

Notes from the Archive

Seaver Center for Western History Research
Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County
November 2020

Welcome to Notes from the Archive, a publication of the Seaver Center for Western History Research, a section of the History Department.
If you are informed by what you read here, please share it with a friend or colleague.

In a year filled with departures, this newsletter is a departure. Personal archival items collected by Seaver Center staff are shared below. But first, featured is a Your Story Matters profile on a Los Angeles County resident and global citizen caught in the pandemic.

YOUR STORY MATTERS

In early May the History Department introduced a community campaign to collect stories from those living in the Los Angeles and southern California region for their thoughts and experiences in coping with the pandemic crisis. Stories are sought to be archived - allowing for future generations to learn from history happening at the moment - by visiting [Your Story Matters](#) to fill out an online set of questions. Digital images, along with audio and video clips, are welcomed.

Greg Molinari shared his story - and his written submission has been expanded below resulting from several follow-up email conversations.

Home base is Whittier, though the early roots for Greg's parents were in Inglewood, Bell and Huntington Park. For a number of years Greg was working in Guangzhou in Guangdong Province, China. On January 20th, several days before the New Year, he took a red-eye flight headed for Manila in the Philippines. Three days into his anticipated three-week stay in Cebu City, he was stunned to see the television news coming out of China.

Through WeChat communications with colleagues he soon learned that the entire country came under lockdown. The following months were punctuated by negotiating temporary living quarters and securing airline flights. The Airbnb reservation system was disrupted, and Greg was met with a lot of starts and stops. At times when international flights were operating, the domestic planes were grounded.



Image from the Seaver Center courtesy of G. Molinari

Eventually he settled into a new normalcy: he attained a permit allowing him to cross checkpoints between *Barangays* (neighborhoods or districts). A building owner and government advisor took pity on his long and expensive overstay and allowed Greg to live in a condo unit for free beginning June 1st. He befriended two families who lived along the street under boards leaned against walls. He provided them with food and clothing, including sandals for 10 to 12 kids in the families. One child, Sofia, was starting school soon on the internet. Not possessing a phone nor a computer, she would pay one peso for five minutes at the internet café.

Greg left Cebu City on July 3rd, and after transiting in Manila for three nights, he returned home to Whittier by July 9th. "I got here in a flurry of relief and anger." Shortly before his departure, Cebu had the highest virus count in the Philippines. Greg summed up his written story this way: "I ended up making some great new friendships in Cebu."



Image from the Seaver Center courtesy of G. Molinari

As of this writing, Greg cannot return to China. Following a short period of loosened travel regulations into the country, his airline cancelled an expensive, one-way trip back to Guangzhou that was set for early November. He then learned from China colleagues that new, stricter guidelines for incoming travelers were implemented, and his November 19th flight was predictably

dropped.

Betty L. Uyeda

THE COLLECTIONS

Seaver Center staff contemplate the year 2020 through their rear-view mirror collections:



March 14: Panic at the produce bins

Los Angeles Times

#179 DESIGNATED AREA HIGH RISK © 2020 NYT SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 2020 latimes.com

Trump declares emergency

LAUSD TO SHUT FOR AT LEAST 2 WEEKS

District move affects 670,000 students as officials plan to open centers for parents with childcare issues.

By HOWARD BLUMER, HALEY BRANSON-POTTS, RYAN VIVERA AND ALEX WIGGLESWORTH

Major school districts throughout California, including Los Angeles Unified, announced shutdowns Friday, joining at least 12 states that have ordered complete closures and rescheduling attempts to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

Los Angeles, the nation's second-largest school system, will shut down its 800 campuses serving more than 670,000 students beginning Monday.

The closure initially is scheduled to last two weeks, but a firm reopen date will depend on the status of the outbreak, which President Trump declared a national emergency on Friday.

"The public health crisis created by the coronavirus is not something any of us



STUDENTS at Hamilton High School say farewell Friday as classes let out, not to resume for at least two weeks in an effort to slow the spread of the coronavirus. Schools in 12 other states are also shutting down.

Action grants money to fight virus

President does not offer specifics on coronavirus response but says he'll 'most likely' get tested.

By ELI STOKOLKA AND NOAH RYDERMAN

WASHINGTON — President Trump declared a national emergency over the coronavirus outbreak Friday, which will allow more federal aid to flow to states and municipalities, as he sought for the second time in three days to reassure the country about his leadership.

At a news conference in the White House Rose Garden, the president made a number of undefined promises about expanded testing and bolstering the economy while bailing away questions about the government's slow-footed response to date.

"To unleash the full power of the federal government, I'm officially declaring

Lengthy school closures?

F4B SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 2020 OC

Los Angeles Times

LATIMES.COM/CALENDAR

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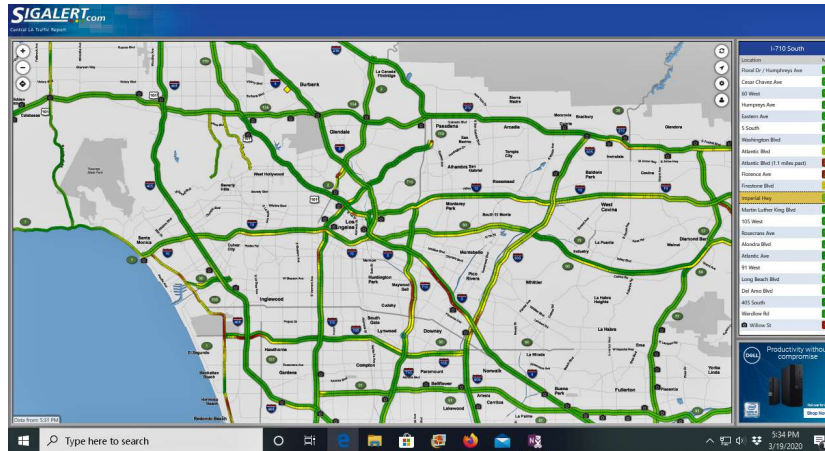
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CORONAVIRUS.GOV
MARCH 16, 2020



March 19: Thursday morning rush hour

Los Angeles Times

CALIFORNIA

FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 2020 • LATIMES.COM/CALIFORNIA

Stay home, residents ordered

Newsom says state mandate is needed to help slow virus' spread

MORE PLACES OF WORK FORCED TO CLOSE

City, county clamp down on nonessential businesses and restrict public gatherings.

BY JACLYN CONNOR, ROME-GOWD LEE II, ALEX WOODLAWORTH AND HANLEY BRANSON-POFF

Los Angeles officials on Thursday took dramatic new steps to severely curtail public movement in a bid to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus.

The restrictions come as the number of confirmed cases continued to grow and as officials said L.A. is running out of time to prevent a much more rapid spread.

"We must slow the number of new cases we have—we must," said Jeffery Piner, director of the L.A. County Department of Public Health, "without slowing

INTERNATIONAL ARRIVALS

TRAVELERS head out from the Tom Bradley International Terminal at LAX. Some international flight passengers say they were told to expect a screening for the coronavirus upon landing but were not checked.

Virus screenings at LAX are spotty, travelers say

Some didn't receive expected health

BY TARIH LUNA

SACRAMENTO — Gov. Gavin Newsom on Thursday ordered all Californians to stay at home, marking the first mandatory restriction placed on the lives of all 40 million residents in the state's fight against the novel coronavirus.

The governor's action comes at a critical time in California, where 39 people have died and an additional 882 have tested positive for the disease.

The mandatory order allows Californians to continue to visit gas stations, pharmacies, grocery stores, farmers markets, food banks, convenience stores, take-out and delivery restaurants, banks and laundromats. People can leave their homes to care for a relative or a friend or seek healthcare services. It exempts workers in 16 federal critical infrastructure sectors, including food and agriculture, health care, transportation, emergency financial services, emergency response and others.

Newsom asked Californians to practice social distancing when performing such "necessary activities."

"We're going to keep the grocery stores open," Newsom said. "We're going to make sure that you're getting critical medical supplies. You can still take your kids outside, practicing social sense and social distancing. You can still walk your dog."

No time frame was set for when the order would end. It was unclear exactly how far the order would reach. It

Waste & Recycling Impacts

Dear Valued Customer,


Valley Vista Services, the City's waste and recycling collector, has informed the City that recycling sorting facilities are shutting down temporarily in order to keep employees safe.

Beginning Monday, March 23, Valley Vista Services will be taking both the waste and recycling materials to the landfill.

Please continue placing all full containers at the curbside of your normal pick up location. The same truck will service both the recycling and waste containers.

As always, we promise to continue our efforts to provide you with the very best of service and value.

Sincerely,
Valley Vista Services


Valley Vista Services



April 7: Rachel Maddow interview with Lt. Gen. Todd Semonite, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



April 9: Wisteria on a daily Spring walk



April 12: Traditional lamb cake for Easter

Sunday Los Angeles Times

83.8¢ DESIGNATED AREAS HIGHER © 2020 EST SUNDAY, MAY 31, 2020 latimes.com

Criticism in the center of national outrage

In Minneapolis, many
fault local leadership
for the response to
George Floyd's death.
Anger isn't abating.

By Molly
Hennessy-Fiske

MINNEAPOLIS — This city has become the center of a nation's anger and frustration as the National Guard rallies through its streets, protesters threaten more uprisals and many across Minnesota blame officials here for a bungled response to George Floyd's death that over the last week has left the skyline in flames.

The rage emanating from Minneapolis has spread to Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia and dozens of other cities in a torrent of demands — many made peacefully, some not — for justice over the death of another black man at the hands of police. But that anger is particularly deep here, where residents complain authorities stood down for too long while looting and rioters ran wild.

"They dropped the ball. The moment the police officer did that, they should have called the National



PROTESTERS stand atop a destroyed LAPD cruiser as another burns at 3rd Street and Fairfax Avenue in Los Angeles. More than 500 people were arrested downtown as the demonstration spun out of control.



A WOMAN affected by tear gas fired by police has milk poured on her eyes in South Minneapolis.



A VEHICLE burns near New York's Union Square during a protest over the killing of George Floyd.

GUARD TO HELP QUELL UNREST IN L.A.

Mayor Garcetti
requests state troops
and imposes citywide
curfew as looting,
vandalism stun city.

By Kevin Draxton,
Richard Wray,
Dakota Smith
and Leila Miller

National Guard troops deployed onto the streets of Los Angeles early Sunday morning as looting, vandalism and violence intensified and the Police Department struggled to restore order after two days of disorder.

The dramatic move came after a day of deteriorating conditions, as protests marking the killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police began peacefully but turned violent. Demonstrators burned Los Angeles Police Department cruisers, threw objects at officers and looted businesses, including the Apple Store and Nordstrom at the Grove shopping mall. Some protesters even made it to Beverly Hills' Rodeo Drive, where they were met by a line of officers.

HOLLYWOOD BOWL 2020

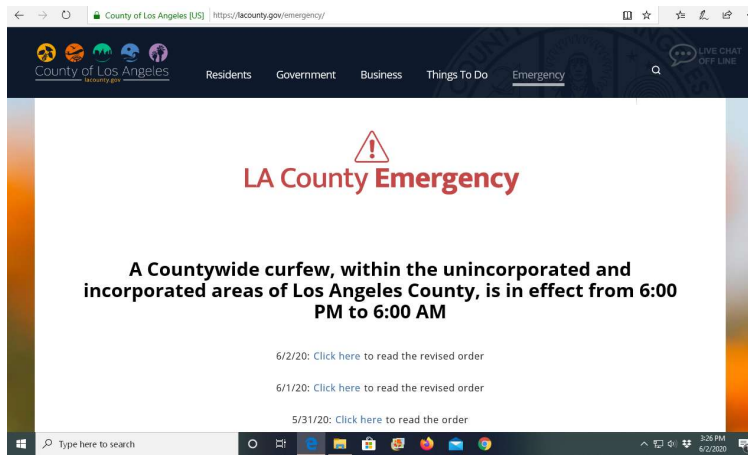
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June 2: A curfew order



COVID-19 in Los Angeles County*

Total

107,667

CASES**

3,454

DEATHS

Daily New

2,204

CASES**

55

DEATHS

07/02 Update

Cases through 8:00pm 07/01/2020

*Includes cases reported by the public and

Sunday
Los Angeles Times
\$3.00 DESIGNATED AREAS HIGHER © 2020 EBT SUNDAY, JULY 12, 2020 latimes.com



EDD delays leave jobless aid in limbo

Californians trapped in vicious redial cycle share horror stories of their unemployment benefits yet to arrive.

By MARIA L. LA GANDA AND PATRICK McSHEERY

Barry Levine has blown through two-thirds of his life savings while waiting for his unemployment insurance claim to be processed. He figures that, by sometime in September, he will have nothing left.

In the 30 weeks since the 59-year-old freelance ad copywriter and occasional actor applied for benefits, he has called the California Employment Development Department "thousands of times," he said, just to reach a human being.

His application has gone missing in the overwhelmed state agency, which has processed 12 million unemployment claims since the pandemic sent the economy reeling in March — nearly doubling the number filed during the worst full year of the Great Recession.

"It takes 100 redials before I get lucky and get someone on the phone," he said. "I would try when I had time,

half an hour here, an hour there. I'm not getting through, but I see no other way to contact these people, and I'm unemployed. This sort of became my de facto job — trying to get in touch with them to follow up the claim."

Social media platforms are filled with horror stories about women and men like Levine who've been thrown out of work by the coronavirus and are fighting to navigate the EDD. They've posted tales such as Reddit with hacks from the unemployment insurance battlefield on how to use the agency's seemingly impenetrable phone system. They've memorized customer-service numbers and can recite chunks of EDD's recorded messages verbatim.

They've sent and re-sent copies of their most important documents — passports, driver's licenses, W-2s, green cards, birth certificates, apartment leases, utility bills — to verify their identities in hopes of speeding the process along. But they've often been met with indifference and left to wonder: "Who was that guy who wouldn't give me his last name or phone number and just sent everything to?"

Those who have filed up (See Unemployment, A7)

Flames ravage historic church

Fire rips through the pews at San Gabriel Mission, symbol of

July 12: News reported a fire at Mission San Gabriel



August 15: The Bobcat Fire, seen behind this house, kept foothill residents on evacuation standby



If you plan to vote by mail,
plan ahead.



Please read this important information for U.S. citizens.

A postcard message to U.S. Citizens

TRUMP IS HOSPITALIZED

CONCERNS RISE AS PRESIDENT ENTERS WALTER REED

ELECTION 2020
■ ■ ■ ■ ■

COVID diagnosis shakes up campaign

Biden remains on trail as Trump's illness highlights pandemic as an election issue.

By MARK Z. BARABAK

For months, the presidential race has been stubbornly static, but on Friday a huge question emerged: Where does it go from here?

With President Trump hospitalized with COVID-19 for at least the next few days, it is unclear when or if he will get back to campaigning, how voters — largely impervious to any number of startling events — will react to his sudden illness, and what Democrat Joe Biden does in the meantime.

Not least, it is uncertain whether two more presidential debates will come off as planned, allowing Trump a badly needed do-over after his caustic performance on Tuesday drew widespread rebuke.

"We haven't gotten that far yet," White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany said on Fox News.



PRESIDENT TRUMP leaves Marine One as Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, left, looks on, at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, where Trump will remain for "the next few days" to treat his illness.

By CHRIS MOSEMAN, ELI STOKOLS AND NOAH BERMAN

WASHINGTON — President Trump was rushed to the hospital for treatment for COVID-19 on Friday evening, less than 24 hours after he tested positive for the coronavirus, and the White House said he would remain at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center for at least a few days as concerns mount that he could become a severe risk from the deadly disease.

The president's surprise diagnosis, and worsening condition, sent shock waves across a country already reeling from the pandemic and bracing for a tumultuous presidential election next month that could hinge on Trump's handling of a public health crisis that has killed more than 208,000 Americans this year.

An senior aides, lawmakers and the Pentagon sought to reassure a nervous public, Trump and the first lady, who also tested positive, spent the day isolated in the White House residence. At sunset, the president walked on his own to the Marine One helicopter on the South Lawn of the White House and was flown to the hospital in suburban Maryland.

Wearing a navy suit, blue tie and a black mask, the president flashed a thumbs-up but didn't stop to speak to reporters. After he arrived at the hospital at 6:25 p.m., Trump tweeted a video message thanking people for their support.

"I think I'm doing very well, but we're going to make sure that things work out," he said.

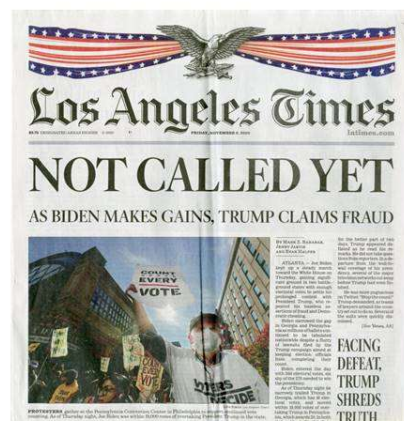
A closely watched prognosis

Trump faces risks of age, obesity but is receiving aggressive care

cases who die of COVID-19.









Provided by:

Betty Uyeda, Brent Riggs, John Cahoon and Kim Walters



Plan your research visit

Call 213.763.3359 or
Email seavercenter@nhm.org
Limited services are available while the Seaver Center is closed until further notice

The Collections

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Over 290 photographic collections

Digitized Collections

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The collections are a part of the History Department of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.
The Seaver Center opened in 1986 through a generous grant from the Seaver Institute.



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