

***Alabama Public Radio Newsroom***

***Public File***

***July 1, through September 30, 2020***

***TOPICS COVERED***

***COVID-19***

***BLACK LIVES MATTER***

***NATURAL DISASTER RECOVERY***

***LOCAL ECONOMICS***

***COLLEGE FOOTBALL***

***CRIME***

***THE U.S. CENSUS***

July 2 “The Street of Many Colors in Mobile.” The death of George Floyd in Minneapolis has prompted protests throughout Alabama. Marchers carrying signs have made their voices heard in Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, Huntsville, Montgomery, and Fairhope. In Mobile recently, children and other residents used a different medium to spread the message. Guy Busby reports they used chalk. 5:46 (7:45, 4:44)

July 7 Cows and COVID—“Cows and COVID: Alabama Farmers Struggle During Pandemic” The Fourth of July has come and gone but grilling season is in full swing in Alabama. Getting meat to go on those grills might be a little more difficult than usual. COVID-19 has not only limited the number of people who can come to the cookout, it is also taking a toll on Alabama’s livestock producers. APR’s Stan Ingold spoke with industry leaders in the state and has this report... 6:30 (7:45, 4:44)

July 9—The debate Over Mobile’s COVID-19 Face Mask Ordinance. Tomorrow marks one week since the city of Mobile made the wearing of masks mandatory. Alabama’s port city joined Tuscaloosa, Birmingham, and Montgomery in requiring residents to wear face coverings to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The law includes the possibility of fines for non-compliance. APR’s Guy Busby reports, the city council passed the ordinance after debate by those for and against the issue. 5:27 (7:45, 4:44)

July 14—Coronavirus and Voting, Part 2. Coronavirus cases continue to trend upward in Alabama, and this may spill over into the November election. Two lawsuits now challenge the state’s absentee and in-person voting laws. Plaintiffs argue the rules restrict voter turnout, while adding risk of COVID-19 exposure at the polls. The complaint is that this problem appears to impact non-white communities the most. Both litigations seek to make no-excuse absentee voting the new normal in the state while doing away with the current photo ID requirement. Alabama has a long history of voter suppression, and the COVID-19 pandemic has become a new platform for change. APR’s Baillee Majors has been following this case. In her latest report, she focuses on

how the battle for voting rights never ended in Alabama, especially for people of color. 8:08 (7:49, 4:44)

July 16 -- Mental Health Help for those on the front lines of COVID-19. The coronavirus pandemic continues to take a toll on Alabama. The COVID-19 caseload has increased by 30 percent over the past two weeks. The state is slowly returning to normal, but healthcare professionals are encouraging everyone to wear masks, use social distancing, and avoid crowded places like restaurants and bars. The pandemic has taken a toll on mental health as well. A recent Kaiser Family Foundation study shows close to half of all adults in the U.S. are worried or stressed over COVID-19. APR student reporter Daniel Pinheiro has more. 4:22 (7:45, 4:44)

July 23—Loss of Football could have a devastating economic impact in Alabama. The return of sports is on everyone’s mind as fall nears and the answer will largely impact the economy as a whole. Jim Page, President and CEO of the West Alabama Chamber of Commerce, said that football season and sports in general are important to the economy. APR student reporter Jaime Jefferson has more... 7:06 (7:51, 4:51)

July 28—“Segregation Academies” looking to overcome divided past.” Across the state, many private academies started as a place to bypass desegregation laws. Jennifer Belcher-Glass, an alumna of the now-closed Marengo Academy in Linden, Alabama, graduated from the school in 2014 and said the lack of diversity was a fact of life. APR student reporter Sydney Melson explains. 8:19 (7:51, 4:51)

July 30—Mobile tries to manage the stress of COVID-19. The mental health threat posed by the coronavirus is gaining attention. A new study by the Lancet shows 25 percent of British citizens reporting mental distress due to COVID-19. That trend is reflected here in Alabama by a report by the internet website Wallethub. Their survey puts Birmingham, Montgomery, and Mobile near the top among U.S. cities for stress related to the coronavirus. The pandemic appears to be affecting the physical, economic and psychological well-being in Mobile. APR’s Guy Busby has more. 8:10 (7:51, 4:51)

Aug 9—The Story of NASA’s “other” high profile astronaut criminal trial. The criminal case against a former NASA astronaut is still working its way through the courts in Tuscaloosa. Space Shuttle crewmember Jim Halsell stands charged with reckless murder in the deaths of two sisters. Jayla Parler and Niomi James died in the early morning traffic crash near Tuscaloosa in 2016. Halsell’s case is attracting attention, in part because of his history with NASA. But, this wasn’t the only time an astronaut faced

this brand of spotlight. APR's Pat Duggins has more on a new book on the criminal case against Astronaut Lisa Nowak. 7:44 (7:51, 4:51)

Aug 14 – “The Environmental Impact of COVID-19.” During the coronavirus pandemic, many workers are without jobs, public school students are preparing for online classes, and everyone is being asked to wear masks and to social distance. This ongoing health crisis also appears to be having an impact on the environment. APR's Stan Ingold has more... 7:55 (7:45, 4:44)

Aug 28—Dealing with hurricanes, and COVID-19, along the Alabama Gulf coast. The presence of Hurricane Laura and what's left of the tropical system named Marco is reminding the Gulf coast that hurricane season is barely half over. With visitors still crowding reopened beaches, emergency management officials spent much of the week tracking two systems in the Gulf of Mexico. Storms happen every year, but 2020 is the first time that officials are having to plan how to evacuate and shelter what could be hundreds of thousands of people during a pandemic. The 2020 hurricane season was not predicted to be normal. APR's Guy Busby has more. 7:27 (7:51, 4:51)

Sept 1-- Alabama Crimson Tide Football team holds a Black Lives Matter march on campus. Players and coaches for the Alabama Crimson Tide made their feelings known about the Black Lives Matter movement. The team marched to Foster Auditorium at the University of Alabama to address students and faculty on racial justice. Foster is the location of the so called “stand in the schoolhouse door” where Governor George Wallace tried to keep two African American students from enrolling in 1963. The list of speakers included Tide players Chris Owens and Jarez Parks\*. They were joined by Doctor Christine Taylor. She's the University's Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. APR's Pat Duggins attended the march and put together this sound portrait. 4:09 (7:45, 4:44)

Sept 3-- Tackling COVID-19 in Mobile, one step at a time. Alabama Public Radio has been focusing on issues regarding the coronavirus outbreak in our state. One concern is how Black Americans in the State are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. A recent study by the American Academy of Pediatrics reports that Black and Hispanic children are also more likely to be hospitalized for the virus than white children. Health care providers say some of these concerns focus on economic inequality that leads to health problems among Black Americans. Some Mobile residents are responding with exercise. 4:17 (7:45, 4:44)

Sept 14—Gulf coast prepares for Hurricane Sally, 1 month after Laura. As Hurricane Sally looms over the Gulf Coast, Alabama coastal communities prepare themselves for the brunt of the storm along with the projected outcomes in mind. The system is expected to mainly target Louisiana and Mississippi. However, the winds and rainfall

can still have damaging effects on Alabama's coast with dozens of inches of rain, high winds, and possible three foot storm surge without the storm stalling, intensifying, and/or drifting our way. APR's Guy Busby has more. 3:50 (7:45, 4:44)

Sept 30 – "2020 Census: Make Alabama Count" The 2020 U.S. Census head count Has been extended to October fifth. Alabama currently ranks last in the country for response to the census, with Louisiana, Mississippi, Georgia and South Carolina rounding out the bottom five. Numbers from the U.S. Census show Alabama so far has the lowest percentage of households responding of any state in the country. A-P-R's Stan Ingold reports this has officials concerned... 6:20 (7:45, 4:44)