

President Trump demands Georgia elections chief find votes for him

By JEFF AMY, DARLENE SUPERVILLE and JONATHAN LEMIRE
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump pressured Georgia’s Republican secretary of state to “find” enough votes to overturn Joe Biden’s win in the state’s presidential election, repeatedly citing disproven claims of fraud and raising the prospect of a “criminal offense” if officials did not change the vote count, according to a recording of the conversation.

The phone call with Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger on Saturday was the latest step in an unprecedented effort by a sitting president to press a state official to reverse the outcome of a free and fair election that he lost. The Republican president, who has refused to accept his loss to Democratic President-elect Biden, repeatedly argued that Raffensperger could change the certified results.

“I just want to find 11,780 votes, which is one more than we have,” Trump said. “Because we won the state.”

Georgia counted its votes three times before certifying Biden’s win by a 11,779-vote margin, Raffensperger noted.

‘I JUST WANT TO FIND 11,780 VOTES, WHICH IS ONE MORE THAN WE HAVE. BECAUSE WE WON THE STATE.’

President Donald Trump

“President Trump, we’ve had several lawsuits, and we’ve had to respond in court to the lawsuits and the contentions,” he said on the call. “We don’t agree that you have won.”

Audio snippets of the conversation were first posted online by The Washington Post. The Associated Press obtained the full audio of Trump’s conversation with Georgia officials from a person on the call.

Trump’s renewed intervention and the persistent and unfounded claims of fraud came nearly two weeks before he leaves office and two days before twin runoff elections in Georgia that will determine political control of the U.S. Senate.

It also added a level of further intrigue to Trump’s rally in Georgia on Monday night — likely the last of his term — in which he is supposed to boost the two Republican candidates. In a rage after the Raffensperger call, Trump

floated the idea of pulling out of the rally, which would have potentially devastated the GOP chances in what is expected to be a pair of razor-thin races.

But Trump was persuaded to go ahead with the rally as a stage from which to reiterate his claims of election fraud and to present, as he tweeted Monday, the “real numbers” from the race. Republicans, though, were wary as to whether Trump would focus only on himself and potentially depress turnout by undermining faith in the runoff elections and not promoting the two GOP candidates.

The president used Saturday’s hourlong phone conversation to tick through a list of claims about the election in Georgia, including that hundreds of thousands of ballots mysteriously appeared in Fulton County, which includes Atlanta. Officials have said there is no evidence of that happening.

The Georgia officials on

the call are heard repeatedly pushing back against the president’s assertions, telling him that he’s relying on debunked theories and, in one case, selectively edited video.

“It was pretty obvious pretty early on that we’d debunked every one of those theories early on,” Raffensperger told ABC’s “Good Morning America” on Monday, “but President Trump continues to believe them.”

Also during the conversation, Trump appeared to threaten Raffensperger and Ryan Germany, the secretary of state’s legal counsel, by suggesting both could be criminally liable if they failed to find that thousands of ballots in Fulton County had been illegally destroyed. There is no evidence to support Trump’s claim.

“That’s a criminal offense,” Trump says. “And you can’t let that happen.”

Others on the call included Mark Meadows, the White House chief of staff, and attorneys assisting Trump, including Washington lawyer Cleta Mitchell. Trump lost the Electoral College to Biden by 74 votes, and even if Georgia, with its 16 votes, were to end up in his column, it would have no impact on the result of the election.

OBITUARIES

Charles Thomas Mestrich Jr. Springfield Oct. 20, 1950 — Dec. 25, 2020

Charles Thomas Mestrich Jr. died peacefully in Springfield on Dec. 25, 2020, at the age of 70, with his friend by his side.

Charles was born on Oct. 20, 1950, in Astoria, to Charles Mestrich Sr. and Pauline (Friedrich) Mestrich. He was the third of six siblings.

He grew up in Astoria, part of a large, close-knit family.

Charles graduated from Astoria High School in 1970. He loved managing high school basketball and football. He stayed involved with managing sports into his adult life as long as he could.

He had many jobs in his lifetime, but his favorite was working alongside his father and uncle Chris, at Chris’s News in Astoria.

He made many friends throughout his lifetime and had a knack for never forgetting any of their names. He was gregarious and loved meeting new people.

During his time in Astoria he was a very active member of the com-



Charles Mestrich Jr.

munity. He was a member of St. Mary, Star of the Sea Catholic Church and the Knights of Columbus.

He was also a big part of his graduating Class of 1970 Astoria Fishermen, and kept them all in contact with each other and helped plan class reunions.

He loved spending time with his children and taking them on many adventures.

Charles was preceded in death by his parents, and his lifelong friend, Jim.

Charles is survived by his daughter, Jeanne (Mestrich) Maciag and her husband, Todd, along with their children, Chloe, Jackson and Mia, of Forsyth, Montana; and a son, James Mestrich, and his wife, Julie, along with their children, Dylan and Logan, of Stevensville, Montana. He is also survived by his two brothers and three sisters, along with numerous nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be planned at a later date.

Pelosi narrowly reelected House Speaker

Georgia runoff will determine control of the Senate

By ALAN FRAM
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Nancy Pelosi was narrowly reelected Sunday as speaker, giving her the reins of Democrats’ slender House majority as she and President-elect Joe Biden set a challenging course of producing legislation to tackle the coronavirus pandemic, revive the economy and address other party priorities.

“We accept a responsibility as daunting and demanding as any that previous generations of leadership have faced,” the California Democrat told the chamber as she accepted a fresh two-year term in her post, perhaps her last. Citing the 350,000 Americans who’ve died from COVID-19 and the millions who’ve lost jobs and livelihoods, she won a standing ovation when she said, “Our most urgent priority will continue to be defeating the coronavirus. And defeat it, we will.”

Yet even before House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., ceremonially handed the speaker’s gavel — a normally genial moment — he provided a stark reminder of the partisan divide coloring Congress.

McCarthy accused Pelosi of over the past two years of leading “the least productive



Erin Scott/AP Photo

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi waves the gavel on the opening day of the 117th Congress on Capitol Hill on Sunday.

Congress in nearly 50 years” and said there was a clear message in last November’s elections, when Republicans gained seats by defeating a dozen Democratic incumbents. “It was a wake-up call,” he said. “The question I ask of this majority: were you listening?”

Those are assertions that Democrats strongly dispute, saying it’s Republicans, especially in the GOP-led Senate, who’ve blocked progress on pandemic aid and other issues.

Pelosi, who has led her party in the House since 2003 and is the only woman to be speaker, received 216 votes to 209 for McCarthy, who again will be the chamber’s minority leader.

It was the first vote of the new Congress, which convened on Sunday with COVID-19 guidelines requiring testing and face coverings for lawmakers. There was widespread mask-wearing

and far fewer legislators and guests in the chamber than usual, an unimaginable tableau when the last Congress commenced two years ago, before the pandemic struck.

Pelosi’s election came 17 days before Biden is inaugurated. Yet rather than a fresh start for him and Pelosi, there are issues and undercurrents that will carry over from President Donald Trump’s tempestuous administration.

Though Congress enacted — and Trump finally signed — a \$900 billion COVID-19 relief package late last month, Biden and many Democrats say they consider that measure a down payment. They say more aid is needed to bolster efforts to vaccinate the public, curb the virus and restore jobs and businesses lost to the pandemic.

Biden’s priorities also include efforts on health care and the environment.

Guiding such legislation

through the House will be a challenge for Pelosi because her party’s narrow majority means just a handful of defectors could be fatal.

In addition, cooperation with Republicans could be made more difficult as many in the GOP are continuing to demonstrate fealty to the divisive Trump, backing his unfounded claims that his reelection loss was tainted by fraud. Congress will meet Wednesday to officially affirm Biden’s clear Electoral College victory over Trump. Many House and Senate Republicans say they will contest the validity of some of those votes, but their efforts are certain to fail.

OBITUARY POLICY

The Astorian publishes paid obituaries. The obituary can include a small photo and, for veterans, a flag symbol at no charge. The deadline for all obituaries is 9 a.m. the business day prior.

Obituaries may be edited for spelling, proper punctuation and style. Death notices and upcoming services will be published at no charge. Notices must be submitted by 9 a.m. the day of publication.

Obituaries and notices may be submitted online at DailyAstorian.com/forms/obits, by email at ewilson@dailyastorian.com, placed via the funeral home or in person at The Astorian office, 949 Exchange St. in Astoria.

For more information, call 503-325-3211, ext. 257.

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SEVEN-DAY FORECAST FOR ASTORIA

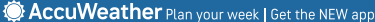
TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
						
48 46	50 40	51 43	51 40	49 41	50 43	52 46
Rain late in the p.m.	Cloudy, a little rain	Cloudy	Periods of rain	Cloudy, rain possible	Cloudy, rain possible	Cloudy, rain possible

ALMANAC
Astoria through Sunday
Temperatures
High/low 54/42
Normal high/low 49/37
Record high 61 in 2020
Record low 17 in 1959
Precipitation
Sunday 0.55"
Month to date 4.10"
Normal month to date 1.04"
Year to date 4.10"
Normal year to date 1.04"

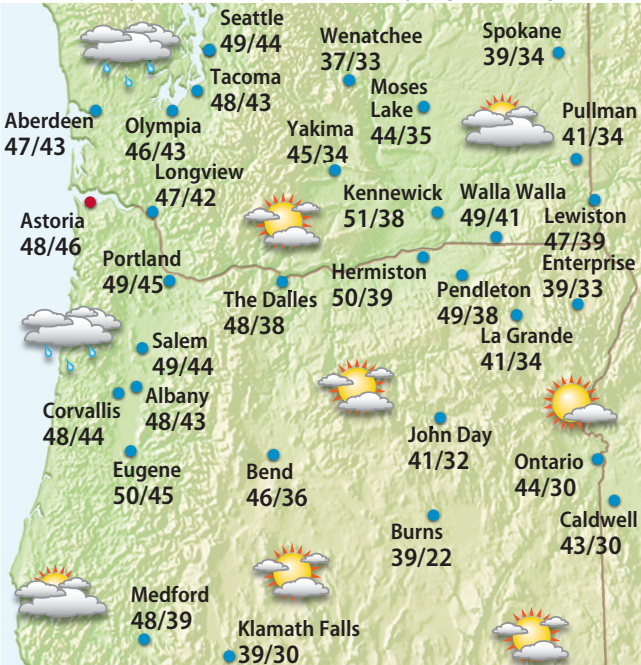
UNDER THE SKY
Tonight’s Sky: High above the southwest horizon is the constellation of Aries, the Lamb.
Source: Jim Todd, OMSI
SUN AND MOON
Sunrise today 7:58 a.m.
Sunset tonight 4:45 p.m.
Moonrise today none
Moonset today 11:56 a.m.
Last New First Full
Jan 6 Jan 12 Jan 20 Jan 28

TODAY’S TIDES
Astoria / Port Docks
Time High (ft.) Time Low (ft.)
5:48 a.m. 7.9 11:59 a.m. 2.7
5:36 p.m. 7.0 none
Cape Disappointment
5:31 a.m. 7.9 11:19 a.m. 3.0
5:12 p.m. 6.7 11:18 p.m. 1.3
Hammond
5:41 a.m. 8.2 11:36 a.m. 2.9
5:25 p.m. 7.3 11:40 p.m. 1.2
Warrenton
5:43 a.m. 8.3 11:43 a.m. 2.8
5:31 p.m. 7.4 11:45 p.m. 1.3
Knappa
6:25 a.m. 8.2 12:14 a.m. 0.4
6:13 p.m. 7.3 1:00 p.m. 2.3
Depoe Bay
4:46 a.m. 8.0 10:47 a.m. 3.1
4:22 p.m. 6.9 10:45 p.m. 1.2

NATIONAL CITIES
Today Wed.
Hi/Low Hi/Low
Atlanta 57/33/s 55/38/c
Boston 35/31/pc 39/29/pc
Chicago 37/24/s 38/31/c
Dallas 62/49/s 58/39/c
Denver 49/24/pc 44/23/s
Honolulu 82/71/pc 83/71/pc
Houston 68/54/s 67/43/r
Los Angeles 64/51/pc 69/51/pc
Miami 73/53/s 73/60/s
New York City 43/33/c 41/32/pc
Phoenix 72/45/pc 71/45/pc
San Francisco 56/44/pc 58/47/sh
Wash., DC 43/35/pc 46/33/s
Weather (W): s=sunny, pc=partly cloudy, c=cloudy, sh=showers, t=thunderstorms, r=rain, sf=snow flurries, sn=snow, l=ice.

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REGIONAL FORECAST
Shown is today’s weather. Temperatures are today’s highs and tonight’s lows.



City	Today	Wed.
Baker City	39/30/pc	37/27/sn
Brookings	52/47/c	51/41/r
Ilwaco	49/45/r	50/40/r
Newberg	49/44/r	49/40/r
Newport	50/46/r	50/42/r

City	Today	Wed.
North Bend	53/48/c	52/40/r
Roseburg	51/45/c	52/38/r
Seaside	49/45/r	49/40/r
Springfield	49/43/c	49/39/r
Vancouver	48/42/r	49/39/r



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