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LOCAL & WORLD NEWS

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# A Major Loss To Our Community: Mavourneen O'Brien Passes

A current picture of Mavourneen & family (L) plus two much earlier photos (pre and teen) taken with her late actor- father Pat (C) and (R)

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# This New Film Debunks the Tarahumara Myth

Written By Martin Fritz -Hale For Outside

Also known as the Raramuri, these super runners (L) & (C), do not let distance or terrain deter them from being some of the fittest athletes on the planet (R)

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# Why I Haven't Raced During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Written By Kaitlin Gregg Goodman For Runner World

Kaitlin Craig-Goodman (L) & (R) has put her world -record marathon running ambitions on hold as she recovers from her near-fatal experience with the corona virus. Stay tuned!

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From Front Page...

# This New Film Debunks the Tarahumara Myth

## 'The Infinite Race' examines the complicated relationship between 'Born to Run' and the runners the book made famous

Fortunately all photographic evidence has long been destroyed, but there was a time when I briefly belonged to the barefoot running cult. This was roughly ten years ago. Like millions of others, I read Christopher McDougall's Born to Run and realized that I'd been duped by big running shoe companies who had sold me something that I didn't actually need. Newly enlightened, I did the only rational thing and spent $160 on a pair of shoes that mimicked the sensation of running barefoot. I felt sorry for the idiots I saw on my daily park loop who were still caught in the cushioning-is-necessary matrix. I exchanged nods with the local hippie guy who always ran in sandals. After a few weeks, however, I became disillusioned. The anticipated breakthrough in my running never came. What's more, none of the top professionals seemed to be ditching their plush footwear and going minimalist. If they weren't doing it, why should I? In the end, I was relieved to go back to wearing regular old running shoes; my feet were really starting to hurt.

The seismic influence of Born to Run also haunts The Infinite Race, the latest installment of ESPN's 30 for 30 documentary series, which is slated for release on December 15. Directed by Mexican-American filmmaker Bernardo Ruiz, the film leans heavily on first-hand accounts from the Tarahumara. In case you happen to be one of the ten people who didn't read McDougall's book, these are the indigenous residents of Mexico's Copper Canyon whose stupendous feats of (minimally shod) endurance have been relentlessly mythologized since Born to Run became a bestselling hit in 2009. Among other things, The Infinite Race seeks to de-exoticize its subject. Late in the film, there's a scene in which Silvino Cubesare, a Tarahumara farmer and quasi-celebrity on the international ultrarunning circuit, is watching footage of McDougall and a New York Times journalist jogging barefoot in Central Park. "I don't know what they're thinking," Cubesare says. "Why do they want to run barefoot? I think they are crazy."

While Cubesare is merely incredulous that anyone with the means to purchase functional running shoes would willingly go without, Irma Chávez, a Tarahumara activist and moral conscience of Ruiz's film, is more cynical. She regards the barefoot running industry as an insult—an attempt to profit off a misconception that the Tarahumara run with minimalist sandals because of alleged performance benefits, rather than out of necessity. This, in Chávez's view, is consistent with a long legacy of external forces projecting their narratives on her people. Even the name "Tarahumara," for instance, came from the Conquistadors; natives call themselves the Rarámuri. As for the ultramarathons, Chavez says she does not regard them as part of her heritage. Running, on the other hand, is essential, though traditional Tarahumara "races" are collaborative efforts. The men's version, called rarajipari, involves repeatedly punting a wooden ball over vast distances and giving chase, while the women's equivalent, ariweta, is a similar concept with a stick and hoop. The Infinite Race begins and ends with glorious, sweeping aerial shots of the Tarahumara engaged in this activity. It is suggested that what we are looking at is not a competition, so much as an act of preservation.

"Running," Chavez says, "is our resistance to imposition."

Imposition from whom? For one thing, there are the narcotraficantes. Due to its agricultural potential and remote location in the mountains of the Mexican border state of Chihuahua, Copper Canyon has long been plagued by drug violence, with the Sinaloa and Juarez cartels vying for territorial control. Over the years, the Tarahumara have had their lands seized; its people have been coerced into smuggling drugs into the United States.

Less menacing is an insidious uptick in ultrarunning tourism, as an ever-growing number of Born to Run-inspired "locos" make the annual pilgrimage to the town of Urique for the "Ultra Maratón Caballo Blanco." In The Infinite Race, we meet an American adventure blogger and über-bro named Ryan van Duzer. When he travels to Urique to attend the 2015 event, he is wearing one of those Colorado logo hoodies and sticks his head out of a train window to scream "yee-haw" into the Chihuahua countryside. "I didn't think they'd have a race store," Duzer says later on, while brandishing a Caballo Blanco shot glass. "This is great!"

Not everyone feels the same way. The dilemma at the heart of The Infinite Race is whether the fundraising initiatives and positive impact of the Caballo Blanco ultra on the local economy has also forced the region to sell some of its soul. The ambivalence is embodied in Cecilia Villalobos, Urique's former director of tourism and co-organizer of the town's famous race. Initially, Villalobos says, the ultramarathon benefitted the region, but soon foreigners were "coming in like mold." (No wonder she's the former director of tourism.)

Most of these interlopers didn't actually end up participating in 2015. After a surge in drug violence forced a controversial last-minute cancellation of the race—a decision that, according to Villalobos, was unilaterally made by the non-local contingent of the organizing team—an abbreviated version was staged by the municipality of Urique, which wanted to salvage some version of the event. "I didn't see the face of a single foreign runner," Villalobos says of the ad hoc event. "And I thought, how ironic. Where are all those folks who support the Tarahumaras?"

Josué Stephens, one of the foreign (and now also former) directors of the Caballo Blanco ultra, isn't portrayed all too favorably in The Infinite Race—though one can hardly blame him for canceling the event after witnessing armed cartel members raid the Urique police station and kidnap several officers. As Stephens notes in the documentary, the move by local leadership to override the decision to cancel and stage an event anyway was almost certainly motivated by a fear of negative publicity.

In the wake of the 2015 debacle, the Caballo Blanco ultra has been primarily organized by the municipality of Urique. Likewise, The Infinite Race can be viewed as an attempt to reclaim part of the Tarahumara myth on behalf of the Rarámuri. Throughout the documentary, we see footage of McDougall promoting Born to Run (whose subtitle reads: "A Hidden Tribe, Superathletes, and the Greatest Race the World Has Never Seen") in various high-profile media outlets. Thanks, it must be said, to some rather selective editing, we repeatedly hear McDougall say that he "discovered" the Tarahumara—a people he at one point refers to as a "Smithsonian exhibit come to life." And yet, the documentary is less a dreary sermon about the perils of cultural appropriation, so much as a reminder that there's always another side to the story.

# In Downtown Anchorage, A Longtime Family Restaurant Clings to Hope

Club Paris survived two major earthquakes and economic recessions. But the family that has owned the restaurant for 45 years has never before experienced a hardship like the pandemic.

Written By Emily GoodyKoontz For The Anchorage Daily News

Brothers Scott and Stan Selman can point out exactly where Scott's daughter, Cheyenne, 4 or 5 at the time, tripped over a stair and split open her head on the corner of the 1950s-era wood and Formica-top bar that curves through Club Paris.

The Anchorage steakhouse, with its pink neon sign glowing on Fifth Avenue and its mostly original interior decor, has been a long-standing fixture downtown. The restaurant is riddled with Selman family memories, especially for Cheyenne, who grew up in the place.

"Oh, we got a little bit of history around here," said Stan, 63.

The building, which is just shy of 100 years old, was once a funeral home, and Club Paris' original owners founded the restaurant in 1957, Stan said. The Selmans bought it in the '70s, and Cheyenne, now 27 and bearing a small scar on her head, is a graduate of a culinary arts school and helps manage the family business.

In its 60-plus years, the restaurant has survived two major earthquakes, ash from volcanic eruptions and two economic recessions — but nothing so bad as the coronavirus pandemic, said Scott, 66.

"COVID has brought us to our knees," said Debbie Selman, Scott's wife.

Club Paris is in survival mode. Like many bars, restaurants and breweries in Anchorage, it is clinging on while the pandemic clobbers the hospitality industry and while the third city-mandated shutdown of indoor dining remains in effect through the end of the month.

With the small family restaurant's business slashed by more than 75%, the livelihoods of the family and their employees are at stake.

"If we don't get help soon, we're going to go underwater," Debbie said. "We're treading water for now."

In some ways, Club Paris is different from other Anchorage restaurants, though many have also been around just as long. The restaurant prides itself on its traditions.

"Grandpa always said, 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it,' " Cheyenne said.

Its employees have been unionized since the '50s — something almost unheard of in restaurants — and its employees have health care, a living wage and pensions.

The brothers' late father, Charlie Selman, was a geophysicist who worked for Richfield Oil Corp. and helped discover Alaska's largest oilfield in Prudhoe Bay.

He worked in an office on a nearby corner and would "drink his lunch" at Club Paris regularly, Debbie said. Then Selman bought into the restaurant as a silent partner in 1976, and took over operations as sole owner in the '80s.

Big business deals were hashed out in the joint — forgotten moments in the state's history, Stan said.

Club Paris' rich past hangs in the atmosphere like a scent, evident in the framed objects lining the walls: In one corner is a hand-drawn original dinner menu from the day the restaurant opened, designed by its first chef, Jewel Hawkins. On the opposite wall is an article about Selman's work as a geophysicist. In another corner, an essay handwritten by Scott as a young boy, who is now 66, describes his experience of the 1964 earthquake.

Stan is responsible for the restaurant's upkeep and he keeps the place in its original state as best as possible, Scott said.

"We've prided ourselves on consistency throughout the years," Scott said. "Nothing's changed except the price."

Where pieces of the restaurant must be replaced or remodeled, Stan preserves what he can — like squares of original wallpaper from the women's restroom, which hang framed and include some original graffiti: "Pierre is a bum lay!" is scrawled in one frame.

Once, while remodeling the walk-in cooler, Stan found old cardboard boxes from the funeral home lining the walls. The boxes once contained caskets from Sound Casket Co. in Everett, Washington.

"They used to do the embalming where the kitchen is — now we just pickle at the bar," Stan joked.

The family business, its clientele and even some employees are generational; children, once grown, have gone to work at the restaurant in their parents' footsteps, Stan said. Some employees have worked there for 10, 20 and 35 years.

"Customers come in and it's like the same steak they got 30 years ago," Stan said. "The generational business is just wonderful. I mean, this place has survived on people having kids and their kids supporting us now."

But it also means the restaurant is similar to a "one-trick pony," Scott said. He worries that younger generations are bringing different eating habits to the table.

And now, with the pandemic upending the dining industry, it's critical that the restaurant adjusts.

"We're trying to adapt every way we can," Scott said.

'All about hope'

On Monday afternoon, the rows of dimly lit booths that stretch along the restaurant walls sat empty. Occasionally the loud ring of a phone interrupted the quiet with a customer calling in an order, which, when ready, a server would place in a bag and run outside to the curb.

"To have this place empty in the daytime is eerie," Stan said.

Closing to indoor dining has created a host of new problems for the restaurant. Knowing how much food to order or how many employees to schedule for a shift is nearly impossible.

"There's no telling what's going to happen each day," Cheyenne said.

But they've ramped up their social media presence, sold gift certificates and created paper menus with QR codes to scan.

The restaurant has cultivated a reputation for its quality steaks, seafood, prime rib and its lunchtime ground filet mignon burgers. Much of it is fare that doesn't translate easily from high-end, sit-down dining into a to-go business. Still, Cheyenne has helped the restaurant pivot to curbside service and a smaller to-go-only menu.

Stan said Club Paris has followed every mandate and precaution throughout the pandemic.

For Scott, who had a lung transplant four years ago, carefully following precautions is "a life-or-death matter," he said.

The business suffered while under capacity limits, but also recognized that restrictions like not allowing customers to sit at the bar are necessary for the safety of customers and employees, Stan said.

"The trust and faith that our customers have in us — they know we follow protocol. And our employees know that we'll take care of them, even in these hard times. And those two things are priceless," Scott said.

But with their business currently decimated under the third mandated shutdown, "I feel like we're being punished for the actions of others," Stan said. It feels unfair and like they have been singled out, he said.

City leaders and health officials say the shutdown is necessary and that it is working. Daily COVID-19 case numbers have been declining.

Still, the industry has borne a large burden. Some restaurants and bars have closed entirely. At Club Paris, the shutdown means they've had to cut employee hours during the holidays, rotating them during the month for two weeks on, two weeks off.

"It's something that we have to get through," server Lainey Rourke said. "I think we've pulled together very well as a crew here — we're kind of like a family here, and so we just hold each other up and pull through it and kind of know that things are going to get better on the other side."

Now, over the span of a week or more, Club Paris brings in only about how much money it would make during a single shift before the pandemic, Debbie said.

But the family is grateful for several things. They have a loyal group of customers who have supported the business during the pandemic and longtime employees who have stuck by them through thick and thin. And the Selmans own the property, so they don't have a monthly rent bill. Without that, they might have gone under already, they said.

The federal, state and municipal aid the restaurant has received so far has kept it alive, Debbie said. The Paycheck Protection Program loan lifted them back up after a long and unexpected "hunker-down" in the spring. Club Paris has received about $400,000 in economic aid so far, Stan said.

"That's still a drop in the bucket compared to our lost revenue," Stan said.

In a normal year, from the month of May through the winter holidays, the building is hopping, Scott said. Christmas garlands, lights and decorations would join the artifacts decorating the walls.

"This place is usually festive, lit up, loud," Scott said.

But this year, just a few lights hang outside. The restaurant will stay closed from Christmas Eve until New Year's Day, when it can hopefully open its doors again to dine-in customers, Scott said.

"Things are going to get better. Put one foot in front of the other, keep doing the work, do the next right thing and things unfold. And that's what keeps us going more than anything — a sense of faith," Scott said.

"It's all about hope right now," he said. "As long as we can open our doors, we'll be fine."


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From Front Page...

# Why I Haven't Raced During the COVID-19 Pandemic

As an elite runner, I'm making tradeoffs by staying home.
But I knew I wouldn't feel safe on a starting line.

The last time I toed a starting line was February 29 at the Olympic Marathon Trials. That was a special day, competing among the best marathoners in the country. Looking back now, 10 months later, the event is even more meaningful to me—it was the last time I saw my parents, the last time I hugged friends, the last time life felt normal. Within a week of returning home from Atlanta, the world had spun madly out of control.

I had worried about COVID-19 since I first heard the news about the outbreak in China in late December 2019. When I was in graduate school (I hold a Masters in Public Health from Brown University's School of Public Health), I studied infectious diseases and epidemiology; off the track, I now work as a health policy consultant. So as I read about the emerging coronavirus last winter, I grew increasingly anxious. Now, almost a year since we first heard about the virus, my anxiety about it remains high, and my concerns have informed many of the decisions I've made this year—including the choice not to race competitively.

In public health, we talk about the concepts of risk reduction and reducing exposure to hazards. This can mean designing safer streets to reduce risk of injury to pedestrians and cyclists, or wearing a seatbelt to decrease one's individual risk of injury in a car crash. In the wake of the pandemic, I've taken steps to lower my likelihood of contracting COVID-19—staying home as much as possible, wearing a mask, and forgoing racing.

The decision to avoid competing was not made lightly. I am a professional runner and Olympic hopeful. Racing is not only part of my livelihood, but it is also one of my greatest passions. I love to compete, and I relish the opportunity to test myself against the world's best distance runners.

But I also deeply value my health and my long-term relationship with running; I hope to be running marathons well into my 70s. Although data suggest that a healthy young person like myself (I am 33 years old) would likely not die from COVID-19, given how little we know about its long-term health effects, I'm trying to minimize my exposure.

This risk reduction comes at the expense of many of the things I love the most. For me, this means not running with anyone outside of my family since March. No more sweaty high-fives at the end of hard workout. No more post-long run brunches with training partners. This means holidays at home, getting groceries delivered, and no indoor dining—though lots of takeout.

I fully acknowledge the privilege that comes with being able to stay home. Not everyone is able to make these choices. Tragically, the pandemic has hit our most financially vulnerable and underserved communities the hardest.

Not racing has been far from easy for me. As a handful of elite races have popped up this year, I've been torn about whether or not I should compete. I've spent many late nights staring at the ceiling, debating what's right for me and my family, and what level of risk I'm willing to accept.

Earlier this fall, I began marathon training, gearing up to try to break 2:30. (My current PR is 2:32:08 from CIM in December 2017.) I set out for solo long runs along a bike path just south of my home in Boston—these days I prefer to get outside the city to train, where I encounter fewer people than when running along the Boston Marathon course or the Charles River.

Masks are required in Boston when out in public, so for every run, I grabbed my buff, folded it over to create two layers, and pulled it up over my nose and mouth. Mask on and with a gel stashed in my sports bra, I went to work, dialing into marathon long runs like it's my job. Because it is.

As the fall continued, I nervously tracked daily COVID-19 cases in the U.S., watching the numbers increase rapidly as the weather grew colder and people spent more time indoors. I spent endless hours debating alongside my husband, who's a physician, if racing was worth the risk for me. Beyond yearning to compete out of a pure desire to find out what's possible for my body, there were financial implications of racing to consider: A new PR would yield a substantial payday from my sponsor.

However, when we crested 50,000 cases per day nationally, at the time a new record for daily cases, I knew I would not feel safe on a starting line. Races may bill themselves as "safe," but in public health, risk exposures rarely fit neatly into "safe" and "unsafe" buckets.

Rather, some activities are lower risk and safer than others, but some degree of risk still remains for participants, volunteers, coaches, and others involved. Races can take measures to reduce risk—requiring negative tests is a good first step, but only one of the many pieces in the COVID-19 puzzle.

Try as I might, I could not envision a scenario in which the benefits of racing outweighed the risks. There would be no more bike path long runs for me this fall, at least not in service to marathon training.

So here I am, not competing, my contract with my sponsor expiring on December 31, and many unknowns ahead in 2021. The U.S. Olympic Track & Field Trials—which I'd hoped would be my fifth Olympic Trials competition—are scheduled for June 2021, and I do not yet have a qualifying mark in the 10,000 meters, the event I hope to race.

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I don't know if I'll race next spring; I'll have to continue the risk/reward analysis. Yet I feel at peace with my current decision. With daily cases in the country now well over 200,000 per day (as of this writing), I know I've made the right choice for me personally.

My decision may be different than yours. We all have different levels of risk tolerance and different factors to weigh. But as our hospitals reach capacity and as our healthcare workers grow increasingly burned out after a hellish year, I ask you to consider how and where you can reduce your risk of contracting COVID-19, and to do what you can to mitigate the spread.

Please wear your mask, limit contact with people outside your household, and when the vaccine becomes available to you, take it—both doses! Our personal actions matter and they do make a difference. The sooner we can get this pandemic under control, the sooner we can all see starting lines again. I can't wait to be there and high-five you at the finish line. Until then, stay safe and be well.

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# Tom Hanks Navigates a Roiling, Post–Civil War America in News of the World

Paul Greengrass's lovely Western follows a traveling newsreader, an orphan girl, and a country that believes what it wants to believe.

Written By Sonia Saraiya

There's a whole subgenre of movie-going pleasure that boils down to "Tom Hanks is a good man who is also good at his job." News of the World, which features Hanks as an antique sort of traveling anchorman bringing headlines to the roiling Texan frontier in 1870, is director Paul Greengrass's Western take on the form. (Greengrass co-wrote the screenplay with Luke Davies; the film is based on the 2016 novel by Paulette Jiles.)

Hanks plays Captain Jefferson Kyle Kidd, a veteran of the Civil War. Five years after Lincoln's assassination, Kidd roams encampments and small towns with a bundle of newspapers and collects a few coins from the crowd in exchange for reading aloud a little bit of the news. He has local headlines and national ones, and even carries The Times of India on him. Greengrass opens the film with one of his readings, and the moment burgeons with atmospheric charm—long, deep shadows accentuated by flickering oil lamps, the faces of the crowd smeared with the day's grime, the mounting anticipation of gathering around a platform to hear something new.

It's a far cry from CNN, but the film delicately teases out the need to understand the wider world while reveling in Kidd's hallowed, central role as the arbiter and curator of headlines. He fought for the South in the war, and speaks to crowds ferociously opposed to the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments, which Texas has to ratify before it can rejoin the United States. Still, the viewer implicitly trusts him, and the film just rolls with it—making Kidd a slightly aged, bookish hero who, of course, is compelled to do the right thing when he comes across a nearly feral adolescent girl (Helena Zengel) in the woods near Wichita Falls.

Her chaperone, a Black man, has been lynched, the stagecoach demolished, the horses stolen. She only speaks a foreign language—not German, as the name on her papers might suggest, but Kiowa, the language of the indigenous tribe being forced off their land by white settlers. Kidd takes on the duty of taking her back to her only remaining blood relatives, hundreds of miles away in south Texas.

If the emotional arc of the movie seems a little predictable from here on out, that doesn't make the film unenjoyable. The unlikely pair have no choice but to bond as they traverse a treacherous, stark landscape, depicted with uncommon beauty by Greengrass and cinematographer Dariusz Wolski. The movie's greatest success is in making the landscape come to life—miles of empty scrublands, the pitch-black of dark outside the little towns, herds of cattle crossing muddy plains as they're driven to market. The makeshift settlements—including proto-versions of Dallas and San Antonio—are romantically charged with the signifiers of the Wild West. The man and girl form a powerful connection over the course of the film, drawn together by mutual loss and need in this inhospitable environment. At the core of the story is the sense that neither of them fit anywhere in this tumultuous world, even as they are doomed to keep seeking a home.

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But despite the intriguing character elements at play, News of the World feels kind of quaint. No Kiowa or Black characters have speaking roles, even though the plot turns on them. And while Zengel, who is playing a less unruly version of her character in System Crasher, is a wonderful character, a child haunted by layers of tragedy she can barely articulate, Kidd himself is too enigmatic for most of the film—more archetype than flesh-and-blood. That his character works at all is an indication of Hanks's uncanny ability to radiate rock-solid integrity—but as the center of the film, he's strangely without any personality except goodness.

To be sure, that kind of character has a home in the Western—and News of the World is rich with old west texture, including a good-old-fashioned shootout. But the contiguous parts of the film don't blend into something uniform. News of the World takes stabs at modern relevance with some of its storytelling, only to suspend other parts of the narrative in a world of frontier fantasy.

After all, the film couches Kidd's work as a newsreader with not-so-subtle commentary on how media manipulates the unwashed masses. For all of his goodness and faith in the true stories of the world, News of the World also breaks down how much power he has as the skilled presenter of these articles. Kidd's characterization may be bafflingly subtle, but the resonance of his role as a newsreader is almost eye-rollingly unsubtle, as he proves his ability to sway or soothe the crowd by the way he reads the story.

News of the World builds a tense contrast between the polished words Kidd reads and the barren, wordless country he travels through, which culminates, kind of, in a breathtaking sandstorm late in the film that offers the audience some beautiful and indelible images. It feels as if Kidd should have more of a reckoning with how words sometimes fail to describe the world, especially as he is bound by duty to a girl who has no words to share with him. But News of the World only digs so deep—far enough to get to the desired conclusion, and not an inch more.

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## All You Need To Know About Turmeric & Why You Should Try It

This article will provide you with all the things that you need to know about turmeric and why you should try it. Read on to learn more.

What Is Turmeric?

Turmeric, also known as Golden Spice or Indian Saffron, is a tall plant that usually grows in Asia as well as in South America. It is a flowering plant, and it belongs to the ginger family. Its roots are used not only in cooking but also in treating various health conditions. If you are familiar with curry powder, particularly the yellow one, turmeric is its main spice. It comes with a bright, yellow-orange color and a distinct flavor.

**What Are the Health Benefits?**

Turmeric contains an active compound called curcumin, which comes with a plethora of health benefits. With its very powerful medicinal properties, consuming turmeric, be it a spice for different dishes, or even in the form of tea, you can expect a positive impact on your body and brain. Curcumin is a natural anti-inflammatory compound and it can definitely match the effectiveness of drugs, without you worrying about the side effects. This substance can also increase the antioxidant capacity of the body, enhance brain functions, lower risks of brain and heart diseases, prevent cancer and Alzheimer's disease, delay aging, and fight depression.

**How Is Fresh Turmeric Prepared?**

Although you can buy turmeric powder in many stores, you have the option to prepare fresh turmeric if you wish to. First, you can utilize a vegetable peeler or even a paring knife to take its skin off. Or, another option is to rub the stem down using the back of a spoon. You can then finely slice or grate it. Take note that turmeric is less fibrous than ginger so you can expect it to be much easier to grate.

**How to Use Fresh Turmeric**

Turmeric has many uses, and you can easily incorporate it into your everyday cooking. You can make tea out of it, blend in a smoothie, and utilize it to add more flavor to your eggs. It can also be an excellent ingredient for salads and dressings. If you are marinating, you can add turmeric to the marinade, too.

**Are There Possible Side Effects?**

Just like anything else, turmeric also has side effects if taken in large amounts. It can make your stomach upset or irritate your digestive system. It can stimulate contractions as well. If you are using blood-thinning drugs, you might as well use turmeric moderately.

From Front Page...

# A Major Loss To Our Community: Mavourneen O'Brien Passes

We recently lost a true immortal and dear friend, the legendary Mavourneen O'Brien. "Baja", as she was known to everyone, was 87 when she succumbed to COVID-19. The family is setting up a memorial for her and we will be posting all of the appropriate information (date, time, & location) as soon as we receive it.

Mavourneen was the daughter of the late Hollywood superstar actor Pat O'Brien (and his late wife Eloise) who also founded the legendary Del Mar Race Track. It had been an annual tradition (since 1941) for her to be celebrating with the owners of the winner of the annual Pat O.Brien Stakes event.

The O'Brien family has been involved with the racetrack from the beginning. Pat O'Brien - known for his roles in movies such as "Knute Rockne," "The Fighting 69th" and "The Front Page" - was part of the founding board of directors, along with other well-known personalities such as Bing Crosby and William Quigley.

In 1937 - the year the track opened — the O'Briens took up residence in Del Mar. Mavourneen was the oldest of Pat and Eloise O'Brien's children; there were also Sean, Terry and Brigid."If you can say 'good morning,' you can pronounce my name," said Mavourneen, which means "my darling" in Gaelic.They built a summer house on 28th Street, and their back patio faced the racetrack's finish line."Jimmy Durante never missed a day at the races," Mavourneen said, "but my father never missed a finish through his binoculars."

The O'Briens were also parishioners at St. James Church when it was in Del Mar. (It's now in Solana Beach.) Mavourneen sang solo in the choir, and Pat was an altar boy. The family's summers in Del Mar ended in the mid-1950s, around the time Mavourneen went to college and the home was sold (and eventually torn down).

Mavourneen went on to graduate *magna cum laude* from Marymount College with a bachelor of science degree in music and a master of arts degree in education from Loyola University. She also holds a General Life Secondary Credential, Library Science Credential from CSULA.

Over the years, Mavourneen spent much of her time enriching people's lives. She taught language arts and served as a volunteer English teacher; was a member of the Roger Wagner Chorale and sang in the Town Hall, Carnegie Hall (N.Y.); became a volunteer member of the Flying Samaritans; and was director of The Diamond Chorale of Rosarito Theatre Guild. Mavourneen also became a top fundraiser for the San Diego Area Chapter of the National MS Society, as she has been battling the disease since 1984; her son, Eric, has multiple sclerosis, as well. She participated in the three-day, 50-mile MS Challenge Walk, and this past year's event was her 15th one.

Among the accolades Mavourneen has received is the Women's International Center's Living Legacy Award, presented to her in 2000.

Prior to relocating from Del Mar, Mavourneen resided in Mexico, but she often made trips to Del Mar, and made it a point to attend the day of the Pat O'Brien Stakes. Last year, she met with family and friends in the Directors Lounge, where she was greeted by Del Mar Thoroughbred Club Chief Executive Officer Joe Harper and a few "old timers." Just before the feature, she was escorted to the winner's circle so she could watch the stakes race and then assist with the trophy presentation.

Among those who were with Mavourneen for most of her ultimate day at the track was her friend Patty Fuller, who recalled their initial meeting."I first met Mavourneen in 1998 in the winner's circle at the Pat O'Brien Handicap," Fuller told us. "I was covering the horse races for the Del Mar Times. I didn't know who she was, but I walked up to this effervescent, smiling woman with blue eyes in the winner's circle and said, 'Why do I want to say my confession to you?' She laughed and responded, 'Well, Pat O'Brien was my father.'"

The house guest list was a "who's who" from the Golden Age of Hollywood, including Crosby, James Cagney, Ralph Bellamy, and (future U.S. President)Ronald and Jane Reagan. Activities included bonfires, weenie roasts, breakfasts on the beach, tide-pooling and volleyball games. Evenings were often spent at the Turf Club or at the Del Mar Hotel (now L'Auberge).

As a teenager, Mavourneen was a ranked amateur tennis player, and often played in exhibition tournaments at the Del Mar Hotel. She said she played Maureen Connelly ("Little Mo") several times, and "even beat her once."

Mavourneen went on to graduate magna cum laude from Marymount College with a bachelor of science degree in music and a master of arts degree in education from Loyola University. She also holds a General Life Secondary Credential, Library Science Credential-CSLA.

Among the accolades Mavourneen has received is the Women's International Center's Living Legacy Award, presented to her in 2000.

Up until her final illness days, Mavourneen resided in Mexico, but she occasionally mad trips to Del Mar, and mad it a point to attend the day of the Pat O'Brien Stakes. During her final year, she met with family and friends in the Directors Lounge, where she was greeted by Del Mar Thoroughbred Club Chief Executive Officer Joe Harper and a few "old timers."

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# Gop Blocks $2,000 Checks As Trump Leaves Covid Aid In Chaos

## Written By Lisa Mascaro And Andrew Taylor

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's sudden demand for $2,000 checks for most Americans was swiftly rejected by House Republicans as his haphazard actions have thrown a massive COVID relief and government funding bill into chaos.

The rare Christmas Eve session of the House lasted just minutes, with help for millions of Americans awaiting Trump's signature on the bill. Unemployment benefits, eviction protections and other emergency aid, including smaller $600 checks, are at risk. Trump's refusal of the $900 billion package, which is linked to $1.4 trillion government funds bill, could spark a federal shutdown at midnight Monday.

"We're not going to let the government shut down, nor are we going to let the American people down," said Rep. Steny Hoyer, D-Md., the majority leader.

With its fate still up in the air, the bill arrived Thursday night in Florida, where the president has been spending the holiday s golfing and tweeting, a person familiar with its movement said.

The optics appear terrible for Republicans, and the outgoing president, as the nation suffers through the worst holiday season many can remember. Families are isolated under COVID precautions and millions of American households are devastated without adequate income, food or shelter. The virus death toll of 327,000-plus is rising.

Trump is ending his presidency much the way he started it — sowing confusion and reversing promises all while contesting the election and courting a federal shutdown over demands his own party in Congress will not meet.

The congressional Republican leaders have been left almost speechless by Trump's year-end scorching of their work.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy helped negotiate the year-end deal, a prized bipartisan compromise, that won sweeping approval this week in the House and Senate after the White House assured GOP leaders that Trump supported it.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin boasted that the $600 checks all sides had agreed to for Americans would be in the mail in a week.

Instead, Washington is now hurtling toward a crisis with COVID aid about to collapse, as the president is at his Mar-a-Lago club. He has been lashing out at GOP leaders for refusing to join his efforts to overturn the election that Joe Biden won when the Electoral College votes are tallied in Congress on Jan. 6.

"The best way out of this is for the president to sign the bill," Republican Sen. Roy Blunt of Missouri said Thursday. "And I still hope that's what he decides."

Racing to salvage the year-end legislation, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Mnuchin are in talks on options.

Democrats will recall House lawmakers to Washington for a vote Monday on Trump's proposal, with a roll call that would put all members on record as supporting or rejecting the $2,000 checks. They are also considering a Monday vote on a stop-gap measure to at least avert a federal shutdown. It would keep the government running until Biden is inaugurated Jan. 20.

Lawmakers will also be asked to override Trump's veto of a must-pass Defense bill.

After presiding over the short House session, an exasperated Rep. Debbie Dingell, D-Mich., decried the possibility that the COVID assistance may collapse.

"It is Christmas Eve, but it is not a silent night. All is not calm. For too many, nothing is bright," she said on Capitol Hill.

A town hall she hosted the night before "had people crying, people terrified of what is going to happen," she said. One father recently told her he had to tell his children there would be no Santa Claus this year.

The president's push to increase direct payments for most Americans from $600 to $2,000 for individuals and $4,000 for couples drives support from Democrats but splits the GOP with a politically difficult test of their loyalty to the president.

Republican lawmakers traditionally balk at the big spending, never fully embracing Trump's populist approach. Many have opposed larger $2,000 checks as too costly and poorly targeted.

On a conference call Wednesday House Republican lawmakers complained that Trump threw them under the bus, according to one Republican on the private call and granted anonymity to discuss it. Most had voted for the package and they urged GOP leaders to hit the cable news shows to explain its benefits, the person said.

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