

Doubts on Mail
Prompt a Push
To Vote on Site

Democrats Uneasy as
Trump Sows Discord

By NICK CORASANITI
and REID J. EPSTEIN

Philadelphia voters will soon hear a familiar election-year sound at their front door: the rap-rap of a Democratic official canvassing for support. But the message they hear might take them by surprise.

After a monthslong effort to get voters to embrace mail-in voting, Democrats in Philadelphia will push supporters to vote in person if they have not already requested a ballot.

The sudden shift in tactics in the biggest city in Pennsylvania, a critical swing state, reveals unease over President Trump’s war on mail-in voting and a rash of court rulings that are still altering the regulations that will govern how ballots are cast and counted in November.

“The only secure thing is to walk to the polls, put your mask on, bring some hand sanitizer — just go vote,” said Bob Brady, a former congressman and the chairman of the Philadelphia Democrats. “This president is going to do everything he can to fight any state, or any city that has an overwhelming vote against him — and we will have an overwhelming vote against him. And we’ll be in his cross hairs.”

Democrats nationally have not abandoned their efforts to vote by mail, largely because their electoral fortunes are wedded to the process. Democrats vastly outnumber Republicans in absentee ballot requests in key battleground states; in Pennsylvania, nearly 1.5 million Democrats have requested a mail-in ballot, three times the requests from Republicans. Since Wisconsin began mailing absentee ballots on Sept. 16, nearly all of the state’s counties that voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016 have returned ballots at a higher rate than counties that backed Mr. Trump.

Many state parties and officials continue to view voting by mail as essential amid the coronavirus pandemic. Joseph R. Biden Jr.’s campaign is still encouraging its supporters to have a plan to vote and to know their options, and that includes voting by mail.

But the change in Philadelphia indicates that some voters are becoming increasingly worried about placing completed ballots in the mail — and that election officials are adjusting accordingly.

As the president falsely claims that mail balloting is rife with

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TODD HEISLER/THE NEW YORK TIMES

A Test on the First Day

New York City’s school system, the nation’s largest, has finished welcoming back 500,000 students for in-person instruction. Page A8.

Covid and Campaigns Collide
In Battleground of Wisconsin

By JULIE BOSMAN

OSHKOSH, Wis. — Steve VanderLoop, 64, heard that several of his co-workers at a manufacturing plant in Wisconsin had fallen ill from Covid-19. Then there was his brother-in-law’s entire family in nearby Washington County. A good friend in Appleton, up the shore of Lake Winnebago. And last week, the gut punch: Mr. VanderLoop’s 96-year-old mother learned she had the virus.

“It’s just crazy here now,” he said of his home state, standing on his porch on a block whose yards and fences were festooned with Biden signs, billowing Trump flags, hand-painted posters and bumper stickers with peace symbols.

He adjusted his cloth mask to cover his nose. “Then you throw in the campaign and everything else. It’s a big snowball.”

Mr. VanderLoop is one of many Wisconsinites living uncomfortably in a dual hot spot: of the coronavirus, which has spiked uncontrollably in counties throughout the state in recent weeks, and

State Now Hot Spot for
Presidential Election
and Virus’s Spread

of the presidential campaign, whose attention seems to be unblinkingly focused on Wisconsin voters.

They have watched with growing alarm as coronavirus cases have exploded. Three of the four metro areas in the United States with the most cases per capita were in northeast Wisconsin, and one hospital in Green Bay, the third-largest city in the state, was nearly full this week.

Daily statewide deaths because of the coronavirus hit a record on Wednesday when officials reported that 26 people had succumbed to the virus. On Thursday, hospitalizations were at a high since the pandemic began, and more than 3,000 new cases were reported, another record.

The mayor of Oshkosh, Lori

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For the Colleges That Beat Back
The Virus, Testing Was the Key

By SHAWN HUBLER

In rural Iowa, just one of the 875 students on Cornell College’s campus has tested positive for the coronavirus this semester. At Amherst College in Massachusetts, the number of undergraduate virus cases has been a bit higher: three.

And Colby College’s rigorous measures have so thoroughly contained the virus that students like Logan Morrione can wander on and off the Waterville, Maine, campus, attend most classes in person and even do without masks in some social situations — privileges that students elsewhere can only dream of.

“At first, we weren’t allowed to see anyone except for our roommates, but now it’s kind of free range,” said Mr. Morrione, a 19-year-old sophomore. “Honestly, it’s not that terrible.”

As campuses across the country struggle to carry on amid illnesses and outbreaks, a determined minority are beating the pandemic — at least for the mo-

Rigid Regimen Allowed
Some Campuses
to Stay Open

ment — by holding infections to a minimum and allowing students to continue living in dorms and attend face-to-face classes.

Being located in small towns, having minimal Greek life and aggressively enforcing social-distancing measures all help in suppressing the contagion, experts say. But one major thread connects the most successful campuses: testing. Extensively.

Small colleges in New England — where the Broad Institute, a large academic laboratory affiliated with M.I.T. and Harvard, is supporting an ambitious regional testing and screening program — are showing particularly low rates of infection. But some larger schools elsewhere also have held the line, even in densely populated areas.

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In Russia, the Lockdown Is Over. But Putin Stays in His Bubble.

By ANTON TROIANOVSKI

MOSCOW — The officials from a secretive Russian security force seemed to know exactly what they wanted when they reached out to Olga Izzanova’s company last spring.

They wanted movable tunnels that douse people in clouds of disinfectant.

“They said it had to be done very fast,” Ms. Izzanova recalls.

She admits the tunnels are of limited efficacy in the coronavirus pandemic, but for her most important customer, every bit counts. The Federal Protective Service, Russia’s answer to the Secret Service, has helped build a virus-free bubble around President Vladimir V. Putin that far outstrips the protective measures taken by many of his foreign counterparts.

Russian journalists who cover Mr. Putin have not seen him up close since March. The few people who meet him face to face generally spend as much as two weeks in quarantine first. The president still conducts his meetings with senior officials — including with



ALEXEY DRUZHININ/SPUTNIK, VIA AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

Vladimir V. Putin meeting with senior officials by video, in a photograph provided by the Kremlin.

his cabinet and his Security Council — by video link from a spartan room in his residence outside Moscow, which has been outfitted with Ms. Izzanova’s disinfectant tunnel.

In the coronavirus pandemic, Mr. Putin’s Russia has often been compared to the United States and Brazil, two other large coun-

tries whose leaders have played down the disease’s risk and saw it spiral out of control. But while President Trump and President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil have chafed against restricting their own movements, Mr. Putin has retreated into an intricate cocoon of social distancing — even as he has allowed life in Russia to essen-

tially return to normal.

The contrast between the behavior of Mr. Putin and that of his people now looms large, as a second wave of the pandemic threatens to wash over Russia. In Moscow, where people packed indoor bars and restaurants all summer with few masks in sight, the num-

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Racism in the Principal’s Office:
Seeking Justice for Black Girls

This article is by Erica L. Green,
Mark Walker and Eliza Shapiro.

BINGHAMTON, N.Y. — Zulaika McKinstry’s once silly, sociable daughter has stopped seeing friends, talking to siblings and trusting anyone — changes Ms. McKinstry dates to the day in January 2019 when her daughter’s school principal decided that “hyper and giddy” were suspicious behaviors in a 12-year-old girl.

Ms. McKinstry’s daughter was sent to the nurse’s office and forced to undress so that she could be searched for contraband that did not exist.

“It’s not fair that now I have to say, ‘It’s OK to be Black and hyper and giddy,’ that it’s not a crime to smile,” Ms. McKinstry said. “And she doesn’t believe me.”

The Binghamton case is now the subject of what might be a groundbreaking federal lawsuit by the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, which has drawn on the disparate treatment

and discipline rates of Black girls to pursue it.

The disproportionate discipline rates of Black boys have long dominated discussions about the harmful effects of punitive discipline policies, but recent high-profile cases have begun to reframe the debate around the plight of Black girls.

In Florida, Kaia Rolle was only 6 last year when police officers escorted her, hands bound behind her with zip ties, from her school in Orlando after employees there said she had a temper tantrum.

In Sacramento, the first “virtual suspension” to draw national attention was meted out to a 9-year-old Black girl who was kicked out of her Zoom classroom for reportedly sending too many messages. In Michigan, a teenager was sent to juvenile detention for not completing her online schoolwork.

Just this week, the Common Application for colleges and universities

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Taiwan Feels U.S.-China Heat
Rising nationalism is making it harder for the island’s chip makers to hold the middle ground. PAGE B1

Black-Market Jobless Benefits
Cybercriminals have stolen millions in unemployment because the usual security methods aren’t working. PAGE B1

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Aiming for a Supreme Boost
Senator Martha McSally, an Arizona Republican, is betting a push to seat Judge Amy Coney Barrett will help reverse a rival’s steady lead. PAGE A13

Hicks Tests Positive for Virus
Hope Hicks, a senior adviser to President Trump, traveled with him to Minnesota for a campaign rally. PAGE A21

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U.S. Prisons to Permit Visitors
Some workers and families say they fear infections as the federal system opens to visits on Saturday. PAGE A9



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A ‘David’ for the Digital Age
Italy is using “the largest 3-D printer in the world” to make an exact copy of Michelangelo’s masterpiece. PAGE A10

Lebanon and Israel Plan Talks
Negotiations over a sea border are a rare breakthrough, but officials said a peace deal wasn’t on the table. PAGE A12

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Stars Clash in W.N.B.A. Finals
The league’s top two teams — the Aces, led by A’ja Wilson, and the Storm, propelled by Breanna Stewart — are facing off for the title. We break down the best-of-five series. PAGE B7

Virus Has N.F.L. Scrambling
The league took a risk by allowing teams to travel freely. Now a spate of infections in the Titans’ clubhouse has forced their game on Sunday to be postponed. On Pro Football. PAGE B7

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Portraits of Changing Love
An exhibition of David Hockney’s works looks at the nature of relationships. Above, “Gregory. Los Angeles. March 31st 1982,” composite Polaroid. PAGE C1

