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HEALTH

U.S. officials say measles cases hit 25-year record

BY LENA H. SUN

• Originally Published April 29, 2019

At least 704 people in the United States have been sickened this year by measles, the highly contagious and potentially life-threatening disease, according to a new report released Monday morning by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It's the greatest number of cases in a single year in 25 years and represents a huge setback for public health after measles was declared eliminated in the United States in 2000. More than 500 of the people infected were not vaccinated. Sixty-six people have been hospitalized, including 24 individuals who had pneumonia. More than one-third of the cases are children younger than 5.

The biggest and longest-lasting outbreaks are in New York's Rockland County and Brooklyn, centered in ultra-Orthodox Jewish communities, where misinformation about the safety and effectiveness of the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine has spread, officials said.

Thirteen outbreaks have been reported in 2019, accounting for 663 cases, or 94 percent of all cases. The CDC defines an outbreak as three or more cases. Half of those outbreaks



DAMIAN DOVARGANES/AP

A poster from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health lists the symptoms of measles.

were associated with close-knit religious or cultural communities that were undervaccinated, accounting for 88 percent of all cases.

In response to the record number of cases this year, New York City has imposed a mandatory vaccination order, and Rockland County has required that anyone with measles avoid public spaces or face a \$2,000-a-day fine. On Monday, New York city officials said it had closed two

schools, and 57 individuals have received summonses for violating the emergency order; they face a \$1,000 penalty if the summons is upheld, and a \$2,000 fine if they don't appear at a hearing or respond to the summons.

In California, hundreds of college students were quarantined last week after one student with measles attended classes on three days while contagious at the University

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of California at Los Angeles, and another contagious person spent hours at a library at California State University Los Angeles. As of early Monday, 343 students and employees remained under quarantine and have been told to stay home and avoid contact with others as much as possible.

The rare and extreme measures reflect the seriousness of this year's outbreaks. In a statement Monday, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar said, "We have come a long way in fighting infectious diseases in America, but we risk backsliding and seeing our families, neighbors, and communities needlessly suffer from preventable diseases."

"We are very concerned about the recent troubling rise in cases of measles," Azar said in a briefing with reporters. Measles is not a harmless illness but one with deadly consequences that most people, even doctors, have never seen because it was eliminated in 2000. "Vaccine-preventable diseases belong in the history books, not in our emergency rooms. The suffering we are seeing today is completely avoidable. Vaccines are safe because they are among the most-studied medical products we have," Azar said.

There are no treatments and no cures for measles, CDC Director Robert Redfield said. "There is no way to predict how bad a case of measles will be," he said. Most of those sickened in this year's outbreaks have been unvaccinated, and most are children younger than

18, he said. "Measles can be serious in any age group, but particularly in children younger than 5 and older adults, they are more likely to suffer complications."

No deaths have been reported in outbreaks this year.

CDC officials said the United States is experiencing so many measles cases this year primarily because of the large outbreaks in New York and Washington state. The New York City outbreak continues to grow; 33 new cases were reported in the last five days, officials said Monday, bringing the total to 367 cases so far in 2019. Officials in Washington, where 72 people have become ill, declared the outbreak over on Monday.

In recent years, anti-vaccine groups have spread discredited claims about the safety of the vaccine and minimized the dangers of measles. CDC officials blamed misinformation for low vaccination rates in some communities now hard hit by the outbreaks.

"Sadly, these communities are being targeted with inaccurate and misleading information about vaccines," said Nancy Messonnier, who oversees CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases.

To combat that misinformation, the agency has increased its work with health-care providers and community leaders, she said. This includes reminding clinicians about the guidelines for identifying measles. The CDC is also working with rabbinical, camp and medical associations to help "spread clear,

consistent, and credible vaccine information through trusted sources" to address questions from parents who are considering delaying or refusing vaccination, she said.

Asked whether President Trump's previous public embrace of long-discredited claims about vaccine safety has contributed to the spread of misinformation, Azar said Trump's statement last week supporting the importance of vaccination was "very firm" and said he was "delighted by the president's very strong leadership."

Last week, Trump told reporters at the White House that parents need to vaccinate their children.

"They have to get the shots. The vaccinations are so important. This is really going around now. They have to get their shots," Trump said.

Measles can be deadly, especially for babies and young children. Some people may have severe complications, such as pneumonia (infection of the lungs) and encephalitis (swelling of the brain), which can lead to hospitalization and death. Measles may cause pregnant woman to give birth prematurely or have a low-birth-weight baby.

One dose of the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine is 93 percent effective, and the recommended two doses are 97 percent effective in a given person in preventing measles. The first dose is normally given at about 12 months, and the second at 4 to 6 years.

In the measles cases reported, the vaccination status of 125 people was unknown, and an additional

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Reported number of measles cases in the United States, Jan. 1 to April 26, 2019



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

THE WASHINGTON POST

76 people had been vaccinated, according to the CDC report. But it wasn't clear how many of the 76 people had received one dose or two. Even with two doses, there is still a 3 percent chance of becoming infected if you're exposed to the virus, clinicians have said.

With holidays and summer travel approaching, the CDC is recommending:

- Infants 6 to 11 months old should get one dose of the MMR vaccine before international travel
- Children 12 months and older need two doses, separated by at least 28 days
- Adolescents and adults who have not had measles or been vaccinated also should get two doses, at least 28 days apart.

- Adults in high-risk groups, including those who are traveling internationally, health-care workers and those in communities with ongoing outbreaks to check with their health-care providers.

Ideally, it's best to be fully vaccinated at least two weeks before travel. But if there's not enough time, people should still get one dose before departing, CDC officials said. As a result, when unvaccinated travelers get measles abroad and return to the United States, especially to close-knit communities with low vaccination rates, these communities are "at risk of sustained measles outbreaks," the CDC report said.

Washington state's outbreak began Jan. 3, with a child who traveled

to Clark County from Ukraine. Officials said Monday that they could not determine whether this case was the source of the outbreak. More than 90 percent of cases were in children younger than 18, and people who were not immunized. One person was hospitalized.

There were 53 public locations — including airports, sports arenas, health-care facilities, retail stores, churches and schools — where contagious people may have exposed others to measles, officials said. Clark County officials identified and contacted more than 4,100 people who were exposed, and made daily monitoring phone calls to more than 800 people considered susceptible to contracting measles. Local schools identified and excluded 849 susceptible students who were exposed to measles.

As many as one out of every 20 children with measles gets pneumonia, the most common cause of death from measles in young children. About 1 child out of every 1,000 who get measles will develop encephalitis, which can lead to convulsions and can leave the child deaf or with intellectual disabilities. On average, for every 1,000 children who get measles, one or two will die of it.

The United States was able to eliminate person-to-person transmission of measles in 2000. But because the virus is so contagious, communities need to have near-perfect levels of 93 percent to 95 percent of the population vaccinated to protect against it.

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HEALTH

How does measles spread? Do I need another MMR vaccine shot? How dangerous is measles? FAQ on the outbreaks.

BY LENA H. SUN

Originally Published April 11, 2019

The United States is experiencing its second-highest number of measles cases in nearly two decades. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said the diagnosed cases have climbed to 465. At least 20 states have reported cases of the highly contagious virus. New York City officials have ordered mandatory measles vaccinations to halt an outbreak. The outbreaks are linked to people who traveled from countries such as Israel, Ukraine and the Philippines, where large measles outbreaks are occurring. The disease is spreading in U.S. communities that have relatively high numbers of people who have not been vaccinated against measles. Here are some answers to commonly asked questions about measles, which can cause serious complications among all age groups, especially young children, adults with weakened immune systems, and the very elderly.

Do I need another dose of the measles vaccine?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends children get two doses of the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine, starting with the first dose at 12 to 15 months of age and the second dose at 4 to 6 years of age. For adults, if you were born before 1957, the CDC says it is unlikely you need more MMR shots. That's because most people born before then caught measles and thus have natural immunity.

If you have no written documentation anywhere that you have had an MMR shot, talk with your doctor. People born between 1957 and 1989 generally only had one MMR dose. One dose is about 93 percent effective at preventing measles, but anyone in that age group can still get a second dose, says

Russell Faust, medical director for Michigan's Oakland County health department. The county, part of metropolitan Detroit, has an ongoing measles outbreak with 39 cases reported. Two doses are about 97 percent effective. Even if you had two doses (or can't remember), it's okay to get a third dose, he says.

"There's no downside to getting an MMR, especially during an outbreak," says Faust.

How dangerous is measles for adults?

Adults who have weakened or impaired immune systems caused by diseases, cancers or medications, or those who may have altered immunity such as the very elderly, are at higher risk for severe complications from measles, including pneumonia. They are also at higher risk for adverse reactions to the vaccine, and

they should talk with their doctor. Faust says protection with a protein injection called immune serum globulin may be more appropriate.

How long does it take for the body to develop immunity after getting an MMR shot?

It takes about 7 to 21 days for the body to mount the maximum immune response, and can be as long as one to two months, Faust says.

How does measles spread?

Measles is one of the most contagious diseases on earth. It is a respiratory infection caused by a virus. The virus lives in the nose and throat of an infected person. It can spread by direct contact with infectious droplets or through the air when an infected person breathes, coughs or sneezes. The measles virus can remain infectious in the air for

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up to two hours after an infected person leaves an area. If other people breathe the contaminated air or touch the infected surface, then touch their eyes, noses or mouths, they can become infected. Measles is so contagious that if one person has it, up to 90 percent of the people close to that person or who walk through the same area and are not immune also may become infected.

Infected people can spread measles to others from four days before through four days after the appearance of a rash.

That's why many health officials in places experiencing outbreaks, such as New York's Rockland County and New York City and Washington state, have declared public health emergencies. Rockland County executives tried to ban unvaccinated minors from public places, including churches, schools and shopping centers. New York City just announced mandatory vaccinations in affected Zip codes.

Can antibiotics treat measles?

No. Antibiotics are used for infections caused by bacteria. Measles is caused by a virus. There is no specific treatment for measles. Health-care professionals try to prevent the disease by administering the measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine to children. Nonimmunized people, including infants, may be given the measles vaccination within 72 hours of exposure to the virus to provide protection against the disease. Pregnant women, infants and people with weakened



BRIAN SNYDER/REUTERS

A vial of measles, mumps and rubella vaccine and an information sheet are seen at Boston Children's Hospital on Feb. 26, 2015.

immune systems who are exposed to the virus may receive a protein injection called immune serum globulin within six days of exposure to prevent measles or reduce the symptoms, according to the Mayo Clinic.

How dangerous is measles?

Measles can be deadly, especially for babies and young children. Some people may have severe complications, such as pneumonia (infection of the lungs) and encephalitis (swelling of the brain), which can lead to hospitalization and death. Measles may cause pregnant woman to give birth prematurely or have a low-birth-weight baby. According to the CDC:

- As many as one out of every 20 children with measles gets pneumonia, the most common cause of death from measles in young children.
- About 1 child out of every 1,000 who get measles will develop encephalitis, which can lead to convulsions and can leave the child deaf or with intellectual disabilities.
- For every 1,000 children who get measles, 1 or 2 will die from it.

Recent findings from researchers in California indicate a rare neurological complication that kills children years after they have been infected by the measles virus is more common than previously thought. The neurological disorder can lie

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dormant for years, and then is 100 percent fatal. There is no cure. For babies who get measles before being vaccinated, the rate is 1 in 609.

How effective is the measles vaccine?

The MMR vaccine is very effective. One dose is about 93 percent effective at preventing measles. Two doses are about 97 percent effective. The CDC recommends children get two MMR doses, starting with the first dose at 12 through 15 months of age and the second dose at 4 through 6 years of age.

What about pregnant women?

If you are pregnant, clinicians say to wait to get the MMR shot until after the baby is born. It is safe for women who are breast-feeding to get a measles shot, according to Wendy Sue Swanson, a Seattle pediatrician.

Why are infants at risk of measles?

If a baby's mother has had her MMR shots or had a measles infection in her life, she passed antibodies to her baby during fetal development. Those antibodies provide protection for young infants and typically are thought to protect infants for up to six months or more, but researchers don't really know the length of protection. Immunity wanes for these babies as they age and the mom's antibodies fail to persist.

Does the measles vaccine cause autism?

No, there is no link between autism and the MMR vaccine. This has been carefully examined by many doctors and scientists from around the world in large and thorough studies. Scientists are studying what does make a child more likely to have autism, such as genes or an older father.

How did the idea that the MMR vaccine causes autism originate?

The debunked claim that there is a relationship between vaccines and autism largely stems from the late 1990s. At the time, autism diagnoses had been increasing, and doctors did not know why. In 1998, British researcher Andrew Wakefield published a fraudulent paper, which was subsequently retracted, linking autism to the MMR vaccine. Evidence emerged that Wakefield had been paid by attorneys for parents who were suing MMR manufacturers and that Wakefield's data were fraudulent. *The Lancet* retracted his study in February 2010. That year, Wakefield was found guilty of professional misconduct by Britain's General Medical Council, and his license was revoked.

How are vaccines tested for safety?

Vaccines are among the most thoroughly tested medical products available in the United States. Before a vaccine can be considered for approval by the Food and Drug Administration, the manufacturer must show it is safe and effective through clinical trials. This scientific

process can take over a decade and cost millions of dollars. The FDA then examines these studies and determines whether a vaccine is safe, effective and ready to be licensed for use. The FDA licenses only those vaccines that have data showing their benefits outweigh the potential risks. If there is any question about the data, or any holes in the data, the FDA will request further studies before approving the vaccine.

Vaccinate Your Family, the nation's largest nonprofit dedicated to advocating for vaccinations, provides a good explanation of the four systems in the United States that work together to help scientists monitor the safety of vaccines and identify any rare side effects that may not have been found in clinical trials. For example, some side effects may happen only in 1 in 100,000 or 1 in 500,000 people. Vaccine trials may not include certain populations, such as pregnant women or people with specific medical conditions who might have different types of side effects or who might have a higher risk of side effects than the volunteers who got the vaccine during clinical trials.

One system, known as the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System, or VAERS, relies on individuals to report vaccine reactions. Anyone can report a reaction or injury, including health-care providers, patients and patients' representatives, such as caregivers or attorneys. The system is co-managed by the FDA and the CDC. The purpose of VAERS is to see whether unexpected or

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unusual patterns emerge, potentially indicating a vaccine safety issue that needs to be researched further.

Another system, called the Vaccine Safety Datalink, is a collaboration between the CDC's Immunization Safety Office and eight large health-care organizations across the country. It conducts studies based on questions or concerns raised from the medical literature and reports to VAERS. In addition, when new vaccines are recommended or if changes are made in how a vaccine is recommended, the VSD will monitor the safety of these vaccines. The system has information on the kind of vaccine given to each patient, the date of vaccination and other vaccinations given on the same day.

It also uses information on medical illnesses that have been diagnosed at doctors' offices, urgent-care visits, emergency department visits and hospital stays.

A third system, called the Clinical Immunization Safety Assessment Project, or CISA, is a national network of vaccine safety experts from the Immunization Safety Office, seven medical research centers and other partners. It also addresses vaccine safety issues and conducts clinical research.

A fourth system, called the Post-Licensure Rapid Immunization Safety Monitoring, or PRISM, is a partnership between the FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research and leading health

insurance companies. It actively monitors and analyzes data from a representative subset of the general population.

Are religions opposed to vaccines?

No. Scholars believe no major religious group advocates against vaccinations on the basis of official doctrine, and experts say the majority support vaccinations. Large majorities of Americans from all major religious groups say healthy children should be required to receive vaccinations to attend school, according to the Pew Research Center. However, some individuals from various faith traditions believe vaccinating goes against their religious beliefs.

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Cover a Health Issue

Health coverage ranges from an upset stomach and migraines to dementia and cancer and an ebola outbreak. From very personal illness to school-wide wellness to an epidemic spread in scope. From common to mysterious.

When a disease that was thought to be eliminated in the United States appeared in Washington state and New York City, health reporters took note. They had to research measles and the MMR vaccine as well as watch for alerts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. “From January 1 to May 3, 2019,” the CDC updated

reported cases, to “764 individual cases of measles confirmed in 23 states” — 60 more cases and one more state from the previous week’s report. This is more cases than in all of 2018 and many more than the 86 reported cases in 2016.

When individuals travel for business from area to area, from country to country, they can come in contact with potentially life-threatening diseases. They can also get a horrible case of stomach flu at a family reunion. If you are a health reporter, you have to cover this spectrum.

Complete the following activity as if you were a health reporter or columnist for your student publication that focused on health concerns and awareness.

Identify the Health Issue or Topic

What local or national health concern may your community need to know? What overlooked area of wellness needs attention? Once you have determined your topic and begin research, do not forget to localize the topic. What is happening where you go to school and in your community.

Research the Issue or Topic

There are reliable sources. Be sure to use them. These include:

- U.S. government departments and agencies | The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is a good beginning place.
- Medical journals | These may be too technical, but teachers or the school nurse in your school may be able to assist you. *Scientific American* prints reader-friendly, informative articles.
- Online medical and wellness sources | Look for those related to respected universities or centers such as the Mayo Clinic and Johns Hopkins Medicine.
- Local experts | These may include the school nurse, your physician, research and educational facilities.

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Look for measles information on the suggested reliable sources (above).

Review Washington Post Coverage

By staff reporters and guest writers. There are three main categories to review:

- **Health**

https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/?utm_term=.7c1721b79883

- **Medical Mysteries**

https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/medical-mysteries/?utm_term=.31d9923f9ada

- **Wellness**

https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/wellness/?utm_term=.e4f68d5c0c94

Summarize information, note their sources and the types of informational graphics used. *Post* reporters will respond to your specific questions if you show you have done your homework first. Note the reporter's or guest writer's contact information.

Summarize What You Know About the Topic

This will include the information you summarized from *Washington Post* articles and commentary, online sources and your reading and interviews.

- Data | What information could you put into an informational graphic?
- Agreement on the topic | Are there areas in which all seem to agree?
- Quotations from experts and best sources

Interview Faculty, Staff and Students Who Are Impacted

This is one of your steps to localize the topic.

With our measles example, questions would include: Have any faculty members in your school had measles as children? Any students? How many students have been vaccinated? Do any students or faculty members have family in U.S. or international locations that are experiencing the outbreak? Perhaps, you could interview the relatives.

Determine What Your Readers Need to Know

From all the research, interviews, quotations and summaries you have compiled, what is the essential information that would benefit and inform your readers.

What Is the Best Format to Present the Information?

Do you write a news article, a personal commentary or column, or a Q&A?

Read and contrast two *Post* articles. Which conveys the most information? Which is most likely to be read by your readers?

- “How does measles spread? Do I need another MMR vaccine shot? How dangerous is measles? FAQ on the outbreaks.”
- “U.S. officials say measles cases hit 25-year record”

Time to Write

You have an important job — informing your school community. Remember to be accurate, balanced and clear.

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She's a playwright. He's a scholar. Their mutual admiration was ordained and established by the Constitution.

BY PETER MARKS

Theater critic

• Originally Published April 11, 2019

NEW YORK — Last fall, Laurence Tribe fell headlong into love. Legalistic love, that is. It was a platonic affair of the mind at the New York Theatre Workshop in the East Village, where he had secured a ticket to Heidi Schreck's whip-smart piece about the framers' masterpiece: "What the Constitution Means to Me."

So smitten was Tribe — a renowned constitutional scholar who has taught at Harvard Law School since 1968 — that he decided he had to meet Schreck. A journey through Google and other related searches led to an email exchange and a get-together, where the academician and the artist exchanged ideas and vowed to meet again, sometime soon.

Which is how I wound up seated next to Tribe one rainy night in late March. We were at Broadway's Helen Hayes Theater on West 44th Street, where "What the Constitution Means to Me" had moved, thanks to its enthusiastic reception off-Broadway. And after the 100-minute show — an account of Schreck's childhood



CHRIS SORENSEN/FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

She's a playwright. He's a scholar. Their mutual admiration was ordained and established by the Constitution.

absorption in the Constitution, through a reenactment of the speech contests she entered — I got a chance to sit with them both. Over oysters and martinis at a restaurant a few steps from the Helen Hayes, they shared thoughts about the document that is now the subject of the unlikeliest hit of the Broadway season.

"I was ecstatic," the 77-year-old scholar said of the play. Tribe, the author of the seminal legal textbook *American Constitutional Law*, is such a sought-after authority on democracy-building that he helped write constitutions for the Czech

Republic, South Africa and the Marshall Islands.

Schreck sat next to him, looking gratified by the praise. "I was almost embarrassingly ecstatic," he added. "I thought, 'This is it: she's bringing the Constitution to life,' and you can sense the pulsation of the audience."

"I do feel it in the room," Schreck, 47, replied, reflecting on the intense responses the play is generating. "For a while now I've felt it. When I first performed it, I was shocked at the electric feeling in the audience. Because it was a kind of expedition into the dark for me."

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“What the Constitution Means to Me,” directed by Oliver Butler and featuring a second actor, Mike Iveson, as a contest proctor, is a vehicle by which Schreck, author of the play “Grand Concourse” and a writer on Showtime’s *Billions*, takes us to places both light and dark. It’s a funny re-creation of her participation in one of these contests, in her hometown of Wenatchee, Wash. (pop. 31,925), in which students vied for prize money by expounding on the characteristics and effects of one of the Constitution’s amendments. But the play also is an opportunity for Schreck to talk about the ways in which the Constitution has failed some of the citizens — women and people of color especially — it is purportedly meant to serve.

She accomplishes this through a sometimes wrenching account of the abuse her grandmother, and the women in her family even earlier, suffered at the hands of men. (At one point, Schreck recounts how her mother, as a teenager, had to testify about the beatings of Schreck’s grandmother by her second husband.) The dramatic linchpin is the discourse that Schreck, in the guise of her 15-year-old self, is required to give on the equal protection clause in the 14th Amendment, so called because it mandates that no state can deny “any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.”

Seasoning her monologue with pertinent case law, Schreck talks about how equal protection was merely a rumor to a young Colorado mother named Jessica Gonzales. Her three children had been killed



CHRIS SORENSEN/FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

The Helen Hayes Theater, where “What the Constitution Means to Me” is playing in New York.

by her ex-husband, even though a restraining order was in place and she had repeatedly called the police for help, in vain. She sued the police department, lost and took her appeal all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, where she lost again.

That case is one that Schreck cites as a way of cuing her audience in to her own sense of tragic injustice, and though she and Tribe share a reverence for much of the document, they also share sadness over how courts have sometimes interpreted it. “The Constitution itself is a trail of tears,” Tribe said at the restaurant. “If you look at all the atrocities perpetrated in its name.”

On some evenings, Schreck barely seems able to keep it together onstage. I witnessed one of those moments

on another evening at “What the Constitution Means to Me,” when she had to pause, explaining to the audience that her chest was feeling constricted and she needed to catch her breath.

“The thing about the piece, what makes it exciting and terrible, is that it’s not the same every night,” she said. “I don’t have the same kind of emotional control that I have doing another show. Sometimes, I have unexpected reactions. Oliver [Butler] and I agreed that one of the guiding principles of doing the piece is that, as much as possible, you try to be as truthful in the moment as you can.”

On the night we met, the performance required no urgent gathering of herself. In our section of the theater, the professor caused a bit of a stir among those who recognized him. He’s a frequent presence these days on cable news networks, where he sometimes talks about his latest book, *To End a Presidency: The Power of Impeachment*. (A bottom line of the book, written with Joshua Matz: The threshold is dauntingly high.) An indication of who else attends “What the Constitution Means to Me” was provided by a woman in front of us, who introduced herself as Dayna Steele, a Democrat who just ran unsuccessfully for the House of Representatives in a conservative Texas district. Somehow, seeing the play with Tribe over her shoulder seemed to add to the evening’s drama.

Over the drinks afterward, Tribe and Schreck’s conversation ranged over points of law that she wanted clarified. Tribe, ever the teacher, tried to oblige, helping her, for example,

What the Constitution Means to Me

“What the Constitution Means to Me” is a different kind of play that began in off-Broadway workshops. And this is a different kind of play review. After reading “She’s a playwright. He’s a scholar. Their mutual admiration was ordained and established by the Constitution,” answer the following questions.

1. In the opening paragraph, the lede, readers are introduced to two individuals. Who are they? What is the catalyst for their meeting?
2. Peter Marks provides information to establish Tribe’s authority. Summarize and explain how this adds to the play review?
3. The play is based on the playwright’s actual experience in Wenatchee, Wash. What is it?
4. Marks states that the play expounds on “the ways in which the Constitution has failed some of the citizens — women and people of color especially — it is purportedly meant to serve.” Give an example from the play.
5. Schreck is not only the playwright. She is one of two actors. She keeps in mind how she presents her lines. Marks witnesses an exchange between Tribe and Schreck. How does he set it up? What insight is gained in the dialogue?

Tribe, ever the teacher, tried to oblige, helping her, for example, with her understanding of the Ninth Amendment, over which she waxes poetic in the play. It’s the terse amendment that says rights outlined in the Constitution “shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.”

A lovely, eternal puzzle is what it amounts to. “The Ninth Amendment is kind of a license,” Tribe said. “You have to figure out what it means to you.”

The same can be said of how the play itself is received each night. “It changes,” Schreck said. “And what the audience brings in changes, too.”

6. What is Laurence Tribe’s connection to President Barack Obama? What does he reveal about what the



CHRIS SORENSEN/FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Constitutional scholar Laurence Tribe speaks with “What the Constitution Means to Me” playwright and star Heidi Schreck backstage at the Helen Hayes Theater in New York.

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FOUNDATION OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT/BLOG.LOC.GOV

Signing of the U.S. Constitution in Philadelphia.

Constitution meant to Obama?

7. A play review should tell its readers something about the work and clearly indicate whether readers should spend time and money to see it in person. What do you think is Marks' evaluation of the play? Include at least three words or statements to support your conclusion.
8. The Constitution is in the news in 2019. From the pages of *The Washington Post*:
 - WASHINGTON — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said Thursday the country faces a “constitutional crisis” over President Donald Trump’s resistance to congressional investigation, and she promised a methodical, if lengthy, effort to pursue oversight of the White House. (May 9)
 - We seem to be edging toward a constitutional collapse, if not a crisis. (May 9)
 - In the Senate Majority Leader’s campaign 2020 video, on blocking consideration of Supreme Court nominee Garland: “Let’s let the American people decide: Who will Americans trust to nominate the next Supreme Court justice?” McConnell says. “It is the president’s constitutional right to nominate a Supreme Court justice, and it is the Senate’s constitutional right to act as a check. The next president may also nominate somebody very different.” (April 17)

Find current references in the media to constitutionality, the U.S. Constitution or that of other countries or amendments.

- a. What are the circumstances?
- b. What are the different points of view?
- c. What do you think about the situation?

9-10. What does the Constitution mean to you?

Constitutional

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

The *Washington Post's* Lillian Cunningham hosts a follow-up to the popular *Presidential* podcast series, exploring the 1787 Constitution of the United States and the people who framed and reframed it.

Visit https://www.washingtonpost.com/podcasts/constitutional/?utm_term=.ea1ab67deb19.

The introduction to Constitutional and the narrative podcast series is found here. You have several formats to use to listen to the podcasts. Topics are categorized under the following phrases from the Preamble to the United States Constitution, an introduction to the document and intent of the Founding Fathers.



We the People



Common Defence



More Perfect Union



General Welfare



Establish Justice



Blessings of Liberty



Domestic
Tranquility



Ourselves and
Our Posterity

After you select and listen to one of the Constitutional podcasts, do the following.

- Indicate the subject of the podcast.
- Summarize the main ideas presented by Lillian Cunningham and the people she interviewed.
- In an essay or short talk present the three most interesting concepts you learned. Be sure to include why these ideas fascinate or inspire you, why you question the value of the concept(s) presented, and/or how they might be better applied in today's society.

An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

Hours, not dollars, are currency at these banks

Members exchange time credits for services instead of money

BY JUSTIN WM. MOYER

• Originally Published April 26, 2019

On a recent spring morning, Susan Alexander left her Maryland home, climbed into her Volkswagen Passat and drove about three miles to pick up two strangers. She battled rush-hour traffic on the Capital Beltway and George Washington Memorial Parkway before dropping them off curbside at Reagan National Airport.

She didn't earn a dime for her trouble, and that was the point.

There and back, the trip took about 90 minutes — worth about \$40 if Alexander, a retired government intelligence analyst, were an Uber driver. Instead, she's a member of the Silver Spring Time Bank — one of more than 100 such exchanges around the world trying to build community by exchanging time credits for services instead of dollars and cents.

"I have time," she said. "I like giving the gift of time to other people."

Though some communities have experimented with local currency, most time banks offer an alternative, powered by 21st-century technology, to the U.S. dollar. About 70 exist across the country — some with a few members, others with hundreds — to give value to work that members



JUSTIN WM. MOYER/THE WASHINGTON POST

Susan Alexander, left, brings passengers Mary and Al Liepold to Reagan National Airport. All three are members of the Silver Spring Time Bank.

say often goes uncompensated in a traditional market economy.

In Alexander's case, passengers Mary and Al Liepold were grateful for the ride, but it wasn't charity. Mary, a retired writer and editor for nonprofit organizations, used time credits she banked for editing work and baking. Senior citizens who don't drive, the Liepolds cashed in their credits to catch a flight to Montreal for a five-day vacation.

Without money changing hands or shifting between virtual accounts, the airport drop-off was more like a coffee klatch than a taxi ride.

Driver and passengers chatted about projects they've completed for the time bank, and no one raised an eyebrow when Mary said she likes "to avoid the conventional economy."

"The beauty of this is that you make friends," Mary Liepold said. "You don't just get services."

The Silver Spring Time Bank formed in 2015 and has about 300 members, said co-founder Mary Murphy. Last year, she said, 1,000 hours were exchanged for basic home repairs, dog walking, cooking and tailoring, among other services, without the exchange of money.

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“You get to save that money that you would have spent,” she said. “You get to meet somebody else in your community and get to know that person. That’s a bonus that’s part of an exchange.”

A transaction performed partly to make friends would seem to go against classical economics and one of Benjamin Franklin’s most memorable chestnuts: “Time is money.” To those at the forefront of modern time-banking, that’s the appeal.

Edgar S. Cahn, an 84-year-old law professor at the University of the District of Columbia who had worked on civil rights and anti-poverty legislation in president Lyndon B. Johnson’s Justice Department, suffered a heart attack in 1980. He said doctors gave him two years to live, with “maybe two good hours a day.”

“I thought: What do I do with two good hours a day?” he said, having beaten doctors’ expectations by nearly four decades. “I have to teach people to value themselves.”

Cahn became a proselytizer for what he called the “time dollar” — a currency in which an hour of work is worth an hour of work, whether it’s performed by a maid, a mechanic or a mechanical engineer. In 1995, he founded the D.C. nonprofit TimeBanks USA, which developed the software used by many time banks around the world. (The organization charges time banks a one-time \$79 start-up fee in actual dollars for the software, and additional fees of about \$3 per

member each year.)

Cahn said worthy services are routinely completed with no compensation in the market economy, pointing to a 2014 RAND Corporation study that valued informal caregiving for elderly Americans at more than \$500 billion a year. Using time as currency “values what it means to be a human,” he said.

“We’re all trained as human service professionals: ‘How can I help you?’ ” he said. “None of us is trained to say: ‘How can you make a difference?’ I need you as much as you need me.”

While the world is unlikely to shift to an international time credit economy, hours have been exchanged in time banks in at least seven countries, including South Korea, New Zealand and France, according to the TimeBanks USA website.

One of the most-active time banks in the United States is the Crooked River Alliance of Timebanks, based in Kent, Ohio. Started in 2010, the alliance has 1,200 members in five branches that have facilitated more than 70,000 hours of exchanges, according to Abby Greer, its founder and director.

“I’m the Bill Gates of time banks,” she said.

Greer said time banks can serve as small-business incubators and a way for seniors to remain active after retirement. They also put value on work that’s not traditionally compensated, like homemaking, she said.

“Everyone’s time is equal,” Greer said. “It changes your thinking about money, wealth, community and knowing your neighbors. All these things have been lost in the past 100 years. The time bank is bringing them back.”

Time banks have also saved their members money.

Alexander, who shuttled the Liepolds to the airport, was giving back after recently spending her time credits to have her home thermostat replaced. She estimated an electrician would charge more than \$100 for the job, but fellow timebanker Don Slater, a former NASA engineer turned National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration contractor, finished the job in about 30 minutes.

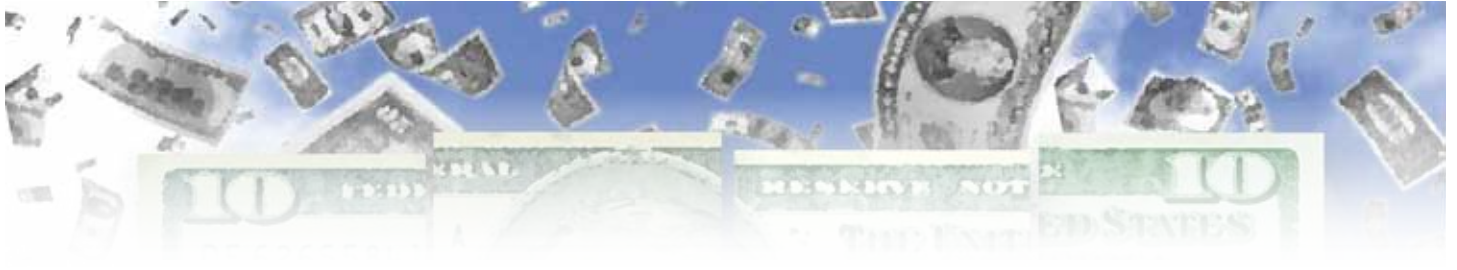
Despite his credentials, Slater, 68, called the wage differential between lower-paid jobs and jobs like his former one “ridiculous.”

“We train for different things, we follow different paths,” he said. “While one may be much more visible than the other — more stressful than the other — it doesn’t make it any less important or less significant.”

As Alexander drove 12 miles back home to Takoma Park, Md., after dropping off the Liepolds, she said the trip wasn’t about profit margins, but the promise of future contact.

“It was funny — we hugged goodbye,” she said. “I’ve never met these people before, but it feels like we’re part of the same family.”

Exchange Time Credits for Service



Many workers seek higher hourly wages and recent graduates look for the best-paying entry jobs. Some out-of-work or between-jobs individuals drive for Uber and Lyft. Balancing daily needs, monthly budgets, entertainment options and unexpected expenses can be quite a challenge. Within this personal budget scenario are people who are providing services without receiving pay.

Read “Hours, not dollars, are currency at these banks” to learn more about a different approach to personal finances. Note that the Silver Spring Time Bank is not alone. It is “one of more than 100 such exchanges around the world.”

1. The article begins with an anecdote.
 - a. What is the purpose of the anecdote?
 - b. What do you learn in the first two paragraphs?
2. The third paragraph is the nut graph that provides the main point or focus of the article.
 - a. What is a time bank?
 - b. At this point, what questions do you have about time banks?
3. What is a “time dollar”?
4. What kinds of jobs are completed by time bank members?
5. What is a major difference between a time dollar and our conventional way of looking at pay?
 - a. How does Edgar S. Cahn explain this currency?
 - b. What is Abby Greer’s explanation of the value of time banks?
6. What is the downside of the time bank?
7. In what ways might a time bank be set up and used in your school?
 - a. Who might give one hour of his or her time?
 - b. For what service, instruction, experience might this be spent?
 - c. Would staff, faculty and parents be allowed to be members?
8. Write a proposal for a time bank in your school community.

For more information, visit TimeBanks (<https://timebanks.org>) and Diversity of TimeBanking (<https://timebanks.org/the-diversity-of-timebanking/>).

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LITTER | *“In the name of art, 1,700 pieces of plastic litter Maryland park”*

The landscape in the Washington region is teeming with green as the spring season settles in — prime time for Brookside Gardens to attract visitors to its lush, immaculately groomed gardens, lawn and ponds.

But in recent days, parts of the Wheaton, Md., public garden look a bit like a trash dump. And it’s all in the name of art.

Keira Hart-Mendoza, a 38-year-old artist from Bethesda, said she wanted to create an environmental art exhibit to showcase how much trash people create and its impact on nature. She said she hopes people will see the exhibit and think about how to reduce their amount of waste.

“Brookside is beautiful,” Hart-Mendoza said. “Everything is in bloom, but you’re seeing this ugly trash like a punch in the face.”

The main exhibit, called “The Legacy Project — Our Lives of Consumption and Waste,” contains more than 1,700 pieces of plastic scattered in a pond at its Perennial Garden. Along a wall around the garden, another exhibit with hundreds of water bottles screwed onto posts is called, “Plastic, Plastic Everywhere, 999,000 Bottles of Plastic on the Wall.”

Brookside Gardens director Stephanie Oberle said the stone wall lined with plastic bottles and a “skyline of trash” among manicured trees is eye-catching.

“It makes you stop and look,” she said.

Hart-Mendoza and Brookside Gardens officials said their goal is to send a message to the public to consider how changing daily habits can help to reduce trash.

“An art exhibit that shows plastic bottles confronts us with the reality that when we throw our trash ‘away,’ it doesn’t miraculously disappear, it just accumulates elsewhere,” Oberle said.

— Dana Hedgpeth, April 26, 2019



PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARAH L. VOISIN/THE WASHINGTON POST
“Marie in the Conservatory, All that glitters is not gold,” was created by Keira Hart-Mendoza in collaboration with Margie Jervis.



Keira Hart-Mendoza created an environmental art exhibition at Brookside Gardens during the month of April. She is pictured in one of the exhibits, “Plastic, Plastic Everywhere, 999,000 Bottles of Plastic on the Wall.”



Keira Hart-Mendoza shows an exhibit to a group of preschoolers and their families.