

THE RACE FOR PRESIDENT 2020

A Land of Buttigiegs

On Malta, thousands share Mayor Pete's surname. And most say they're rooting for him.

By Chico Harlan
WASHINGTON POST

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No one in this village — where actually one in every 14 people is a Buttigieg — is directly related to the U.S. presidential candidate. But for people in this Mediterranean nation, and especially in villages like Qala where the surname is most concentrated, Mayor Pete Buttigieg's surprise push through the Democratic primaries has nonetheless stirred a kind of sporting pride — a sense that any Buttigieg beyond Maltese borders deserves support.

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It helps that Mayor Pete has spoken fondly of Malta, describing it as gorgeous, like a replica Jerusalem with all its stone buildings, a perfect backdrop for filming TV shows and movies. He has also made note of the small-town feel. His own county in Indiana has 270,000 people, compared with Malta's population of 490,000. And he has played for laughs one of the many obvious differences between the United States and his ancestral homeland.

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"I wouldn't be the first President Buttigieg in the world," he continued. "There was a President Buttigieg in Malta who was next-door neighbors with my family Buttigiegs, and they weren't even related."

That would be Anton Buttigieg, Malta's second president. His grandson, also named Anton Buttigieg, talks fancifully about how it would feel if Mayor Pete won his long-shot bid and visited Malta as America's president.

"It would be like the pope or something is coming," he said.

There are, in fact, 2,850 Buttigiegs in Malta, according to the last census, one in every 170 people. A few, like Sam Buttigieg, 62, who paints roads for the government, are products of Buttigieg-Buttigieg marriages. All across the country, Buttigiegs sell insurance, teach music, install air-conditioning units, and sit in parliament. And there are multiple Mayors Buttigieg — not just Mayor Paul Buttigieg in Qala, but also Mayor Albert Buttigieg in the town of St. Julian's.

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the surname, it can be a bit challenging to pronounce, what with the collision of drumlike consonants at the end. Mayor Pete has tried to give some guidance of his own: His campaign posters say Boot-edge-edge. But Maltese tend to hit the notes a little differently, speeding through the first two syllables and drawing out a "geechee" at the end.

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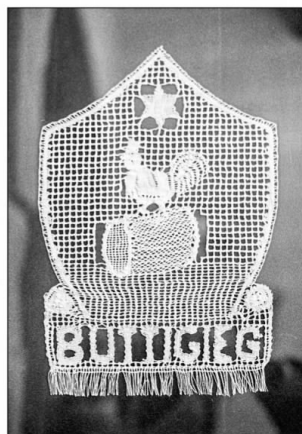
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TRANSCRIPTION

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JOANNA DEMARCO / Washington Post

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It helps that Mayor Pete has spoken fondly of Malta, describing it as gorgeous, like a replica Jerusalem with all its stone buildings, a perfect backdrop for filming TV shows and movies. He has also made note of the small-town feel. His own county in Indiana has 270,000 people, compared with Malta's population of 490,000. And he has played for laughs one of the many obvious differences between the United States and his ancestral homeland.

"The funny thing is, over there, [Buttigieg is] like Smith — it's one of the most common names," he said in January during a small meeting with voters. "I wouldn't be the first President Buttigieg in the world," he continued. "There was a President Buttigieg in Malta who was next-door neighbors with my family Buttigiegs, and they weren't even related."

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Super Tuesday: What's it all about?

By Amber Phillips

There is no national primary for presidential nominations, but Super Tuesday is as close as we get. That's the day when the most states hold nominating contests, the most voters have a chance to go to the polls, and the most delegates will be allotted to candidates. More than a third of all delegates for the Democratic National Convention will be up for grabs on this one day.

What happens on Super Tuesday will shed some light on the big questions around the Democratic presidential primary — and there are a lot more questions than usual at this point in an election cycle.

Here's what you should know.

Question: When is Super Tuesday?

Answer: It's March 3. It will be the first big primary day after the four early nominating states — Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada, and South Carolina — hold their votes.

Poll closing times vary by state: Vermont's close first at 7 p.m. Eastern, and California's last at 11 p.m. Eastern. We won't know all the results Tuesday, since tabulating votes could go late into the night, especially on the West Coast. California's results will take days, at least, as mail-in ballots must be postmarked by election day.

Super Tuesday is a popular day to hold a primary because so many states want an early say in who gets the nomination. So they have clustered as early as they can without stealing any thunder from the first four states, which have deals with the Democratic National Committee to go in the order they do.

Q: Which states are voting on Super Tuesday and how many delegates are at stake?

A: Fourteen states and one U.S. territory will hold nominating contests on Super Tuesday, to award a total of 1,587 delegates. The states are across the country — from California to Maine — and include heavily Democrat-

ic Massachusetts, traditionally Republican Texas and Oklahoma, and more in-between states like Colorado, North Carolina, and Virginia. Democrats who live in American Samoa will also caucus on Super Tuesday, and Democrats who live abroad will begin casting ballots.

Let's step back for a moment to explain that it's the delegate total, not the sheer number of votes, that counts when figuring out who wins a party's presidential nomination. Each state is allotted a certain number of delegates based on a formula of population and weight in the Democratic Party. The state parties then award delegates to the candidates based on the votes they receive. The first candidate to get a majority of the nearly 4,000 delegates wins the nomination.

This year, Super Tuesday is even more consequential, because California moved its primary up to March 3. It had been voting in June, at the tail end of the nominating process when there's typically less at stake. The addition of the most popu-

lar state adds even more heft to Super Tuesday: 30% of the delegates awarded on Super Tuesday will come from California.

No one can win the nomination on Super Tuesday alone, but doing well that day can get you a long way toward winning a majority of the 3,979 delegates up for grabs. Thirty-four percent of delegates are offered on Tuesday. That's more than any other single day in the nominating contest.

Before Super Tuesday, less than 5% of delegates will have been allotted. After: 38%.

Q: Why is Super Tuesday important, especially this year?

A: Heading into Super Tuesday, the race for the Democratic nomination is still wide open. Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont and former South Bend, Ind., Mayor Pete Buttigieg finished in the top two in both Iowa and New Hampshire, and Sanders has led recent national polling. But no state contest has presented a potential shake-up like the one this Super Tuesday could provide.

The Democratic field is still relatively big, with eight candidates. It's possible some candidates will drop out after the results come in from South Carolina, but if not, Super Tuesday could narrow the field.

But with 34 states voting all at once, Super Tuesday could serve as more of a gut-check for where the Democratic Party electorate is. Voters across the country will go to the polls with the race still in flux. Super Tuesday also offers a big contrast to the early states, particularly Iowa and New Hampshire, by allowing Democratic voters from politically and demographically diverse regions to chime in.

There's another reason Super Tuesday could have an especially big impact this year: Former New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg will first appear on presidential ballots. He entered the race late, skipping the early states, and has spent hundreds of millions in his own money on campaign ads, and his standing in the polls, including among black voters, has risen as former Vice President Joe Biden's has slipped.

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