

USA TODAY

04.30.19



USA TODAY SPORTS

Triple Crown begins with the Kentucky Derby

Race's 145th running is Saturday, and we examine the use of the medication Lasix in horse racing. **In Sports**

NEWSLINE

IN NEWS



CHRISTOPHER POLK/GETTY IMAGES

John Singleton, filmmaker, dead at 51

Director, screenwriter earned Oscar nominations for "Boyz n the Hood"

Rod Rosenstein submits resignation

Deputy attorney general appointed special counsel Robert Mueller

IN MONEY

Facebook plans to return users' privacy

CEO Mark Zuckerberg to reveal how he intends to do it at F8 conference

IN SPORTS

Harper and Machado making subtle impact

Top free agents aren't on leaders' lists, but their teams are off to hot starts

Post-draft questions for every NFL team

Mike Jones: With needs addressed, clubs head into offseason practices

IN LIFE

'Thrones' cheats fans with sparse death toll

Kelly Lawler: Writers' refusal to kill off major characters hurts the series

On sale now

USA TODAY's Pet Guide is full of tips, trends and advice for keeping your furry friends healthy and happy. It's available on newsstands and at onlinestore.usatoday.com.



HOME DELIVERY
1-800-872-0001, USATODAYSERVICE.COM

USA SNAPSHOTS®

Mittens needs a part-time job
How much Americans pay for pet care (in billions):



SOURCE American Pet Products Association, March 21, 2019
FRANK POMPA, JANET LOEHRKE/USA TODAY

FEARS OF BIG PHARMA

Many don't trust industry. Why would they trust its vaccines?

Jayne O'Donnell
USA TODAY

Bernadette Pajer doesn't trust the pharmaceutical industry. And she doesn't trust vaccines.

The founder of a Washington state advocacy group says drugmakers have a "pretty poor record overall" on safety and transparency. Not to mention the opioid epidemic, though Pajer often does.

As distrust of the pharmaceutical industry grows, so has the anti-vaccination movement – a critical issue as the number of measles cases in the USA surges.

Vaccine supporters – including

federal, state and local officials, the public health community and most doctors – say it wasn't drugmakers' idea to require protection from largely eradicated deadly diseases. It's the government's doing.

It's also the government that shields drugmakers from liability when vaccines are found to cause injury. To skeptics, including drug safety advocate Kim Witezak, this suggests they may be hiding or at least getting away with something.

When voters were surveyed in January about their feelings toward industries that benefit from the

See **VACCINES**, Page 3A



"Vaccines are largely a victim of their own success. If you don't fear the disease, you're more likely to fear the vaccine."

Paul Offit
Author and infectious disease physician at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

GETTY IMAGES

Trump, Dems huddle today

Infrastructure meeting comes with tension high

John Fritze and Eliza Collins
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – President Donald Trump and congressional Democrats will meet Tuesday in search of a fix for the nation's crumbling infrastructure, but they'll first have to swerve around an escalating battle over special counsel Robert Mueller's report.

The meeting, which will mark the first time Trump has hosted Democratic leaders since an acrimonious gathering during the partial government shutdown in January, comes as the White House is resisting Democratic demands to question administration officials involved in the Mueller investigation into Russian election interference.

Trump and Democratic lawmakers have flitted with a bipartisan infrastructure deal since the president took office, but talks have stalled around how to pay for the trillion-dollar-plus investment needed to make a dent in modernizing the nation's highways, transit systems and airports. And that was before congressional subpoenas started flying.

"The current climate seems less than optimal for reaching a consensus," said D.J. Gribbin, a former assistant to the president on infrastructure issues, but he said he was nevertheless encouraged that an initial meeting is taking place.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and

See **HUDDLE**, Page 6A



House Speaker Nancy Pelosi suggested the meeting in a call this month with President Trump. JARRAD HENDERSON/USA TODAY

Synagogue shooting wounded – and united – 2 congregations

Chris Woodyard USA TODAY

ESCONDIDO, Calif. – Two religious congregations about 12 miles apart – one Jewish and the other Christian – were bound by tragedy over the weekend.

One was a synagogue ripped apart by gunfire; the other was a church the suspected shooter's family regularly attended. What both shared Sunday: an overwhelming sense of grief as worshippers grappled to make sense of the senseless.

Their leaders, a rabbi and a pastor, did their best to show how they are rising above hate.

At the Chabad of Poway, Orthodox Jews had gathered for Passover when a gunman burst in with a semiautomatic rifle Saturday and started shooting.

See **CONGREGATIONS**, Page 4A



Chilling plot in LA

Ex-soldier charged with planning mass terror attacks. **3A**

Mourners pay their respects to Lori Gilbert-Kaye, who was killed in the attack on the Chabad of Poway synagogue.

NICK OZA FOR USA TODAY

Feds: Vet plotted mass-casualty attack

A 'real threat' thwarted, LA prosecutors say

Chris Woodyard and Kevin Johnson
USA TODAY

LOS ANGELES — Federal prosecutors charged a 26-year-old U.S. Army veteran who they said expressed support for the Islamic State with plotting to bomb a white nationalist rally. They said he also considered targeting churches, military facilities, police and Jewish holiday gatherings.

In a 30-page complaint unsealed Monday, federal prosecutors offered a detailed account of a government sting operation in which Mark Steven Domingo allegedly told FBI informants of his desire for a mass-casualty event on the scale of the 2017 Las Vegas shooting massacre and 2013 Boston Marathon bombing in retribution for last month's attack on a New Zealand mosque that

left nearly 50 dead.

Domingo, whose military service included combat in Afghanistan, was arrested Friday night by FBI agents after they say he conducted surveillance of his intended target, a public park in Long Beach, California. He was accompanied by two others he thought were to be accomplices in the attack but who were in fact an undercover FBI agent and informant who helped make the case against him.

Domingo, who lives in Reseda, California, is charged with providing and attempting to provide material support to terrorists. Prosecutors said Domingo had provided boxes of nails he believed were to be used in the construction of a bomb. The device had been rendered inert by the FBI before it was delivered to Domingo.

"At no time was the public in danger, and there is currently no known threat to public safety," Los Angeles FBI chief Paul Delacourt said.

Domingo's arrest comes as Southern California reels from a weekend attack on a San Diego-area synagogue in which one worshipper was shot and killed during a service on the last day of Passover. Police arrested a 19-year-old suspect in the shooting who authorities say spoke of a desire to kill Jews.

In Los Angeles, U.S. Attorney Nick Hanna characterized Domingo as "a very real threat" despite the FBI's undercover contacts with him.

"This investigation successfully disrupted a very real threat posed by a trained combat soldier who repeatedly stated he wanted to cause the maximum number of casualties," Hanna said. "Anyone who plots to use a weapon of mass destruction will be held to account."

Federal investigators began tracking Domingo in early March, according to court documents, after he posted messages online describing his support for "violent jihad and his aspiration to

conduct an attack in the Los Angeles area."

"America needs another Vegas ... something to kickoff civil unrest," Domingo allegedly wrote in a rambling, ungrammatical March 3 post, referring to the 2017 Las Vegas shooting that left 59 dead. "Its not about winning the civil war its about weakening america giving them a taste of the terror they gladly spread all over the world."

Eleven days later, Domingo angrily responded to the New Zealand mosque shooting: "There must be retribution."

Domingo's communications prompted the FBI to direct a longtime informant to make contact with him. They met in mid-March to discuss possible targets. During that first meeting with the informant, who has been paid more than \$300,000 for his work for the FBI since 2013, Domingo allegedly shared his desire to attack a range of people and locations, including "Jews, police officers, churches and a military facility."

Vaccines

Continued from Page 1A

North American Free Trade Agreement, nearly half had an unfavorable opinion of pharmaceutical companies, up from about a third in 2008, according to the advocacy group Public Citizen and the research firm Citizen Research.

"The pharmaceutical companies in particular push the negative reactions off the chart, with nearly half giving the most intense negative response," says a summary by pollster Stanley Greenberg. "Just mentioning the pharmaceutical companies as benefiting is like throwing a bomb in every quarter of the electorate."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Monday that 704 measles cases in 22 states have been confirmed since Jan. 1. The numbers surpass the record of 667 set in 2014, the previous highest total since the disease was declared eliminated in 2000.

Pajer, a mystery writer and former grocery store clerk, says no one ensures the science is valid. She describes herself as a supporter of "scientific integrity in vaccine policy," not as "anti-vaccine."

Pajer's advocacy group says drug-maker Merck can't be trusted with its measles, mumps and rubella vaccine,



Bernadette Pajer says she became a critic of mandatory vaccines after her son was injured by one when he was a child. BERNADETTE PAJER

also known as MMR, in large part because it is fighting a federal whistleblower lawsuit in court that alleges the company overstated the effectiveness of the mumps vaccine. She questions the long-term effectiveness of Merck's measles vaccine and says the risk of the rubella portion causing arthritis has not been publicized.

A statement from Merck says it is "prepared to disprove the false allegations at trial, if necessary." It cites CDC estimates that two doses of the MMR vaccine have an average effectiveness of 88% for mumps. The CDC says there's been a 99% drop in the annual number of U.S. cases of mumps since the vaccine was introduced in 1967.

Pajer says she didn't know anything about vaccine risks until her son, now 16, developed severe allergic reactions called anaphylaxis to the food ingredients in vaccines as a child. His then-pediatrician suggested Pajer's son have the rest of his shots "in the hospital in case he goes into shock," she says. Pajer declined, and her son has a lifetime medical exemption from vaccines.

Is your doctor lying to you?

Paul Offit, an author and infectious disease physician at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, has fought the anti-vaccine movement for about 20 years.

It's easier to understand a parent — or a celebrity, such as vaccine opponent Jenny McCarthy — who says children are injured or develop autism because of vaccines than it is to understand the science of why 26 shots are needed in the first few years of life to prevent 14 diseases few have ever seen, Offit says.

For these fears to be well-founded, a massive coverup of data would be re-

quired, he says. "In order to believe vaccines are hurting you means your doctor is lying to you," Offit says. To believe that, "on some level you have to be a conspiracy theorist" who believes the industry is "directing the government and the health care industry to lie about vaccines."

For baby boomers and older Americans, polio, smallpox and chicken pox could be deadly and crippling. But those diseases have been eradicated for so long, younger generations may have no knowledge or memory of them. Autism is a more common concern among today's parents.

"Vaccines are largely a victim of their own success," Offit says. "If you don't fear the disease, you're more likely to fear the vaccine."

'A healthy dose of skepticism'

Witczak sees close parallels between doctors' near unanimous push for vaccines and the enthusiasm for antidepressants.

In August 2003, Witczak's husband died by suicide, five weeks after his doctor prescribed him the antidepressant Zoloft to treat his sleep problems. Timothy Witczak never suffered from depression or expressed suicidal thoughts until he began taking the drug, she says.

Kim Witczak recalls her typically gregarious husband in the fetal position on the floor, saying, "Help me, help me."

Witczak sued drugmaker Pfizer for failing to warn the medical community and consumers about the risks of suicidal thinking and death associated with Zoloft. The case was settled, and she became a drug safety advocate.

The advertising and marketing communication consultant is a vocal industry critic and consumer representative on the Food and Drug Administration advisory panel that evaluates psychopharmacologic drugs — those that can affect mood, thinking and behavior.

At the time of Timothy Witczak's death, the Zoloft label noted "possibility of a suicide attempt is inherent in depression and may persist until significant remission occurs."

In 2005, "black box" warnings, which relate to the most serious risks, were added to antidepressants, including Zoloft, disclosing the link to suicide and suicidal thinking. It was too late to help Witczak's family.

Witczak questions the "sheer numbers of vaccines" and points to a recent British Medical Journal study questioning the reported effectiveness of the HPV vaccine.

"There's something bigger happening, and you have to have a healthy dose of skepticism," she says. The government "shouldn't be attacking the patients out there."

The drug industry's trade group, Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers Association, calls vaccines "one of the greatest achievements of biomedical science and public health."

"And biopharmaceutical companies remain committed to making more diseases history," PhRMA says in a statement. "Today, there are 264 vaccines in development by biopharmaceutical companies to both prevent and treat diseases."

Taking claims to court

One of the biggest factors underlying some vaccine critics' skepticism is the fact that the federal government shields pharmaceutical companies from considerable liability with the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program. Anyone who petitions that a vaccine caused an injury or illness must file a claim first with the program.

Narayan Nair, director of the division of injury compensation at the Department of Health and Human Services, says the agency is not aware of anyone suing a drug company after losing their federal claim.

The Justice Department represents HHS in the proceedings, and special masters in the U.S. Court of Federal Claims decide the cases.

The program wasn't started to protect drug companies, Nair says. It was meant to protect consumers who need a reliable supply of vaccines.

Since 1988, 20,428 petitions have been filed with the compensation programs. Of these, 17,718 cases were heard — 6,430 were found eligible for compensation, and 11,288 were dismissed. No autism claims have been compensated.

The government's total bill: about \$4 billion.

The program is generous — almost to a fault, Offit says. In about 70% of cases that the program agrees to pay, the compensation is part of a negotiated settlement and "HHS has not concluded, based upon review of the evidence, that the alleged vaccine(s) caused the alleged injury," the agency says.

No 'memory' of measles

Claire Foster has good friends who work in vaccine development where she lives in Auckland, New Zealand.

"This work is undertaken in an academic environment, and they are by no means getting rich from Big Pharma," she says. "These are highly educated people motivated purely by the prevention of disease and suffering."

Foster gets frustrated by what she calls fear-mongering online. She posted "The 'I've done my homework' Pop Quiz" to tweak the anti-vaccine crowd. The multiple-choice questions included one asking readers to identify a cell type by its photo and another that asked which antibody chain is the first to respond to an antigen. Those who got questions wrong were told their definition of research is different from that of the scientists who develop vaccines.

Indeed it is, Offit says.

"When Jenny McCarthy gets on TV and says 'I'll take the measles every time,' that tells you something important," he says. "It shows me that not only have we eliminated measles, but we've eliminated the memory of measles."



PO' BOY II SAMPLER

30 Cigars

only \$25



Includes 2 each of: Victor Sinclair • Cuban Delights
Fidalgo Negro • Piloto Cubano • Raji's Untimely Demise
Old Havana • Ron Mexico • Don Smith • VS Connecticut
La Diferencia Cubana • Joya del Jefe • Hesitant Pirate • Duque
Oro Cubano • Don Rafael

Visit: www.CigarsIntl.com/SA7627

Enter complete web address or search keyword: SA7627

1-888-244-2790 mention code SA7627

Item #: CA16-SP

*Plus \$4⁹⁹ s/h. Purchase may be subject to state or local sales tax where applicable.
First-time purchasers only. One per customer. No sales to anyone under the age of 21. We do not ship to Utah and South Dakota. For more information see www.CigarsIntl.com/SHIP. Offer expires 5/31/19