



## NEWSBANK HOT TOPICS

*September 2020*

### CURRENT EVENTS

#### **EDUCATION: Worldwide – Countries Differ on Re-opening Schools**

**TOPIC:** Around the world, countries are having to decide whether or not to re-open schools and colleges. Some are opting to continue with online distance learning. Others are insisting that masked students return to classrooms. Still others are attempting a hybrid of the two approaches. What are the reasons for students being in the classroom? What are the arguments against this? How do teachers feel about these options? What are the views of parents whose children may be at risk of infection?

**SEARCH TERMS:** (schools or colleges or universities) AND (covid-19 or coronavirus) AND (opening or re-open or re-opening)

#### **GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS: Political Conventions**

**TOPIC:** The Republican and Democratic Party conventions have showcased not only the political platform of each of the parties' presidential candidates but also showcased a variety of political strategies and given platform to a variety of the party leaders on each side. What are the platform positions and strategies for each party? Who were some of the compelling speakers at each convention? What were the main points in the speeches for each of the two presidential candidates?

**SEARCH TERMS:** convention AND (Republican OR Democratic) AND (Biden OR Trump)

#### **GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS: Canada – Government Shakeup**

**TOPIC:** Finance minister Bill Morneau resigned not only from his office, but also from his seat in parliament. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has replaced him with Chrystia Freeland. What reasons did Morneau give for stepping aside? Were there other reasons that he did not mention? What was Freeland's career before she became Canada's first female finance minister?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Bill Morneau" OR "Chrystia Freeland"

#### **ECONOMICS: South Africa – IMF Loan Deal Made**

**TOPIC:** South Africa is being given a loan of \$4.3 billion (70 billion Rand) by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) which is to be repaid over five years at an interest rate of 1.1%. The country is also seeking loans from other multinational and development funds. The government hopes to raise 95 billion Rand through them. Who else has South Africa sought loans from? How big is the government debt compared to the gross domestic product (GDP)? What would impact the government's ability to repay the loan?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "South Africa" AND ("International Monetary Fund" OR IMF)

#### **ECONOMICS: Economic Recovery Rate**

**TOPIC:** Different U.S. states are recovering economically at differ rates. Which states are recovering most rapidly, which states are recovering least rapidly and why? What are some ways that federal and state governments have aided the recoveries in their states and what are some criticisms outlining how it could have been done better?

**SEARCH TERMS:** ("economic recovery" OR "improving economically" OR "economic improvement") AND (U.S. OR state) AND (coronavirus OR "COVID-19" OR COVID19 OR "COVID 19")



**HEALTH: Africa – Wild Poliovirus Eliminated**

**TOPIC:** The African Regional Certification Commission for Polio Eradication announced that the continent was free of wild poliovirus after years of effort. There were no cases attributable to the wild polio for the past 4 years. There are still cases of vaccine-related polio in several countries. How devastating had polio been across the continent before this effort began? What countries are dealing with outbreaks caused by vaccine-related polio? What are the two countries in the world that harbor wild poliovirus? What other diseases ravage the continent?

**SEARCH TERMS:** Africa AND “wild poliovirus”

**PEOPLE: Japan – Prime Minister Abe Resigns**

**TOPIC:** Shinzo Abe has resigned from his party leadership and prime ministerial office citing health concerns and the need for ongoing treatment. He had recently become Japan’s longest serving prime minister. How did he become prime minister in the first place? What were some of his domestic accomplishments while in office? What were his policies abroad? Who is likely to succeed him?

**SEARCH TERMS:** “Shinzo Abe”

## BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

**BUSINESS: Tech Companies Thrive**

**TOPIC:** Apple Inc. has recently shown a market value of \$2 trillion and the strong performance of many other technology companies is having a positive influence on the stock market in these recessionary times. What are the main factors driving the strong performances in these tech companies and what are some unique drivers for Apple? How does this positive influence on the stock market help the economy? What are some areas of the economy that can languish with little positive impact from the technology strength and stock market rise?

**SEARCH TERMS:** Apple AND “market value” AND tech\* AND “stock market”

**BUSINESS: China – Ant Group’s IPO**

**TOPIC:** Chinese firm Ant Group, controlled by Jack Ma founder of Alibaba, has announced that it will have its initial public offering on both the Shanghai and Hong Kong exchanges. Ant Group owns the online payment system Alipay. It might be the largest IPO in history. What other businesses is Ant Group involved in? How successful was Jack Ma’s IPO of Alibaba and how does he control Ant Group?

**SEARCH TERMS:** “Ant Group” AND IPO

**BUSINESS: U.S. Post Office**

**TOPIC:** Since taking office in June 2020, Postmaster General Louis DeJoy has instituted changes that have become a focus of Congressional hearings. What difficulties is the U.S. Post Office having and why are they being linked to the changes made by DeJoy? What impact are the delays in the U.S. Postal Service having on healthcare and what threat do they pose to our election system during the time of COVID-19?

**SEARCH TERMS:** (“Post Office” OR “Postal Service”) AND (medicine OR medical OR voting OR ballots) AND (delay OR delays)

**BUSINESS: Zoom Use**

**TOPIC:** The Internet video call service Zoom has been a popular way for groups to communicate and share work during the pandemic and has been a popular way for schools to conduct classes with remote students. How did a recent outage of Zoom impact the schools using it, what was the technical issue and how was it fixed? What are some of the different ways that schools, businesses and the general public use Zoom?

**SEARCH TERMS:** Zoom AND video AND (schools OR outage OR businesses)



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**SEARCH TERMS:** ("economic recovery" OR "improving economically" OR "economic improvement") AND (U.S. OR state) AND (coronavirus OR "COVID-19" OR COVID19 OR "COVID 19")

### **ECONOMICS: Argentina – Debt Agreement**

**TOPIC:** Argentina and its main creditors reached an agreement to restructure its foreign debt, with some payment dates changing while keeping the total amount owed at the same level. Argentina owes about \$65 billion in foreign debt. How long did the negotiations with the debtors take? What did the International Monetary Fund, who also hold Argentinian debt, have to say about the proposed agreement? How did markets react this?

**SEARCH TERMS:** Argentina AND "debt relief"

### **ECONOMICS: Historic Fed Rate**

**TOPIC:** The Federal Reserve has adopted a historic policy designed to boost employment that allows for some inflation. How does this policy work and why is it so unusual? Why does the Federal Reserve feel that inflation can be contained in spite of this policy?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Federal Reserve" AND (employment OR jobs) AND inflation AND "monetary policy framework"

### **FINANCE: Evictions**

**TOPIC:** Many renters around the nation are facing a threat of eviction and possible homelessness as they find themselves unemployed and unable to pay rent. How have different states and cities dealt with this problem and what have been some of the more successful solutions? How is this impacting the finances of landlords and what are some measures that have been taken to help them?

**SEARCH TERMS:** (eviction OR evictions) AND rent AND (ban OR stimulus OR homeless)

## **CIVICS, GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

### **GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS: Political Conventions**

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**SEARCH TERMS:** convention AND (Republican OR Democratic) AND (Biden OR Trump)



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**SEARCH TERMS:** "Bill Morneau" OR "Chrystia Freeland"

### **GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS: Lebanon – Beirut Explosion**

**TOPIC:** When a freighter was unable to pay its port fees, its cargo was unloaded and stored in a nearby warehouse. That cargo was 2,750 tons of the fertilizer ammonium nitrate which can also be used as an explosive. A nearby fire caused it to explode and the force of it ripped through the port, destroying neighborhoods near the port, and causing damage across a wide swath of the city. How was the ammonium nitrate stored? Who knew it was there and of its potential for damage? How did the government respond to the blast? What other problems was Lebanon undergoing before this disaster?

**SEARCH TERMS:** Beirut AND explosion

### **GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS: Senate Report of Russian Influence**

**TOPIC:** The U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee has issued a report on Russian influence on the 2016 election that goes beyond the Mueller report. What was the conclusion of the Senate committee's report? What new information about Russia's influence and U.S. political relationships has been released?

**SEARCH TERMS:** Senate AND "intelligence committee" AND Russia AND Trump AND 2016

### **HISTORY: Worldwide – World War II Anniversary**

**TOPIC:** It is the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of World War II. How did the various nations who were involved in the Pacific Theater of the war celebrate this anniversary? Were their plans changed because of the coronavirus crisis?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "World War II" and "75th anniversary"

### **HISTORY: 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment**

**TOPIC:** 100 years ago, the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was passed that forbid states to bar citizens from voting based on their gender. Prior to this amendment which states allowed women to vote, which did not and why? What was the Seneca Falls convention of 1848 and how did that influence the movement for women's suffrage?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "nineteenth amendment" OR "19<sup>th</sup> Amendment" OR "women's suffrage"

## **SOCIAL ISSUES**

### **CRIME AND LAW: Demonstration Events**

**TOPIC:** Kenosha, Wisconsin has been the scene of demonstrations after a police officer shot Jacob Blake seven times in the back. Blake survived but was paralyzed as a result of his wounds. Teenager Kyle Rittenhouse is accused of travelling there with an automatic rifle and shooting three people during a demonstration, killing two of them. A caravan of Trump supporters drove into downtown Portland, Oregon and began firing paintballs into demonstrators there. One of the caravan members was shot and killed. How did Kenosha's law enforcement respond to these shootings? What is known about the alleged shooter? Who was the victim in Portland and has anyone been arrested for his killing? How have these killings been politicized by candidates running for office?

**SEARCH TERMS:** [Kenosha AND (Blake OR Rittenhouse)] OR (Portland AND demonstrations AND shooting)



**CRIME AND LAW: Urban Homicide Spike**

**TOPIC:** Many U.S. cities are seeing a sharp rise in homicide rates over the past two months. What are some of the reasons for this and how is law enforcement responding to this rise? What are some ways that the urban crisis in violent crime of the 1980s was resolved in the 1990s?

**SEARCH TERMS:** (urban OR cities) AND (homicide OR homicides) AND (rate OR spike)

**CRIME AND LAW: New Zealand – Mosque Shooter Sentenced**

**TOPIC:** Brenton Tarrant has had to hear from the victims who survived his mass murder attempts at two Christchurch, NZ, mosques, and from the families of those who did not survive, at a sentencing hearing for his crimes. The prosecution was also able to present the facts they had collected about his crimes and his motives. He declined the chance to speak for himself. How many people did he kill or wound in his March 2019 attacks? What did the prosecutors have to say about his planning for the attacks and about how the attacks unfolded? Why were prosecutors glad he chose not to speak? What is his sentence and what is unusual about it?

**SEARCH TERMS:** “Brenton Tarrant”

**EDUCATION: Worldwide – Countries Differ on Re-opening Schools**

**TOPIC:** Around the world, countries are having to decide whether or not to re-open schools and colleges. Some are opting to continue with online distance learning. Others are insisting that masked students return to classrooms. Still others are attempting a hybrid of the two approaches. What are the reasons for students being in the classroom? What are the arguments against this? How do teachers feel about these options? What are the views of parents whose children may be at risk of infection?

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**RELIGION: U.S. Churches and In-Person Services**

**TOPIC:** Churches in the U.S. have shown a split on their decisions whether to hold remote services or invite their congregations into the churches. What are the churches that opt for in-person services claiming to be the advantage over remote services? Of the churches that have opposed remote services but later changed their mind, what were common themes driving the change?

**SEARCH TERMS:** churches AND (coronavirus OR “COVID-19” OR COVID19 OR “COVID 19”) AND (remote OR “in-person” OR “in-house” OR opening)

**RELIGION: India – Temple Dedicated**

**TOPIC:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi broke ground for the beginning of construction on a temple to Ram in Ayodhya. The site is controversial as for years a Mughal-era mosque stood there. That mosque was torn down by mobs of Hindu radicals in 1992, setting off a wave of communal violence throughout India. What ceremonies were performed as part of the ground breaking? How big will the completed temple be and how long is construction supposed to take?

**SEARCH TERMS:** Ayodhya AND temple AND groundbreaking

**SOCIAL RELATIONS: Australia – Mining and Aboriginal Ancient Sites**

**TOPIC:** Three mining companies have the right to ancient sites of the Aborigines in northwest Australia. Rio Tinto destroyed a 46,000-year-old rock shelter last spring at Juukan Gorge. How did these companies get the rights to destroy these sites? Who gave the companies those rights? Can the traditional owners intervene to save any of them? What is lost when these sites are destroyed?

**SEARCH TERMS:** Australia AND mining AND “Aboriginal sites”

**SOCIAL RELATIONS: QAnon**

**TOPIC:** A complex conspiracy theory called QAnon is growing quickly in the United States. It began a few years ago from postings on a controversial internet message board by an anonymous person called “Q” (QAnon). What are the claims of QAnon and how to these claims link together in a broad conspiracy theory? What do the critics of the theory cite as lacking evidence and how does the QAnon movement answer these criticisms? Who are some of the most recognized believers in these theories and why have they claimed to believe them?

**SEARCH TERMS:** QAnon

**SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND HEALTH****ENVIRONMENT AND NATURE: Denmark – A Border Fence for Wild Boars**

**TOPIC:** Denmark erected a border fence to keep wild boars from entering the country from Germany. This was to protect the Danish pork industry from illnesses and interbreeding. There are more pigs than people in the Scandinavian country. How many boars are thought to be in Denmark? Where are there gaps in the fence? How important to the Danish economy is the pork industry?

**SEARCH TERMS:** Denmark AND boars AND fence

**ENVIRONMENT AND NATURE: California Heat and Wildfires**

**TOPIC:** The heat and dry climate in California not only drove the temperature in Death Valley to a near record high but also created conditions that allowed lightning to ignite wildfires. What are other conditions in California that make wildfires difficult to contain and extinguish? What was the highest temperature recorded recently in Death Valley and what is the highest temperature ever recorded on earth?

**SEARCH TERMS:** (California AND wildfires) OR (“Death Valley” AND temperature AND record)

**ENVIRONMENT AND NATURE: Hurricane Season**

**TOPIC:** Hurricane Laura is the most recent and strongest in a series of hurricanes coming up to the U.S. from the Caribbean and through the Gulf of Mexico. What have been the damages done by this powerful hurricane and what were some preventative measures taken to help prepare for it? How did this series of hurricanes form and develop and why did Laura gain so much strength when the previous ones weakened?

**SEARCH TERMS:** “Hurricane Laura”

**HEALTH: Africa – Wild Poliovirus Eliminated**

**TOPIC:** The African Regional Certification Commission for Polio Eradication announced that the continent was free of wild poliovirus after years of effort. There were no cases attributable to the wild polio for the past 4 years. There are still cases of vaccine-related polio in several countries. How devastating had polio been across the continent before this effort began? What countries are dealing with outbreaks caused by vaccine-related polio? What are the two countries in the world that still harbor wild poliovirus? What other diseases regularly ravage the continent?

**SEARCH TERMS:** Africa AND “wild poliovirus”

**HEALTH: Great Britain – Breast Cancer Treatment Effectiveness**

**TOPIC:** Researchers at University College London have shown success with their experimental treatment for breast cancer, which involves placing a small bead in the site of the tumor before closing up the patient. This radiotherapeutic bead has been found through a world-wide research program to eliminate the need for women to receive multiple doses of radiation and has been found to reduce the number of deaths from the illness. This single-dose treatment is called Targeted Intraoperative Radiotherapy (TARGIT-IORT). What is the current treatment regime for breast cancer using radiation? Where was the long-term research for this treatment carried out and how successful were the results of it? Why is this good news for women?

**SEARCH TERMS:** “breast cancer” AND “Targeted Intraoperative Radiotherapy (TARGIT-IORT).”

**HEALTH: Virus-spreading Children**

**TOPIC:** A recent study by the American Medical Association (AMA) that was published in the Pediatrics journal claimed that children that exhibit no symptoms can carry and spread COVID-19 more effectively than adults. What is the reason children can spread the disease so much more effectively? What evidence was this study based on and how was it gathered?

**SEARCH TERMS:** (coronavirus OR COVID-19 OR COVID19 OR "COVID 19") AND (superspreaders OR “super spreaders”)

**SCIENCE: Betelgeuse Dimmed**

**TOPIC:** NASA has explained the recent dimming of the bright star Betelgeuse as caused by a recent traumatic outburst that formed a dust cloud that obscured the view of Betelgeuse from earth. What more do we know about the outburst? What are some of the qualities of Betelgeuse? What instruments do we use to view Betelgeuse and how do they work?

**SEARCH TERMS:** NASA AND Betelgeuse AND star

**SCIENCE: Outer Space – Is It the Youngest Neutron Star?**

**TOPIC:** In 1987, a star exploded near the Large Magellan Cloud. Now 33 years later astronomers feel they discovered the core of Supernova 1987A hiding is a “blob” of dust whose energy was 100 times that of the sun. It could be the youngest neutron star ever discovered. How did the astronomers locate this core? How sure are they that this is a neutron star? What are neutron stars and what happens when they begin to spin? What role did neutrinos play in identifying this as a neutron star?

**SEARCH TERMS:** Supernova 1987A

**TECHNOLOGY: Switzerland – New Heights for Solar Plane**

**TOPIC:** Raphael Domjan jumped out of a solar powered airplane when it was 5,000 feet in the air and, after freefalling and attaining speeds of over 90 mph, safely landed. He is the first to parachute from a solar powered plane. The SolarStratos team hopes to eventually fly the plane into the stratosphere. Why did Domjan make this jump and what did he hope to prove by doing it? What is the stratosphere and where does it begin and end?

**SEARCH TERMS:** “Raphael Domjan” AND SolarStratos

**TECHNOLOGY: New Science Institutes**

**TOPIC:** The Trump Administration has announced that it is building twelve science institutes to advance the knowledge and use of artificial intelligence (AI) and quantum information. What is AI? What is quantum information? What are the goals of the Trump Administration in seeking advancement in these specific areas?

**SEARCH TERMS:** Trump AND (invest\* OR build\*) AND (“artificial intelligence” OR AI) AND quantum AND (institutes OR centers)



## SPORTS

### **SPORTS: Jason Wright**

**TOPIC:** Former NFL running back and business consultant Jason Wright has been named president of the Washington Football Team, becoming the first African-American NFL team president in the league's history. What were the main areas of focus in Wright's career as a consultant and what are some of his successes? What NFL teams did he play for and what were some of his major successes? What are some of his goals as president of the Washington Football Team?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Jason Wright" AND Washington AND football

### **SPORTS: Europe – Champions League**

**TOPIC:** Bayern Munich has beaten Paris Saint Germain to win the UEFA Champions League finale. It was PSG's first appearance in the final game, while Bayern has now won this trophy for the sixth time. What was each team's path to the final? Who were the stars on each team and how did they play? Who starred in that last game?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Bayern Munich" OR "Paris Saint Germain"

### **SPORTS: Spain – Messi Wants Out**

**TOPIC:** Lionel Messi has informed his club Barcelona FC that he wishes to exercise a clause in his contract that would allow him to leave after the recently concluded season. The club disputes that the clause is still in effect and states that its rebuilding under new coach Ronald Koeman is centered on Messi. How has Koeman approached Messi and other senior players? Why does Messi wish to leave?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Lionel Messi" OR "Barcelona FC"

### **SPORTS: NBA Halts Playoffs**

**TOPIC:** The National Basketball Association (NBA) briefly postponed the playoffs after the Eastern Conference first round game against the Orlando Magic was halted by the Milwaukee Bucks boycotting them in protest of the police shooting of Jacob Blake in their home state of Wisconsin. What other walkouts have occurred over this recent shooting? What are other ways the NBA players and officials have shown support for the Black Lives Matter movement?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Milwaukee Bucks" AND "Jacob Blake"

### **SPORTS: John Thompson**

**TOPIC:** John Thompson was hired in 1972 to rebuild the Georgetown University's basketball program, took it to back-to-back NCAA finals games and had twenty-four consecutive seasons of postseason games. His players who stayed for four years had a 97% graduation rate. Where did he play in college and in his brief NBA career? Who were some of the great players he coached? When did he retire from Georgetown and how did the coaches who followed him continue his work?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "John Thompson" AND Georgetown

### **SPORTS: Collin Morikawa**

**TOPIC:** Collin Morikawa has won golf's 2020 PGA Championship, his first major championship title. What are the key strengths and weaknesses of his golf game? What are some other high points in his career as a golfer?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Collin Morikawa" AND "PGA Championship"

**SPORTS: College Football Postponements**

**TOPIC:** The Big 10 and Pac-12 college football conferences have announced they are postponing the start of their fall football seasons as a COVID-19 precaution but still plan to play. What are the contingencies of how these conferences plan to schedule their season? What Big Ten school has announced an intent to have non-conference play and how does that work?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Big 10" AND "Pac-12" AND football AND (coronavirus OR COVID-19 OR COVID19 OR "COVID 19")

**ARTS AND LITERATURE****FINE ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE: NY Quarantine Exhibit**

**TOPIC:** The New York Historical Society has opened an outdoor photography exhibit called *Hope Wanted: New York City Under Quarantine*, showcasing images of the city in the time of COVID-19. Who are the photographers who took the photos being exhibited and what kind of feeling do their photographs evoke? What are some measures taken by the New York Historical Society to protect the audience for exhibition from COVID-19?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Hope Wanted: New York City Under Quarantine" AND "Historical Society"

**FINE ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE: Netherlands – Hals Painting Stolen, Again**

**TOPIC:** The Franz Hals painting *Two Laughing Boys with a Mug of Beer* has been stolen for a third time, possibly to order. It was taken from a small museum in Leerdam. How have some criminals been using stolen art to change their jail sentences? Who was Franz Hals and what is notable about his work?

**SEARCH TERMS:** Franz Hals AND painting AND theft

**LITERATURE: Netherlands – Prize Winner**

**TOPIC:** Marieke Lucas Rijneveld, a binary individual who uses the pronouns they and them to self-identify, has won the Man Booker International Prize for her novel *The Discomfort of Evening*, a prize they will share with her translator, Michelle Hutchison. It was their first novel. What had they published before this novel? What works has Hutchison translated before? What have reviewers said about the novel?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Marieke Lucas Rijneveld" OR "Michelle Hutchison"

**LITERATURE: Gail Sheehy**

**TOPIC:** Gail Sheehy was a journalist and novelist often known for her book *Passages*, written in the mid-1970s that explored the experience of mid-life in the mid-70s. What is the biography of Hillary Clinton that Gail Sheehy wrote and what were some revelations about Mrs. Clinton in that book? What other biographies did Sheehy write and how were they received? What was it about *Passages* and other books she wrote about cultural changes in the U.S. that made her so popular? What newspapers and magazines did she write for and what were some of her more influential articles?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Gail Sheehy" AND writer

**MOVIES AND TELEVISION: Chadwick Boseman**

**TOPIC:** Chadwick Boseman was an actor best known for portraying Wakanda's King T'Challa in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) film *Black Panther*. Before that film, he had portrayed three very different black men in films: Jackie Robinson, James Brown and Thurgood Marshall. When did Boseman decide to become an actor, and what were his early roles? How important a movie was *Black Panther*, and how powerful was his performance in it?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Chadwick Boseman"

**MOVIES AND TELEVISION: Talk Shows in Studios**

**TOPIC:** Late night talk show hosts Stephen Colbert, Jimmy Fallon and James Cordon have returned to their studios after broadcasting from home, but with many cautionary measures to deal with COVID-19 risks. What are the changes from studio broadcasts that are different from their broadcasts before the virus? What are the advantages of broadcasting from a studio that brought them back and what were some advantages of broadcasting from home?

**SEARCH TERMS:** ("late night" OR "late show") And (Fallon OR Colbert OR Cordon) AND studio AND (coronavirus OR COVID-19 OR COVID19 OR "COVID 19")

**MOVIES AND TELEVISION: Germany – Berlin Film Festival**

**TOPIC:** The Berlin Film Festival will be held next February. In advance of this, they have announced that they will no longer be awarding acting awards by gender. They will be awarding a Silver Bear for Best Leading Performance and a Silver Bear for Best Supporting Performance. What is their reasoning behind this change? Do you think it might have unintended long term consequences and, if so, what could those be?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Berlin Film Festival"

**MUSIC: Great Britain – Julian Bream**

**TOPIC:** Julian Bream was a British guitarist. He popularized lute music, commissioned works for both guitar and lute, and brought Tudor music back to popularity. Who were some of the Tudor composers whose works he performed? Who were the modern composers he commissioned to create works for him?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Julian Bream"

**MUSIC: New York Phil Bandwagon**

**TOPIC:** The New York Philharmonic will be bringing small ensembles from its orchestra to neighborhoods throughout New York City in a customized pickup truck called the NY Phil Bandwagon, with musicians playing at various street corners and plazas. What is the supporting technology for these musicians to be heard and properly produced? What kind of music will be played? What safety precautions are being taken?

**SEARCH TERMS:** (NY Phil Bandwagon" OR "New York Phil Bandwagon) AND "New York Philharmonic"

**PERFORMING ARTS: France – Notre Dame Organ to Be Cleaned**

**TOPIC:** One positive item to come out of the fire at Notre Dame Cathedral is that its pipe organ is going to be disassembled and thoroughly cleaned while the repair work goes on. It is the largest musical instrument in France. How long will it take to disassemble it? What toxic by-product of the fire needs to be cleaned off the pieces of the organ? When do they expect to have it re-assembled and ready for use?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Notre Dame" AND "pipe organ"

**PERFORMING ARTS: Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival Moving**

**TOPIC:** The Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival has for years been in the historic Boscobel house property in Garrison, New York will now be moving to a permanent location in nearby Philipstown, NY. What are some of the advantages of this new location? What is the history of the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival" AND Boscobel AND Philipstown



## PEOPLE

### **PEOPLE: Japan – Prime Minister Abe Resigns**

**TOPIC:** Shinzo Abe has resigned from his party leadership and prime ministerial office citing health concerns and the need for ongoing treatment. He had recently become Japan's longest serving prime minister. How did he become prime minister in the first place? What were some of his domestic accomplishments while in office? What were his policies abroad? Who is likely to succeed him?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Shinzo Abe"

### **PEOPLE: Russia – Opposition Leader Poisoned**

**TOPIC:** Thirty minutes after drinking a cup of tea in an airport café, Alexei Navalny fell sick on a flight back to Moscow from Tomsk. His flight was diverted to Omsk, where he was hospitalized. His staff claim that the tea was poisoned. Local doctors delayed a medevac flight to Germany, though they did eventually let him go. What did the Omsk doctors claim about his condition? What did the German doctors find after examining him? Is this an isolated occurrence or have others suffered after criticizing the Russian regime and leader, Vladimir Putin?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Alexei Navalny" AND poison

### **PEOPLE: Sumner Redstone**

**TOPIC:** Sumner Redstone was a highly successful businessman in the media industry. What companies constituted his media empire and how was it built? What were the talents he had that made him so successful? What was the family controversy in his succession?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Sumner Redstone"

### **PEOPLE: Pete Hamill**

**TOPIC:** Pete Hamill was a successful journalist, editor and author. What newspapers did he write for and in what ways is he credited with capturing the spirit and feeling of New York City in his articles, columns and books? How did he get his start in the newspaper business and what were the aspects of his writing that got him so much fondness and respect from both his readers and from his peers?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Pete Hamill" AND (journalist OR novelist OR writer) AND "New York"

### **PEOPLE: Ellen DeGeneres**

**TOPIC:** Popular comedian and talk show host Ellen DeGeneres's TV show is being investigated for being a hostile workplace. What are the allegations and who has made them? How do the charges conflict with the media image of DeGeneres? What are some of her known behaviors that are now being seen in a new light? What is her background and in what ways has she been a successful role model and positive influence for the public?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Ellen DeGeneres" AND hostile AND workplace

### **PEOPLE: Italy – Franca Valeri**

**TOPIC:** Franca Valeri starred on radio and in TV and movies in the post-war years. What films did she make with Alberto Sordi, another well-known comic actor? What film did she make with Sophia Loren and how was the script altered to allow the two of them to work together?

**SEARCH TERMS:** "Franca Valeri"