25 a week earlier.

A total of 147 Oregonians were hospitalized, up from 119 in the previous week. It was the highest weekly total since mid-July.



Preppers meet Oct. 17 in Bandon

THE WORLD

BANDON — The Southwestern Oregon Preppers will hold a meeting at noon on Saturday, Oct. 17, in the Bandon City Park, 1204 11th St. Southwest in Bandon.

The group will meet under the covered area and people are encouraged to bring something to sit on.

The main topic for the meeting is preparing for

after the election. Things may or may not go smoothly, so the group will discuss what could go wrong and how to be prepared.

Southwestern Oregon Preppers meetings always start with a question and answer period before the main topic so all in attendance get a chance to participate.

The meeting is free and provides an opportunity for newcomers to get to know

fellow preppers in the area and to exchange information and ideas.

The group feels it is important for individuals to understand that they will be on their own in the event of a disaster and should prepare not to depend on receiving outside help.

People can join the Southwestern Oregon Preppers on Facebook or at meetup.com.

Wildfires have exposed millions to hazardous smoke

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. (AP) — Wildfires churning out dense plumes of smoke as they scorch huge swaths of the U.S. West Coast have exposed millions of people to hazardous pollution levels, causing emergency room visits to spike and potentially thousands of deaths among the elderly and infirm, according to an Associated Press analysis of pollution data and interviews with physicians, health authorities and researchers.

Smoke at concentrations that topped the government's charts for health risks and lasted at least a day enshrouded counties inhabited by more than 8 million people across five states in recent weeks, AP's analysis shows.

Major cities in Oregon, which has been especially hard hit, last month suffered the highest pollution levels they've ever recorded when powerful winds supercharged fires that had been burning in remote areas and sent them hurtling to the edge of densely populated Portland.

Medical complica-

tions began arising while communities were still enveloped in smoke, including hundreds of additional emergency room visits daily in Oregon, according to state health officials.

"It's been brutal for me," said Barb Trout, a 64-year-old retiree living south of Portland in the Willamette Valley. She was twice taken to the emergency room by ambulance following severe asthmatic reactions, something that had never happened to her before.

Trout had sheltered inside as soon as smoke rolled into the valley just after Labor Day but within days had an asthma attack that left her gasping for air and landed her in the ER. Two weeks later, when smoke from fires in California drifted into the valley, she had an even more violent reaction that Trout described as a near-death experience.

"It hit me quick and hard — more so than the first one. I wasn't hardly even breathing," she recalled. After getting stabilized with drugs, Trout was sent home but

the specter of a third attack now haunts her. She and her husband installed an alarm system so she can press a panic button when in distress to call for help.

"It's put a whole new level on my life," she said. "I'm trying not to live in fear, but I've got to be really really cautious."

In nearby Salem, Trout's pulmonologist Martin Johnson said people with existing respiratory issues started showing up at his hospital or calling his office almost immediately after the smoke arrived, many struggling to breathe. Salem is in Marion county, which experienced eight days of pollution at hazardous levels during a short period, some of the worst conditions seen the West over the past two decades, according to AP's analysis.

Most of Johnson's patients are expected to recover but he said some could have permanent loss of lung function. Then there are the "hidden" victims who Johnson suspects died from heart attacks or other problems triggered

by the poor air quality but whose cause of death will be chalked up to something else.

"Many won't show up at the hospital or they'll die at home or they'll show up at hospice for other reasons, such as pneumonia or other complications," Johnson said.

Based on prior studies of pollution-related deaths and the number of people exposed to recent fires, researchers at Stanford University estimated that as many as 3,000 people over 65 in California alone died prematurely after being exposed to smoke during a six-week period beginning Aug. 1. Hundreds more deaths could have occurred in Washington over several weeks of poor air caused by the fires, according to University of Washington researchers.

The findings for both states have not been published in peer-reviewed journals. No such estimate was available for Oregon.

Wildfires are a regular occurrence in Western states but they've grown more intense and dangerous as a chang-

ing climate dries out forests thick with trees and underbrush from decades of fire suppression. What makes the smoke from these fires dangerous are particles too small for the naked eye to see that can be breathed in and cause respiratory problems.

On any given day, western fires can produce 10 times more particles than are produced by all other pollution sources including vehicle emissions and industrial facilities, said Shawn Urbanski, a U.S. Forest Service smoke scientist.

Fires across the West emitted more than a million tons of the particles in 2012, 2015 and 2017, and almost as much in 2018 — the year a blaze in Paradise, California killed 85 people and burned 14,000 houses, generating a thick plume that blanketed portions of Northern California for weeks. Figures for 2017 and 2018 are preliminary.

A confluence of meteorological events made the smoke especially bad this year: first, fierce winds up and down the coast whipped

fires into a fury, followed in Oregon by a weather inversion that trapped smoke close to the ground and made it inescapable for days. Hundreds of miles to the south in San Francisco, smoke turned day into night, casting an eerie orange pall over a city where even before the pandemic facemasks had become common at times to protect against smoke.

AP's analysis of smoke exposure was based on U.S. Environmental Protection Agency data compiled from hundreds of air quality monitoring stations. Census data was used to determine the numbers of people living in affected areas of Oregon, Washington, California, Idaho and Montana.

At least 38 million people live in counties subjected to pollution considered unhealthy for the general population for five days, according to AP's analysis. That included more than 25 million people in California, 7.2 million in Washington, 3.5 million in Oregon, 1 million in Idaho and 299,000 people in Montana.

Heat Record

From Page 1

cooling of parts of the central Pacific that changes weather patterns and usually slightly lowers temperatures.

"A La Nina is no match for how much we're warm-

ing the planet," Dello said.

The first nine months of 2020 are the second warmest on record, a shade behind 2016 when there was a strong warming El Nino. But Sanchez-Lugo said her office's calculations show that there's a 64.7% chance that 2020

will pass 2016 in the last three months to take the title as the warmest year on record. And if it doesn't make it, she said it'll easily be in the top three, probably top two.

"We're catching up" to 2016, Sanchez-Lugo said. "It's a very tight race."

Reedsport

From Page 1

pleton School District in Lane County will see over \$300,000 to renovate and re-open the aquatics center serving Florence and Mapleton.

Neighbors for Kids, a

nonprofit in Depoe Bay, will receive upwards of \$55,000 for improving its security and fire infrastructure.

All told, the funding amounts to more than \$1.7 million for eight communities in Oregon, according to the release.

"Every Oregonian in every part of our state—regardless of their zip code or their income—should have the facilities and infrastructure necessary to build community and stay safe from risks like wildfires and cyberattacks," Merkley said in the release.

NORTHWEST STOCKS

Closing and 8:30 a.m. quotes:

Stock	Close	8:30
Intel	52.52	53.37
Kroger	33.85	33.80
Microsoft	220.68	218.42
Nike	127.32	127.92

NW Natural	46.56	45.79
Starwest	30.69	30.22
Starbucks	89.03	88.54
Umpqua Hlds	12.15	12.27
Weyerhaeuser	29.30	29.63
Xerox	20.02	19.83

Levi Strauss	15.59	15.48
Dow Jones closed at	28,514.00	
NASDAQ closed at	12,086.19	
S&P 500 closed at	3,488.67	

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LOTTERY

MegaMillions
Oct. 13
11-44-45-46-70
MegaBall: 25
Multiplier: x2
Jackpot: \$77 million

Powerball
Oct. 14
21-37-52-53-58
Powerball: 5
Multiplier: x2
Jackpot: \$82 million

Megabucks
Oct. 14
5-8-10-12-14-48
Jackpot: \$3.2 Million

Win For Life
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Judiciary Committee to vote on Barrett on Oct. 22

WASHINGTON (AP) — With a vote date set, the Senate Judiciary Committee Thursday debated the nomination of Judge Amy Coney Barrett for the Supreme Court, Democrats objecting to Republicans’ rush to confirm President Donald Trump’s pick before the Nov. 3 election.

The committee set an Oct. 22 vote to recommend Barrett’s nomination and send it to the full Senate for a vote by month’s end.

“If anybody in America is ready to go to the Supreme Court” it’s Barrett, said Chairman Lindsey Graham, R-S.C.

Democrats tried, and failed, as the minority party to halt the process.

“This is a sham,” said Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., arguing the Senate should wait until after the election and allow the winner of the

presidency to chose the nominee for the vacant seat.

The session is without Barrett after two long days of public testimony in which she stressed that she would be her own judge and sought to create distance between herself and past positions critical of abortion, the Affordable Care Act and other issues.

Her confirmation to take the seat of the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg seems inevitable, as even some Senate Democrats acknowledged.

Graham pushed past Democratic objections and procedural moves to set the panel’s Oct. 22 vote on recommending her confirmation even before final witnesses testify before and against her nomination.

In the minority, Democrats acknowledge there is little they can do stop

them from locking a conservative majority on the court for years to come. The shift would cement a 6-3 conservative majority on the court and would be the most pronounced ideological change in 30 years, from the liberal icon to the conservative appeals court judge.

Republicans insisted they were well within norms with Trump as president. But no court nominee has ever been confirmed so close to a presidential election. Democratic called it a “power grab” and violation of Senate traditions.

Facing almost 20 hours of questions from senators, the 48-year-old judge was careful not to take on the president who nominated her and sought to separate herself from writings on controversial subjects when she was an academic. She skipped past Democrats’ pressing

questions about ensuring the date of next month’s election or preventing voter intimidation, both set in federal law, and the peaceful transfer of presidential power.

She also refused to express her view on whether the president can pardon himself.

“It’s not one that I can offer a view,” she said in response to a question Wednesday from Democratic Sen. Patrick Leahy of Vermont.

Democrats raised those questions because President Donald Trump has done so himself.

When it came to major issues that are likely to come before the court, including abortion and health care, Barrett repeatedly promised to keep an open mind and said neither Trump nor anyone else in the White House had tried to influence her views.

“No one has elicited from me any commitment in a case,” she said.

Nominees typically resist offering any more information than they have to, especially when the president’s party controls the Senate, as it does now. But Barrett wouldn’t engage on topics that seemed easy to swat away, including that only Congress can change the date that the election takes place.

She said she is not on a “mission to destroy the Affordable Care Act,” though she has been critical of the two Supreme Court decisions that preserved key parts of the Obama-era health care law. She could be on the court when it hears the latest Republican-led challenge on Nov. 10.

Barrett is the most open opponent of abortion nominated to the Supreme Court in decades,

and Democrats fear that her ascension could be a tipping point that threatens abortion rights.

There was no hiding her views in at least three letters and ads she signed over 15 years and her membership in Notre Dame’s Faculty for Life. So Republican senators embraced her stance, proudly stating that she was, in Graham’s words, an “unashamedly pro-life” conservative who is making history as a role model for other women.

Sen. Josh Hawley, R-Mo., said there “is nothing wrong with confirming a devout pro-life Christian.”

Barrett refused to say whether the 1973 landmark Roe v. Wade ruling on abortion rights was correctly decided, though she signed an open letter seven years ago that called the decision “infamous.”

New jobless claims rise to 898,000

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of Americans seeking unemployment benefits rose last week by the most in two months, to 898,000, a historically high number and evidence that layoffs remain a hindrance to the economy’s recovery from the pandemic recession.

Thursday’s report from the Labor Department coincides with other recent data that have signaled a slowdown in hiring. The economy is still roughly 10.7 million jobs short of recovering all the 22 million jobs that were lost when the pandemic struck in early spring.

Confirmed coronavirus cases have been rising again nationwide in the past month, likely causing more Americans to hold back from eating out, shopping and engaging in other commerce. Cases have spiked in Wisconsin, for exam-

ple, prompting renewed restrictions on business in Milwaukee and Madison.

Across the country, applications for unemployment aid are rising while negotiations over a new stimulus package between House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin remain mired in a stalemate.

The job search website Indeed said its job postings were unchanged last week, remaining about 17% below last year’s levels. Many employers still aren’t confident enough in their businesses or in their view of the economy to ramp up hiring. Job postings had rebounded steadily over the summer, but the gains have slowed in the past two months.

“Further recovery looks to have stalled out,” said AnnElizabeth Konkel, an economist at Indeed. “Holiday hiring is sluggish, and many businesses need to

make significant changes to ride out the colder months.”

The recession has disproportionately hurt in-person service industries, especially restaurants, hotels, travel companies and entertainment venues. The damage to those industries has left millions of people unemployed, likely for an extended period until they are either finally recalled to their previous jobs or switch to new careers.

The government’s report Thursday, showing that initial requests for jobless aid rose 53,000 last week, also said the number of people who are continuing to receive benefits dropped 1.2 million to 10 million. That decline signals that many of the unemployed are being recalled to their old jobs.

But it also reflects the fact that potentially even more people have used up their regular state benefits — which usually

expire after six months — and have transitioned to extended benefit programs that last an additional three months. The extended aid programs were established by the financial aid package that Congress enacted in the spring.

Indeed, the number of people receiving extended benefits in late September, the latest data available, jumped 800,000 to 2.8 million. The government also said 373,000 people applied for jobless aid under a separate program that made the self-employed, contractors and gig workers eligible for unemployment benefits for the first time.

That figure was 90,000 lower than in the previous week. These figures aren’t adjusted for seasonal trends, so the government reports them separately from the traditional jobless claims.

Nearly all jobless benefit recipients are now

receiving only regular state unemployment payments because a federal weekly supplement of \$300 has ended in nearly all states. A \$600-a-week federal benefit expired over the summer.

Economists have warned that without further aid, families across the country will struggle in coming months to pay bills, make rent, afford food and avoid eviction.

The end of federal aid for the unemployed will likely force many of the jobless to sharply cut their spending, thereby weakening the economy. The full impact may have been delayed, though, by the fact that most of the federal aid was saved or was used to pare debt, according to research by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

According to the New York Fed, at the end of June nearly one-quarter of jobless aid payments had been

saved. Nearly half were used to pay down debt. Just 28% of the money was spent.

And more than one-third of the \$1,200 stimulus checks that went to most adults was saved, with an additional one-third of that money used to pay off debt. Overall, Americans’ saving rate remains sharply higher than pre-pandemic levels, suggesting that some people will be able to continue paying some bills out of their savings, at least for now.

The end of the federal payments has also underscored the dramatically uneven nature of unemployment benefits across states. In Arizona, for example, the maximum weekly payment is only \$240, while in neighboring California it’s \$450. In Florida and Tennessee, the maximum is just \$275. In New Jersey, the top weekly benefit is \$713.

Poll: Americans critical of Trump’s handling of virus

WASHINGTON (AP) — Less than three weeks from Election Day, majorities of Americans are highly critical of President Donald Trump’s handling of both the coronavirus pandemic and his own illness, according to a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

The survey also shows that few Americans have high levels of trust in the information the White House has released about Trump’s health. Initial accounts of the president’s condition were murky and contradictory, and the White House is still refusing to say when the president last tested negative for COVID-19 before his infection became public.

Trump’s illness and hospitalization has re-focused the critical final stretch of the presidential campaign on the pandemic, which has killed more than 216,000 people in the United States this year. Democratic challenger Joe Biden has sought to make the election a referendum on the Republican president’s handling of the virus, arguing that Trump has mismanaged the pandemic and cost Americans lives.

The AP-NORC poll suggests many Americans agree with that sentiment, with 65% saying Trump has not taken the coronavirus outbreak in the U.S. seriously enough. The poll, which was taken a week after Trump dis-

closed his own COVID-19 diagnosis, also shows that 54% of Americans disapprove with how the White House handled the episode.

The Rev. Joseph Wiseman, a 49-year-old registered Republican and Biden supporter from Wichita, Kansas, is among them. Wiseman said he was turned off by the president’s “cavalier attitude” toward the pandemic and what he saw as Trump’s “disregard for the health and well-being” of people around him who were exposed to the virus at White House events, as well as when the president drove in a vehicle with Secret Service agents to greet supporters during his hospital stay.

Trump spent four days at a military hospital just outside Washington, where he was treated with an aggressive drug regimen. On Sunday, his doctor said he was no longer contagious, and he’s returned to the campaign trail this week, holding rallies in battleground states across the country.

The president was eager to return to campaigning in part to send a message to Americans that they should not allow the virus to consume their lives. It’s a message that has been well-received by some of the president’s supporters.

“I think that from the start to the finish that he came through quite rapidly and he’s back out

there,” said Jim Gula, 71, a Republican and Trump supporter from Jacksonville, Florida. “And I think that’s a reflection on the overall people who have come down with a positive test.”

The pandemic upended Trump’s plans to spend 2020 running on a strong economic record, thrusting him instead into the role of a president governing through crisis. He’s repeatedly tried to downplay the impact of the virus, even after his own illness, and has opposed some of the more stringent safety measures recommended by his own administration.

With early voting already underway in much of the country, national polls show Biden leading Trump by a comfortable margin, though many battleground states remain competitive. The president is spending much of this week campaigning in states that should be comfortable territory for him, including Iowa and Georgia, which hasn’t voted for a Democrat for president since 1992.

The race has remained relatively stable for weeks, with Trump unable to gain significant ground on Biden through his efforts to refocus on a “law and order” message aimed at rallying white suburban voters or through his nomination of Judge Amy Coney Barrett to the Supreme Court seat that opened after the death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren

CROSS-DRESSING CAUSES FRACTURE IN A SOLID LONGTIME MARRIAGE

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been together for 11 years, married for eight. We have been through a lot together, which has served to strengthen our marriage. My husband is my Prince Charming and my happily forever after.

Recently, he has discovered that he likes wearing women’s clothes. It started with him wearing women’s underwear under his clothes, which didn’t bother me. I even bought him a few pair I liked. It has progressed quickly.

He assures me that he isn’t gay, he does not want to become a woman or want to dress in women’s clothes full time. However, some of his behaviors have changed, and his wearing women’s clothing has increased. When I tried discussing my concerns with him, he said I was being irrational. We fought, and I thought we had worked some things out, but he still has an attitude.

I’m terrified that this is the beginning of the end of my marriage, and I don’t want to lose him. But I also don’t know just how much of this I can accept or how far he wants to go. He says if I can’t accept it, he will stop doing it. But we will both know that he has that desire, and I don’t want to stifle something that seems to mean so much to him. I have no one I can talk to about this, Abby. Please help. -- STRUGGLING IN FLORIDA

DEAR STRUGGLING: Take the opportunity to learn all you can about cross-dressing. More men than you may think engage in it, and the majority are heterosexual. An excellent support group for cross-dressers and wives of men who need (not “LIKE”) to cross-dress is The Society for the Second Self (Tri Ess). Its website is tri-ess.org. Go there and you will find the support and answers you’re looking for.

Keep the lines of communication with your husband open and honest. Only the two of you can determine how to navigate through this. For many couples, it’s not necessarily a deal-breaker.

DEAR ABBY: When I was 21, I got pregnant with “Earl,” a guy who had nothing to his name but a bicycle. It was three weeks after we met. Earl was 24. Two years later we split. I was working and he was a stay-at-home dad, and I couldn’t stand it.

Five years later, I married a very wealthy man, moved to another country and lived a life of luxury. Thirteen years later we split. I left our small island and moved back, still well off on my own.

Earl was my rock and is a totally different man now. Sixteen years later, I have fallen head over heels for him. He has become everything I’ve always wanted. Our son wasn’t crazy about it at first (he’s 18), but now loves it. Earl’s mother said she knew it would end up this way. My parents have reservations. Do you think we have a fighting chance? -- NEW EXPAT IN NEVADA

DEAR NEW EXPAT: Earl is not the person he was and, frankly, neither are you. Do the two of you have a fighting chance? Absolutely. However, before marrying anyone again, it is important that you discuss this with an attorney and have in place a signed prenuptial agreement. While it may not seem romantic, it’s the intelligent thing to do.

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.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: “Abby’s Favorite Recipes” and “More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby.” Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$16 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

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Saban, who monitored practice Wednesday from home, said he didn't have any symptoms as of early evening. But the second-ranked Crimson Tide will almost certainly be without their iconic 68-year-old coach on the sideline when they play Georgia.

Saban wasn't sure how game day will go when it comes to communication with his staff, but is confident he can still lead practices and run meetings from home via Zoom calls. He communicated with a team manager when he saw a mis-

The Tide played at Mississippi last weekend, and Rebels coach Lane Kiffin said Wednesday his team had some positive tests. Saban said Alabama hasn't "had any indication" of an outbreak within the team.

"I haven't blocked anybody or tackled anybody, caught any passes, thrown any passes in a game in a long, long time, so it's still going to be up to how the players are able to execute and it's up to us to try to get them in the best position to do that."

Byrne said he would “remain at home and follow all guidelines.”

“While it cannot be said that Fred Dean’s greatness as an NFL player began when he came to the 49ers in 1981, I can say as the owner of the team that the greatness of the 49ers began with Fred Dean’s arrival in San Francisco,” former 49ers owner Eddie DeBartolo

"I actually stepped on the other side for a minute, breathed in the air, looked at it as a rainbow," he said before being inducted into the Hall of Fame. "I made

A fan vote for Pro Bowl rosters still will be held, beginning Nov. 17. The rosters will be announced in December. Players, coaches and fans vote for the Pro Bowl.

The Niners were 3-2 when Dean arrived with hopes of ending an eight-year

Manager Dave Roberts said Clayton Kershaw will start Game 4 for the Dodgers, two nights after the three-time NL Cy Young Award winner from Dallas was scratched because of back spasms. Bryse Wilson makes his postseason

Mookie Betts had an infield single on the first pitch of the game, though he was initially called out before a replay challenge overturned the call by umpire Dan Iassogna. Seager drove in Betts with a double on the next pitch before groundouts by Justin Turner and Muncy.

Greinke, bothered by a sore arm in the Division Series against Oakland, made only one big mistake when he allowed a

“We’ve got to get the bats going, no doubt about it,” Rays manager Kevin Cash said. “We’ve been carried here by our pitching and defense, which is how we’re built, but we sure would like to get some (hits).”