



TRUMP'S SIGNATURE COULD MEAN MORE WATER FOR VALLEY

February 19, 2020 | David Taub

More water will flow toward San Joaquin Valley farmers, President Donald Trump declared at an event in Bakersfield on Wednesday afternoon. Trump announced the completion of biological opinions that will increase water allocations in Cal-

"A major obstacle to providing more water for the region's farmers has now been totally eliminated by the government." — President Donald Trump

ifornians. "A major obstacle to providing more water for the region's farmers has now been totally eliminated by the govern-

ment," Trump said. Several thousand invited guests attended the event at the JACO Hangar at Meadows Field Airport.

Newsom: State Will Sue Over Trump's Water Plan

However, Gov. Gavin Newsom said before Trump's announcement that he plans to sue the Trump administration over its plans to increase water deliveries to the Valley. Newsom's announcement may just be a gambit to increase the state's leverage. The governor has acknowledged that California farmers need more water. "We remain committed to working to resolve these remaining differences in (the) coming weeks and months," Newsom wrote in a letter sent to Interior Secretary David Bernhardt earlier this week.

Water for the Valley

Trump recounted a story told on the campaign trail about why the fields along Highway 99 were so brown. He was amazed when told by Rep. Devin Nunes (R-Tulare), it wasn't because of a drought. In 2018, Trump signed a memorandum outlining water supply goals for areas such as the Valley. At today's event, Trump officially signed a follow-up Presidential Memorandum on Developing and Delivering More Water Supplies in California. The new memo will build upon the findings from be-

fore and "help develop and deliver water supplies in the Central Valley," according to a White House news release. "You need the water, it's really that simple," Trump said. Some of what the memo would do is implement the biological opinions that should increase flows from the Delta down south to the Valley and Southern California.

McCarthy Approves

Speaking to GV Wire after the speech, House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Bakersfield) said he liked what he heard. "He updated the science. It's old science. It protects the fish. It allows more water to flow in an environmentally sound way," McCarthy said. "It gets more water down south for the residents in L.A., for the farm communities in the Central Valley." During his speech, which resembled one

of his campaign rallies, Trump talked about taking back the House of Representatives for Republicans, and the need to "get rid of Pelosi." If the Republicans regain

Gov. Gavin Newsom said before Trump's announcement that he plans to sue the Trump administration over its plans to increase water deliveries to the Valley.

the majority, McCarthy could become Speaker of the House. "We only need 18 seats to win the majority. That's not much, but we got to go out there and work," Trump said.

Enthusiastic Entrance

The audience stood waiting in an airport hanger for nearly four hours, listening to the usual Trump event rotation of Rolling Stones songs, interspersed with other patriotic and classic rock themes. Given the locale of Bakersfield, one might have expected some Merle Haggard or Buck Owens mixed in. But the songs of those country music legends weren't heard. Just before 3 p.m., Trump emerged to an enthusiastic crowd and the sounds of "Bless the USA" by Lee...



February 19, 2020 | AP News

PORTERVILLE — Two teenage boys have been arrested for allegedly started a blaze at a public library in Porterville that left a firefighter dead and another missing, officials said.

Porterville Police Chief Eric Kroutil said Wednesday the two 13-year-old boys were arrested Tuesday in the fire that left a 35-year-old firefighter dead. Kroutil said the teenagers were seen running from the library shortly after the fire started.

Fire Captain Killed, Firefighter Missing

Fire Capt. Raymond Figueroa, 35, was killed in the blaze and firefighter Patrick Jones, 25, is still missing, said Porterville Fire Chief David LaPere. The blaze was reported at about 4:15 p.m. Tuesday at the Porterville Public Library in the Tulare County city of Porterville, fire officials said. Staff called 911 when they

noticed flames in the children's section of the library, which has about 77,000 books, city librarian Vikki Cervantes told the Visalia Times-Delta. Flames shot through the library's roof, which later collapsed.

The library is located about a block from the fire department. The first arriving firefighters quickly called for more assistance, officials said.

Library Doesn't Have Fire Sprinklers

The library was built in 1953 and did not have fire sprinklers, an official said said. More than 50 state, county, and city crews battled the stubborn blaze for hours.

The cause of the fire is under investigation, officials said...

FOUNDATION SEEKS RESCUE OF DOWNTOWN **FRESNO STRAYS**

February 19, 2020 | The Business Journal

A local business executive and casino owner is working to find homes for the stray and abandoned animals of Downtown Fresno — and he's taking to social media to get the job done. Club One Casino owner Kyle Kirkland started the Kirkland Foundation about three years ago, responding to a growing problem of homeless dogs and cats in the area that he has noticed over the course of a decade.

His own dog is a rescue from downtown. After the terrier mix was found near the Club One dumpster, he was taken in and found a home with Kirkland. Since then, "Jackpot" the dog has become something of a Club One mascot, and an inspiration for the foundation.

However, most strays in Fresno will not have the same luck that Jackpot had. In fact, according Fresno Humane Animal Services, Fresno County has the lowest save rate in California, with approximately 80% of cats and 50% of dogs being euthanized...

READ MORE »

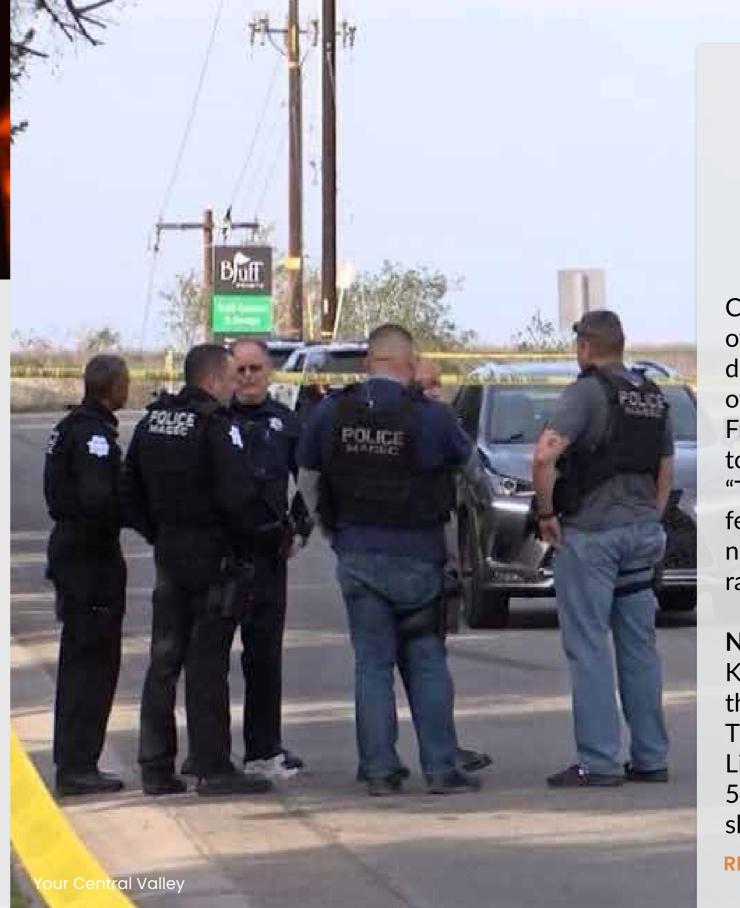


GATES TO MILBURN OVERLOOK CLOSED AFTER HOMICIDE: KARBASS February 19, 2020 | GV Wire

City officials have temporarily closed the gates to the Milburn overlook near the San Joaquin River following the shooting death of 24-year-old Brandyn Harris on Monday. "The Milburn overlook ... is meant to be a peaceful retreat for residents," said Fresno City Councilman Mike Karbassi. "The tragic event that took place ... has rattled the residents of northwest Fresno. "The city manager's office and I have agreed to look into safety features for the lookout in order to make the area safer for the neighborhood. During this process, we have decided to temporarily close access gates until safety improvements are made."

Neighborhood Meeting Scheduled for Thursday

Karbassi also said that he is holding a neighborhood meeting that will include Fresno Police Department representatives Thursday. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 5:30 p.m. in the Liddell Elementary School multipurpose room. The school is at 5455 W. Alluvial Avenue. Police dispatchers received reports of shots fired in the vicinity of Milburn and Alluvial avenues... **READ MORE »**





NEWSOM MAKES HOMELESSNESS THE STATE'S NO. 1 ISSUE

February 19, 2020 | AP News

California should lower the legal bar for providing forced treatment to the mentally ill and building more homeless shelters, Gov. Gavin Newsom said Wednesday in his second State of the State address. He took the unusual step of devoting most of the annual speech to just two related issues: affordable housing shortfalls and homelessness.

Related Story: Newsom's Homeless Plan Faces Skepticism from Lawmakers, Mayors

They have quickly eclipsed the state's other problems since the Democratic governor took office a year ago. He called it "a disgrace, that the richest state in the richest nation ... is falling so far behind to properly

Newsom proposed lowering the threshold for conservatorships for those with mental illnesses, particularly for those experiencing homelessness who turn down medical aid. He said that current laws set a "too high" threshold for compelling individuals to go into community treatment centers.

house, heal and humanely treat so many of its own people." While homeless populations in most states have declined recently, California's jumped 16% last year to about 151,000 people, a problem that the governor said disproportionately affects minorities. Meanwhile, a statewide housing shortage has compounded the issue, driv-

ing up prices and contributing to more people fleeing California than moving in, the first time in 10 years the state has had a migration loss. Newsom proposed lowering the threshold for conservatorships for those with mental illnesses, particularly for those experiencing homelessness who turn down medical aid. He said that current laws set a "too high" threshold for compelling individuals to go into community treatment centers. California must act "within the bounds of deep respect for civil liberties and personal freedoms, but with an equal emphasis on helping people into the life-saving treat-

ment that they need at the precise moment they need it," he said in a 42-minute livestreamed address from the ornate Assembly chamber.

Trump Has Frequently Criticized California for Its Homelessness Woes

However, he said, "clearly it is time to respond to the concerns of experts who argue that thresholds for conservatorships are too high and should be revisited."

Homelessness has been a catalyzing issue in California politics, with public opinion polls showing it at the top of voters' priority lists. Republican President Donald Trump has frequently criticized

"Spend your mental health dollars by June 30, or we'll make sure they get spent for you. It's time to match our big-hearted empathy with tight-fisted accountability." — Gov. Gavin Newsom

California for its homelessness woes, saying the Democratic-led state can't handle the crisis and blaming it for other state problems, including poor water quality in the San Francisco Bay. Trump again chided Los Angeles leaders on Tuesday during a visit to Southern California for failing to stem that city's homelessness epidemic, warning that the federal government will intervene if Los Angeles doesn't "clean it up fast."

A law Newsom signed last year authorized San Francisco to expand its conservatorship authority, a program that the city is still setting up. Civil rights groups are concerned with expanding conservatorship programs. Newsom last year also signed a law exempting Los Angeles shelters and supportive housing from the state's famously strict environmental review rules. He called for expanding that exemption statewide. "We need more housing, not more delays," he said. The California Environmental Review Act requires most construction projects to submit to a strict analysis of how it would impact the environment. Such reviews can delay projects and give opponents ample opportunity to...



February 20, 2020 | AP News

SACRAMENTO - California lawmakers on Thursday became the first political leaders in the nation's most populous state to apologize for discriminating against Japanese Americans and helping the U.S. government send them to internment camps after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor during World War II

The Assembly unanimously passed the resolution and welcomed several people who were imprisoned in the camps and their families. Several lawmakers gave somber statements and gathered at the entrance of the chamber after the vote to hug and shake hands with victims like 96-year-old Kiyo Sato. Sato said young people need to know about the

120,000 Japanese Americans who were sent to internment camps during the war. "We need to remind them that this can't happen again," she said. The resolution came a day after Gov. Gavin Newsom declared a Day of Remembrance for Feb. 19, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an executive order in 1942 that led to the imprisonment of Japanese Americans across 10 camps in the U.S. West and Arkansas.

The governors of Idaho and Arkansas also proclaimed it a Day of Remembrance, and events are held nationwide. "During the years leading up to World War II, California led...

READ MORE »



LA ADOPTS NEW 'WAR **ROOM'STRATEGY FOR TACKLING HOMELESSNESS**

February 19, 2020 | AP News

LOS ANGELES — Los Angeles city and county officials on Tuesday announced a new strategy to speed the process of getting homeless people into permanent housing that is modeled on the federal government's response to natural disasters. The creation of a "Housing Central Command" marks an overhaul of how agencies work together in addressing the growing number of people living on the street, according to the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority.

Previously the system was slowed by red tape and gaps in information showing what housing units were available and who is eligible to move into them, officials said. In some cases there was a waiting period of 10 months from a person being matched to housing to signing a lease. "Nobody was holding the full picture of resources," said LAHSA interim executive director Heidi Marston. "Our systems weren't talking to each other." The new initiative uses a "war room model" inspired by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban...

READ MORE »

FLYING SAUCER OR SOMETHING ELSE NEAR MT. SHASTA?

February 18, 2020 | GV Wire

The photograph with this story isn't doctored. But the object hovering near Mt. Shasta isn't a flying saucer either.

Lenticular Clouds Explained

It's a lenticular cloud photographed by fire management officer Paul Zerr of the U.S. Forest Service on Feb. 12. "Lenticular clouds are stationary clouds ... and normally develop on the downwind side of a mountain or mountain of a mountain or mountain range," the Forest Service explained in a Facebook post. "They are most common during the winter months and Mt. Shasta is one of the places to spot them in the state and perhaps the country." The National Weather Service has more on lenticular clouds at this link.

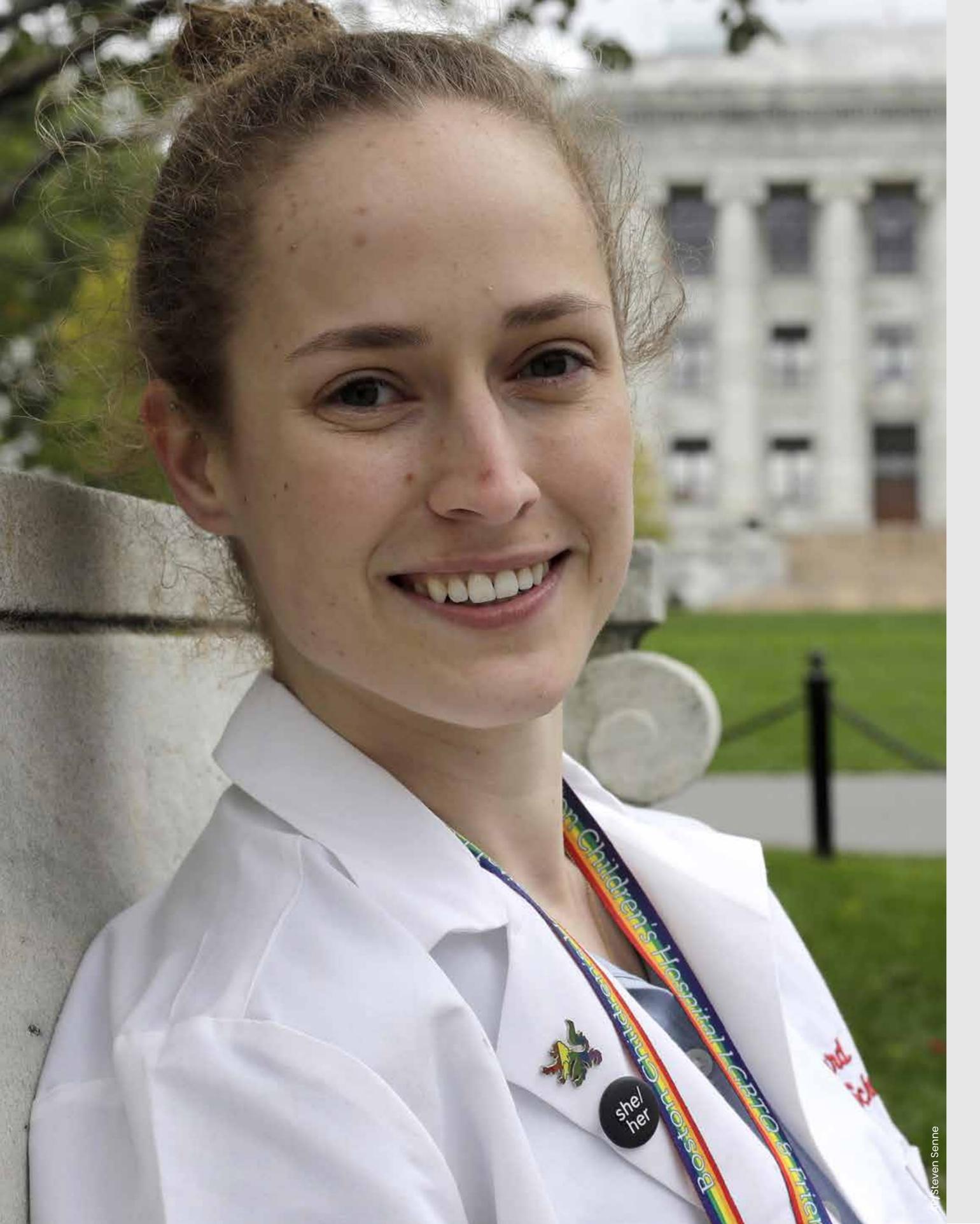
Big Hit on Facebook

"Wow! I've seen a lot of lenticular clouds around Mt. Shasta over the years, but this one is the strangest," said Facebook commenter Robert Bobby Phillips. Added Brandon Vee, in...

READ MORE »



8 GV Wire Weekly Digest



US MEDICAL SCHOOLS BOOST LGBTQ STUDENTS, DOCTOR TRAINING

February 19, 2020 | AP News

Aliya Feroe recalls the flustered OB-GYN who referred her to another physician after learning she identified as queer. For Rhi Ledgerwood, who was designated female at birth, identifies as trans and doesn't have sex with men, it was a doctor advising about condoms and pregnancy prevention. For Tim Keyes, who came out as gay at age 17, it's when doctors automatically assumed he sleeps with women. Ask any LGBTQ patient about awkward doctor visits and chances are they'll have a story to tell. When being heterosexual is presumed even in doctors' offices, those who identify otherwise can feel marginalized and less likely to seek medical care, contributing to health problems that include high rates of depression, suicidal behavior, alcohol and drug use and inadequate health screenings, LGBTQ advocates say.

Now, moves are afoot to remedy that. The American Medical Association vowed in November to push for a federal ban on gay conversion therapy. Medical schools

"LGBTQ physicians deserve an equal standing in the medical community and LGBTQ patients deserve the same quality of care awarded to anyone else." — Aliya Feroe, a third-year Harvard medical student

are beefing up education on LBGTQ health issues. And some schools are making a major push to recruit LGBTQ medical students, backed by research showing that patients often get better care when treated by doctors more

like them. Feroe, Keyes and Ledgerwood — all pursuing medical careers — are part of the trend. "LGBTQ physicians deserve an equal standing in the medical community and LGBTQ patients deserve the same quality of care awarded to anyone else," said Feroe, a third-year Harvard medical student.

This Past Fall, Harvard's Entering Class of Medical Students Was 15% LGBTQ

Increasing LGBTQ enrollment and training in LGBTQ health issues in medical schools can help achieve those

goals, advocates say. Exact numbers of LGBTQ medical students and doctors are unknown. In 2018, the AMA added sexual orientation and gender identity as an option for members to include in demographic profiles the group compiles. Of the 15,000 doctors and students who have volunteered that information so far, about 4% identify as LGBTQ. That's similar to Gallup estimates for the general U.S. population, although LGBTQ advocates

believe the numbers are higher and rising as more people are willing to "out" themselves. This past fall, Harvard's entering class of medical students was 15% LGBTQ, a milestone that is no accident. The American Association

"We have gay Muslim students. Lesbians from China. Students who are survivors of conversion therapy. They are now out and very proud gay people and they are healing those wounds." — Jessica Halem, the medical school's LGBTQ outreach director

of Medical College' primary application used by U.S. schools began offering prospective students the option of specifying gender identity and preferred pronouns in 2018. Harvard's school-specific application allows applicants to identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer. A response is not required, but the option "sends a message that you're wanted," said Jessica Halem, the medical school's LGBTQ outreach director. "We know that doctors need to look like and be a part of the communities they serve," Halem said.

Harvard Has an Active LGBTQ Group on Campus

"We have gay Muslim students. Lesbians from China. Students who are survivors of conversion therapy," she said. "They are now out and very proud gay people and they are healing those wounds." Feroe had intended to present herself as straight in medical school, fearing doing otherwise would be off-putting for patients and make her feel like an anomaly among her peers. But Harvard has an active LGBTQ student group on campus, faculty members who ask students if they...



February 20, 2020 | AP News

12 GV Wire Weekly Digest

WASHINGTON — Trump loyalist and ally Roger Stone was sentenced Thursday to more than three years in federal prison, following an extraordinary move by Attorney General William Barr to back off his Justice Department's original sentencing recommendation.

U.S. District Court Judge Amy Berman Jackson said Stone's crimes demanded a significant time behind bars, but she said the seven to nine years originally recommended by the Justice Department were excessive. Stone's lawyers had asked for a sentence of probation, citing his age of 67 years, his

health and his lack of criminal history. Instead, he drew 40 months. Stone had no immediate reaction in court when Jackson announced his sentence. She is delaying execution of his sentence while she considers Stone's motion for a new trial.

He was convicted in November on all seven counts of an indictment that accused him of lying to Congress, tampering with a witness and obstructing the House investigation into whether the Trump campaign coordinated with Russia to tip the 2016 election. The sentence came amid Trump's...

.

READ MORE »

DEBATE NIGHT BRAWL: BLOOMBERG, SANDERS ATTACKED BY RIVALS

February 20, 2020 | AP News

LAS VEGAS — From the opening bell, Democrats savaged New York billionaire Mike Bloomberg and raised pointed questions about Bernie Sanders' take-no-prisoners politics during a contentious debate Wednesday night that threatened to further muddy the party's urgent quest to defeat President Donald Trump. Bloomberg, the former New York mayor who was once a Republican, was forced to defend his record and past comments related to race, gender and his personal wealth in an occasionally rocky debate stage debut.

Sanders, meanwhile, tried to beat back pointed questions about his embrace of democratic socialism and his health following a heart attack last year. The ninth debate of this cycle featured the most aggressive sustained period of infighting in the Democrats' yearlong search for a presidential nominee. The tension reflected growing anxiety among candidates and party leaders that the nomination fight could yield a...

READ MORE »

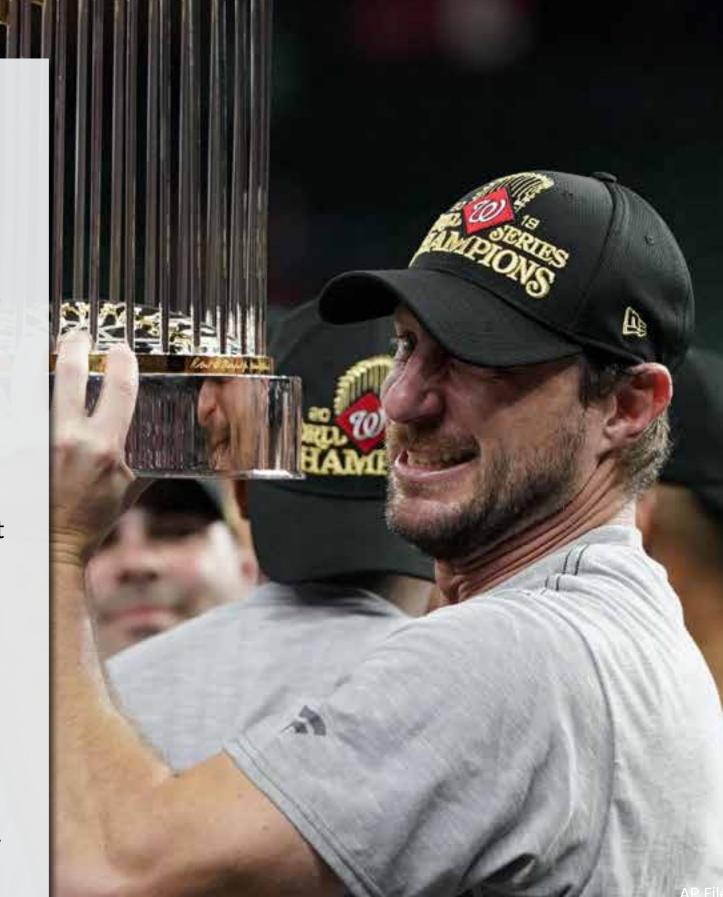
MLB STARS HAMMER MANFRED OVER 'PIECE OF METAL' TROPHY CRACK

February 18, 2020 | AP News

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — Players who have won a World Series — and those who have come up short — seethed Monday at Commissioner Rob Manfred's reference to the sport's championship trophy as merely a "piece of metal," saying that comment reflected a disconnect between baseball's boss and those who produce the product on the field. "It bothered me, man. I hated it. It made him sound really out of touch," said reliever Sean Doolittle, a member of the 2019 title-winning Washington Nationals.

"That's the holy grail of our sport. That's what we show up for in the beginning of February, thinking about and working towards." Added Doolittle: "I just can't believe how out of touch that is. You're the commissioner of our game. You're the steward of this game. That's a really special thing. It's an iconic symbol of our game. Please don't say that, even off-hand, even tongue-in-cheek." As with so many things being...

READ MORE »





NEW THREATS EMERGE IN OUTBREAK WHILE CHINA VOICES OPTIMISM

February 20, 2020 | AP News

BEIJING — Chinese health officials expressed new optimism Thursday over a deadly virus outbreak while authorities in South Korea's fourth-largest city urged residents to hunker down as fears nagged communities far from the illness' epicenter. The confidence voiced by China's government came as it reported a reduced

The confidence voiced by China's government came as it reported a reduced number of new infections. But doubts remained about the true trajectory of the epidemic as China again changed its method of counting and new threats emerged outside the country.

number of new infections. But doubts remained about the true trajectory of the epidemic as China again changed its method of counting and new threats emerged outside the country. "The downward trend will not be reversed," insisted Ding Xiangyang, deputy chief secretary of the State

Council and a member of the central government's supervision group. Whatever promises were aired where the illness poses its biggest threat, countries around the world continued to grapple with the rippling effects. The latest front in the widening global fight against COVID-19 emerged in Daegu, South Korea, where the city's 2.5 million residents were urged to stay inside, wearing masks even indoors to stem further infection. Mayor Kwon Young-jin made a nationally televised appeal for those preventative measures, warning that a rash of new cases could overwhelm the health system. He pleaded for help from the country's central government. Daegu and surrounding towns reported 35 new cases of the coronavirus on Thursday.

The Trajectory of the Outbreak Remained Clouded by China's Zigzagging Daily Reports

The flare-up came more than 900 miles from COVID-19's epicenter across the Yellow Sea in China's Hubei province and its capital of Wuhan, a sign of the risks the virus potentially poses to communities across the region and beyond.

"Everything that is not known about this is causing concern," said Dr. David Heymann, a professor of infectious disease epidemiology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Though all but about 1,000 of more than 75,000 reported cases of COVID-19 have been recorded in China, scattered cases have erupted elsewhere.

Related Story: China's Virus Center Vows No Patient Unchecked as Cases Fall

Iran announced three more infections Thursday, a day after the country's state-run news agency, IRNA, reported its first two deaths stemming from the virus. In addition, South Korea reported its first fatality and Japan said two former passengers of the Diamond Princess cruise ship had died of the illness, bringing the death toll there to three. Other deaths confirmed by the World Health Organization outside mainland China in-

clude two in Hong Kong and one each in France, the Philippines and Taiwan. The trajectory of the outbreak remained clouded by China's zigzagging daily reports of new cases and shifting ways of tallying them. The number of

"Everything that is not known about this is causing concern." — Dr. David Heymann, a professor of infectious disease epidemiology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

new cases in China declined again Thursday, to 394, a notable shift from the 1,749 figure released a day earlier. Another 114 deaths in China were linked to the virus.

Cities in Hubei With a Combined Population of More Than 60 Million Have Been Under Lockdown

But those statistics came after yet another change in how cases are counted. Last week, China's National Health Commission said officials in Hubei would record new infections without waiting for laboratory test...



February 10, 2020 | AP News

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — A small instrument inside the drones that targeted the heart of Saudi Arabia's oil industry and those in the arsenal of Yemen's Houthi rebels match components recovered in downed Iranian drones in Afghanistan and Iraq, two reports say.

These gyroscopes have only been found inside drones manufactured by Iran, Conflict Armament Research said in a report released on Wednesday. That follows a recently released report from the United Nations saying its experts saw a similar gyroscope from an Iranian drone obtained by the U.S. military in Afghanistan, as well as in weapons shipments seized

in the Arabian Sea bound for Yemen. The discovery further ties Iran to an attack that briefly halved Saudi Arabia's oil output and saw energy prices spike by a level unseen since the 1991 Gulf War.

It also ties Iran to the arming of the rebel Houthis in Yemen's long civil war. Iran denies it had a hand in that assault but has increasingly promoted its influence over the Houthis and launched a ballistic missile attack on American troops in Iraq after a U.S. drone strike killed a top Iranian general in Baghdad last month. "This gyroscope ... we've seen it now enough times in Iranian-manufactured material to be able to

tary in Afghanistan, as well as in weapons shipments seized times in Iranian-manufactured material to be able to...

READ MORE »



UN APPEALS FOR HUMANITARIAN CORRIDORS IN NORTHWESTERN SYRIA

February 18, 2020 | AP News

BEIRUT — The United Nations human rights chief urged Syrian government forces and their allies Tuesday to allow safe corridors in conflict areas in northwestern Syria, where a military offensive has unleashed a massive wave of fleeing civilians in one of the worst humanitarian catastrophes in the long civil war. Michelle Bachelet told reporters in Geneva it was "cruel beyond belief" that civilians live under plastic sheeting in freezing conditions while getting bombed.

Her appeal came after a day after Syrian President Bashar Assad pledged to press ahead with a military campaign in the northwest that has displaced more than 900,000 people from their homes since the start of December, according to U.N. officials. Many of the civilians are sleeping in open fields and under trees in freezing temperatures. "Children and families are caught between the violence, the biting cold, the lack of food and the desperate living conditions. Such abject disregard for the safety and well-being of children and...

READ MORE »

INDIA HASTILY BUILDS WALL ALONG SLUM AHEAD OF TRUMP VISIT

February 18, 2020 | AP News

AHMEDABAD, India — A 1,640-foot brick wall has been hastily erected in India's Gujarat state ahead of a visit by U.S. President Donald Trump, with critics saying it was built to block the view of a slum area inhabited by more than 2,000 people. "Since they are spending so much money on this wall, why not use that to improve our slum and provide better facilities for us," said Keshi Saraniya, a resident. "Why are they hiding us poor people?"

Trump is visiting the city of Ahmedabad in Gujarat during a two-day trip to India next week to attend an event called "Namaste Trump," which translates to "Greetings, Trump," at a cricket stadium along the lines of a "Howdy Modi" rally attended by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Houston last September. Trump is to drive along a road next to the slum and will be accompanied by Modi, who is from Gujarat. News reports said the wall was originally planned to be...

READ MORE »



