Mattis blasts Trump

Ex-defense secretary criticizes president for threatening protesters with troop deployments

By Wyatt Olson
Stars and Stripes

Former U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis excoriated President Donald Trump in an open letter Wednesday for worsening divisiveness in the country and considering the use of active-duty troops in the wake of nationwide protests.

“Donald Trump is the first president in my lifetime who does not try to unite the American people — does not even pretend to try,” Mattis wrote. “Instead he tries to divide us. We are witnessing the consequences of three years of this deliberate effort. We are witnessing the consequences of three years without mature leadership.”

Mattis resigned as defense secretary in December 2018 over Trump’s decision to withdraw American troops from Syria. The retired Marine Corps general has kept largely silent about his

Mattis

SEE MATTIS ON PAGE 3

Goodbye to Guam

USS Theodore Roosevelt officially restarts patrol 2 months after coronavirus outbreak

By Caitlin Doornbos
Stars and Stripes

The USS Theodore Roosevelt redeployed Thursday after a coronavirus outbreak on board that had sidelined the aircraft carrier at Naval Base Guam since March.

Sailors manned the rails “as a gesture of respect and admiration for the people of Guam for their support and hospitality over the last two months” as the ship left the island, the carrier’s commander, Capt. Carlos Sardiello, said in a Facebook post Thursday afternoon.

“We owe them all a debt of gratitude that words cannot express,” he said.

The carrier was patrolling the Western Pacific when it diverted to Guam on March 26 after several of its sailors tested positive for the coronavirus. Over the following weeks, more than 1,150 of the Roosevelt’s 4,800 crewmembers became infected, according to the Navy.

One Roosevelt sailor died from the virus, according to the Navy.

SEE ROOSEVELT ON PAGE 6

Online: Get the latest news on the virus outbreak stripes.com/coronavirus

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Navy Airman Matthew Malvas mans the rails as the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt departs Apra Harbor, Guam, on Thursday.

GEORGE F. LEE
Stars and Stripes

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SEE ROOSEVELT ON PAGE 6
**EUROPE GAS PRICES**

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**WEATHER OUTLOOK**

The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

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**EXCHANGE RATES**

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**INTEREST RATES**

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**INTEREST RATES**

**ADVERTISING**

**EUROPE**

**ADVERTISING**

**MIDDLE EAST**

**ADVERTISING**

**PACIFIC**

**ADVERTISING**

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**STARS AND STRIPES**

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USAf leaders urge conversation on race

By Joseph Ditzler
Stars and Stripes

Thousands turned to Facebook on Wednesday to hear two top leaders in the Air Force talk openly about racism in the ranks and curbing its influence.

A black enlisted man, Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Kaleth O. Wright, and a white officer, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein, answered questions from their audience for close to two hours while streaming live online.

Their talk took place as President Donald Trump evoked the military to rein in a week’s worth of civil unrest across the nation. Riots and protests gripped the country following the May 25 killing of an unarmed black man, George Floyd, by police in Minneapolis.

Meanwhile, three other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff issued their own statements in the wake of events the past week:

By Wednesday evening, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael Gilday, Commandant of the Marine Corps David Berger and Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville also weighed in with remarks posted on social media that touched on common themes: eliminating division, condemning racism, taking time to listen.

Their enlisted leaders signed onto those statements or like Wright, issued their own.

Among the first questions pitched to Wright and Goldfein: How do I find the right thing to say?

‘Aggressive listeners’

The town hall session followed statements published by Wright and Goldfein on social media decrying violence as rioters looted and rampaged in cities from New York to Los Angeles.

Their statements in videos posted to Facebook and Twitter addressed legitimate grievances expressed by thousands of protesting Americans.

Wright made a visceral connection to African American men killed by police and related his own fear at seeing a police cruiser’s flashing lights in his rear-view mirror. Goldfein, among the first heads of a U.S. military branch to do so, on Tuesday released his own statement, circulated internally the day before, expressing his outrage at Floyd’s killing.

The general said he recognized some airmen are “weary of the battle against racial prejudice” and pledged to address disparities in military justice.

Goldfein and Wright promised a long fight against discrimination while pouring out advice, suggestions and recommended the society and the country follow.

“The discussions we need to have are going to be most effective at the smallest unit. This is flight-team work, this is command work to make sure we create the spaces for this discussion and really be aggressive listeners,” Goldfein said.

He referenced lessons learned from a recent round of stand-downs, pauses in day-to-day Air Force routines to talk about the problem of violence in the service.

“Aggressive listeners,” take time to learn about their airmen by asking about their background, experience and motivation when the opportunity allows, he said.

Wright pitched in: “Don’t look past the source, don’t look past if you work with, minority airmen. Ask them. Ask them how they see the world, ask them how they feel, ask them what happens when they go outside the gate, ask them when they go into stores, ask them if they feel like they’re part of the organization, if they’ve dealt with racism or exclusion.”

‘Can’t imagine the pain’

Also Wednesday, Gilday posted his own, self-recorded video statement to Facebook and Twitter in which he described “a very sad time for our country — a confusing time.”

Gilday referred to the “murder of George Floyd and the events that we have all watched on TV for the last several nights.”

Like Goldfein, Gilday expressed a lack of knowledge about race as a person of color in America.

“I will never walk in the shoes of a black American or any other minority,” he said. “I will never know what it feels like when you watch that video of Mr. Floyd’s murder. And I can’t imagine the pain and the disappointment and the anger that many of you felt when you saw that. Because it’s not the first time, it’s happened time and time again in our country.”

Mattis: Trump calls former Pentagon chief ‘world’s most overrated General’

FROM FRONT PAGE

For the first time since leaving office, Pentagon officials and former officials discussed their disagreements with President Donald Trump, the former boss of his Defense Department.

The former Defense Secretary and General Mark Esper, who served in a non-combat role under the command of the nation’s top military officers, said on Twitter that he had never imagined that the American military would be involved in a conflict.

“IT sickened me yesterday to see security personnel — including members of the National Guard — forcibly and violently clear a path through Lafayette Square to accommodate the president’s visit outside St. John’s Church,” Mullen wrote. “I have to date been reticent to speak out on issues surrounding President Trump’s leadership, but we are at an inflection point, and the events of the past few weeks have made it impossible to remain silent.”

While he expressed confidence in the professionalism of the men and women in uniform, he questioned the soundness of their leader.

“They will obey lawful orders,” Mullen said. “But I am less confident in the soundness of the orders they will be given by this commander in chief, and I am not convinced that the conditions on our streets, as bad as they are, have risen to the level that justifies a heavy reliance on military troops.”

“The Atlantic magazine published a letter Tuesday by Mike Mullen, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that also took umbrage with the White House’s use of force in clearing protesters.

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Detained US Navy veteran freed by Iran, on way home

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A Navy veteran detained in Iran for nearly two years has been released and started making his way home, with the first leg on a Swiss government aircraft, U.S. officials said Thursday. "The nightmare is over," his mother said.

The U.S. special envoy for Iran, Brian Hook, flew to Zurich with a doctor to meet freed detainee Michael White and will accompany White to the United States aboard an American plane, the officials said.

White’s release was part of an agreement involving an Iranian-American doctor prosecuted by the Justice Department, and followed months of quiet negotiations over prisoners. The two countries are at bitter odds over U.S. penalties imposed after President Donald Trump withdrew the U.S. from the 2015 nuclear deal and over the killing by American forces of a top Iranian general in Iraq at the beginning of this year.

"I am pleased to announce that the nightmare is over, and my son is safely in American custody and on his way home," White’s mother, Joanne White, said in a statement. She thanked the State Department and Bill Richardson, a former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and one-time New Mexico governor, for raising her son’s case with the Iranians.

Richardson, who met with Iran’s foreign minister and ambassador to the U.S. about the case, said in a statement that the "release should have and could have been done earlier. But I am glad and relieved that Mike is on his way home to get treated. White had been diagnosed with coronavirus, but has been recovering.

White, of Imperial Beach, Calif., was detained by Iranian authorities in July 2018 after dating a woman he had met online and fallen in love with. He was convicted of insulting Iran’s supreme leader and posting private information online, and was sentenced to a decade in prison.

“Simply put, the charges against Michael were pretexts for a state-sponsored kidnap-for-ransom scheme,” family spokesman Jon Franks said in a statement.

Bailey to take command of Aviano’s 31st Fighter Wing

BY NORMAN LLAMAS Stars and Stripes

AVIANO AIR BASE, Italy — Brig. Gen. Jason E. Bailey is scheduled to take command of Aviano’s 31st Fighter Wing during a virtual ceremony Friday, wing officials said.

Bailey takes over command from Brig. Gen. Daniel T. Lasica, who will assume command of the 9th Air and Space Expeditionary Wing at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany.

Bailey was a 1985 Air Force Academy graduate who has also served overseas as the flight lead and flight commander of the 50th Fighter Wing, Kunsan Air Base, South Korea; commander of the 455th Expeditionary Operations Group at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan; and commander of the 52nd Fighter Wing at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany. Bailey will command the only permanently assigned Air Force fighter aircraft wing in NATO’s southern region. With approximately 4,200 active duty military members, nearly 300 U.S. civilians and 700 Italian civilian employees, the wing conducts and supports air combat operations, and maintains missions for NATO.

Army general in Germany suspended

BY JOHN VANDIVER Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — The one-star general who commands the Army’s reserve headquarters in Europe was suspended this week, pending the outcome of an internal probe, U.S. Army Europe said.

Brig. Gen. Michael Harvey, who leads the 7th Mission Support Command and also serves as deputy commanding general of the 21st Theater Sustainment Command, is under investigation for a matter that “does not involve criminal activity or safety,” USAREUR said in a statement Wednesday.

Harvey was removed from his position Tuesday. Col. Douglas A. LeVien, a 21st TSC deputy commanding officer, was named acting commander of the 7th MSC.

No further information will be released until the investigation is complete," USAREUR said.

The 21st TSC manages logistics for the Army in Europe and plays a key role in getting supplies to forces operating at relatively austere outposts in places like Poland. It also supports U.S. Africa Command.

LeVien takes over with extensive logistics experience. Before arriving at the 21st TSC, he commanded the 406th Army Field Support Brigade out of Fort Bragg, N.C.
German woodcarver Sebastian Demmel holds one of thousands of carvings he has made for American service members over the past five decades.

**By Marcus Kloekner Stars and Stripes**

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — A German man who has made wood carvings for the 10th Special Forces Group for nearly 50 years has been nominated for an honorary Green Beret.

Sebastian Demmel, 79, of the Bavarian village of Sachsenkam, has been a select club that includes President George H.W. Bush, actors John Wayne, Sylvester Stallone and Bob Denver; Snoopy, baseball Hall of Famer Bob Feller and an inter-Korean factory park that have been major symbols of reconciliation.

In his letter announcing Demmel’s nomination, Lt. Gen. M. Beaudette, wrote in a letter announcing Demmel’s nomination.

Beaudette wrote that the carving by Demmel that he received when he was commander of the 10th SFG was “the best gift I’ve received in my 31-year career.”

Demmel’s bond with the U.S. military go back much further than when he began making wood carvings for soldiers, he said.

Shortly after World War II, Demmel and other children used to run behind U.S. military vehicles as they drove through Sachsenkam, picking up chewing gum that the soldiers spat out and popping it into their mouths to see if it was still sweet. He and other boys also once got into a large American car and started eating the pears they found in a brown paper bag on the back seat.

When a U.S. soldier walked toward the car from an inn across the street, most of the boys ran away, leaving Demmel, the youngest, behind to face what he was sure would be a severe scolding.

“But the soldier simply picked me up, helped me out of the car and sent me on my way,” Demmel said. “The fact that he didn’t shout at me impresses me to this day.”

On one trip to Asia’s most vibrant democracy, sending balloons across the border has been a common activist tactic for years, but North Korea considers it an attack on its government. Defectors and other activists in recent weeks have used balloons to fly leaflets criticizing the North’s authoritarian leader Kim Jong Un over his nuclear ambitions and dismal human rights record.

While Seoul has sometimes sent police officers to block such activities during sensitive times, it had resisted the North’s calls to fully ban them, saying the activists were exercising their freedoms.

The shift followed remarks earlier in the morning from Kim’s powerful sister, who threatened to end the military agreement and said the North could permanently shut a liaison office and an inter-Korean factory park that have been major symbols of reconciliation.

In her statement released through state media, Kim Yo Jong called the defectors involved in the balloon launches “human scum” and “mongrel dogs” who betrayed their homeland and said it was “time to bring their owners to account,” referring to the government in Seoul.

Stars and Stripes reporters Karin Zeitzfeld and Immanuel Johnson contributed to this report.

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**VIRUS OUTBREAK**

**Airline downturn may spur USAF pilots to remain**

By Seth Robson

The Air Force is hoping more soon-to-departing pilots will consider its generous retention bonuses as commercial airlines struggle with the effects of the coronavirus.

Gen. David Goldfein, the Air Force chief of staff, told the House Armed Services Committee on March 4 that the service was 2,000 pilots short of the 21,000 needed to meet requirements laid out in the 2018 National Defense Strategy. He cited competition from high-paying commercial airlines.

However, the pandemic has thrown commercial aviation into a free fall with passenger volumes dropping by 90%, the Financial Times reported May 14.

“Recognizing the challenges the airline industry is facing, we are providing options for rated officers to remain on active duty who otherwise had plans to depart,” Air Force spokeswoman Lt. Col. Malinda Singleton said in an email Wednesday.

“We have seen Air Force members with approved retirement and separation dates request to withdraw their paperwork since March, and at this time 171 pilots have been approved to stay past their original retirement or separation dates,” she said.

Active-duty aviators whose initial service commitment expires during this fiscal year are being offered the following retention bonuses:

- Bomber, fighter, mobility and special operations pilots: Annual payments of $35,000 for contract lengths of three to 12 years. Lump-sums of $100,000 for seven- to nine-year contracts and $200,000 for 10- to 12-year contracts.
- Command and control intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance pilots, combat search and rescue fixed wing pilots and remotely piloted aircraft pilots: Annual payments of $25,000 for contracts of three to six years and $35,000 for contracts of seven to 12 years. Lump-sums of $100,000 for 10- to 12-year contracts.
- Combat search and rescue rotary wing pilots: Annual payments of $25,000 for contracts of three to six years and $30,000 for contracts of seven to 12 years.
- Combat systems officers and air battle managers: Annual payments of $20,000 for contracts of three to six years and $25,000 for contracts of seven to nine years.

Aviators whose contracts have expired, or who have never signed a previous retention agreement, are being offered the following retention bonuses:

- Bomber, fighter, mobility and special operations pilots: Annual payments of $35,000 for contracts of three to nine years.
- Remotely piloted aircraft pilots, command and control intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance pilots and combat search and rescue fixed wing pilots: Annual payments of $30,000 for contracts of three to nine years.
- Combat search and rescue rotary wing pilots: Annual payments of $25,000 for contracts of three to nine years.

**Roosevelt: Crew members with the virus still kept behind until recovered**

**FROM FRONT PAGE**

The aircraft returned to sea two weeks ago for carrier flight qualifications before the ship went back to Guam this week to retrieve the remaining sailors who were medically cleared to re-embark, Sardiello wrote in the post.

“To this date, since returning TR to sea two weeks ago, we continue to sail and operate with no return of the virus on board,” he said. “The Rough Riders and our families’ tenacity and resiliency in the face of uncertainty has been put to the test and met the challenge.”

Sailors still battling the coronavirus were left behind, where “they will continue to be cared for ashore until all are recovered, while we remain on mission,” Sardiello said.

“Now it is time to continue to protect our ability to do our mission and protect our sailors’ health,” he added. “We have returned Theodore Roosevelt to sea as a symbol of hope and inspiration, and an instrument of national power.”

Sardiello took over for Capt. Brett Crozier, the carrier’s former commander, when then-acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly removed Crozier from command in April.

The removal came after a letter Crozier had written to Navy higher-ups pleading for help for his crew was leaked to the San Francisco Chronicle and picked up by worldwide media.

“The spread of the disease is ongoing and accelerating,” Crozier wrote March 30. “We are not at war. Sailors do not need to die.”

Modly received backlash from sailors and lawmakers for removing Crozier. Video of thousands of Roosevelt sailors chanting Crozier’s name as he walked off the carrier for the last time flooded social media.

Modly resigned about a week after removing Crozier when a recording of his speech to the Roosevelt’s crew criticizing the former skipper and calling him “stupid” was leaked to the public.

A report on the outbreak’s handling was turned in to Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday last week. Crozier’s removal prompted an inquiry into the situation, which led Gilday to order a follow-on investigation.

Gilday’s office has not commented on the report but told media on May 27 that Gilday will need time to review and endorse its contents.
US military relaxes more restrictions for troops on Okinawa

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Marine spouse Kristin Edick said she was glad to see the American Village retail complex on Okinawa.

The Marine Corps and Air Force on Wednesday and Thursday relaxed some coronavirus restrictions for service members and their families on the island, which as of Wednesday had 146 coronavirus cases and seven deaths. The last infection on Okinawa was reported April 30.

The Edick family, and others like them, are now able to dine at off-base restaurants, as long as they sit outdoors, and patronize off-base retail stores for nonessential goods and services. These freedoms, realized once again after nearly seven weeks under lockdown, were much to the family’s spirits, as they looked forward to a post-coronavirus reality.

“I needed to buy Ellisyn a new pair of Crocs and I had been waiting for it,” Kristin Edick, 3rd of Charlotte, N.C., said of the announcement easing restrictions. She saw the Facebook post on Wednesday night. Air Force Brig. Gen. Jose Culp said she couldn’t wait to visit the Japanese home improvement store Makeman.

“i think it’s awesome in the small things that matter,” he said. “We did so much stuff around the house I want to try and get done.”

Marine Lt. Col. Jessica Culp said she couldn’t wait to visit the Japanese home improvement store Makeman.

“I think it’s a good move forward in the right direction,” he said as he exited the Camp Foster front gate, the Starbucks on Route 58 in front of him. “That trend has boosted consumer spending from exceedingly low levels and has likely encouraged some companies to hire again.”

“I think everyone’s excited about it,” she said as she rushed to get her lunch. “It’s going to be helpful for the Marines to be able to get out in town and will definitely lift everyone’s spirit.”

Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Justin Hayes, a corpsman with the 3rd Medical Battalion, said he couldn’t wait to patronize his favorite island eateries.

“I think it’s awesome in the sense of being able to go to outside retail stores, i.e. the Daiso (a 100-yen store franchise), just the small things that matter,” he said with a wide smile. “Hopefully the restrictions loosen up a little bit more but I’ll take what we can get.”

More seek jobless aid, reopenings slow layoffs

BY CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Nearly 1.9 million people applied for U.S. unemployment benefits last week, the ninth straight decline since applications spiked in mid-March, a sign that the gradual reopening of businesses has slowed the loss of jobs.

The diminishing pace suggests that the job market melt-down triggered by the coronavirus may have bottomed out as more companies call at least some of their former employees back to work.

The total number of people who are now receiving jobless aid rose only slightly to 21.5 million, suggesting that rehiring is offsetting some of the ongoing layoffs.

Though applications for benefits are slowing, the latest weekly number is still more than double the record high that prevailed before the viral outbreak. It shows that there are limits to how much a partial reopening of the economy can restore a depressed job market mired in a recession.

With all states gradually reopening for business, more consumers are starting to return to restaurants, stores and hair salons. That trend has boosted consumer spending from exceedingly low levels and has likely encouraged some companies to hire again.

In addition to the laid-off employees who applied for benefits last week, 623,000 others sought jobless aid under a new program for self-employed and gig workers, who now qualify for unemployment benefits for the first time. These figures aren’t adjusted for seasonal variations, so the government doesn’t include them in the overall data.

The figures come one day before the government’s jobs report for May is expected to show that employers slashed 8 million jobs last month, and that the unemployment rate jumped from 14.7% to 19.8%. If those forecasts prove accurate, it would mean that nearly 30 million people have lost jobs since the viral outbreak intensified in March, and that joblessness has reached its highest point since the Great Depression.

Since mid-March, 42.7 million people have applied for unemployment benefits. Not all of them are still unemployed, though. Some have since been rehired. And some laid-off people, it turns out, filed duplicate applications for benefits as they struggled with unresponsive state unemployment systems.

The depth of the job cuts since the virus forced the widespread shutdown of businesses reflects an economy gripped by the worst downturn since the Great Depression. The economy is thought to be shrinking in the April-June quarter at an annual rate approaching 40%. That would be, by far, the worst quarterly contraction on record.

Still, real-time private data on consumer behavior is showing signs that the economy is gradually reviving. Credit and debit card spending tracked by Chase Bank shows that consumer spending, though roughly flat last week, rebounded from its low point in mid-April, when it was 40% below year-ago levels.

Now it is down 20% from a year ago.

Economists have cautioned that most Americans will need to feel more confident about returning to their former habits of shopping, traveling and eating out before the economy can sustain any meaningful recovery. That will likely require the availability of a vaccine or a significant increase in testing.

“What’s really going to move the needle economically is when consumers and businesses feel comfortable re-engaging with the economy the way they did before COVID-19,” said Adam Kamins, a senior regional economist at Moody’s Analytics.

More seek jobless aid, reopenings slow layoffs

BY CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Nearly 1.9 million people applied for U.S. unemployment benefits last week, the ninth straight decline since applications spiked in mid-March, a sign that the gradual reopening of businesses has slowed the loss of jobs.

The diminishing pace suggests that the job market melt-down triggered by the coronavirus may have bottomed out as more companies call at least some of their former employees back to work.

The total number of people who are now receiving jobless aid rose only slightly to 21.5 million, suggesting that rehiring is offsetting some of the ongoing layoffs.

Though applications for benefits are slowing, the latest weekly number is still more than double the record high that prevailed before the viral outbreak. It shows that there are limits to how much a partial reopening of the economy can restore a depressed job market mired in a recession.

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In addition to the laid-off employees who applied for benefits last week, 623,000 others sought jobless aid under a new program for self-employed and gig workers, who now qualify for unemployment benefits for the first time. These figures aren’t adjusted for seasonal variations, so the government doesn’t include them in the overall data.

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China easing airline access amid fresh conflict with Washington

Associated Press

BEIJING — Chinese regulators said Thursday more foreign airlines will be allowed to fly to China as anti-coronavirus controls ease but it was unclear whether the change will defuse a fresh conflict with the Trump administration over air travel.

The announcement came after Washington said Wednesday it would bar four Chinese airlines from the United States because Beijing was failing to allow United Airlines and Delta Air Lines to resume flights to China.

Airlines that were flying to China when controls were imposed in March were allowed to keep making one flight per week. United and Delta had suspended their flights before that and asked permission to resume.

Airlines that aren't on the March list can make one flight per week starting Monday, the Civil Aviation Administration of China said on its website.

The announcement appeared to open the door to United and Delta but CAAC gave no indication which carriers were affected.

An employee who answered the phone at CAAC said she had no details. She would give only her surname, Yan.

Asked what it heard from Chinese regulators about its status, United said in a statement, “We look forward to resuming passenger service between the United States and China when the regulatory environment allows us to do so.”

The dispute adds to U.S.-Chinese strains over trade, technology, Taiwan, human rights and the status of Hong Kong.

All foreign carriers authorized to fly to China will be allowed to increase to two flights per week if they go three weeks with no passengers testing positive for the virus, CAAC said.

The new restrictions will be suspended for one week if the number of passengers who test positive reaches five.

China easing airline access amid fresh conflict with Washington

British government hosts vaccine summit

Associated Press

LONDON — The British gov-

ernment hosted a vaccine summit Thursday, hoping to raise billions of dollars to immunize children in developing countries and to discuss how any potential vac-
cine against COVID-19 could be freely available to everyone, calling it “a moral imperative.”

Thursday’s event was a pledg-
ing conference for the vaccines alliance GAVI, which says the funds will be used to vaccinate about 300 million children in do-

cens of countries against diseases like malaria, pneumonia and HIV.

GAVI was also expected to start a new “advance market commitment” mechanism that it hopes will enable developing countries to get any effective COVID-19 vaccine when available.

But experts pointed out that the unprecedented pandemic — where arguably every country will be clamoring for a vaccine — may make such discussions extremely messy.

And the worldwide scramble for masks and ventilators disrupted in the early stages of the pandemic — where countries like France requisitioned the coun-

try’s entire supply of masks and the U.S. apparently paid off the shippers of loads already on air-

planes to obtain ventilators — are not encouraging signs that there will be much global cooperation if and when a coronavirus vaccine becomes available.

“Rich countries will most likely try to push their way to the front of the queue, leaving poorer countries at the back, and that’s a problem,” said Jimmy Whitworth, a professor of international pub-

lic health at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

“I can’t imagine any country saying, ‘Africa’s need is greater than ours, so they can get the vaccine first and we’ll remain vulnerable.’”

The urgency of finding a way to stem outbreaks was evident as India on Thursday reported yet another record number of new in-
fec tions — 9,304, with 200 deaths, in the previous 24 hours.

India’s total tally of COVID-19 fatalities surpassed 6,000 and its number of infections has risen to nearly 217,000, the Health Min-
istry said. That makes India the seventh worst country hit by the pandemic.

Pakistan reported over 4,000 new cases and said 82 more people had died, raising its death toll to 1,770.

Its confirmed cases surpassed neighboring China, jumping to 85,284 compared with Beijing’s total of 82,567.

The spike in infections comes weeks after Prime Minister Imran Khan overrode warnings from experts and eased a lock-
down. Officials have blamed the public for not adhering to social distancing regulations.

As countries such as New Zea-

land and Australia mark progress in containing the pandemic and work on plans to resume some inter-

national air travel, others are having to step up precautions.

North Macedonia reintroduced stringent restrictions on move-

ment in its capital, Skopje and three other areas. On Thursday the health ministry announced 120 new confirmed cases — the highest increase since the out-

break began — and two deaths.

In the U.S., Arizona officials reported nearly 1,000 new cases Wednesday amid a rise in hospita-

lizations, a little over two weeks after Gov. Doug Ducey ended his stay-at-home order. The state now has tallied more than 22,000 cases and 981 deaths.

Utah’s state epidemiologist is-

sued a renewed plea Wednesday for people to maintain social dis-

tancing and exercise caution after state figures showed an average of about 200 new cases a day last week, the highest weekly average since the pandemic began.

South Carolina has logged its three highest daily case counts in the last week. The two high-
est death counts have occurred in the last week — 20 deaths on May 27 and 17 on Wednesday.

The number of people worldwide who have been confirmed infected with the coronavirus now exceeds 6.5 million people worldwide have been confirmed infected with the coronavirus, more than 386,000 have died, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University. The actual number of infections is thought to be much higher, due to limits on testing and many asymptomatic cases.

Protests eclipse virus, but White House fears resurgence

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — For weeks, President Donald Trump has been eager to publicly turn the page on the coronavirus pan-

demic. Now fears are growing that the lives of more than 105,000 Americans and imperiled his re-
election prospects.

The announcement came after Washington said Wednesday it would bar four Chinese airlines from the United States because Beijing was failing to allow United Airlines and Delta Air Lines to resume flights to China.

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Protests eclipse virus, but White House fears resurgence

VIRUS OUTBREAK
‘Bandits’ spread smiles at Yokota one can at a time

BY THERON GODBOLD
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Mysterious cans of Chef Boyardee Beefaroni recently began popping up outside residences and offices at the home of U.S. Forces Japan in western Tokyo.

The unexpected 16-ounce bundles of macaroni, ground beef and tomato sauce come with yellow sticky notes attached bearing handwritten messages like: You’ve been Beefaroni’d #BeefaroniBandits #BeefaroniBanditsStrikeAgain #StayTuned.

This campaign of canned frivolity is the work of five service members, spouses and civilians who spoke to Stars and Stripes by phone, but refused to reveal their identities. Their aim, they said during a group call Tuesday, is to raise morale and have some fun during the ongoing restrictions aimed at reducing the coronavirus’ spread.

“It was spur of the moment and we didn’t expect it to take off,” said one of the Bandits, who dress in dark clothing and wear paper bags over their heads. “We started with our friends; we thought it was funny.”

The idea sprang from a Reddit post in which the author described pranking his best friend for a year by placing cans of Beefaroni in his mailbox and on his doorstep.

The Redditor described the lengths to which he went to throw his friend off the trail. He concluded the prank by dressing as Chef Boyardee and telling his friend, “Your subscription to Chef Boyardee Beefaroni has ended. Would you like to renew?”

The story made its way to Facebook, where the Beefaroni Bandits found their inspiration.

Over the past week, quite a few cans of Beefaroni have been donated to Yokota’s food pantry, volunteer Cristy McDaniel said Tuesday. She said that such items are popular at the food bank, which is always accepting canned goods that are up to six months past expiration.

“I think it breaks the monotony,” McDaniel said of the Beefaroni Bandits. “With the coronavirus restrictions, it brings a little bit of comedy to the situation.”

Yokota as been under a public health emergency declared by 374th Airlift Wing commander Col. Otis Jones on April 6. The restrictions, which limit travel by military and civilian personnel to home and work and trips for essential services only, are scheduled to expire June 30.

The bandits said that they hope to reveal their identities at an event that benefits Yokota’s food pantry once the emergency is lifted and life returns closer to normal.

The group, which has a Facebook page with about 80 members, expects to continue its campaign into the foreseeable future. Nearly 30 people have asked to be Beefaroni’d.

“We are not here to mess with people’s property or vandalize anything. We are all adults; we just like acting like children sometimes,” one of the bandits said. “Stay tuned, because we are very far from done.”

The Chef Boyardee Co. has a previous military connection. Founded in 1928 by Italian immigrant Hector Boiardi and his brothers, it provided canned rations to American troops during World War II. Boiardi sold the company not long after; it’s owned today by Conagra Brands.

‘Bandits’ spread smiles at Yokota one can at a time

A Beefaroni Bandits member poses with cans of Beefaroni left outside the Stars and Stripes office at Yokota Air Base, Japan, on Monday.
Floyd to be eulogized in Minneapolis memorial

By Corey Dickstein
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon ordered active-duty soldiers deployed outside Washington, D.C., for riot control to remain in the region after hours earlier deciding that some of the troops should return to their home bases, a defense official said late Wednesday.

Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy received orders Wednesday morning from Defense Secretary Mark Esper to send some 200 infantrymen from the 82nd Airborne Division's Immediate Response Force back to Fort Bragg, N.C., a defense official said. Later Wednesday, after Esper attended a meeting at the White House, McCarthy was notified that Esper had changed his mind, the official said.

The roughly 1,600 soldiers deployed this week from Fort Bragg and Fort Drum, N.Y., to undisclosed military installations in the national capital region remained “on alert” Wednesday afternoon, two other defense officials said. Top Pentagon officials, including Esper, have said that they were reticent to move those troops — the vast majority of whom are military police — onto Washington’s streets.

Top Pentagon officials ultimately delayed their final decision on removing any troops from the Washington region, according to one of the defense officials, who was not authorized to comment on the issue and spoke on condition of anonymity. It was not clear Wednesday afternoon when a decision to send troops back to their home bases would be made.

The moves follow Esper’s Wednesday morning Pentagon news briefing to announce his opposition to the use of active-duty forces on American streets, as protests sparked by the May 25 killing of a handcuffed black man, George Floyd, by a Minneapolis police officer, had grown violent.

Esper appeared to break with President Donald Trump in discouraging invocation of the Insurrection Act, a rarely used 1807 statute that allows the president to deploy federal troops within the United States to quash civil unrest. Trump on Monday said that if the nation's governors did not use their own National Guard troops to address violent protests, which in many cases have led to rioting and looting, he would take it upon himself to respond by deploying active-duty troops.

Esper’s comments were not well received at the White House, Politico and CNN reported, citing unnamed administration officials. White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany said that she was unaware of Esper’s position on the Insurrection Act before Wednesday but would not say whether Trump had lost confidence in his second defense secretary.

“As of right now, Secretary Esper is still Secretary Esper,” she said in a White House news briefing. “If the president loses confidence, well, we will all learn about that in the future.”

Dickstein@coreystripes.com
Twitter: @CDicksteinDC

After protests, Northam orders removal of Lee statue in Richmond

By Sarah Rankin
Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. — A towering statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee was likely removed “at any time” as per Gov. Ralph Northam’s order Wednesday.

The statue, which sits on state property, will move to storage while Northam’s administration works “with the community to determine its future,” the governor said at a news conference where the announcement was met with extended applause.

Northam made the decision after days of angry protests in Richmond and across the country over the death of George Floyd, a black man who was killed in Minneapolis when a white police officer pressed a knee into his neck while he pleaded for air.

“You see, in Virginia, we no longer preach a false version of history. One that pretends the Civil War was about ‘state rights’ and not the evils of slavery. No one believes that any longer,” Northam said.

The decision came a day after Richmond’s mayor, Levar Stoney, announced that he will seek to remove the other four Confederate statues along Monument Avenue, a prestigious residential street and National Historic Landmark district.

Together, the decisions mark a striking departure from recent years when even after a violent rally of white supremacists descended on Charlottesville in 2017 and other Confederate monuments started falling around the country, Virginia did not make the same changes.

In part, local governments were hamstrung by a state law that preserves memorials to George Floyd, by a Minneapolis police officer, had grown violent.

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NATION
PHILADELPHIA — Explosions have hit 50 cash machines in and near Philadelphia since the weekend, and one man has died, in a coordinated effort to steal them or take the money inside, authorities said Wednesday.

A 25-year-old who’s accused of selling homemade dynamite on the streets with instructions on how to use it on ATMs has been arrested, though authorities aren’t sure whether the man is connected to the coordinated effort, the state attorney general said.

Police earlier urged businesses that host cash machines to remove cash to discourage further thefts, one of which resulted in the death of a 24-year-old man hours after he tried to break into an ATM early Tuesday, authorities said.

“It’s not worth it,” Police Commissioner Danielle Outlaw said. “It’s not worth the injuries that we’re seeing associated with this, and it’s not worth the risk to the community and the danger that it’s been imposed upon.”

Talib Crump is charged with felony possession of weapons of mass destruction as well as numerous misdemeanor charges including weapons offenses, terroristic threats and risking a catastrophe. An email seeking comment on Crump’s behalf was sent to the Defender Association of Philadelphia, listed in court documents as representing Crump.

Crump had “bragged on social media that using dynamite was better than bullets for robbing an ATM and offered up explicit instructions on how to best set dynamite up to blow up an ATM,” Attorney General Josh Shapiro said at his news conference Wednesday.

“He further described having done this at an ATM the night before, stealing more than $8,500,” he said.

Crump was taken into custody during an undercover buy, and his vehicle was found to have enough dynamite to blow up at least four more ATMs, Shapiro said.

“Individuals who choose to be associated with coordinated efforts to blow up ATMs in Philadelphia, sought to take advantage of civil unrest to sow chaos and destruction,” Shapiro said.

Cash machines in some other cities, including Pittsburgh and Minneapolis, also have been stolen from or damaged since civil unrest struck the nation when George Floyd was killed on Memorial Day. But Philadelphia’s problem appears to be on a larger scale.

Floyd, a black man, died in handcuffs while a Minneapolis police officer pressed a knee on his neck even after he pleaded for air and stopped moving.

The officer, Derek Chauvin, was fired May 26 and had his initial charge of third-degree murder bumped to the second degree on Wednesday. Three other officers who were at the scene were also charged Wednesday with aiding and abetting second-degree murder and manslaughter.
WASHINGTON — Former President Barack Obama is reemerging as the nation confronts multiple crises, setting the stage for an increasingly public role in a political season, say observers.

Obama is signaling his successor, President Donald Trump, and his allies, that normal life for people of color in the U.S. involves being targeted for violence, and that normal is a term that has meaning for many Americans as the police killings of black people in Minneapolis and across the country have given rise to a national reckoning.

In his opening statement, he rejected that explanation, saying, "This is not an either-or choice. It is a path to change. It can't be normal."

Obama called for turning the protests over Floyd's death into policy change to ensure safer police practices and to refocus attention away from the coronavirus pandemic.

During the roundtable, Obama was asked by a moderator if the coronavirus pandemic swept across the U.S., killing more than 100,000 people and the economy began to crumble.

In a lengthy written statement last week, Obama said that while he understood millions of Americans were eager to just get back to normal, when the coronavirus pandemic began, he knew that normal life for people of color in the U.S. involves being treated differently on account of their race.

"This shouldn't be 'normal' in 2020 America. It can't be 'normal,'" Obama wrote.

Rosenstein says that he wouldn't approve of FBI's Russia warrant now

By Eric Tucker

WASHINGTON — Former Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein told lawmakers Wednesday that he would not have approved an FBI surveillance application for a former Trump campaign aide focused on what he saw as political bias in the State Department's current management, but had taken issue with Democratic appointees.

Rosenstein, a longtime friend and adviser to Obama, said that normal life for people of color in the U.S. involves being treated differently on account of their race.

"This shouldn't be 'normal' in 2020 America. It can't be 'normal,'" Obama wrote.

"We're in a political season, but our country is at an inflection point," said Valerie Jarrett, a former senior adviser to Obama. "President Obama is not going to shy away from that dialogue simply because he's not in office anymore."

During the roundtable, Obama drew parallels between the unrest sweeping America currently and protest movements of the 1960s. But he said that polls show a majority of Americans support protests and demonstrations.

Obama was already beginning to emerge from political hibernation to endorse Joe Biden's Democratic presidential bid.

"This shouldn't be 'normal' in 2020 America. It can't be 'normal,'" Obama wrote.

Ousted State watchdog confirms prior investigations into Pompeo

By Mary Clare Jalonick and Eric Tucker

WASHINGTON — Ousted State Department Inspector General Steve Linick leaves a meeting in a secure area at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, in October.

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VA backlog of claims grows to 119,000 as work stopped for virus

By Nikki Wentling
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The backlog of Department of Veterans Affairs claims has grown by tens of thousands of cases since the department halted work because of the coronavirus pandemic, top VA officials said Wednesday.

There were 119,000 backlogged cases as of Wednesday, up from 64,000 in November. The VA considers backlogged claims for benefits to be those that have been pending longer than 125 days to approve or deny.

“Now, we are very happy about the backlog,” said Paul Lawrence, VA’s undersecretary for benefits. “Our team is very proud of processing claims quickly, so we want to get to right away.”

Lawrence had testified before the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee on Wednesday alongside VA Secretary Robert Wilkie.

Questions from senators focused on the department’s response to the pandemic, as well as its fiscal 2021 budget request.

Sen. John Boozman, R-Ark., asked about the claims backlog, which he said had “grown significantly” since the start of the pandemic.

The VA stopped performing in-person compensation and pension exams April 2 to encourage veterans to stay home to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Compensation and pension exams, referred to as C&P exams, are appointments with doctors, during which disabilities are evaluated. The results of the exams help the VA rate veterans’ disabilities, which determines the compensation they receive each month, as well as their eligibility for VA programs.

Without the exams, the claims backlog has grown and thousands of veterans are waiting for decisions. The coronavirus pandemic coincided with the start of the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act, which prompted a surge of new claims, Lawrence said. The new law made 316,000 Vietnam War veterans newly eligible for VA benefits beginning in January.

The VA is restarting in-person C&P exams at some locations Monday. Agency officials chose 20 facilities that will begin to offer health services unrelated to the coronavirus. Based on how the reopening goes at those sites, the department will begin to open more.

Those facilities must still screen patients and implement social distancing measures, the VA said. Patients will be required to wear face coverings.

To help handle the delay, Lawrence asked Wednesday for Congress to approve legislation that would allow non-physicians, such as nurse practitioners, to conduct the exams.

Lawrence also asked that some of the money Congress gave the VA for its coronavirus response efforts be moved to the Veterans Benefits Administration to help pay employees overtime. In its fiscal 2021 CARES Act approved March 27, Congress allotted $19.6 billion for the VA. The department had spent only $2.3 billion of the money by last week, and other VA officials asked Congress for the authority to transfer it between accounts.

On Wednesday, the VA reported that nearly 15,000 of its patients had tested positive for the coronavirus and 1,284 had died. Nearly 12,000 patients have recovered.
Floods in Yemen leave at least 16 people dead

SANAA, Yemen — Floods swept through Yemen amid heavy seasonal rains, leaving at least 16 people dead and flooding dozens of homes, security officials said Thursday.

The casualties were reported in eastern Hadramawt and southern Shabwa provinces, where it began raining late Wednesday, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to brief the media.

Yemen’s rainy season runs from April to the end of August.

At least 29 homes were flooded and hundreds of livestock killed in Hadramawt, the officials said. Yemeni military planes have been rescuing residents trapped in valleys by the flooding.

Spokesman: Forces take key Libya airport

CAIRO — Forces allied with the U.N.-supported government in Libya have captured a key airport in Tripoli from rival troops attempting to take control of the capital for over a year, a government forces spokesman said.

The fall of Tripoli International Airport came two days after the U.N. announced Libya’s warring parties had agreed to resume talks attempting to end the country’s decade-long war.

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At least 39 injured in knife attack in China

BEIJING — State media report at least 39 people were injured in a knife attack on a kindergarten in southern China on Thursday morning.

The attack was an eerie throwback to deadly attacks at schools in China over past years that prompted security upgrades.

The local government in the Guangxi region’s Cangwu county said 37 students and two adults suffered injuries of varying degrees in the attack.

Chinese state media identified the attacker as a security guard at the school surnamed Li. No motive was known and the suspect had been detained while an investigation was underway, they said.

State broadcaster CCTV said 40 had been injured, three seriously, including the head of the school, another security guard and a student.

Participants hold candles during a vigil for the victims of the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre at Hong Kong’s Victoria Park on Thursday, despite applications for the vigil being officially denied.

Many defy ban on Hong Kong vigil

HONG KONG — Thousands of people in Hong Kong defied a police ban Thursday evening, breaking through barricades to hold a candlelight vigil on the 31st anniversary of China’s crushing of a democracy movement centered on Beijing’s Tiananmen Square.

With democracy smothered out in the mainland, the focus has shifted increasingly to semi-autonomous Hong Kong, where authorities for the first time banned the annual vigil that remembers victims of the 1989 crackdown.

Beijing is taking a tougher stance following months of anti-government protests last year, in what activists see as an accelerating erosion of the city’s rights and liberties.

Earlier Thursday, the Hong Kong legislature passed a law making it a crime to disrespect the city’s national anthem. Pro-democracy lawmakers disrupted the proceedings twice to try to prevent the vote.

Despite the police ban, crowds poured into Victoria Park to light candles and observe a minute of silence at 8:09 p.m. Many chanted “Democracy now” and “Stand for freedom, stand with Hong Kong.”

While police played recordings warning people not to participate in the unauthorized gathering, they did little to stop people from entering the park. Authorities had cited the need for social distancing during the coronavirus pandemic in barricading the sprawling park, but activists saw it as an outbreak as a convenient excuse.

“If we don’t come out today, we don’t even know if we can still come out next year,” said participant Serena Cheung.

Police said they made arrests in the city’s Mongkok district, where large crowds also rallied. When several protesters tried to block a road, officers rushed to detain them, using pepper spray and raising a blue flag to warn them to disperse or they would use force on the unauthorized gathering.

On Twitter, they urged people not to gather in groups because of the coronavirus.

After the vigil ended in Victoria Park, groups of protesters dressed in black carried flags that said, “Liberate Hong Kong, Revolution of our times” as well as “Hong Kong Independence.”

Hundreds and possibly thousands of people were killed when tanks and troops moved in on Tiananmen Square the night of June 3-4, 1989, to break up weeks of student-led protests that had spread to other cities and were seen as a threat to Communist Party rule.

On Thursday, the square where thousands of students had gathered in 1989 was quiet and largely empty. Police and armored vehicles stood guard on the vast space. Few pedestrians lined up at security checkpoints, where they had to show IDs to be allowed through as part of nationwide mass surveillance to prevent any commemoration of the event.

A has become customary, many dissidents were placed under house arrest and their communications with the outside world cut off, according to rights groups.

“We all know the Hong Kong government and the Chinese government really don’t want to see the candle lights in Victoria Park,” said Wu'er Kaixi, a former student leader who was No. 2 on the government’s most-wanted list following the Tiananmen Square crackdown.

“The Chinese Communists want us all to forget about what happened 31 years ago,” he told The Associated Press in Taiwan, where he lives. “But it is the Chinese government themselves reminding the whole world that they are the same government ... doing the same in Hong Kong.”

China did not intervene directly in last year’s protests, despite speculation it might deploy troops, but backed the tough response of the Hong Kong police and government.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo tweeted criticism of China and Hong Kong for banning the vigil earlier this week before meeting with a group of Tiananmen Square survivors at the State Department.

Zhao, the Foreign Ministry spokesperson, said, “We urge the U.S. to abandon ideological prejudice, correct mistakes and stop interfering in China’s internal affairs in any form.”
Cannabis traces found in ancient Israeli temple

BY ILAN BEN ZION
Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Israeli archaeologists said they’ve found cannabis residue on artifacts from an ancient temple in southern Israel — providing the first evidence of the use of hallucinogens in the ancient Jewish religion.

In a research paper, the authors said that the discovery from an 8th-century B.C. shrine at Tel Arad offers the first proof for “the use of mind-altering substances as part of cultic rituals in Judah,” including the first Jewish Temple that stood in Jerusalem at the same time.

Archaeological excavations at Tel Arad, located around 35 miles south of Jerusalem, in the 1960s discovered a stronghold belonging to the ancient kingdom of Judah, and at its core, a small shrine bearing striking similarities to the biblical Temple in Jerusalem.

But for decades, attempts to determine the composition of black deposits found on two limestone altars from the shrine’s inner sanctum — now located at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem — were inconclusive.

Chemical analysis of the samples conducted at Israel’s Hebrew University and Technion Institute found that one altar contained the psychoactive compounds found in marijuana, and the other had traces of frankincense — one of the ingredients mentioned in the Bible for the incense sacrifice in the ancient Jewish Temples, the authors wrote.

Eran Arie, curator of Iron Age archaeology at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem and lead author of the study, said that the discovery was “revolutionary,” as it was the earliest evidence of cannabis use in the ancient Near East and the “first time we see psychoactive substances in Judahite religion.”

The absence of cannabis pollen or seeds from the ancient Near East indicates that the cannabis was likely imported over long distance trade routes, possibly in the form of resin, known colloquially as hashish.

BERLIN — German investigators on Thursday carried out raids on dozens of people suspected of posting hate messages about a regional politician from Chancellor Angela Merkel’s party who was killed last year.

Walter Luebcke, who led the regional administration in the central Kassel region, was shot on his porch on June 1, 2019, and died later that night. His killing sparked widespread outrage in Germany and warnings about the growing danger of violent far-right extremism.

A man with previous convictions for a string of violent anti-migrant crimes has been charged with murder in the case. Prosecutors say that he attended an October 2015 town hall event where Luebcke defended the German government’s decision to allow hundreds of thousands of refugees into the country. A video of Luebcke’s remarks was widely shared in far-right circles, drawing numerous threats.

Frankfurt prosecutors said that authorities in 12 of Germany’s 16 states conducted searches and questioning of 40 people suspected of posting “criminally relevant comments” about Luebcke, largely on various social media networks. The action was the result of an investigation launched in September.

They are being investigated on suspicion of offenses including public incitement to commit crimes, endorsing crimes and disparaging the memory of the dead.

Prosecutors in Bavaria, where seven of the suspects live, said the comments were posted both before and after Luebcke’s death.
astonishing that a single animal makes,” Katija said. “It’s pretty complex structure that an animal
uni-directional, but isn’t. The critter that looks like a tadpole — called giant larvaceans — build a new one. Usually every day or so.

These so-called “snot palaces” could possibly help human construction if scientists manage to crack the mucus architectural code, said Kakani Katija, a bioengineer at Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute.

Her team took a step toward solving the mystery of the snot houses and maybe someday even replicating them, according to a study in Wednesday’s journal Nature.

The creatures inside these houses may be small — the biggest are around 4 inches — but they are smart and crucial to Earth’s environment. Found globally, they are the closest relatives to humans without a backbone, Katija and other scientists said. “Together with their houses they are like an alien life form, made almost entirely out of water, yet crafted with complexity and purpose,” said Dalhousie University marine biologist Boris Worm, who wasn’t part of the study. “They remind me of a cross between a living veil and a high tech filter pump.”

Also, when they abandon their clogged homes about every day, the creatures collectively drop millions of tons of carbon to the seafloor, where it stays, preventing further global warming, Worm said. They also take microplastics out of the water column and dump it on the seafloor. And if that’s not enough, the other waste in their abandoned houses is eaten by the ocean’s bottom dwellers. But it’s what they build that fascinates and mystifies scientists. Because the snot houses are so delicate, researchers haven’t often been able to take them to the lab to study them. So Katija and team used a remote submersible, cameras and lasers to watch these creatures in water about 650 to 1300 feet deep off Monterey Bay in Northern California. These mucus structures aren’t simple. They include two heart-like chambers that act as a maze for the food that filters in, except there’s only one way for it to go: into the larvacean’s mouth. The snot houses often are nearly transparent and flow all around the critter that looks like a tadpole, yet isn’t.

“It could be the most kind of complex structure that an animal makes,” Katija said. “It’s pretty astonishing that a single animal is able to do it.”

And the houses are compar-
BUILDING BLOCKS OF EDUCATION

Minecraft Education Edition’s success shows that video games can be both fun and useful for kids stuck in quarantine

Page 34
GADGET WATCH

Turn your iPhone images into a book

BY GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

E ven with the lockdown starting to lift, our hours at home are more plentiful than ever, so what better time to turn some of those priceless photos you have stored on your iPhone into a coffee table photo book? Think of vacations, graduations, birthdays, anniversaries or just a select period of time. Any group of images will work. Storing photos digitally is the way go compared to the closest full of prints my mom had in shoeboxes. If you’re like me, you have photos taken over the course of time in your iPhone, which when combined would make a great photo book to give the images a permanent, personalized home that’s easily accessible.

I recently did just that with Motif, using the photo roll on my iPad, which is synced with my iPhone, to produce a hardcover 24-page 11-by-8.5-inch book.

To start the project, the first thing I did was find all the photos for the subject of my book and put them in their own folder in the iOS photo app.

Next, I got the Motif iOS for iPhone or iPad or the Motif for macOS app for laptop or desktop. Once downloaded, I chose the type of book I wanted among sizes; hardcover choices are 13-by-10, 11-by-8.5, 10-by-10 and 8-by-8 inches. Softcover sizes are 11-by-8.5, 8-by-8 and 8-by-8 inches.

After creating my account, using the app was easy once I selected my photos for the book. The app connects to my photo folders, where I choose what I want in the book. Overall it’s an easy app to navigate with a user-friendly dashboard and screen shot examples of what all the choices will look like.

I let the Motif app organize the images, which took no time at all. In a few steps, the app evaluated image content of my selections and then gave me a screen with all the images and checkmarks for the choices the software thought were best.

I thought the automation gave me a great starting point, but it also allowed for customization, so I did change the order of a few pictures and swap out a few pictures entirely. The app made it easy to make these changes.

Next was the choice of the book theme; you’ll see samples of each image, and how many can fit on a page with different layouts and designs. There’s no right or wrong here, it’s whatever you like and want.

After you choose the book style, it gives you a full layout of the book with the chosen images. You can re-crop the images or change them entirely for full customization. Either is easy.

Overall, I thought the quality of the product was high, including the bonus paper and the overall craftsmanship. A few days later, the book of memories arrived at my doorstep, encased in a protective sleeve.

Motif states on its home page: “Your Best Memories Just Got Better.” I can absolutely agree after I had my completed book. I have a few more books I need to do, and I certainly have the time. Online: motifphotos.com; prices vary based on book sizes.
NOT ONLY A QUESTION OF JUSTICE
AMC’s ‘Quiz’ explores the humanity of the Ingrams in the ‘Millionaire’ coughing scandal

BY LYNN ELBER
Associated Press

A ny misconduct attached to ABC’s “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire” was of the garden-variety business type. During the quiz show’s initial 1999-2002 run, the network milked the unexpected hit with nightly airings until its ratings crashed.

Then there was the lawsuit over the show’s profits that yielded a $269 million verdict, plus interest, against ABC’s parent company, Disney. British TV, which originated the series, easily topped those corporate offensives. In 2001, a husband and wife were accused of cheating their way to the top million-pound prize — allegedly coughing up answers by brazenly signaling with a “nasty cough” central to the saga doesn’t cast a pandemic-era shadow.

The resulting play and TV series, which originated the series, easily topped those corporate offensives. In 2001, a husband and wife were accused of cheating their way to the top million-pound prize — allegedly coughing up the correct multiple-choice answers by brazenly signaling with exactly that, a cough.

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‘The High Note’

Musical ride makes for pleasant escapist fare

BY ANN HORNADAY
The Washington Post

“The High Note” is a music-centered comedy that is a deep-comfort dive such as “Beyond the Lights” and “A Star Is Born.” It’s a movie drenched in catchy pop hooks and sentimental romance. If this iteration doesn’t quite achieve the full lift-off of the others, it still manages to hit more than a few pleasure centers as a summery slice of light escapism.

One of “The High Note”’s chief strengths is the radiant Tracee Ellis Ross, who for so long has been the best thing about anything she’s in. Here, she claims center stage with toughness, humor and almost feral unpredictability. She plays Grace Davis, an R&B diva who’s been in coast mode for several years; as the film opens, she’s being offered a residency in Las Vegas that will offer the perfect glide path to wealthy obscurity. She will also put her foot in her face and feature creatively. The only member of her entourage who still believes Grace hasn’t long since peaked is her personal assistant Maggie, an adoring acolyte who nurses a secret dream to be a record producer.

Maggie, in other words, is young, hungry and ambitious, which makes Dakota Johnson’s performance so curious. Languid and doe-eyed, Johnson’s breathy delivery and receptive persona never suggest higher stakes than achieving the right style points with her vintage-fringed suede jacket. She’s lovely to look at and can never be accused of overacting, but in terms of conveying single-minded drive, Johnson is no match for Ross’ carefully calibrated tonal swings between imperiousness, self-awareness, isolation and down-to-earth intimacy.

That’s a shame, because even though there’s a low-key subplot involving an attractive singer, “The High Note” is essentially a love story between two women whose interpersonal politics are complex and ever shifting. It should be “The Devil Wears Prada” with sicker beats. But director Nisha Ganatra (“Late Night”), working from a script by Flora Greeson, keeps undercutting the story’s most promising moments by meandering away from the comedy, especially in a third act whose twist is no less post-Asian than being so glaringly obvious from the get-go.

Sadly, “The High Note” is full of funny, charming and diverting supporting performances, especially Ice Cube as Davis’ perpetually grumpy manager, Jack; June Diane Raphael as Grace’s catty house manager; and Kelvin Harrison Jr., who delivers an impressive and utterly persuasive turn as a gifted singer. (Eddie Izzard and Diplo also pop up in cameos, the latter doing an amusing burlesque of a pompous synth-happy producer.)

Throw in some fun songs, sun-kissed Los Angeles locations, stunning wardrobe changes and an overall vibe of generous-hearted fun, and “The High Note” makes for a welcome digression from real-life irritations. It may not soar, necessarily, but it hums along pleasantly enough.

FOCUS FEATURES

‘Space Force’ lifts off, but TV satire can’t stay in orbit

BY ROBERT LLOYD
Los Angeles Times

Steve Carell co-created and stars in the comedy series “Space Force,” now streaming on Netflix.

Carell plays Gen. Mark Naird, newly promoted from three to four stars and expecting to command the Air Force. Instead, to satisfy the whim of a never-named president who is clearly Donald Trump, he is put in charge of creating Space Force, a job at which he first stumbles, then embraces.

“POTUS wants boots on the moon by 2024,” says the secretary of defense. (“Actually, he said ‘boobs on the moon,’ but we believe that to be the intent of the president also wants to go to space to protect the internet and Twitter—a little ironic, given recent developments. (To return to the unreal real world for another second, Trump recently unveiled his actual Space Force flag and touted the development of a “super-duper missile.” The parody is self-service.)

The assignment drops Mark, his unhappy teenage daughter, Erin (Diana Silvers), and his wife, Maggie (Lisa Kudrow), in a remote corner of Colorado. In a sprawl, not-ver-secret secret base, scientists huddle over consoles and troops march by chanting: “I don’t know, but I’ve been told / Outer space is very cold.”

John Malkovich, muttering like John Malkovich, plays Dr. Adrian Mallory, in charge of the science portion of the program and almost always at loggerheads with Mark.

When Kudrow does appear, which is not often enough, she creates a little sphere of reality that humanizes whomever she’s with. (As eccentric as they made her, Phoebe was always the most believable character on “Friends.”)

Carell has opted to play Mark partially with a gruff military voice. Words seem to escape him in bursts of air, as if to symbolize his psychological repression. (“I know you’re not the most flexible person,” Maggie says. “I can be flexible if I’m ordered to.” Mark responds.) He sings old pop songs to calm his nerves—“It’s a character quirk or maybe an insight—and his taste is not necessarily good. (Then again, we may disagree on “Kokomo.”)

At other times, as when helping his daughter with her math homework, or in scenes with Kudrow, or whenever he’s out of uniform, his tone becomes more human. These more sensitive scenes are often interrupted by some crazy emergency, killing a mood.

Even among actors with a relatively generous amount of screen time, few get the opportunity to build their characters. And so it becomes difficult to care what becomes of any of them—or the fate of the Space Force itself, for that matter. “The Office” and “Parks and Recreation” managed to be both absurd and moving because the characters were always showing you who they were and how they fit together. “Space Force” remains opaque and obvious and unconvincing. It is a contraction, and just what it is meant to produce is never quite clear. Its tones never mesh; its personality remains split.

Carell and Daniels have tried to be satirical without being insulting, mostly to the disadvantage of the satire, which is rarely more biting than the first lady proposing ridiculous new designs for the Space Force uniforms. (“We wanted to make sure that we were being accurate and more than respectful,” Daniels has said.) Still, the creators do regularly insert meaningful statements about war and peace and the poor old Earth, signifying that they understand the times demand something more than silliness.

“I see billionaires in the news who look at space like it’s where we’re all going to go when we trash this planet. There is no substitute in space for this planet,” Mark tells a congressional panel.

In the same scene, as if to ensure the appearance of balance, an ancient Southern congressman declaring, “I feel safer knowing that we have satellites that contain God’s holy hellfire upon our enemies on this majestic, flat Earth of ours,” and a liberal New York congresswoman, named Grace, in other words, is “God’s holy hellfire upon our enemies.”

— whose question about the high rate and more than respectful bidding on the boots”) is made up largely of dundehedrons and weirdos. (It is nice to see Chris Gethard among them, though.)

Here, as throughout the series, things will go wrong on the way to going improbably right. As for “Space Force” itself, not so much.
**NEW ON DVD**

“The Hunt”: Director Craig Zobel's horror thriller following a group of “elites” hunting down “deplorables” has been cursed with bad timing. It was originally slated for theatrical release in September 2019, but Universal pulled it after mass shootings in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio. It didn't see the light of day until March 13, just before governors began shutdowns amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Its DVD release comes in the midst of nationwide protests and violence following the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis. Despite the controversy that has surrounded the film, what resonates most after watching it is general confusion.

And creating confusion is the film’s biggest accomplishment, for better and worse.

The story takes wild turns once arriving at the “manor,” where the “elite” co-workers commence their human hunting spree, faking out the audience with false starts several times. The message appears to be that no one can be trusted, not even the camera.

This leads us to the movie’s one saving grace: Betty Gilpin's captivating performance as the mysterious Crystal. She handles dialogue does it no favors (see: “Climate change is real!” “She’s unequaled, so have fun with it!”), eliciting as many cringes as its graphic violence.

Also available on DVD:

*Doctor Who: The Complete Twelfth Series*: The Doctor (Jodie Whittaker) continues her adventures in the United States. An episode, we might well have not come up with the idea,” he said, ruefully.

Spader, who's also an executive producer of the series, says, “I was intrigued,” the actor said. “I thought that it seemed like the right thing to do, to try and finish the episode in any way that we could, and not only the episode, but to end the season.”

The process began with a handful of script revisions to make the episode “feel a little more like it had a forward throw, driving us into next season,” Bokenkamp said. Animation helped with the plot tinkering, and provided something else on the side. “A scene that had taken place with Red and Liz (series star Megan Boone) sitting in a room, because that’s what we could afford in live action, suddenly becomes a scene between Red and Liz walking on the Washington Mall with the Capitol in the background,” Eisendrath said. “You can make it somewhat more cinematic ... make it feel more like a graphic novel.”

As series creator Bokenkamp describes it, illustrated novels and comics share DNA with “The Blacklist” and add to the case for an excursion into animation for the Sony Pictures Television and Universal Television production.

The series is “sort of a big, wild slightly mysterious Crystal. She remains unclear. The clunky dialogue does it no favors (see: “Climate change is real!” “She’s unequaled, so have fun with it!”), eliciting as many cringes as its graphic violence.

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The series is “sort of a big, wild slightly heightened show that feels like a comic book ... A bad guy in a fedora is our hero. It’s rather violent, at times it’s incredibly emotional,” he said. Add a veritable “rogue’s gallery” of villains, and there are stretches that feel “like we’re telling an old-school Batman story, with a good, juicy bad guy of the week.”

Making “The Blacklist” routinely comes with geographical complications. After it’s shot in New York, editing and other post-production takes place in Los Angeles, with oversight by LA-based Eisendrath and Bokenkamp in his native Nebraska. Adding animation required equipment to be shipped to housebound actors to record voice-over dialogue.

For Spader, that meant doing his best in a noise-prone 1850s farmhouse that also challenged what he called “the poor sound guy” ultimately tasked with making the audio pass muster.

“I hadn’t yet played Raymond Reddington with my son tip-toeing into the kitchen to get snacks,” he said. “But you do what you do. You turn the heat off so it wouldn’t cycle; you try to remember not to run the dishwasher.”

He drolly recounted “rudimentary” efforts at insulation, including placing mats tucked under the microphone and closing window shades “so the lashing rain outside wasn’t quite so loud.”

With the animation by Proof Inc. created primarily in Atlanta and London in long-distance coordination with the show’s producers, a nonstop effort was required — and it was still in motion in early May, as the episode’s stateside air date approached.

“It’s sort of a 24-hour process,” Bokenkamp said last month. “While we’re sleeping, London is working, and we’ll watch what they sent at night. Then we give them our notes and they quickly start turning them around, so there’s people in many different time zones working around the clock to get it done on time.”

While an ideal hybrid episode would have been done from scratch and animated scenes determined before taping, the producers hope the audience is understanding.

“We felt that it was important to do our best in a difficult situation to try and get the episode completed,” Eisendrath said.
An ode to oddballs

by ANNE MURPHY PAUL
Special to The Washington Post

W eird! is a distinctly odd creation, an assembly of social science reporting, autobiographical confession and in-depth interviews with the most unusual people, it holds together — just barely — by the singular voice of its creator, novelist and essayist Olga Khazan. By turns insistently candid, calmly authoritative and poignantly insightful, Khazan’s persona has a startling freshness that ultimately wins over the reader, who may well identify with some head-scratching and eye-brow-raising along the way. This is a book that has evoked such bewilderment reactions all her life. She has always felt weird, not like others — a painfully and permanently strange state that she traces back to her childhood as a Russian immigrant in Midland, Texas. Her experiences growing up in this Bible Belt oil town are a mix of bizarre and pointless cruelty and profound humor — often featuring her father, a larger-than-life persona to whom she attributes many opinions and glibly trenchant pinching. “One day, someone toileted in the sink and I had to explain to my parents that this is what American kids do to losers,” Khazan recounts. “Undeterred, my dad eagerly raked the toilet paper into a garbage bag and put it in his bathroom fortune box: ‘Pour the toilet paper!’ he said happily over dinner.”

Now a successful magazine writer, Khazan does not lack for status that others seem to sense immediately. “Sometimes,” she writes, “strangers ask me if I’m lost.”

“Weird” is Khazan’s attempt to find herself — in the psychological and sociological literature she regularly covers for the Atlantic, and in the narratives of other people who feel they don’t fit. On her wide-ranging tour of the former realm, she examines research on norms, conformity, coping (especially divorce, loneliness and “imposter syndrome”) — a voluminous catalogue of the ways humans create groups that include some and exclude others. One framework that she repeatedly concerns itself with: loose cultures. “Tight cultures are those in which social norms are strict and formal, and the punishments for breaking them are severe,” she explains. Loose cultures, on the other hand, “allow a wider range of behaviors.” This distinction appears in a less academic form in many of the weird-people stories Khazan proceeds to tell. Most of these narratives trace a path of liberation from a rigidly rule-bound community to a more liberal and accepting milieu. It’s easier to be weird in a loose culture than in a tight one, she observes.

This is Khazan’s own journey, of course. The book is given over by her search for answers to her eternal questions: Why do some people feel weird? How do such weirdos come to feel more comfortable in a world of near-normal human behavior? After all, are they not all, at heart, just a bunch of attention outcast, on a cast of real-life outsiders and misfits.

The first of these is Michael Ain, a professor of orthopedic surgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. Ain’s difference from his previous high-profile parent: He has achondroplasia, or dwarfism, and stands only 4 feet 2 inches tall. When he first interviewed for admission to medical school, Khazan reports, “some admissions officers would push him away.”

Others stared awkwardly, then dismissed him from the meeting. “Patients won’t respect you,” one said. “They want tall doctors with long, white coats.” He was rejected from every school.” More than a decade later, after gaining his degree and a single preschool teacher, a female racecar driver, a Mormon missionary, a rebellious teenager in an Amish order, a liberal professor in a conservative school, a transgender city council member in another small town — so many purportedly weird people, in fact, that his biographical details begin to blur.

It’s not clear, either, if there is any essential quality that unites this motley group, as Khazan herself hastens to acknowledge, she doesn’t intend “to imply that I consider the low-level unease of, say, a white immigrant to be equivalent to the obstacles faced by people of color or those living with the particular conditions.”

Yet Khazan is looking for commonalities, and finds them, making connections among her rhyming cases and drawing parallels to her own story.

Toward the end of the book, the reader encounters a narrator trying to become less weird, while also advancing the notion that being odd is actually an advantage. Both of these efforts feel a bit halfhearted. “Weird” is at its strongest when Khazan allows herself to explore, with bracing candor and unexpected insight, some of the weird-people stories she doesn’t intend “to imply that I consider the low-level unease of, say, a white immigrant to be equivalent to the obstacles faced by people of color or those living with the particular conditions.”

It’s too bad that this 15th installment in the Siri Paiboun mystery series is the final one. In 1981, Dr. Paiboun is retired from his job as the national coroner in corrupt, Communist Laos. He’s helping out in his wife’s noodle shop when an anonymous tip sends him a Japanese soldier’s World War II-era bilingual diary. With a day perils connection to the relic, the good doctor is assisted by, amongst others, Auntie Bop, Dr. Paiboun’s recently deceased “transvestite spirit guide.” It’s a wonderful farewell to a boundless series.

The Delightful Life of a Side Pilot
Colin Cotterill

If you’re looking for a fictional good fright to distract you from the real ones, look no further than the world of the Hidden Iceland series, featuring brainy, glum police inspector Helga Hulmamondottir. It’s a winter with snowing and little daylight when three bodies are found in and near a remote farmhouse. The talented Jonasson backs up two months to portray — with the precision of a puzzler — twin complex marriages whose outcomes are not at all ambiguous, this being a crime novel.

The Silence
Susan Alliot

Australia’s ugly history of forced removal of Aboriginal children from their families is central to the plot of this first novel, a wrenching melodrama about a Sydney seaside neighborhood that’s rife with alcoholism, marital discord, thwarted intentions and possibly murder. Londoner Isla Green, intent on sobering up and staying that way, flies to Sydney to help her sobering-up and staying that way, flies to Sydney to help her dysfunctional mother and child. But things go from bad to worse for Isla and her relation.

The Strel
Mary Logue

The author of the Deputy Sheriff Claire Watkins series is off on a winning new tangent with Brigid Reardon, an immigrant from Laos who lands in the Dakota Territory of the 1870s and sets out to clear her gold-mining brother-in-law in the murder of a “strel,” a Deadwood prostitute. Reardon is a prayerful Catholic girl who is also appealingly droll and self-possessed. Hilden also learns to swoon on cue and aim a derringer in this vibrant new series.

‘Hunger Games‘ prequel fills in villain’s backstory

BY KARIN TANABE
Special to The Washington Post

J oyou know Suzanne Collins’ dystopian Hunger Games trilogy, you know Coriolanus Snow. He’s Katniss Everdeen’s nemesis and the tyrannical proconsul of Panem. Now Collins has created a young Coriolanus, and kids from the districts are selected to fight to a televised death. He’s a sadist who smokes roses and has a talent for crushing both spirits and heartbeats.

Do you need to know more? With the publishing odds ever in her favor (the Hunger Games trilogy sold more than 100 million copies), Collins believes you do. In this prequel, Collins claims you need to panic. It’s been 10 years since the inception, and like any reality show that has been on for a decade, it could use new bells and whistles. It is decided that for the first time, Academy students will mentor the tributes forced to compete. Collins claims that the mentors aren’t materializing. The ratings need a boost, and it’s up to the mentors to increase that. “When do you watch? Or let viewers feed the tributes as if they were zoo animals? Oh, the possibilities.”

The scenes during the Games are sharply plotted and move with the same superlative execution as the Hunger Games. If you’re looking for a fictional good fright to distract you from the real ones, look no further than the world of the Hidden Iceland series, featuring brainy, glum police inspector Helga Hulmamondottir. It’s a winter with snowing and little daylight when three bodies are found in and near a remote farmhouse. The talented Jonasson backs up two months to portray — with the precision of a puzzler — twin complex marriages whose outcomes are not at all ambiguous, this being a crime novel.

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Thrillers, mysteries offer summer escape

P.D. James said, “Crime fiction can be a joy, a refuge, despite some evidence to the contrary, that we live in a rational, comprehensible, and moral universe.” We’ve all needed one or more of these kinds of escape into a rational universe? A few new top-notch mysteries and thrillers are here to help.

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Most serene views

Beautiful San Marino is one of the world’s smallest countries

BY NORMAN LLAMAS
Stars and Stripes

San Marino is full of surprises. It’s one of the world’s smallest countries — a microstate covering around 42 square miles, or less than half the area of Washington, D.C. — and is completely surrounded by Italy. Founded in the year 301, it’s said to be the oldest country in the world, and has the oldest constitution, dating from 1600.

Also called the Most Serene Republic of San Marino, it’s one of the most spectacular destinations for anyone living in Italy who’s looking for a day trip or weekend getaway, when coronavirus restrictions make that possible. It’s about four hours by car from Aviano, which is where we set out from one day before the pandemic made traveling impossible for people living in Italy.

Mount Titano dominates San Marino’s landscape. The capital, also called San Marino, with its cobblestone streets and medieval walled old town, sits atop the mountain and is the country’s most visited tourist attraction. Three fortresses dating from medieval times look from Mount Titano toward Rimini and the Adriatic coast. A footpath connects all three.

The best way to get to the city center — which, together with the mountain it sits on, was named a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2008 — is by cable car. You’ll find it about halfway up the mountain, with parking available in several lots. A RT ticket is 4.50 euros, except for children under 4 feet tall and muzzled dogs, who ride for free.

Bring a camera because when you get to the top, you’ll be greeted by one of the most magnificent views you’ve ever seen. There are also nonmedieval attractions in San Marino, and one that we particularly liked is a small store on Via Eugippo, in the city center at the top of Mount Titano, that sells nothing but rubber ducks. There are ducks depicting Star Wars characters, the Minions, an official San Marino duck, even a President Donald Trump duck. As of late May, the Duck Shop was welcoming customers again, but only if they wear face masks and follow other anti-coronavirus guidelines like social distancing.

Expect to do a lot of hill walking in the city. If you’re used to hiking, you’ll be fine, but make sure to take frequent breaks, wear the right shoes and have plenty to drink. Also note that the city center gets very crowded on weekends, holidays and during the summer months, and some attractions may not be open, or may be operating on a limited schedule, because of coronavirus restrictions.

DIRECTIONS

San Marino is about 220 miles south of Aviano, or roughly four hours by car. Once you’re off the highway, follow signs to the capital city and cable car.

COSTS

Parking lots have meters and the cost varies depending on how long you stay. We paid about $15 for around 4 hours of parking in the city of San Marino. Be careful not to park in areas reserved for residents, typically marked by yellow lines. You will get a ticket and your car could be towed. San Marino has the usual selection of museums — contemporary art, history of the city, etc. — and some unusual ones, like museums of creatures of the night, of old weapons, new weapons, or instruments of torture. Entry fees are very reasonable.

FOOD

There are restaurants throughout the city, and stands offering fast food can be found on the footpath connecting the three fortresses.

INFORMATION

San Marino Duck Store: Via Eugippo 22, San Marino.
Phone: +378 (0549) 964177
Online: sanmarinoduckstore.net

— Norman Llamas

Views of the country of San Marino are plentiful from San Marino City, which was built on Mount Titano, one of the peaks of the Apennine Mountains. San Marino was founded in 301 A.D.

The Duck Store sells nothing but rubber ducks.

Gualta tower, also known as La Rocca, is one of three towers in the city of San Marino.

Cesta tower, also known as De La Fratta, is located on the highest of the three peaks of Monte Titano, in San Marino’s capital city. It was constructed in the 13th century on the remains of a Roman fort.

In January, before the coronavirus, people gathered outside the Basilica Di San Marino, also called La Pieve, in San Marino City.
A welcome return
Some of Europe’s most famous museums reopen doors

By Raf Casert and Peter Delong
Associated Press

In the Netherlands, the intimate gaze of the Girl with the Pearl Earring can once again stare and entice visitors. Down in Spain, three tiny maze-like steel sheets by Richard Serra is a wonderland anew for art lovers. And at the Vatican’s Sistine Chapel, Michelangelo’s Creation of Adam can drop jaws like it has done for decades.

As Europe slowly emerges from the coronavirus pandemic that has killed well over 150,000 on the continent and continues to be a major challenge to the world’s biggest economies, Monday let a brilliant ray shine through the gloom as several of the top museums globally reopened to flaunt their riches. The Netherlands rejoiced in a relaxing of lockdown measures that have kept people away from bars, restaurants and cinemas — as well as some of the greatest cultural institutions in the world.

“Welcome back,” said Rijksmuseum General Director Taco Dibbits as the first visitors filed into the vast museum in central Amsterdam.

At the adjacent Van Gogh Museum, the welcome came with — what else? — sunflowers. Any visitor leaving the museum was given one of the yellow flowers famously depicted by the Dutch painter’s brush to celebrate the reopening.

Across the continent, museum officials rejoiced as visitors were let in again.

“This is a day to celebrate, a day of great joy,” said director Barbara Jatta, as her Vatican Museums reopened Monday. “The significance of this reopening is hope. It is a great hope that we can return to the normalcy.

Some 1,600 people reserved tickets in advance to see the Sistine Chapel and its sublime walls and ceilings on the first day the Vatican Museums opened to the public after a three-month coronavirus shutdown.

During peak summer months, the Vatican Museums routinely would have an hourslong line of tourists waiting to enter since there was no advance reservation system to schedule.

In so many museums now, the phenomenon of over-tourism is making space for cultural tourism, especially since so few foreign visitors can come in.

At the Guggenheim museum in Bilbao, Spain, the price of one ticket bought this month will include a 3-month museum membership.

Steadily, ever more of Europe’s main museums will reopen.

In Madrid, the Prado and Reina Sofia open again on Saturday.

In Paris, the Impressionist palace that is the Musee d’Orsay will open from June 23 and the Louvre, home of the Mona Lisa, will welcome visitors again on July 6.

Dreaming of sunlit adventures in Europe’s far north

As summer approaches, Europeans would normally be flocking to southern destinations to tank up on a commodity that for many is in short supply the rest of the year: a blazing summer sun. Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain attract the ray- and warmth-starved masses from Scandinavia, Great Britain and densely-packed Europe, places for now, there do remain, even in travel anywhere these days is not set, or barely dips below the horizon over a 24-hour period.

From this time of year and into August, Europe’s northernmost cities, towns and hamlets beckon with a range of unique pursuits. Add to that the fact that they can be considered to at almost any hour of the day, and you’re really on to something special.

Lapland experiences: The Finnish sauna experience is enjoyed not only in winter but throughout the year, with the most magical place to indulge in this ritual quite possibly a rustic lakeside cabin in Lapland. For a touch of pure Finn-ness, opt for a smoke sauna, in which wood is burned in a sauna without a chimney. When the room approaches optimal temperature, the smoke only able to gaze upwards at Michelangelo’s ceiling, visitors had space to move and explore the exquisitely detailed ceiling of the high Renaissance master.

Where suffocating throngs once forced everyone along in a sweaty shuffle, the only sensory impediment was a protective mask.

In Amsterdam’s Rijksmuseum there were, for once, more people depicted in Rembrandt’s Night Watch than visitors looking at them.

At the Guggenheim museum in Bilbao, Spain, the spray of one ticket bought this month will include a 3-month museum membership.

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For an overview of salmon fishing: tinyurl.com/y78bt5hj

Meeting the Sami: The indigenous reindeer herders known as the Sami make their homes in Scandinavia and northern Russia. The rhythm of their lives is largely dictated by the reindeer, meaning spring is the time for birth, and summer is the time for the calves to grow big.

A Sami family residing in the small village of Breivik on the island of Soroya demonstrates their way of life to their guests on select dates between June and August. A visit to this idyllic island would include the chance to see the deer, hike and go sea fishing. At night, the family pitches a traditional lavvu tent and entertains by a campfire with stories and traditional song. A four-day, three-night package goes for about $2,650 per person. Online: visitnatives.com/summereexperience
Skip the lines, avoid crowds
No hype, just good food at OhJulia in Stuttgart

By John Vandiver
Stars and Stripes

OhJulia, you aren’t a hyped burger joint, and that’s just right right now. There’s a lot to be said for restaurants like OhJulia that aren’t the hot new thing and don’t draw excessive crowds at a time when eating in a small indoor area still carries a coronavirus risk.

Just a couple of weeks before everything locked down, the Five Guys burger franchise opened in downtown Stuttgart. I’d been anxious to give the place a try while holed up in quarantine. Masked, I hopped on a U-Bahn and walked to Stuttgart’s downtown for the first time in months. But upon reaching Five Guys, I got cold feet.

As for Five Guys, the long wait continues, but the service is also generally friendly and attentive, which isn’t given a lot of places in Stuttgart.

For Five Guys, the long wait continues, but hopefully not forever.

vanfinder.john@stripes.com
Twitter: @john_vandiver

During the coronavirus pandemic, OhJulia at Stuttgart’s Killesberg Park has begun offering takeout options. The Italian sausage pizza is especially good.

Photos by John Vandiver/Stars and Stripes

OHJULIA

Location: Am Hoehenpark 2, Stuttgart
Hours: Monday-Friday, 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Prices: From 8-13 euros for pasta, pizza and burgers; up to 25 euros for a 24-inch pizza
Information: Phone: +49 (0)711 253 7722
Online: ohjulia.de/stuttgart/weere-open.html

English menu: Yes
— John Vandiver

TUNA MELT WITH KETCHUP

Ingredients:
6-oz. can of oil-packed tuna, drained
1/2 cup diced red onion
1 scallion, white and light green parts, finely chopped
3 tbsp. coarsely chopped flat-leaf parsley
3 tbsp. mayonnaise
Hot sauce, such as Tabasco
Salt and freshly ground pepper
4 slices of rustic bread
2 tbsp. unsalted butter
4 slices of sharp cheddar cheese
Ketchup (recipe follows, or just use your favorite store-bought bottle)

Directions:
In a medium bowl, mix the tuna, red onion, scallion, parsley, mayonnaise, and a few dashes of hot sauce. Season with salt and pepper.
Butter each slice of bread on one side. Divide the tuna mixture over the uncooked side of 2 bread slices and top with the cheddar and then the other 2 bread slices, buttered sides up. Warm a griddle or cast-iron skillet over moderate heat and fry the sandwiches, carefully turning once, until the bread is crusty and the cheese is melted, about 3 minutes per side. Serve hot with ketchup.

KETCHUP

Ingredients:
2 tbsp. olive oil
1 garlic clove, minced
1/2 cup chopped red onion
14-oz. can peeled whole tomatoes
1/2 tsp. tomato puree
1 tbsp. dark brown sugar, plus more to taste
1 tbsp. red wine vinegar
Salt and freshly ground pepper

Directions:
In a medium saucepan, heat the olive oil. Add the garlic and red onion and cook over moderately high heat, stirring, until softened but not browned, about 5 minutes. Add the tomatoes, tomato puree, sugar and vinegar and cook over low heat, breaking up the tomatoes, until thick, about 8 minutes. Let cool, then transfer to a small blender and puree. Season the ketchup with salt and pepper, and more brown sugar, if desired.

Makes about 2 cups
Serves 2

PHOTOS BY JOHN VAN DIVER/STARS AND STRIPES

Tuna melt two ways: with cheddar and with jalapeno Jack.

American home kitchens are in an unprecedented moment, where the most pedestrian supermarket staples can feel as valuable as finicky homemade products. A household’s most prized possessions can include a jar of sourdough starter just as easily as a can of Chef Boyardee SpaghettiOs.

Which makes this the perfect time to celebrate the tuna melt, one of the most supermarket-driven of sandwiches. It’s made from canned tuna, mayonnaise and sliced cheese from the dairy aisle — not dependent on decent produce, like, say, a BLT. What makes it shine now is the increasing availability of high-quality canned fish.

The dish has been having a bit of a moment since March 1. According to a Reddit spokes-person, there’s been an increase of more than 30% in mentions of tuna melts across the platform, which includes an 18.7 million-member food community, compared with the same time period in 2019.

The sandwich is also a highlight of the new “The Tinned Fish Cookbook: Easy-to-Make Meals From Ocean to Plate” by Bart van Olphen, who was once a chef at the 2-Michelin-star restaurant Lucas Carton in Paris. He’s gone on to become a passionate sustainable seafood advocate. He advises British food star Jamie Oliver on the subject and has written cookbooks in both English and his native Dutch. In his 2010 award-winning “Fish Tales,” he chronicles stories and recipes from sustainable fisheries around the world.

His new book includes 45 recipes for different kinds of canned and tinned seafood, from anchovies and sardines to

Van Olphen has a soft spot for the tuna melt, which combines creamy tuna salad with melty cheese within the crunchiness of fried bread. He notes you can substitute your favorite cheese for cheddar. But it’s hard to argue with a cheese that melts all over the tuna salad as it rests in the skillet. (He also says you can switch out the canned fish in the sandwich, but who would want to do that?)

The former chef in van Olphen hacks the classic by making a homemade ketchup to serve as a dipping sauce for the tuna melt. It’s a good, tangy, sweet tomato mix. But if you love a ketchup in a bottle, use that. Whether you want to go the extra step of making homemade sourdough bread for the sandwich is up to you.

The following recipe is adapted from “The Tinned Fish Cookbook.”

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1/2 cup diced red onion
1 scallion, white and light green parts, finely chopped
3 tbsp. coarsely chopped flat-leaf parsley
3 tbsp. mayonnaise
Hot sauce, such as Tabasco
Salt and freshly ground pepper
4 slices of rustic bread
2 tbsp. unsalted butter
4 slices of sharp cheddar cheese
Ketchup (recipe follows, or just use your favorite store-bought bottle)

Directions:
In a medium bowl, mix the tuna, red onion, scallion, parsley, mayonnaise, and a few dashes of hot sauce. Season with salt and pepper.
Butter each slice of bread on one side. Divide the tuna mixture over the uncooked side of 2 bread slices and top with the cheddar and then the other 2 bread slices, buttered sides up. Warm a griddle or cast-iron skillet over moderate heat and fry the sandwiches, carefully turning once, until the bread is crusty and the cheese is melted, about 3 minutes per side. Serve hot with ketchup.

KETCHUP

Ingredients:
2 tbsp. olive oil
1 garlic clove, minced
1/2 cup chopped red onion
14-oz. can peeled whole tomatoes
1/2 tsp. tomato puree
1 tbsp. dark brown sugar, plus more to taste
1 tbsp. red wine vinegar
Salt and freshly ground pepper

Directions:
In a medium saucepan, heat the olive oil. Add the garlic and red onion and cook over moderately high heat, stirring, until softened but not browned, about 5 minutes. Add the tomatoes, tomato puree, sugar and vinegar and cook over low heat, breaking up the tomatoes, until thick, about 8 minutes. Let cool, then transfer to a small blender and puree. Season the ketchup with salt and pepper, and more brown sugar, if desired.

Makes about 2 cups
Serves 2

No hype, just good food at OhJulia in Stuttgart

TUNA MELT WITH KETCHUP

Ingredients:
6-oz. can of oil-packed tuna, drained
1/2 cup diced red onion
1 scallion, white and light green parts, finely chopped
3 tbsp. coarsely chopped flat-leaf parsley
3 tbsp. mayonnaise
Hot sauce, such as Tabasco
Salt and freshly ground pepper
4 slices of rustic bread
2 tbsp. unsalted butter
4 slices of sharp cheddar cheese
Ketchup (recipe follows, or just use your favorite store-bought bottle)

Directions:
In a medium bowl, mix the tuna, red onion, scallion, parsley, mayonnaise, and a few dashes of hot sauce. Season with salt and pepper.
Butter each slice of bread on one side. Divide the tuna mixture over the uncooked side of 2 bread slices and top with the cheddar and then the other 2 bread slices, buttered sides up. Warm a griddle or cast-iron skillet over moderate heat and fry the sandwiches, carefully turning once, until the bread is crusty and the cheese is melted, about 3 minutes per side. Serve hot with ketchup.

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Makes about 2 cups
Serves 2
A spirited journey

Pour a glass and be whisked away to faraway destinations

By Liza Weisstuch
Special to The Washington Post

Civilization, as William Faulkner once said, begins with distillation. Long before our age of international commerce, each culture around the world made drinks with its own indigenous ingredients and techniques. Hundreds—if not thousands—of years later, some spirits have gone on to play a starring role on the international drinks scene while others remain far more popular in their place of origin. But one thing’s for sure: Wherever you go, there are drinking traditions that go back generations.

Here are a few suggestions for how to drink like a local in far-off destinations, even when you can’t be there.

Amaro, the bittersweet love of Italy

One of Francesca Nonino’s most vivid childhood memories was that moment when, after a meal, her grandfather would pour a generous helping of the family’s amaro over ice, add an orange slice and offer her a deep whiff from the glass. That remembrance of taking in what she calls “alchemic perfection”—a medley of bitter-orange, lemon, mint, burnt sugar, saffron and sundry alpine herb and spices—drives her today as she learns how to distill her family’s Quintessentia Amaro Nonino, a modified version of the recipe created by Antonio, her great-grandfather, who took over the family’s grappa distillery in Fruili, Italy, from his father, the founder. (Francesca’s mother Cristina is the lead distiller today.)

The Noninos are just one example of many Italian families whose generations-old amaro is still being produced. A century-plus ago, these bitter liqueurs were made for medicinal purposes, primarily to aid digestion, but since they also happen to be delicious, it’s little surprise they’ve found a place in recreational consumption. It’s always good to have a bottle around the house for a post-feast punctuation mark. Francesca also recommends it just as her grandfather still drinks it—over a rock of ice with an orange slice.

Cachaca, the soul of Brazil

Back in the 1990s, Americans thought of tequila as bottom-shelf hooch: Typically adulterated with additives, the Mexican spirit showed up in margaritas or a shot glass, the latter of which easily prompted a cringe. Then the category saw a glorious reawakening. Its natural beauty came shining through, and now tequila is celebrated, sipped and savored far beyond the local cantina.

And so it goes with cachaca, Brazil’s national spirit. Made from sugar cane juice, early producers date to the early 1500s, preceding rum—which is most often made from molasses, a sugar byproduct—by at least 100 years. Even when you consider that cachaca has a long history in a giant, densely populated country, it’s nevertheless astonishing to learn there are upward of 4,000 brands in Brazil.

Entrepreneurs are making strides these days, developing brands with long-standing producers to showcase the finer side of cachaca, once known as a harsh spirit reserved for the caipirinha in lively settings and bracing shots in more casual ones.

Working with a nearly century-old family-run distillery, Nate Whitehouse and Peter Nevenglosky developed Avua, which comes in several expressions, including some aged in various woods, a common practice among traditional producers. Sip it neat or swap it in for the base spirit in your favorite rum drink for an earthier, grassier take on the drink. Nate favors it in an El Presidente.

Mastiha spirit, an ancient drink for modern times

Any Greek restaurant in the United States would likely have a choice of ouzo, the anise-flavored liquor that Greece’s older generations down with fried sardines as commonly as executives pair Bordeaux with filet mignon. But it’s hardly the only spirit of the nation.

In the cafes of the Greek islands, glasses have long been filled with a mastiha spirit. Mastiha, a resin that’s recognized as a superfood, comes from trees that only grow on one Greek island (Chios). It’s been used in alcoholic drinks since Aristotle’s time and even served as the ancient world’s chewing gum. (It provides the linguistic root for the verb “masticate.”)

Shown to aid digestion, the drink is traditionally served before or after meals. Effie Panagopoulos calls the spirit Greece’s best-kept secret. Or it was, at least, until she gave the game away in March 2018 when she launched Kleos, the first super-premium brand of the traditional liqueur. Fresh and vegetal with a hint of sweet mint, you can drink it as a functional digestif or mix it 50/50 with any base spirit.

Baijiu, the star of the Far East, rises in the U.S.

What Bollywood is to the entertainment industry, Baijiu is to spirits: ubiquitous to the point that it’s unavoidable in an Asian nation but barely a blip on the radar stateside. The numbers tell it best: Consider the popularity of vodka and combine that with the popularity of whiskey—all whiskies. That doesn’t even begin to compare with consumption of baijiu in China.

According to research group IWSR Drinks Market Analysis, in 2018 (the last year for which figures are available) global sales of baijiu clocked in at 14.6 billion bottles, almost all of which was consumed in China, typically as a shot. Global sales of vodka, meanwhile, were a meager 5.1 billion bottles, and global whiskey was 5.3 billion. It’s important to note that, like whiskey, baijiu is a big category. It encompasses drinks distilled from an array of grains. Sorghum is the most popular, but you can find products made from rice, millet, corn and more. The fermentation agent, qu, a medley of yeast, mold and bacteria, is what makes a spirit baijiu. The variable base-grains and production techniques lend themselves to a wide spectrum of products, ranging from lemony toasted rice to herbaceous and sweet to earthy and savoury.

Derek Sandhaus would like to see a little

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27

Quintessentia Amaro Nonino is a modified version of the recipe created by Antonio Nonino, who took over the family’s grappa distillery in Fruili, Italy, from his father.
more American love for the spirit. "The author, most recently, of "Drunk in China: Baijiu and the World’s Oldest Drinking Culture," and leading English-speaking expert on the stuff was part of the team that collaborated with Luzhou Laojiao, China’s oldest continuously operating baijiu distillery, to turn the Mág River-Sichuan baijiu. It’s a Western-friendly style that delivers bright tropical and floral notes that tame the “firewater.” While typically consumed as a shot, Sandhaus says this one has plenty of uses in cocktails or, better yet, as accompaniment to a spicy Sichuan meal.

**Genever, or how to go Dutch**

In Holland, the bar call is for a kopstootje, which translates as “head butt.” If that sounds daunting, chalk it up to the infamous Dutch blunt humor. This seemingly brutal drink is nothing more than a boilermaker — the classic shot-and-beer combo. The spirit here is genever, a Dutch botanical drink commonly thought of as the precursor to gin. It’s actually more akin to what whiskey was centuries ago, which is to say a distillate of malted barley with a small bit of botanicals added, a trick whiskey-makers used to soften their fiery liquor before they started using wood barrels to do the job.

“Genever is a parent of whiskey,” explains Philip Duff, founder and owner of Old Duff Genever, which he produces at one of the few remaining family-owned distilleries in Holland. “Think of it like this: Normally you only see the descendant of a dinosaur, how things transmogrified over time. But if you drink real genever, you’re drinking exactly what ruled the world in the 1600s,” he says.

**Will adventure travel point the way back?**

Adventure travel specialists discern a silver lining to the current pause in travel. Theirs may be one of the first tourism sectors to rebound — and some of their practices could be adopted more widely when the world opens to travel again.

Adventure trips tend to bring people to out-of-the-way destinations. They also often require travelers to be self-reliant, from carrying their own food and gear, to hiking or paddling themselves to a destination. Some popular stops, such as the Galapagos Islands and Peru’s Inca Trail, have quotas that limit visitors. These approaches could help travelers stay healthy by allowing space for social distancing.

“The outdoors is where people are turning right now,” said Greg Lais, founder of Wilderness Inquiry, a nonprofit organization that makes outdoor adventures accessible to people of all abilities.

“In a post-COVID world, we’ll be seeing purpose and growth and connection more than ever, and travel is about connection at a basic human level,” said Jordan Harvey, co-founder of Minnesota-based Knowmad Adventures. Harvey is currently establishing safety protocols for his customers and their in-country guides and hosts, even as trips have ceased. But he sees a bright future.

“The current pause in travel — and the fears of contagion — will make people ‘really open to what is less known and less traveled,’ Harvey said.

— Star Tribune (Minneapolis)
Patrons under plastic

As virus restrictions are relaxed, restaurant owners are seeking to welcome back safe, in-person dining

By Thomas Adamson and Oleg Cetinic

Dining at a table where each person is enclosed by a clear plastic shield might look and sound futuristic, but it could be one way for some restaurants to reopen. It also might help in the event that your companion orders escargots, heavy on the garlic.

The prototype plastic shields are known as the “Plex’eat,” and they resemble big clear lampshades suspended from the ceiling. They are being showcased temporarily at H.A.N.D., a Parisian restaurant seeking a way to reopen its dining room as coronavirus restrictions are relaxed.

As restaurateurs around the world seek to resume in-person dining amid the pandemic, they want to adhere to social distancing rules while also trying to serve as many customers as health and safety measures will allow.

Some are putting mannequins at every other table to put some space between the actual customers, like at Augustas and上的, a restaurant in the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius. Some of its faux diners are bears seated at some tables to keep diners properly spaced apart. They also ensure a cozy, less-sterile atmosphere.

At Amsterdam’s Mediamatic restaurant, the owners have erected small glass houses that surround each table, served by waiters in protective shields.

While many restaurants offered takeout and delivery during the health crisis to keep generating at least some income, such practices are less common in France, although Michelin starred chefs such as Alain Ducasse have started doing takeout service.

Owners are seeking solutions that will coax back customers while also easing their anxiety about catching the virus.

Mathieu Manzoni, the director of H.A.N.D., said he thinks the plastic shields are a “pretty, more poetic” solution for restaurateurs who fear that social distancing could cut their capacity by half or more.

“There is a bit of a panic,” Manzoni said.

Makers of the Plex’eat say they have received more than 200 preorders around the world, including from France, the U.S. and Japan.

Designer Christophe Gernigon said he got the idea after visiting a store in Bangkok “with three individual domes with chairs where people would sit and listen to music.”

He merged the idea with the large face shields that have proliferated since the pandemic began, although there is no filtration system to keep any viruses from spreading.

Being French, there’s a version for more intimate dining, of course: a dome that cocoons its occupants in romantic isolation from the rest of the room.

Among other revamped restaurants across Europe:
- At El Salamanca, a Barcelona beachfront restaurant, menus are gone and customers use their smart phones to scan a QR code to consult what is on offer.
- Greek restaurants are using salt and pepper sachets inside of shakers, and menus are either thrown away after each meal or are laminated and wiped down regularly. Some tavernas have staff in matching face masks.
- In the Russian city of Nizhny Novgorod, a restaurant on the banks of the Volga and Oka rivers has set up 20 plastic huts for couples. It is awaiting approval from authorities to open if it meets safety standards.
- Italian restaurants are using contact tracing. Diners are supposed to reserve tables ahead of time and owners are keeping their contact information: If someone subsequently reports testing positive, the restaurant can quickly identify and contact those who ate there at the same time.
With eyes on the future

How the coronavirus pandemic is changing entertainment in Japan

BY SHOKO ODA AND NAO SAND
Bloomberg

Singing your heart out at karaoke boxes may never feel the same in Japan in the coronavirus era. To encourage customers to return following the lifting of the state of emergency, the Japan Karaoke Association has drafted a set of guidelines detailing recommendations on how the industry can safely resume. They call for a limit on how many people can be in one box — typically a booth smaller than a motel room — and for people to wear masks “and/or other protective gear that covers the eyes and face” while belting out the latest hits.

A national pastime and cultural export, karaoke unfortunately tacks every box in the government’s guidelines of environments to avoid; crowded, cramped and potentially laden with virus-carrying droplets. But that didn’t stop customers from lining up outside outlets of Manekineko, Japan’s largest karaoke chain, as they reopened for business on Wednesday in Kanagawa, south of Tokyo.

“We’re asking for everyone except the person singing to wear masks,” said Hitomi Baba, a spokeswoman for chain operator Koshidaka Holdings Co. “We’re also giving out a mask to each customer where possible, and where we can’t, giving disinfectant sheets instead.” About half of the chain’s 527 outlets across the country have resumed business.

Japan lifted its state of emergency nationwide on May 25, as new infections and overall hospitalization rates have slowed to levels near the peak. The government has warned people they must adjust to a “new lifestyle,” with recommendations covering everything from how to commute and shop to a “new lifestyle,” with recommendations covering everything from how to commute and shop to how to dress and microphone themselves.

Some recommendations may be easier to obey than others. An organization representing theme parks, including the operators of Tokyo Disney Resort and Universal Studios Japan, unveiled a set of measures to reduce risk at the parks. Among the recommendations was one calling on customers to refrain from screaming on roller coasters and attractions and, of course, to wear masks while on the rides.

Countries around the world are cautiously reopening their economies as people attempt to resume a sense of normality while mindful that the virus could return in second waves until there is a vaccine for widespread use. People in Japan have begun to speak of the “With Corona” era, meaning a time in which people live with the virus as part of their everyday lives and try to reduce risk of infection, instead of sheltering at home to avoid it. Japan’s approach to the pandemic has assumed that the virus won’t be wiped out, with small clusters already spreading days after the emergency was declared over.

Amid lingering questions over why Japan hasn’t seen anywhere near the level of cases and deaths from the virus as other countries, the nation’s experts have credited advice given early in the pandemic to avoid what they term the “Three Cs” — closed spaces, crowded places and close-contact settings where the virus is thought to spread most easily.

The seven-week loose lockdown — which requested some firms to close and urged residents to stay home, albeit with no penalties for disobedience — has pushed many businesses to the brink, and left industries scrambling to create environments where customers will feel safe spending.

“Companies that don’t take care of their customers will be subject to fierce criticism if it comes to light,” said Tomoki Inoue, chief analyst at NLI Research Institute. “That’s a risk, so everyone will be looking to turn behavior into daily habits.”

Japanese organizations like to create rules,” said Rochelle Kopp of Japan Intercultural Consulting, who advises and trains Japanese firms. “And Japanese individuals like to have rules so they know what’s appropriate or not. Going along with what the rule is, what has been determined, is very important.”

In Tokyo, the metropolitan government has laid out a three-stage reopening road map for when businesses can resume operations. While the government can’t force businesses to close during the pandemic, a name-and-shame campaign against outlets that defied calls to voluntarily close, such as pachinko parlors, was highly successful in securing cooperation. Karaoke booths can resume in stage three, while gyms may be reopened in stage two of the plan, which began in some regions last weekend.

High-end fitness gym operator Rizap Group Inc., which saw its shares drop as much as 59% this year during the pandemic as it closed outlets, has gone as far as announcing that it will provide coronavirus antibody tests to more than 6,000 employees and trainers, and in principle test all new clients.

“We have established our own safety and security standard protocol, ‘Rizap Standard With Corona,’ as a new normal, developed under the guidance of infectious disease control doctors,” the company said in a statement. One sector that has yet to get guidance from the authorities is Japan’s nighttime entertainment sector, known as “mizu shobai,” meaning “the water trade,” which spans everything from casual bars where young women chat to customers to prostitution, which is in large parts legal.

Hostess bars, where female escorts pour drinks and chat with multiple tables of men throughout an evening, have been particularly singled out as a source of multiple infection clusters. The government has continued to urge people to avoid them, with several of the recent cases identified in Tokyo linked to such outlets, according to an NTV report.

With no end to the situation in sight, some have resorted to opening hostess bars online to alleviate the financial hit. Customers can choose a bar of their choice, and chat and virtually drink with a hostess or other customers in a webcam “nomikai,” or drinking session.

Whether it’s a small bar or a fairly large one, you can’t avoid close-contact settings with these places as hostesses need to socialize with customers, said Mayuko Igarashi, who started an online bar. “We launched it May 14 and it’s been full house the past four, five days,” she said.

The Shibuya shopping district, a major fashion and nightlife center in Tokyo, was crowded in this 2017 photo. How the coronavirus changes the landscape of such hot spots remains to be seen as restrictions are slowly lifted and businesses once again open their doors.
To be polite, considerate now means something much different than it used to.
The social element of someone’s job can play a large role in missing a work spouse, too, Westring said. “If you’re married and work a full-time job, the people that you spend the most time with, besides your partner, are your work colleagues — that is your social circle as well,” she said. “So there’s a friendship level, too, that I think people are for sure missing.” While missing out on those social connections is a valid concern, Westring also thinks being without certain work relationships can make people miss parts of themselves, specifically the parts that are put together and professional, and not frazzled in sweatpants, she said. “When we’re with our partner, we’re playing that partner role, but there are aspects of our personalities that may come out in the workplace that we don’t really get to express when we’re home all the time,” said Westring. “There’s parts of our identity that we’re not getting to live in right now, and I think the work relationships can remind us of that part of ourselves that we’re not really seeing.” Elizabeth Burke, owner and founder of Empowered Therapy in Chicago, says couples need to seek understanding around why a partner calls a colleague a “work spouse.” “It’s important that people are clear about what that means to both the person who has the work spouse, and to their partner,” said Burke. “Be really open and honest and communicative about that, so that the person who has the work spouse can recognize their own blind spots before they become issues in their relationship.” Burke said asking your partner questions like, “What does the term mean to you?” and “Do you trust them in a different way than your other colleagues?” can be helpful ways to gain clarity. If responses to these questions sound like, “I see them as someone who I want to spend a lot of time with, and they understand me in a different way,” then setting boundaries may become necessary, Burke said. “They’re getting more into an intimacy thing.” Couples should also examine their own relationship, too, asking questions centered around trust and communication like, “Are there issues within our relationship that make it more difficult for me to trust them?” and “Is my partner trying to keep their work life secretive, or changing work habits to align with this colleague?” Burke doesn’t think the term “work spouse” is negative, but she does urge couples to be careful. “We spend so much time at our offices working with people who understand our stressors in maybe a different way than our spouses, and who are really there with us so many hours of the week,” she said. “I think it can draw two people together in a way that can be a little bit dangerous in their personal lives.”
When country singer Kip Moore wasn’t performing, he was traveling the world to places like Iceland and Costa Rica looking for the next great wave to surf, or a cliff to climb or a remote trail to hike. But when the coronavirus pandemic hit, the Georgia-born globetrotter found himself pretty well suited to isolation as well.

“I’ve always kind of been an introvert at heart that’s forced to be an extrovert because of what I do,” said Moore, from his rock-climbing lodge near the Red River Gorge in eastern Kentucky.

When other artists have decided to postpone releasing albums during the pandemic, Moore put out on May 29 “Wild World,” his fourth album and one of his most soul-searching releases.

“This is a time of need for people,” Moore said. “I think there’s so many messages on this album that it will help people dig up those bones of what they’ve suppressed and analyze them and process them.”

Moore made his name in 2011 with his multiplatinum hit “Somethin’ ‘Bout a Truck,” but to lump him into the truck- and beer-focused bro-country set that has dominated country radio over the past decade would be selling him short. When programmed beats and pop-influenced country is the sound of the moment, Moore’s heartland country-rock songs with his growling voice feel muscular, nostalgic and honest.

“He’s probably one of the most reflective, introspective humans I know,” said Cindy Mabe, president of Universal Music Group Nashville. “And that’s not necessarily common DNA in the entertainment industry. He really is soul searching every day.”

The album’s title track isn’t just an apt description of today’s uncertain times. In the lyrics of “Wild World,” he’s thinking back to the life lessons his mother and his father taught him around their kitchen table. On “Fire and Flame,” which builds like a U2 “Joshua Tree”-era arena rock song, Moore addresses his tendency to neglect his faith.

“When I am taking the time to pray and meditate and stay grounded in that, I feel so much more in peace,” Moore said. “But yet, I still push it away and I’ll walk away from it for a long time. I still hold onto it, but I don’t spend time nurturing it. And that’s when I feel really dark and lost feeling.”

Moore tends to put the most important song at the end of record, which are also the album cuts that fans gravitate toward the most, whether they are played on radio or not. On this album’s closer, “Payin’ Hard,” he shares his remorse of not spending more time with his father, who died in 2011 just as his career was starting.

“‘Payin’ Hard’ was the single most personal song I’ve ever written,” Moore said. “Those are deep-rooted, dark-kept things I’ve had in the closet for a long time with regret.”

Moore didn’t expect to be trying to promote his album remotely from a lodge in Kentucky, but he’s trying to make the most of the situation by focusing on the simple things, like writing songs and rock climbing in the nearby sandstone cliffs.

“This has given me a chance to take a little breath, sleep in the same bed every night for a long time with regret.”

Moore didn’t expect to be trying to promote his album remotely from a lodge in Kentucky, but he’s trying to make the most of the situation by focusing on the simple things, like writing songs and rock climbing in the nearby sandstone cliffs.

“This has given me a chance to take a little breath, sleep in the same bed every night for a little bit,” he said. “I’m ready to get back out and play now, but I needed a little bit of this pause.”
**‘Chromatica’: A star is reborn on the dance floor**

**By Mikael Wood**

Los Angeles Times

Lady Gaga released “Chromatica” on May 28, marking a return to the sleek dance-pop sound that made her a star more than a decade ago. Her first studio album since the classic-rock-inspired “Joanne” in 2016, “Chromatica” follows Lady Gaga’s Oscar-nominated acting turn in director Bradley Cooper’s 2018 remake of “A Star Is Born,” in which she played the showbiz-ingenue role previously portrayed by Barbra Streisand and Judy Garland.

Gaga was drawn to for early hits like “All That,” on the other hand, is about mental health. But “Chromatica” arrives, of course, just as the COVID-19 pandemic has shut down the very festivals and clubs in which the singer might’ve envisioned her new music coming to life.

“I can’t wait to dance with people to this music,” she told Lowe, “to show them how much I love them.”

**Sparks**

A Steady Drip, Drip, Drip (BMG)

Sparks, that most European of American bands, has released one of their best albums nearly 50 years after their debut.

“A Steady Drip, Drip, Drip” shows brothers Ron and Russell Mael as eclectic, extravagant, inventive, melodic and theatrical as ever, preoccupying themselves with lawnmowers, the environment and life on their native West Coast, all while envisioning how an iPhone would disrupt Eden or the Gettysburg Address and fantasizing about Igor Stravinsky’s life as a pop star.

The album follows in a similar vein to both its immediate predecessor — “Hippopotamus,” surely the best, if likely only, record of 2017 — but recorded this album, like several of its predecessors, at Hobo Sounds in Weehawken, N.J.

**Willie Nile**

New York at Night (River House Records)

Not for the first time in his career of more than 40 years, Willie Nile finds his muse nearby with “New York At Night,” an album inspired by his adopted city.

His 13th studio effort has plenty of rockers and a few reflective ballads and is as sharp and guitar-driven as ever, with Nile and his long-serving live band radiating energy and commitment.

“New York Is Rockin’” is enthusiastic even if it feels a bit like a commission from Madison Avenue, listing a catalog of NYC neighborhoods, personalities, sports teams and landmarks.

It also mentions the Giants and the Jets, even though their shared stadium is in New Jersey. It’s OK, though, because despite Nile’s Big Apple identity, he recorded this album, like several of its predecessors, to, ahem, not mess up work.

**Charli XCX**

how i’m feeling now (Atlantic)

The title of Charli XCX’s fourth album is lowercase, e.e. cummings-style, to express the disconnection and dissatisfaction of leading a life in limbo during lockdown.

The British electro pop star and songwriter — who has penned hits for Icona Pop, Iggy Azalea and Camila Cabello — conceived, wrote and recorded the entirety of the glitchy, uneasy “how i’m feeling now” during the coronavirus pandemic.

Quarantining in Los Angeles with boyfriend Huck Kwong, she announced the project in early April and gave herself a May 15 deadline, keeping fans up to speed on her progress on Instagram Live.

The resulting music, made in collaboration with producers like A.G. Cook and Skrillex; it also contains much-hyped features by Ariana Grande (“Rain on Me”), K-pop girl group Blackpink (“Sour Candy”) and 73-year-old Elton John, who duets with the singer on “Sine From Above,” about feeling immortal when you’re young.

“I’ll keep on looking for Wonderland,” Gaga sings in “Alice,” which carries echoes of Crystal Waters’ 1991 dance staple “Gypsy Woman,” “911,” with a lyric regarding mood-stabilizing drugs, has the singer processing one that one. No two tracks are alike, even to many of the 22 studio albums before Mrs. Lincoln and Taylor Swift — and only, record of 2017 to tip its hat to both popotamus,” surely the best, if likely only, record of 2017 — to tip its hat to both.

“I can’t wait to dance with people to this music,” she told Lowe, “to show them how much I love them.”
Players flock to download Minecraft’s Education Edition, offered for free since March

Learning from a video game?

By Todd Martens
Los Angeles Times

With schools closed and many a parent thrust into the difficult role of managing a job, a household and a child’s education, here’s one unexpected bit of positive news to emerge from the coronavirus outbreak: Video games are good for your brain. Well, some games, at least.

Minecraft, the Microsoft-owned game known for its user-driven content, creative use of blocks and monsters that come out at night, has been at the forefront of mainstream games that utilize educational content. The studio’s Minecraft: Education Edition has for the past few years played host to virtual curricula that have allowed students to visit and learn about global monuments, sharpen math skills, understand coding or take puzzle-filled explorations to places as varied as the human body or a NASA-approved jaunt into the International Space Station.

Much of this content, which was at first fueled by educators in the Minecraft community before Microsoft brought it in-house in 2016, had previously been available only to schools and teachers and worked in tandem with Microsoft educational accounts. In March, however, Microsoft made an assortment of Minecraft’s popular educational tools available for free, with easier access for all players via the Minecraft Marketplace.

And players have flocked to it. Microsoft reports that there have been more than 50 million downloads globally of educational content since it was made available for free March 24. It’s further evidence that virtual worlds are not just places to play or escape, but vessels to learning, connecting or even taking part in digital events. Last month, for instance, Minecraft was home to a mock commencement ceremony for UC Berkeley, which featured remarks from Chancellor Carol T. Christ alongside musical performances. It was one of many Minecraft graduation ceremonies happening around the globe.

The UC Berkeley event, said Helen Chiang, the studio head at Minecraft developer Mojang Studios, happened organically. When viewed alongside more commercially-minded endeavors, such as rapper Travis Scott unleashing a single in Fortnite via an interactive experience that attracted more than 27 million participants, this pandemic moment is arguably accelerating an entertainment and cultural landscape in which persistent and evolving virtual worlds don’t just live alongside content crafted by traditional media gatekeepers but become equally as vital.

How it all evolves is something of an unknown, as evidenced by the fact that Minecraft’s own educational suite was birthed via the game’s community rather than with the company behind it.

“The example right now of universities and college campuses,” says Chiang, discussing Minecraft graduations at schools around the globe, “it actually would have been really difficult for us to re-create all these colleges. The fact that we have a tool that passionate Berkeley students can go build across multiple platforms. For high-end PC users, the studio is also tinkering with graphical enhancements for Minecraft.

But the studio is also having to adjust to a work-from-home lifestyle. While complications related to the current health crisis caused a brief delay in the release of Minecraft Dungeons, Chiang is optimistic that there are lessons to be learned from the remote-work environment that can translate to the office.

For instance, Chiang says, while office life may provide many efficiencies for large companies, remote work has also allowed for some democratization. Online tools can provide participatory options for those who may not feel comfortable raising their hand in a meeting room.

“One of the things I love seeing is how much more inclusive a lot of the conversations can be. I think when you’re in the office and you try to fit into a conference room there are different configurations of teams that come in for the conversation,” Chiang says. “But one of our big teams did a planning exercise where they took the entire team virtually off site to plan for the next year. That’s something that would have actually been pretty difficult to do in person because it’s hard to hear 100 different voices when you’re in the room together. But then doing that planning exercise together online in a remote situation was actually more productive. You can hear more voices in that situation.”

Looking ahead, Minecraft has pledged to keep its educational assets free and available to non-educators at least through June 30. Chiang also sees the company continuing to experiment with bringing Minecraft to players outside of the core game, as witnessed by Minecraft Earth and Minecraft Dungeons.

“That is definitely something we’re very deliberate and focused on,” Chiang says. “Our players have been telling us for years that they want more versions of Minecraft. The most popular question is, ‘Where is Minecraft 2?’ There really isn’t a Minecraft 2, but options like Minecraft Earth and Minecraft Dungeons are ways we can continue to build the Minecraft franchise.”
Trials of Mana helps novices get acquainted with the basics of RPG gameplay

BY GENE PARK
The Washington Post

Role-playing games can be intimidating. They involve all this math, stats and different mechanics to memorize and track. Enemies might explode into a treasure trove of new items with benefits harder to read than your insurance policy.

Meanwhile, every new town in Trials of Mana offers you exactly one new weapon. No need for spreadsheets on the “loot grind” and decoding cryptic algorithms. Just get the one sword, which you know is stronger because it has bigger numbers than your last sword.

The brilliance of Trials of Mana is how it distills several core gameplay features to their truest sense. The “loot grind” to gain more equipment really comes down to comparing smaller and bigger numbers. Sometimes towns really don’t function as much else besides places to stock up on things and maybe get some loose context for the world. Sometimes, a simple classic like Trials of Mana is all you really need.

This game is mythical. It’s the direct sequel to the Super Nintendo classic Secret of Mana, a name whispered with just a little less reverence than for Chrono Trigger or Final Fantasy VI. Known as Seiken Densetsu 3, it was only ever released in Japan in 1995, at the tail end of the Super Nintendo console’s life. Despite this lack of attention, Japanese gamers and intrepid importers praised the game as a celebration of all things that were great about the 16-bit era of role-playing games. The game attained near-mythical status for collectors and retro gamers, becoming a 16-bit milestone.

Last year, Seiken Densetsu 3 finally released in the West as Trials of Mana under the Collections of Mana. And now, in 2020, here is a full-bore 3D remake of that same game for the PlayStation 4, PC and Nintendo Switch.

Trials of Mana is perfect for two types of players. First, there are folks like me who grew up with the 16-bit classics, and would love for a chance to dive back into that charming world of simple and immediate rewards. But then, it’s also a great primer for anyone who’s been intimidated by role-playing games, or even more action-heavy games like the Devil May Cry series. Yes, this is a 2020 remake, but don’t expect anything as luxurious or literally game-changing like the Final Fantasy VII Remake. This Japanese role-playing remake is far more faithful, at least in spirit, to its classic roots. Super Nintendo role-playing stories were often mere outlines of grand epics, and Trials of Mana makes a little no effort to update its dialogue and writing.

What’s different, then, is how it implements modern action role-playing design concepts into an old but classic formula. The combat is now fully 3D and moves in real time like an action game. There’s one button for basic attacks, another for slower attacks that hit harder, a jump button and a dodge button. Big enemy attacks will be telegraphed by red flashing lights on the floor, which is the player’s signal to move. Massive multiplayer online RPGs have used this system for years, and it’s a neat visual trick to implement in real-time combat. It’s almost impossible to get lost in this game. There are no side quests to distract you, and every quest is a simple matter of getting from Point A to B, another example of this game’s ability to distill gameplay concepts to their core.

All of this is introduced pretty slowly, but certainly not more slowly than some of the tutorials in today’s most complicated games. And the game is easy, even on its “hard” difficulty. Players who want high-octane engagement need not apply, but what if those new to the genre suddenly get bored halfway through the game? Well good news, it just means you’re probably primed for something more complex and challenging! Did you think the dungeons were too straightforward? Maybe it’s time you finally checked out one of the 17 phenomenal The Legend of Zelda games. Mana offers similar gameplay, movement and combat (complete with a lock-on targeting system for enemies). But the Zelda dungeons also have puzzles to solve and enemies to beat that require a bit more thought than a simple button press.

Maybe you liked the combat and wish it was more exciting? You’ve got an entire genre of character action games to explore, from the five Devil May Cry games that created and innovated the genre, to 2018’s award-winning God of War for the PlayStation 4.

If you enjoyed the character customization and “loot grind,” you’re probably ready for Diablo 3, another simple action role-playing adventure. Its “loot grind” is infinitely more complicated, but Trials teaches you basic concepts like “strength” and “magic strength,” more than enough information to tackle anything Diablo throws at you.

That’s not to say Trials of Mana offers little. On a “normal” difficulty, it offers at least 20 hours of gameplay, including a new chapter. And like the original game, it offers you six heroes to choose from, all with their own stories, abilities to learn and weapons to gain. You can take up to three of the characters through the whole game. And each character comes with at least six different classes, only widening the combat possibilities. The game’s combat is basically a simple Streets of Rage-type brawler with RPG mechanics, but the combat and class variety spices things up considerably. New Game Plus, meanwhile, allows players to run through the story again (with different lead characters if you want) with all your items and stats intact.

The graphics are pretty but rely mostly on the strength of their colorful character designs. Good art direction goes a long way to hide any technical issues, and Square Enix’s designers were on fire during the ‘90s. Some characters look a bit outdated (notably the huge busts on the warrior princesses), and one character’s voice acting is irredeemably terrible in English.

But Trials of Mana was never meant to wow anyone with fireworks. It’s a simple, updated remake of a legendary game. Time has humbled its legacy, as developers and studios iterated the formula of the 16-bit adventure. Modern classics like The Witcher 3 and Skyrim have done wonders to build believable characters, settings and compelling contexts for adventure.

Trials of Mana reminds us of why we fell in love with these games in the first place. The rules are simple; the rewards are immediate and obvious. There’s no better formula for escapist fantasy.

Platforms: PC, Switch, PS4
Online: trialsofmana.square-enix-games.com

Trials of Mana offers six heroes to choose from, all with their own stories, abilities to learn and weapons to gain.
WILLPOWER TO WORK OUT

Fitness gurus offer tips for finding the motivation to exercise during the pandemic

By Pam Moore
Special to The Washington Post

I f your motivation to exercise during the pandemic is as elusive as flour and antibacterial wipes, that’s not surprising — and you’re not alone.

“It’s totally fine and totally normal to have your motivation wane,” says Steve Magness, a Houston-based running coach who has seen athletes at all levels lose initiative as the pandemic wears on. Here’s why you may be feeling this way and what you can do about it.

“One of the best things to keep people motivated is staying in a routine. You take that away, you throw it for a loop, and it’s really hard to establish new routines,” Magness says, author of “Peak Performance.” “All of a sudden, our offices and our homes have become the same thing.”

Pre-pandemic, it might have been second nature to hit the gym en route to or from the office. Now, if you work from home, and particularly if you’re a parent, the pull toward work or family can easily derail you from your workout.

“Nothing is more important right now than everyone’s health,” Harrison says. Jennifer Harrison, a Chicago-area triathlon coach who describes her clientele as “Type A,” says even they are floundering as race directors announce cancellations.

While the pandemic may have drained some of your desire to work out, it’s also the reason you shouldn’t ditch your routine.

“Your risk of getting sick. One of the many benefits of exercise is that it keeps our immune system functioning optimally. Emmerman says more is not necessarily better: Working out too intensely or for too long may increase your risk of getting sick.

Exercise is also an excellent tool for stress management. For many of Harrison’s clients, it provides an important outlet. She coaches an infectious-disease doctor who hops on her treadmill for 30 minutes at 10 p.m. to decompress after work.

Front-line workers aren’t the only ones feeling pressure: Adapting to a virtual work environment comes with its own challenges.

“It is stressful sitting at your screen all day and having all these meetings and having zero (in-person) communication,” Magness says. “We’ve shifted to being an indoor society, on screens. Especially now, (exercise) is a nice relief.”

Emmerman suggests going outside, if possible: “Nature is a wonderful equalizer to all the stressors.”

And while it won’t help to worry about the future, maintaining a base level of fitness will help prepare you for it.

“You want to set yourself up to be firing on as many cylinders as you can as things move forward,” Emmerman says.

But how do you get moving when the bed or couch beckon? Here are strategies for staying motivated.

Be kind to yourself
First, don’t beat yourself up or attempt to power through if your drive is low right now.

“Give yourself time to get through almost what I call the grieving moment,” Magness says. He says it’s important to allow yourself to “wallow” or do “whatever you need to do.”

Harrison agrees. She says if you can’t muster the energy to work out for a day or even a week, “Give yourself some grace.”

But that doesn’t mean throwing in the towel indefinitely.

“At some point, you have to set some sort of expectation or set some sort of bar,” Magness says. “And that bar can be really low.” As a distance runner, he was running six to seven days a week with a focus on becoming “super fit for my next race” before the pandemic. Now, he’s focusing on staying healthy, happy and sufficiently fit to compete again when the opportunity arises. These days, he gives himself permission to walk instead of run.

Magness says staying home has been especially challenging for his clients with young children. Instead of struggling to squeeze in challenging workouts, they’re going for walks with their kids “and maybe doing a few random exercises” — which he says is absolutely fine.

Harrison says that “the most important thing is continuing to move,” even if it’s only a 20-minute walk.

Set new goals
With our lives upended, many of our pre-coronavirus fitness goals no longer make sense. If that’s your situation, select a new goal that accounts for your circumstances and priorities. The more meaningful your target, Magness says, the more committed you’ll be to it, so choose wisely.

Right now, he’s encouraging his athletes to focus on outcomes that are unrelated to performance. Before the coronavirus, his workouts served to prepare him for racing, now the goal is to take care of himself and a welcome escape from Zoom calls.

“It provides this nice little anchor to the day,” he says.

Emmerman advises asking yourself what you can do to make yourself feel better as you select fitness goals right now. If, for example, you struggle with back pain, your goal could be to experience no more than two days per week of pain greater than three out of 10 on the pain scale.

Achieving the goal might mean completing three 20-minute mat Pilates sessions per week with a YouTube instructor or engaging in yoga or a stretching routine for 15 minutes per day, if those activities tend to be helpful.

Stay accountable
Once you select a goal, being accountable, even if only to yourself, can help you achieve it. Harrison suggests keeping a simple chart on your phone or your fridge for doing 15 minutes of yoga, completing 10 push-ups, or from the office.

Friends and family members can also help you stay on track. If you live in a part of the country where it’s allowed, Harrison suggests getting some fresh air with a friend.

“Put a mask on and go for a walk with your best friend and laugh for 30 minutes,” she says.

You could also compete against or collaborate with others, whether it’s over Zoom, or in person with roommates or family. For example, you and your workout buddies could challenge one another to increase your maximum push-up repetitions by a certain percentage each week or compete to see who can do more on any given day, she says.

Even if your workout buddy slack off, the temptation to test yourself can still be motivating, she says.

Since the coronavirus took hold, Harrison has been offering free group challenges each month that are open to anyone; the goal is to accrue as many points as possible. May’s participants earned points for doing 15 minutes of yoga, completing a bike or run workout without music, or completing 15 minutes of dryland swim drills, to name a few.

Look forward
If you’re feeling too tired to exercise, Emmerman suggests focusing not on how low you feel now but on how energized you’ll be when you’re one, or how you might feel if you skip it.

“A body at rest wants to stay at rest, and a body in movement wants to stay moving,” she says. Changing clothes and starting can be the biggest hurdles.

The promise of a post-workout treat can also entice you to lace up your tennis shoes, Emmerman says. A reward might be a dessert or a meal you’ve been looking forward to or anything else you enjoy, such as a show, a hot bath or a scented candle.

Finally, it’s important to stay optimistic, Harrison says. Believing the future will bring races, events and workouts among friends is vital.

“Hope is not a plan, and hope is not a strategy,” she says, “but it sure as heck is a motivating factor for people.”
By Lauren Parker
Special to The Washington Post

Jewelry designer Lisa Zampolin was beading, arranging jewelry during quarantine when her 13-year-old son had an idea. "Mom, we should give your angel bracelets to all the nurses and doctors who follow you on Instagram!" Next thing she knew, Zampolin’s followers were messaging names and addresses of health-care workers from across the country, and her sons packaged and mailed 200 guardian angel bracelets from her business, Love, Lisa. "I have teenage boys. They never paid attention to my jewelry," Zampolin said, laughing. "But now that I’m working from home instead of at the showroom, they’re seeing me in a whole new light: as a businesswoman." 1:08 a.m. Do you know where your parents work? 

Under various shelter-at-home orders, every day is now Take Your Child to Work Day as millions of parents are working alongside remote-schooling children. Challenges are considerable, as the many work-from-home memes will attest, but experts see a silver lining: Kids can learn what their parents actually do for a living, see how hard they work at doing it and possibly gain a whole new appreciation for them.

"In my work as a family and child therapist, I ask a lot of questions, Uno cards that say, ‘What do your parents do for a living?’" said San Diego psychologist Rosanna Paparella, professor at Alliant International University and co-author of “Teaching Kids to Think.” "I get blank stares, overly blue, answers like, ‘I don’t know the look of amazement when they realize they have no idea.’" 

In her therapy, Paparella sees a parent’s professional identity — skillfully leading a Zoom meeting, getting treated respectfully by coworkers and being comfortable with the showroom, they’re seeing me in a whole new light: as a businesswoman." 

With parents working from home because of the coronavirus pandemic, every day is Take Your Child to Work Day. 

The pandemic also offers kids a crash course in the professional pivot, as working parents scramble to adapt to this virtual new normal. Natasha Augusto-Tomás always taught yoga on-site at New York’s Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts but has since started creating YouTube video sessions for students in her apartment-turned-yoga studio. "I didn’t have a tripod, any filming equipment or anything," she said. Augusto-Tomás enlisted her 9-year-old daughter to act as iPhone director and video cinematographer, and as a participant in partner yoga videos. "My daughter says she loves the attention to my jewelry," Zampolin said, laughing. "But now that I’m working from home instead of at the showroom, they’re seeing me in a whole new light: as a businesswoman." 

Often left at the office, the work-load is now laid bare for all to see. "Witnessing their parent’s energy output during the day is staggering to kids, and many are finding a new appreciation for this day-to-day lived experience," said Pasadena, Calif., therapist John Sovee, who specializes in adolescents. "I’m seeing teens taking on increased tasks to support parents in keeping the house running smoothly and not just looking for money in exchange for chores.

When parents toss away at home, small children also get the message that life doesn’t revolve around them, and that work comes before play. Independent educational consultant Coleen Paparella Ganjian in Vienna, Va., models this by setting up her 7-year-old daughter with a daily planning board similar to the one she uses. "Once she finishes her work, she gets free time. Just like I do."

Working at home with two young children, Bolanle Williams-Olley, chief financial officer of New York-based Mancini Duffy architectural firm, tries to set a good example. "My daughter and I were in the bed the other day trying to get in 30 minutes of productive time," she said of her 6-year-old. "I had my laptop and she had her coding class. When watching me focus, she’s learning to be disciplined to get through her schoolwork.

Older children can learn from the pandemic’s emotional toll on the businesswoman, too. "Most of our portfolio companies have struggled through this thing, and a lot of my day is spent on Zoom helping CEOs work through plans to survive, often including deals to reduce head count," said Mike Troiano, partner in Boston-based venture capital firm G20 Ventures. He rarely discussed work with his three children, (11, 14 and 18) living at home before, but now with an 18-stair commute to the dinner table, he’s arriving without the buffer of a podcast or Springsteen tunes and is more eager to share. "Now the kids are getting a more complete picture of what it means to lead, and the emotional costs of doing what’s required."

Seeing a parent’s professional identity — skillfully leading a Zoom meeting, getting treated respectfully by coworkers and being important in the corporate context — can have a profound impact.

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WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

THE MYSTERY OF MCGUFFIN MANOR
BY ANDREW CHAIKEN / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Andrew Chaiken is a translator and game inventor in San Francisco. This crossword contains a clued-in mystery — W.B.

"Thank you for coming, sir," said Lady Mcgguffin. "He's been stolen from my study!"

The eight members of the staff had a costume party tonight — if he's to be one of them: the butler, driver, cook, baker, page, painter, barber or equerry. They have all been confined to their respective rooms surrounding the parlor, as shown here. Can you determine who stole the diamond... and where it is now?

ACROSS
1. Battlefield cry
2. Spirit competitor
3. Pollen-producing plant part
4. About three miles
5. Exorcists
6. "The Deer Hunter" director Michael
7. An antique might have one
8. What a Venn diagram shows
9. Alike
10. As you inspect each room, you find staff members dressed as
11. Start of a Christmas refrain
12. "I like it!"
13. Days of old
14. Word that sounds like a number... and is a letter backward
15. Russian pancakes
16. Burn slightly
17. Refusals
18. They're all... so you can easily identify them
19. Popeye's kid
20. Delta competitor, in brief
21. Wisn
22. Suspect No. 2
23. Have trouble swallowing
24. "Like beloved books, often"
25. Shivers
27. Tucson school, in brief
28. California-based auto company
29. Bristle of grain
30. What it all adds up to
31. A ways away
32. Suspect No. 3
33. Spun up
34. Music for the masses?
35. Sly and the Family Stone gesture
36. Public spot
37. Considered
38. "Fusion (type of cuisine)"
39. Some appliances
40. They catch dust bunnies
41. It might get a licking
42. Musician, with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame
43. In the study, you find that the thief accidentally left behind
44. Some sports cars
45. "That's..."
46. "Some modern notes say smart"
47. Four-letter word for a four-letter word
48. (Omit) (block)
49. "I'm Hades too"
50. Next to bar
51. Ate in a restaurant
52. One of the eight major taxonomic ranks
53. "Flambé"
54. Japanese hot lunch
55. "Oscology: wines:..." zymology:__
56. Org. in "Do Hard"
57. Tens with a "T"-oic" rule
58. It might be snowy
59. Move off the bottle
60. Chip dip, familiarly
61. The pocket
62. "Like a bad loser"
63. "Major source of oxygen in the earth's atmosphere"
64. "Junior's" tool
65. Embarrass yourself
66. "Gangsta's" rob
67. "The original Bush Gardens"
68. "Some of the"...

DOWN
1. Source of the robe material for Isaac royalty
2. Home brewer
3. Tell
4. "Brooklyn Coll. is part of it"
5. Thomas who was chairman of the WII Commission
6. "Enjoy deeply"
7. "Sabo brand"
8. "Some modern notes say smart"
9. "Four-letter word for a four-letter word"
10. (Omit) (block)
11. "I'm Hades too"
12. Next to bar
13. "I'm Hades too"
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23. "Major source of oxygen in the earth's atmosphere"
24. "Junior's" tool
25. "Gangsta's" rob
26. "The original Bush Gardens"
27. "Some of the"...

51. Delta predecessor
52. Like a Debbie Downer
53. Women of honor
54. "Kinds"
55. "Very, in Verona"
56. "Swing and completely miss"
57. "Getaway for two..."
58. "Ireland's best-selling solo artist"
59. "Home of the original Bush Gardens"
60. "Some of the"...
61. "The original Bush Gardens"
62. "Flambé"
63. "Oscology: wines:..." zymology:__
64. Org. in "Do Hard"
65. Tens with a "T"-oic" rule
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75. "Some of the"...

GUNSTON STREET

"Gunston Street" is drawn by Basil Zaviski. Email him at gunstonstreet@yahoo.com, and online at gunstonstreet.com.

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How caged birds sing

Music producer David Jassy helps inmates find their voice

David Jassy was a successful music producer who had worked with Britney Spears and others before he was sent to prison for killing a man during an altercation. While serving his time, he would hear talented young inmates rapping in the yard at San Quentin Prison with skill and power. In his cell, where Jassy used his keyboard to make beats, he invited the men to perform rap freestyles and helped them with songwriting and music production. Jassy said he took advantage of the situation to help them keep pushing through. A teenager was injured in one of the altercations, police said. Police are not immediately known if he was hit with a bullet or was one striking YFN Lucci’s Bentley. The teen was not identified and it is turned to toward more pressing concerns.

Cannes reveals the lineup that could have been

By Jake Coyle
Associated Press

From an empty movie theater in Paris, organizers of the Cannes Film Festival on Wednesday announced the films that would have played there in May had it not been canceled by the pandemic. The selections were an exercise in what might have been for Cannes, the international French festival that for the past 73 years has been one of the most prestigious and glitzy annual gatherings of cinema. Cannes, originally slated for mid-May, initially considered postponing to July but ultimately gave up on a 2020 edition.

Hearing what would have premiered on the stage of the UGC Normandie cinema in Paris alongsides Cannes’ president, Pierre Lescure, the announcement, usually made in April in press conference before teeming throngs of international journalists, was instead presented during a TV interview that streamed online and aired on Canal+.

Fremaux didn’t distinguish between which films had been slated for its main selection, in which some 20-25 films compete for the best picture at the Academy Awards. But Wednesday’s show largely focused on everyday heroes. Country stars highlighted the heroism of citizens and communities around the country who were coming together to help each other in the middle of the coronavirus pandemic during the “CMT Celebrates Our Heroes” TV special.

CMT started the show with a simple text introduction: “As social unrest grips the nation, we want to say thank you to those taking action against injustice. There are heroes all around us.”

The special aired in place of the CMT Music Awards, which were postponed until October. The special, which appeared to be mostly pre-recorded performances and duets from artists like Carrie Underwood, Luke Combs and Darius Rucker, focused on good stories of healthcare workers, educators, first responders and more.

Amy Grant undergoes open-heart surgery

A publicist for Amy Grant, a contemporary Christian singer, said she had open heart surgery on Wednesday to fix a heart condition she has had since birth.

Doctors discovered Grant had a heart condition called partial anomalous pulmonary venous return during a routine checkup. Velvet Kelm, her publicist, said Grant’s doctor said the surgery “couldn’t have gone better.”

Teen hurt by gunfire at YFN Lucci video shoot

A teenager was injured Wednesday after gunfire rang out during the filming of a music video in Atlanta, the city’s police said.

Police said the 15-year-old boy’s thumb was grazed after some 21 bullets were fired, with at least one of YFN Lucci’s Bentley. The teen was not identified and it was not immediately known if he has been hospitalized.

YFN Lucci left the apartment complex without his luxury car before authorities arrived at the scene, police said. Police are searching for suspects in the shooting.

Other news

— Just two days before it was to begin streaming, “We Are Freestyle Love Supreme,” a documentary about the hip-hop improv group Freestyle Love Supreme, has postponed its release out of solidarity with protests and the postponement Wednesday, citing that our “collective attention” is turned toward more pressing concerns.

— Pop star Chris Trousdale, a former member of the boy band Dreaminc, has reportedly died of complications from coronavirus. He was 34.

CMT special focuses on everyday heroes

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But Wednesday’s show largely didn’t address the protesting and rallies for racial justice that have gripped the country in the previous week following the death of George Floyd.

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Other news

— Just two days before it was to begin streaming, “We Are Freestyle Love Supreme,” a documentary about the hip-hop improv group Freestyle Love Supreme, has postponed its release out of solidarity with protests and the postponement Wednesday, citing that our “collective attention” is turned toward more pressing concerns.

— Pop star Chris Trousdale, a former member of the boy band Dreaminc, has reportedly died of complications from coronavirus. He was 34.
**AMERICAN ROUNDPUR**

**WWII flag stolen from City Hall is returned**

**NV** RENO — A flag from a World War II battle ship stolen from its display Saturday after people broke into Reno City Hall amid protests over the death of George Floyd was anonymously returned Tuesday.

City spokesman Jon Humbert confirmed the glass display case that held the USS Reno flag was smashed during demonstrations protesting the death of Floyd, a black man who died in Minneapolis after a white officer pressed his knee into Floyd’s neck for several minutes.

RKNV reported that the flag was inside a package anonymously delivered to the station Tuesday and addressed to journalist Kenzie Margiott with a note in Sharpie that read: “Needed protecting. Looters were flag burning. R.I.P George Floyd.”

The flag was donated to the city in 1946. The men of the USS Reno were credited with shooting down five enemy airplanes and assisted in the downing of at least two more at Iwo Jima.

**Pipeline worker mauled by black bear**

**AK** JUNEAU — A contract worker for the trans-Alaska pipeline system was mauled by a bear and seriously injured while running on a public road near a pump station, a spokesperson for the pipeline operator said Tuesday.

The incident occurred Friday evening on a route used for recreation by employees based at the remote Interior Pump Station 5, which is on the south side of the Brooks Range, said Katie Pesznecer with Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.

She said security personnel went to look for the worker, identified by Alaska State Troopers as Michael Becwar, 53, of Wasilla, when they noticed he had been gone for about 50 minutes. They found Becwar on the side of the road with serious injuries, she said. He was taken to a hospital in Fairbanks, which is about 160 air miles south, she said. Pesznecer said he’s expected to recover.

Troopers, in an online dispatch, said a necropsy performed by the Department of Fish and Game confirmed an adult male black bear killed by pipeline security personnel Sunday was “very likely” the animal involved in the mauling.

**Man charged after pickle hits road worker**

**VT** POWNAL — A Massachusetts man is facing an assault charge after he allegedly threw a large pickle from a moving vehicle that hit a Vermont highway worker, police said.

The incident occurred Tuesday, before 6 p.m. Monday on U.S. Route 7 in Pownal near the border crossing into Massachusetts.

A passenger in a southbound vehicle threw an object “later determined to be a large pickle” that hit the highway worker and “caused him pain,” police said.

**A wild ride**

**FL** MIAMI — Florida’s Lionfish Challenge is open and will run through the summer.

The annual contest began May 22 and will end on Labor Day, according to a Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission news release. Winners will be announced a week later at the Lionfish Removal and Awareness Festival in Destin.

The most common methods of harvesting lionfish are spearfishing and using a hand-held net. They are also caught as bycatch in commercial lobster and stone crab traps. Lionfish are invasive to Florida and harm native fish that are important to maintaining healthy reefs.

**The Census**

**CA** LOS ANGELES — One of the world’s most coveted coins is coming to the market. A rare Brasher Doubloon, the first gold coin struck in the U.S., is being offered privately at a $15 million asking price, according to numismatic adviser Jeff Sherrard.

His firm, Los Angeles-based PCG, is marketing the coin on behalf of a collector who would only identify as a former Wall Street executive.

The doubloon is dated 1787 — five years before the federal mint opened in Philadelphia. Metal-smith Ephraim Brasher, George Washington’s next-door neighbor on New York’s Cherry Street, pri-

**First US gold coin set for private sale**

**FL** BRANDON — A huge Confederate battle flag has been lowered from its towering pole near Interstate 4 and 75 outside Tampa after threats appeared on social media to set it on fire during protests of the killings of black people by white authorities.

David R. McCallister, who leads the local chapter of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, wants people to know that removing the 30-foot by 60-foot flag wasn’t a decision made in fear.

“The decision was we would temp take down the flag in the best interests of preserving the park overall,” he told the Tampa Bay Times. “We don’t want the flag to be an excuse for anyone to do illegal acts.”

The flag flies on a 139-foot flagpole, erected in Confederate Me-

**THE CENSUS**

**$6K reward offered for information about George Floyd**

A Louisiana black bear last month, Louisiana’s Department of Wildlife and Fisheries said Tuesday. Agents were told about the bear and collected its body May 17 from St. Mary Parish, according to a news release. A necropsy found that it had been shot with a rifle a few days earlier. The reward will be paid for information that leads to the bear-killer’s arrest and conviction.

Memorial Park in 2008 for the 200th birthday of Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederate States of America. The group typically only removes it when hurricanes threaten the area.

**Regulators fine firm for oil meter violations**

**AK** ANCHORAGE — Alaska regulators have fined Hilcorp Energy Co. $30,000 for meter-related violations at an oil and gas field on the Kenai Peninsula.

The company’s history of violations as a factor for the penalty.

The Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission said in a May 14 order that Hilcorp failed to submit required meter performance reports for the creek unit in the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska’s Energy Desk reported.

The reports detail how accurately meters measure the vol-

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Eugene Sheffer Crossword

ACROSS
1 Clumps of grass 46 Names of states that begin with "Miss"
6 "Nova" ailer 47 "K" of "Tuna"
9 Ovum 53 "Mean old man"
12 Love, to Luigi 57 "Blue" singer 24 Poseidon's home
13 "Exodus" hero 25 "D" of "Psalm"
15 Craze 26 Have at 28 Fulton's power
16 Tijuana bar 27 Dime store 30 UFO pilots
18 Age of the 28 Specialized barber
Miracle Mets 32 Tennis legend
20 Secondhand 33 Joan of —
21 Paris pal 34 Tax prep pro
23 Capitol VIP 36 Spin
24 Entrap 38 Become nower
25 Barrett or Jaffe 39 Memorable
27 Snooped (around) 40 Dwarf planet
30 "Serpico" star 42 Central
31 Runway surface 45 Squad
32 Scottish hillside 46 Wise one
33 Lines of fashion? 46 82" Idol
34 Half a sextet 47 White House
35 Lion of "Clueless" 50 Stumpy's pal
36 Do wrong 50 "M" of "Lil"
37 Donovan of 51 Have
38 "I" of "Make"
39 Become narrower
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DOWN
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3 Italian cheese 26 Have at
4 Half a sextet 28 Fulton's power
5 Lines of fashion? 30 UFO pilots
6 "Serpico" star 32 Tennis legend
7 Scottish hillside 33 Joan of —
8 Do wrong 34 Tax prep pro
9 Donovan of 35 "Mean old man"
10 Lost cause 36 Spin
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Answer to Previous Puzzle

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MAS TASS
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6-5

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RMV TDA SO AGDC LMC EVD
RDVA: M LDVQC-HSRASEV

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IT INVOLVES BIG BUCKS TO GET A ROCKET OFF THE GROUND AND INTO ORBIT, THERE IS NO FREE LAUNCH.

Today's Cryptoquip: L equals T
OPINION

Not all endorse political moves by retired brass

By Michael J. Stircop
Special to The Washington Post

Without saying anything about the presidential campaign, retired Adm. Mike Mullen, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and former defense secretary and retired Marine Corps Gen. Jim Mattis became the latest in a vocal chorus of criticism this week when they denounced President Donald Trump. Although Trump has courted military leaders and placed them in his Cabinet, his disregard for the law, his divisiveness and his erratic nature rub many, like Mattis, the wrong way.

On Wednesday, the general wrote: “When I joined the military, some 50 years ago, I swore an oath to support and defend the Constitution. Never did I dream that troops taking that same oath would be ordered under any circumstance to violate the constitutional rights of their fellow citizens — much less to provide a bizarre photo op for the elected commander in chief, with military leadership standing alongside.” He lamented that Trump was the first president in his life “who does not try to unite the American people.” Instead, “he’s dividing us.”

Trump responded by calling Mattis “the world’s most overrated General” and noting that he was happy that the general “is gone.”

This back and forth reflected the key role the military has come to play in politics, campaigns and elections today — and likely will play as 2020 continues.

But that howls new this role is. Retired military leaders had historically offered presidential endorsements over the last three decades, but the first in the wave of activism by military leaders occurred in 1988 when retired Marine Corps commandant P.X. Kelley came out in favor of George H.W. Bush. As mundane as it feels today, this practice reflects something quite dangerous — the increased politicization of the military and the reliance of civil authorities on the armed services for credibility.

The most interesting and significant endorsement of this era came from a military officer occurred in 1992 when a former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, retired Adm. William Crowe, endorsed then-President George H.W. Bush. Although Crowe came out in favor of Bush on Sept. 19, 1992. Crowe’s statement included a number of now-familiar themes, notably the importance of ensuring “knowledge and toughness.”

Clinton adviser Richard Holbrooke was particularly insistent that the American electorate would back the candidate that they felt was “toughest” in a general election. But this was a high bar for Clinton, who had not served in the military, was accused of being a draft dodger and faced off against Bush, a war hero.

Crowe’s presence was designed to signal that a distinguished military officer believed Clinton had what it took to be commander in chief. By the summer of 1992, the military was increasingly distant from its soldiers, requiring greater distance between the elected commander in chief, and that this success could in part be credited to Crowe’s vouching for his toughness, made military endorsements an important part of presidential politics.

Not surprisingly, once this habit was established, such endorsements skyrocketed, peaking with the 200 plus retired military officers who backed Mitt Romney’s unsuccessful 2012 campaign.

Such endorsements became pivotal because of the military’s unique history: While every president from World War II until Clinton had served in the military, no recent president has had significant military experience (George W. Bush served in the Air National Guard and saw no active duty). The American Civil society has grown increasingly distant from its soldiers, requiring candidates to reach across this divide, especially in key states with large military populations.

Candidates seek out military endorsement as a sign of the Democratic Party’s ability to unite the American people.” As much as Trump opponents cheered Mattis’s and Crowe’s endorsements, not every officer who endorsed him did so.

Crowe came out publicly in favor of Clinton on a carefully crafted media event on Sept. 19, 1992. Clinton’s statement included a number of now-familiar themes, notably his emphasis on the idea of “leadership.”

Crowe explicitly tackled the question of Clinton’s lack of military service, saying that it was not the uniform that determined one’s capacity for leadership. Crowe became an integral part of the campaign, something more significant and unprecedented than other military endorsements, except perhaps for Colin Powell’s endorsement of Barack Obama in 2008 (which was different because Powell was a former Republican secretary of state as well).

Crowe’s endorsement signaled to other military officers that it was OK to hop on board. Over the next month, Clinton accumulated the endorsements of 21 other retired generals and admirals, allowing Crowe to position his ongoing endorsement as an act of exertion of his influence, confirmed a source. This puts Trump in the tricky position of the numbers count, in which each presidential campaign jockeyed to see who could secure the most endorsements from retired military leaders.

A perfect storm produced Crowe’s endorsement, a procedural move set by Keane in 1988, Crowe’s desire for a renewed and more positive public role and Clinton’s needs as a candidate. But it was also the result of two significant trends over the last 80 years. In U.S. history, the beginning of a widening gap between civil society and the military after the end of the Cold War, which created the opportunity for an inexperienced candidate like Clinton.

The Clinton campaign, however, and that this success could in part be credited to Crowe’s vouching for his toughness, made military endorsements an important part of presidential politics.

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**OPINION**

**What newspapers are saying at home**

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

**NC governor wisely chose safety over GOP convention**

*The Charlotte (N.C.) Observer*

For months leading up to the Republican National Convention, North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper tried to rid itself of the 2020 Republican National Convention, Donald Trump’s tweets on it have been predictable.

The president packed a lot of wrong into a handful of words. He said North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper was a “total idiot” for saying that the state’s RNC convention in Milwaukee, but if the president and his party were in August. We wish the RNC and Trump were thinking about himself.

After a week of trying to get the other to say “no,” the governor and the president landed in a place that seemed inevitable all along. It is that the president has said he will not attend the convention. In August. The RNC and Trump chose the responsible wait-and-see approach Democrats are taking with their August convention. An election in August is not where the president is on his convention-goers partying like it’s 2019, he needs to find a city and state where leaders care as little as he does about the risks. It’s true, as this editorial board has said, that the president and his party were in a crisis they did not understand in the thought of making plans and investing millions only to have the governor lock them out of the state in August. We wish the RNC and Trump chose the responsible wait-and-see approach Democrats are taking with their August convention. An election in August is not. It’s a good bet that at least some of those burns and buildings had previous runs with the law.

**The best of America shows itself in times of conflict**

*The Washington Post*

Even amid the tear gas and rubber bullets, the sirens, the fires, the standoff, the looting, the “vicious dogs” and “omenous wolves” who could not be stopped, no dark side of coronavirus — which hit African-Americans hardest — has no doubt contributed to the unrest. But as Americans continue to do the hard work of the experiment, more than economic damage ought to go to it in the cost ledger. There has also been damage to the social fabric and the rule of law.

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**Coronavirus lockdowns’ effect seen in out-of-control protests**

*The Wall Street Journal*

Those who doubted the wisdom of severe coronavirus lockdown measures were often accused of valuing economics more than public health. That charge was always a caricature, and the riots and lawlessness engulfing America’s cities ought to discredit it. The consequences of the lockdown also include social dislocation. The majority of those gathering to protest are peaceful and legitimately outraged by the brutality against George Floyd in Minneapolis. Yet the wave of police tests associated with the Black Lives Matter movement after 2014 never devolved into the wanton looting and property destruction now taking place nationwide. It doesn’t take a sociology Ph.D. to suspect that the unprecedented conditions the nation has been living under for more than two months has contributed to the anger apparent in the riots and violence.

More than 40 million Americans, especially in low-wage occupations, have filed for unemployment benefits in the last two months, according to the Commerce Department. That is, if they have any. And take along video of their officers acting badly.

If you’re not black and feel compelled to call the police on a black person for simply breathing the same air as you, back off. Who the hell are you?
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Friday, June 5, 2020
Tokyo Games could be downsized

BY STEPHEN WADE
Associated Press

TOKYO — The Japanese public is being prepared for the reality of next year’s postponed Olympics, where athletes are likely to face quarantines, spectators will be fewer, and the delay will cost taxpayers billions of dollars.

The Tokyo Olympics face “real problems,” partially because of the numbers involved: 15,400 Olympic and Paralympic athletes to start with, and then staff, officials, media and up to 80,000 volunteers.

The stark message about a very different, reduced Olympics is now being faced by Japan’s politicians, and in unsourced news stories. The numbers are huge:

- 40% of athletes will be quarantined in separate housing and treated for COVID-19 during the Games.
- The traced contact group is not showing symptoms.

One typical report said Olympic participants could be headed back home. The delay means leaving in limbo the disposition of millions of tickets already sold.

“We want to brush away these concerns,” Takaya said, speaking to worried ticket holders.

“First of all we need to gain the understanding of Tokyo residents and the Japanese people,” she said.

But in the news conference, Takaya did not substantiate any of the leaked information and said it did not come directly from him.

One report said Olympic participants could be heading back home.

The Tokyo rings float in the water at sunset in the Odaiba section in Tokyo on June 3. The Japanese public is being prepared for the reality of next year’s postponed Olympics, where athletes are likely to face quarantines, spectators will be fewer, and the delay will cost taxpayers billions of dollars.

Associated Press

Oklahoma State linebacker Amen Ogbonegbemi announced Tuesday he tested positive for COVID-19 after he attended a protest in Tulsa.

Oklahoma State said Wednesday a student worker in its athletic department tested positive for COVID-19, the first COVID-19 case identified at an Oklahoma university this spring.

“Positives were expected and the plan for a period determined by health and medical officials, the highly contagious virus can cause severe symptoms and be fatal. The vast majority of people recover.

He referenced the financial impact of canceling Olympic sports while suggesting spectators should return to campus for voluntary workouts beginning June 15.

The Big 12 is allowing schools to bring football players to campus for voluntary workouts beginning June 15. The Big 12 is allowing schools to bring football players to campus for voluntary workouts beginning June 15.

Gundy apologized four days later, saying he understood his comments offended some people and that his first priority was the well-being of student-athletes.

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The Big 12 is allowing schools to bring football players to campus for voluntary workouts beginning June 15.
Colts hope big bet on Rivers pays off

Indianapolis confident that poor 2019 season was an anomaly for 38-year-old quarterback

By MICHAEL MAROT
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Frank Reich jumped right into research mode when he knew Philip Rivers would hit free agency.

The Indianapolis Colts coach studied tapes of Rivers’ throws from an uncharacteristically poor 2019 season to compare with those he made earlier in his career. Reich saw no difference.

When offensive coordinator Nick Sirianni and tight ends coach Jason Michael concurred with Reich’s opinion, general manager Chris Ballard went all in on a 38-year-old quarterback the Colts believe can make them a title contender.

“I really think he’s the same player he was five years ago physically and he’s taken good care of his body,” Reich said recently. “I think he’s at a stage in his career where this is the right thing; this is a great move for him. He’s a great fit for us.”

There’s plenty to like about Rivers.

He has a reputation as the consummate leader who would just as soon run over a defender than throw for 60,000 yards and 400 touchdowns. He has a family man- active in the community. He understands the offense and the philosophy of Indy’s offensive braintrust after spending three sea- sons in San Diego working with Reich, Sirianni and Michael.

He has a resume to back up his trash talk.

The eight-time Pro Bowler needs 60 completions, 2,091 yards and three TD passes to become the sixth player in league history to throw for 60,000 yards and 400 TDs.

He shattered Chargers career passing marks, previously held by Dan Fouts, while throwing 44 fewer interceptions than the Pro Football Hall of Famer. Rivers has even outlasted Eli Man- ning, the guy he was swapped for during the 2004 draft in a move that defined the Chargers and Giants franchises for more than a decade.

But the Colts didn’t make this move because of Rivers’ past. They made it for the future.

“This guy is a fighter and he’s never going to quit. That’s what makes him special,” Sirianni said. “I got excited about our run- ning attack combined with how good Philip is in the play-action game.”

Still, there are questions.

Rivers readily acknowledges his 17th NFL season could be his last. He’s already accepted a post-career head coaching job at St. Michael Catholic High School in Fairhope, Ala. And the Colts in- vested $25 million for one season on a guy critics contend is rapidly declining.

Hall of Fame executive Bill Po- lian doesn’t see it the same way.

The architect of Indy’s most successful decade believes the Colts followed the formula he implemented when bringing the then 34-year-old Rivers to Caro- lina for its inaugural 1995 season, and again in 2011 when he signed the then 39-year-old Kerry Col- lins to replace the injured Peyton Manning.

“What you’re looking for is a quarterback who can play at a reasonably high level, and when a quarterback reaches a certain age, it starts to get a little worrisome,” Polian said. “Philip has played well, has been pretty healthy throughout his career. The final piece of it is familiarity with a player. You don’t want to start over with someone you don’t know. That’s risky. They know him, he knows them, it’s the perfect marriage.”

Quarterback Philip Rivers, an 8-time Pro Bowl player, needs 60 completions, 2,091 yards and 24 touchdown passes to move past Dan Marino for No. 5 in each category.

Running in place: Steelers’ Conner utilizes shutdown

By WILL GRAVES
Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — James Con- ner insists he didn’t take the past two seasons and has topped 1,000 yards in 12 games as the Steelers running back as “just the angle” and that “lots of people would just as soon run over a defender as he would run by one.”

He’s become leaner and more versatile with the Steelers. He’s caught 89 passes over the past two years and has proven to be valuable in pass protection.

While the Steelers have pro- fessed faith in him, they’ve also hedged their bets. They took a running back in the draft for the first time in 2019 when they selected Anthony McFarland out of Maryland in the fourth round.

McFarland joins a group that includes Conner, Benny Snell, Trey Edmunds and Jaylen Samu- els. That’s a lot of bodies and only one football at their disposal.

If I’m the guy, or however this year works, the goal is to win,” Conner said. “We’ve got to be ready at all times. You can’t warm up to it. That’s been our slogan, ‘We can’t warm up to it.’ So I’m not paying attention to how many carries I need.”

Conner believes the return of quarterback Ben Roethlis- berger from elbow surgery puts the Steelers back into the mix in the AFC. Pittsburgh still found a way to finish 8-8 last season with the then 39-year-old Kerry Col- lins playing all of six quarters.

Conner was effective in spurts but had just 18 touches over the final eight games because of a right shoulder injury sustained in the final seconds of a win over Miami.

“There’s nothing I can do to get last year back,” Conner said. “I’m working every day hard as possible to be in the best shape ever, to be the best football player I can be. I’m going to give it ev- erything I have. That’s just where my mindset is.”
Hockey program in Deep South now threatened by budget cuts

By Paul Newberry
Associated Press

They've always been an outlier, the major college hockey program in the Deep South. As with most pioneers, they've teetered on the brink of failure, shoulders through plenty of skepticism and ridicule.

That only made it more imperative to save the Chargers of the University of Alabama in Huntsville. When the word came down last week in one of those end-of-the-week news dumps that UAH was whacking its men's hockey team, it hit especially hard.

"Complete shock," said Tony Guzzo, a native of Huntingtown, Md., who played for the Chargers from 1993-97 and now lives in Huntsville. "It came out of nowhere. No one was expecting it."

Thankfully, an impromptu fundraising campaign that got a boost from NHL goalie and UAH alum Cam Talbot raised more than $1 million, bringing word Friday that the Chargers will return to the ice for at least one more season.

UAH also eliminated its men's and women's tennis teams at the same time it announced hockey's demise — all in the name of balancing a bottom line that has taken a huge hit during the coronavirus pandemic.

Across the country, scores of lesser-known college teams have been eliminated in the past couple of months, from the baseball team at Bowling Green to the wrestling team at the University of Alabama in Huntsville.

"It became home."

At Old Dominion.

UAH also eliminated its men's and women's tennis teams at the same time it announced hockey's demise — all in the name of balancing a bottom line that has taken a huge hit during the coronavirus pandemic.

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Expect plenty of empty seats whenever fans welcomed back

BY DAVE SKRETTA
Associated Press

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Empty seats have been the norm the past few years at the University of Kansas, where a succession of football coaches has failed to turn around the flailing fortunes of the Jayhawks.

Now, all those open seats — and short lines and quiet concourses — will be the norm in stadiums just about everywhere.

The coronavirus pandemic has forced universities, leagues and franchises to evaluate how they might someday welcome back fans. While opinions vary from sport to sport, nation to nation and even state to state, one thing seems clear: Social distancing is a sure bet when fans return.

So don’t expect 100,000-plus fans packed into Michigan Stadium for a football game this fall or 16,300 seated inside Kansas’ storied Allen Fieldhouse when college basketball season rolls around.

“We don’t know how we’ll be coming back,” Jayhawks athletic director Jeff Long acknowledged.

“We’ve modeled 15 to 16,000 in Memorial Stadium, and to be honest with you, we’ve modeled Allen Fieldhouse, and I can’t bring myself to look at because I know how few people it will be and that’s upsetting,” Kansas athletic director Jeff Long

Most colleges rely heavily on ticket sales, souvenirs and concessions in football and basketball to raise the bottom line to the point that non-revenue sports can be fully funded. But smaller crowds are going to be necessary to ensure proper social distancing — in pro sports around the globe, too. Forbes estimates the NFL would lose $5.5 billion in stadium revenue if all games are played without fans, and the fallout for other leagues without lucrative TV deals could be catastrophic.

The virus that causes COVID-19 is most easily spread when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks and the droplets spread to people nearby. That’s why guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and World Health Organization preach separation in public as an effective safeguard.

In a stadium, though, creating that kind of buffer is no easy task.

Most fans tend to file through the gates at the same time, creating a bottleneck in which thousands could be in close proximity to each other in concourses to catch a bit of food, drink and merchandise. They stand in lines at restrooms. They surge toward the exits at the end of the game.

Most teams and leagues have not publicly revealed their plans for fall sports, though some are up front about what to expect. Iowa State is looking at selling only tickets to tailgating. Notre Dame has warned of fewer fans and limits the surge to the exits at the end of the game.

Most teams in other leagues are already used to create more intimacy settings for concerts or other events, and Bristol Motor Speedway had some of them strung up for last weekend’s NASCAR race in Tennessee.

Another idea is to turn sections of 20 or more individual or bench seats into temporary suites, where a group of 10 friends and family members can be socially distant from other groups — and potentially selling them for a higher price.

“There are a lot of different things you can do,” said R.J. Orr, whose Arizona-based firm Bhesmedia specializes in such “seat kills” and temporary structures. They already have worked with Arizona State and other schools on similar projects.

The next challenge is keeping fans socially distant when they do leave their seats. A company called WaitTime has software applications tied to security cameras that allow fans and stadium operators to know on monitors or apps just how busy certain areas might be. A motion analytics company, inside, uses lidar sensors to detect unsafe crowding.

“We’re working on tools to overlay crowd density on top of stadium maps,” inside CEO Sam Kamel said. “These maps would then tell fans where to avoid, or when it’s ‘safe’ to get a hot dog or Coke and when the food court isn’t too crowded.”

There is little dispute that the game-day experience will be vastly different.

At baseball games in Taiwan, up to 1,000 spectators have been allowed into the ballpark, but they were barred from bringing food, concession stands are closed and they are told to sit three seats apart. During a recent Fubon Guardians game in New Taipei City, about 900 people showed up at its 12,500-seat stadium, leaving across empty seats to talk with friends and moving on their own to cues from cheerleaders and mascots.

“There’s plenty of social distance here,” said Guardians fan Sun Ming, who works in finance in New Taipei City.

It could be that way for quite a while.

Baseball fans Mark Southard, center left, and his wife Janelle Southard pose for a photo taken by their son Grayson, 16, during a tour of Globe Life Field, home of the Texas Rangers, during the first day of public tours in Arlington, Texas, on Monday.

A member of the media uses a long microphone boom to interview Texas Rangers fans during tours at Globe Life Field on Monday. The coronavirus pandemic has forced sports teams and their leagues to evaluate how they will welcome back fans.

AP sports writers Dave Campbell, Larry Lage and John Pye contributed to this report.
**VIRUS OUTBREAK**

**Diner up!**

**Pawtucket turns infield into eatery**

**By Jimmy Golen**

Associated Press

PAWTUCKET, R.I. — The Pawtucket Red Sox are going from “Play Ball” to “Bon Appetit.”

With the minor league baseball season on hold due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Triple-A affiliate of the Boston Red Sox has found another use for its home field, McCoy Stadium. Starting this weekend, “Dining on the Diamond” will allow fans to sample typical ballpark fare on the McCoy Stadium infield.

For a baseball romantic, this is the best restaurant in the world,” team President Charles Steinberg said. “It was an emotional, sentimental experience for those who have tried it so far.”

Minor league ballparks have long been a laboratory for some of the wackiest promotions in sports, giving away everything from toilet seat cushions to vases to funerals. During the coronavirus shutdown, other teams have rented out their stadiums on Airbnb or sold them for high school graduations.

PawSox promotions beyond the usual cap and bobblehead nights often involve playfully stoking the Red Sox-Yankees rivalry. But the team is taking this seriously.

Twenty picnic-style tables have been spread out across the infield dirt, from first base to third, a dirt, from first base to third, a

The ballpark seats 10,031, but it’s “a ‘I think people are just excited to come out to a ballpark. They’re excited to socialize under the correct conditions,” PawSox Vice President Dan Rea said. “This is an opportunity for us to do something a little bit unique, a little bit different, but something special.”

For a media preview last week, the PawSox set up a tent to park in a lot with every other space blocked off. Before entering the ballpark, there was a self-screening to verify that they don’t have a fever or any other potential COVID-19 symptoms. After checking in at what could pass for a regular restaurant host stand, they are taken to their table.

The entire full-time staff of the PawSox was participating, from preparing the food to serving. At the media preview, Rea was over-seeing the screening, and playing-play-by-play man Josh Maurer helped reporters bring their food.

“This is really an ‘all hands on deck’ endeavor,” Rea said. “People have just said, ‘Sign me up for whatever. If you need me to cook food, if you need me to stock food, if you need me to carry drinks.’ I think people are just excited to be back working with fans, talking to people and being here at the ballpark.”

The PawSox also have a take-out option, with curbside pickup so fans don’t have to leave their cars. Steinberg said the team is thinking of other ways to improve the experience, like having former Red Sox players who came up with the Pawtucket video chat with fans on the center field scoreboard, or perhaps even appear in person.

Still, he’ll be happy when baseball returns.

“You’re happy to take a bow and let baseball resume at center stage,” Steinberg said. “But you may have created something that you just may be able to do when the team’s on the road. It has a chance to become a positive innovation in baseball that arises from this difficult time.”

**By Dave Campbell**

MINNEAPOLIS — The jersey-wearing camaraderie. The scent of sizzling sausages. The buzz before a big game.

The distinctive atmosphere of live sports, that feeling in the air, will return in time as pandemic restrictions are eased. But will that very air be safe in a closed arena with other fans in attendance?

The billions of dollars spent on state-of-the-art sports facilities over the last quarter-century have made high-efficiency air filtration systems more common, thanks in part to the pursuit of green and healthy building certifications. Upgrades will likely increase in the post-coronavirus era, too.

The primary problem is that even the cleanest of air can’t keep this particular virus from spreading.

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To prevent the potential spread of a virus through coughing or sneezing. Officials are working on safety protocols and looking at new technology to make stadiums and arenas as safe as they can.

In this Dec. 25, 2008, photo, fans toss confetti, mimicking LeBron James’s pre-game chalk toss.

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Players’ proposal rejected

Owners threaten season of roughly 50 games after nixing 114-game plan

By Ronald Blum  Associated Press

NEW YORK — If Major League Baseball and its players take the field for a coronavirus-delayed 2020 season, it will be after acrimonious negotiations that resemble their labor war of a generation ago.

MLB rejected the players’ proposal for a 114-game season with no additional salary cuts, and will turn its attention to a shortened slate of perhaps 50 games or fewer. Owners last week proposed an 82-game schedule starting in early July.

“I do not have any reason to believe that a negotiated solution for an 82-game season is possible,” Deputy Commissioner Dan Halem wrote in a letter Wednesday to chief union negotiator Bruce Meyer that was obtained by The Associated Press.

MLB’s plan included a sliding scale of pay decreases that would leave players at the $365,500 minimum with 75% if their original salaries and top stars Mike Trout and Gerrit Cole earning about $200 million, or 70% of their original salary.

That agreement called for the sides to “discuss in good faith the economic feasibility and impact on playing games in the absence of spectators.” The union has said no additional cuts are acceptable.

There has not been a schedule averaging fewer than 82 games per team since 1879.

“Despite what it sounds like with some of the Twitter bickering back and forth and some of the posturing back and forth, I am optimistic that we are going to play baseball this year,” Milwau- kee president of baseball operations David Stearns said.

Halem ended his letter by tell- ing Meyer “we stand ready to discuss any ideas you may have that might lead to an agreement on resuming play without regular fans” and access to our stadiums.

MLB wants to start the season in early July, and Halem wrote an agreement would have had to be reached by June 1 or to reopen training camps by June 10. That would leave three to four weeks of preparation, which Halem said is “the wide consensus.”

“We are opposed to rushing to begin the season and then subjecting players to a grueling schedule,” he said.

“Players haven’t had a chance to practice rushes, the power play or penalties. They don’t see the level of competition. They don’t see the chemistry. They don’t see the intensity kill for months, players will have no choice but to acclimate to a season where you’ve got to get the buy-in right away.”

“Players haven’t had the opportunity to build up conditioning levels. Many goaltenders don’t even have their gear with them, and they’ll have to go through the rigors of the situation adds a layer of unpredictability and could make this one of the most competitive seasons for the Stanley Cup in history.

“Some players have expressed concerns about their individual game skills, like Winnipeg winger Patrik Laine expecting himself to be “terrible” after so much time off. Many goaltenders don’t even have their gear with them, and getting back into a groove will take some time.”

“It’s different because you know you can really get when you’re playing for a championship.”

Halem said coronavirus testing would cost the teams $40 million to $50 million. He claimed “clubs would fare even worse economically if we were to play a significant number of doubleheaders, as your counter-propos- als contemplate.”

Players proposed that $100 million in salaries be deferred to 2021 if the season is canceled.

“Deferring salaries, with interest, is the economic equivalent to guaranteeing the expansion money that is key to eligibility for free agency and arbitration,” he wrote. “It’s different because you know the players already, Tippett said. “It’ll be a little bit like the start of a season where you’ve got to get up and going pretty quick.”

Absent the usual drills to prac- tice rushes, the power play or penalty kill for months, players will have no choice but to acclimate to each other quickly. Washington general manager Brian MacLell- an said he wasn’t worried.

“I think players adapt,” Ma- cLellan said. “Timing and speed and systems play usually takes a few weeks. It’s no different than a training camp coming in, except it’ll be ramped up — the intensity part — quicker. I think players will adapt to it.”

Test: teams will require time to find rhythm on ice

CAPITALS left wing Alex Ovechkin follows through on a shot during a playoff game last season. Washington general manager Brian MacLellan isn’t concerned with players’ ability to quickly get back into form. “I think players adapt,” MacLellan said. “Timing and speed and systems play usually takes a few weeks. It’s no different than a training camp coming in, except it’ll be ramped up — the intensity part — quicker. I think players will adapt to it.”

FROM BACK PAGE

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He sees training camp as the time for coaches and players to do some team rebuilding.

“The skating and everything comes back pretty quick,” Colum- bus captain Nick Foligno said. “It’s the team mindset, the system play again, where you need to be — that feel. That’s the only stuff you can really get when you’re doing the reps over and over and over again.”

Knowing full well he won’t have a month to work with play- ers before games resume, Ed- moreston coach Dave Tippett dug up his notes from the abbreviated training camp he oversaw with the Coyotes going into the 2013 lockout-shortened season.

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For more AP NHL coverage: https://ap- news.com/NHL
With NASCAR back, are fans far behind?

By Jenna Fryer  
Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — There is finally a break in this weird, new world of NASCAR after nine races over 16 days in three different states.

Brad Keselowski lucked into a pair of wins, new favorite son Chase Elliott lost three races (but won one), and Kyle Busch ticked off his haters simply by being himself.

Some rain interruptions aside, the racing has been good. The series is starting to find a rhythm and the story lines are strong. Even seven-time NASCAR champion Jimmie Johnson has come close to winning his first race in more than three years.

But all is not entirely well.

A sport that prides itself on the access to its drivers is racing at empty tracks, most evident Sunday at cavernous Bristol Motor Speedway. The Tennessee bullring known as “The Last Great Colosseum” can hold about 140,000 fans and once boasted a 55-race sellout streak spanning 28 years.

It was jarringly empty on a spectacular day for racing Sunday. When Elliott and Joey Logano tangled on the track with just over a lap remaining — and when Logano gave Elliott a long stare on pit road — it was eerily silent.

In the old days, before the pandemic, the crowd would have been a nuisance. Social distancing is for the most part followed, but awareness is fading and teams were in clusters along pit road waiting for the Bristol race to start.

NASCAR already made a huge decision to get back to business after postponing eight Cup Series races. Now it will face another in deciding if the comeback is complete and fans can return.

Cup race.

The near-misses haven’t shaken the confidence for Elliott or crew chief Alan Gustafson.

“I think you have to be a little bit hard-headed to do this job, and you have to find a way to improve, and just you have to kind of shake it off,” Gustafson said after Elliott won at Charlotte. “Professional sports are super fickle, and one day you’re good and one day you’re terrible, and you just get used to that.”

Elliott took the momentum from his Charlotte win to Bristol Motor Speedway on Sunday and was again in contention for a victory. But he and Joey Logano tangled on the track with just over a lap remaining that caused both to crash. Logano gave Elliott a long stare on pit road that lacked some of the drama with no fans on scene to react.

“I talked to Joey after the race face-to-face like it should be,” Elliott said.

Regardless of the missed opportunities or bad breaks, he’s third in the Cup series standings with four top-five finishes through nine races. Elliott is keeping that fast start in perspective, but still feels like he can contend for a series championship.

“This is a 38-race season, and we have to keep that up to really be a contender,” he said. “I think we can do it, but until you go out there and achieve that it really doesn’t matter.”

It’s been anything but a normal season so far amid the pandemic. Races have been held without fans and with condensed one-day schedules. Elliott likes the new itinerary, saying “over time we’ve overcomplicated weekend schedules and practiced entirely too much.

“I know a lot of that’s money driven, and I get it,” he said. “As our popularity grew over a period of time, races and tracks tried to get all they could get. I understand that, but I think a lot of us... we’ve got to get back to our roots.”

He’s not alone in that sentiment. Brad Keselowski, winner of two of the races Elliott lost, said this schedule cuts costs and benefits the more experienced drivers.

Added Logano: “We are race car drivers, not practice car drivers.”

Drivers make their way around the track past empty stands during a NASCAR Xfinity Series race Monday in Bristol, Tenn.
Brees’ anthem comments draw backlash

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — Drew Brees was sharply criticized by fellow high-profile athletes, including some of his own teammates, on Wednesday after the Saints quarterback reiterated his opposition to kneeling during the national anthem.

In an interview with Yahoo, Brees was asked to revisit former NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick’s 2016 protest of police brutality against minority Americans which Kaepernick knelt during the national anthem before games.

“I will never agree with anybody disrespecting the flag of the United States,” Drew Brees Saints QB

She said she was disappointed with the USOPC. “I feel like for them to post something like that without first apologizing ... it takes away their sincerity to the situation at hand,” Berry said.

And yet, in Berry’s view, the back and forth with the USOPC is the least of the problems facing her or her country, as the U.S. heads into the second week of protests in reaction to Floyd’s death. A white police officer, Derek Chauvin, has been charged with second-degree murder in the death of Floyd, a black man who was handcuffed as the officer pressed his knee on Floyd’s neck for several minutes.

She says the endless stream of stories of police brutality leveled against blacks in America keep her in a constant state of worry about her son and her brothers.

“I have a child who is a black man, who does not look like a child,” she said. “I have siblings who are black men who do not look like children. They’re big. They can be intimidating. I’m in fear for their lives right now. I feel like I’m fighting for them.”

She’s been inspired by former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick, who ultimately lost his job after kneeling during the national anthem in 2016 to protest police brutality and racial injustice.

Berry ‘disappointed’ with USOPC for her raised-fist probation

By Eddie Pells and Pat Graham

As it turns out, the hard part for U.S. Olympian Gwen Berry hasn’t started yet.

The raised fist at the Pan-Am Games last summer, along with the public shaming she received from Olympic authorities afterward, and the wondering what might happen if she were to use her platform at the now-postponed Tokyo Games to protest racial injustice — all that seems easy now.

“I feel like, right now, my body and my mind, it’s like I’m going to war,” Berry told The Associated Press in an interview Wednesday. “I’m trying so hard to protect something that is near and dear to me.”

Berry is the African American hammer thrower — the mother of a 16-year-old son — who captured headlines last year when she used her turn on the gold-medal podium at the Pan-Am Games to raise her fist as a show of her frustration with America’s treatment of blacks.

Her gesture, to say nothing of the punishment that came afterward, are all being seen in a new light these days, in the wake of the killing of George Floyd — a tragedy that has sparked protests across America while also compelling hundreds of commissions, leagues and players in the sports world to make commitments against police brutality.

By Tim Booth

RENTON, Wash. — Speaking to the media for the first time since the end of last season, Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson didn’t care to talk about the game that’s helped make him famous.

“To be honest with you, I don’t even want to talk about football right now,” Wilson said during a video conference Wednesday. “You know, that’s a thing that I don’t even know what that looks like down the road or anything else. I think that none of that matters. I can’t compare football to life and what the black community is going through right now.”

Wilson’s 35-minute session was as emotional as he’s been in any formal media setting during his eight previous seasons in Seattle. He relayed stories from his youth in Richmond, Va., and about raising two kids now with a third on the way.

At times in the past, the conversation with Wilson may have centered on offseason changes to Seattle’s offense and whether Wilson has enough weapons for the Seahawks to contend in a challenging NFC West.

But Wilson didn’t want to talk about the officer who pressed his knee on Floyd’s neck. “A guy was murdered last week. There needs to be a change. There needs to be a change. It’s not overly complicated,” Wilson said.

On his “Flying Coach,” podcast released late Tuesday night, coach Pete Carroll said he felt he has not done enough to create change.

“We’re trying to interact as much as we can with our guys and learn from them and listen and learn and grow, and find a place where we can act and do something really positive,” Carroll said. “Our club has done that over the years, but we need to do more — we’re never done.”

Earlier this week, linebacker Bobby Wagner said he attended protests in Seattle.

Floyd protests:

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At times in the past, the conversation with Wilson may have centered on offseason changes to Seattle’s offense and whether Wilson has enough weapons for the Seahawks to contend in a challenging NFC West.

But Wilson didn’t want to talk about the officer who pressed his knee on Floyd’s neck. “A guy was murdered last week. There needs to be a change. There needs to be a change. It’s not overly complicated,” Wilson said.

On his “Flying Coach,” podcast released late Tuesday night, coach Pete Carroll said he felt he has not done enough to create change.

“We’re trying to interact as much as we can with our guys and learn from them and listen and learn and grow, and find a place where we can act and do something really positive,” Carroll said. “Our club has done that over the years, but we need to do more — we’re never done.”

Earlier this week, linebacker Bobby Wagner said he attended protests in Seattle.
Chemistry test
Recapturing team dynamic could pose challenge post-quarantine

By Stephen Whyno
Associated Press

Claude Giroux’s Philadelphia Flyers were the hottest team in the NHL back when hockey was still being played. That was more than two months ago and their next game could be two more months away. He can’t predict how things might go if the season resumes.

“I don’t know,” Giroux said. “Right now, everything’s unknown.”

Among the unknowns about the NHL returning amid the coronavirus pandemic is what the on-ice product might look like. In a team sport that demands rhythm and chemistry, players will have to quickly adapt after so much time apart to recapture what it takes to jump right into the playoffs and compete for the Stanley Cup.

“We want to see great hockey played,” Toronto captain John Tavares said. “It’s not an exact science. It’s something we’ve never dealt with before, and we want to make the best and most conscious decision we possibly can to obviously make sure not only guys stay safe, but that the quality of hockey is extremely high.”

Unlike basketball, where one player can dominate a game and carry a team, hockey is predicated on players being in sync, knowing where teammates are — and will be going next — for tape-to-tape passes. Timing as a unit is an essential ingredient to success, and it’s that timing that could be missing early because of so much time off the ice.

With the exception of a handful of players who were rehabbing injuries, living in Sweden or somehow able to find an open rink, most haven’t skated since the season was halted in mid-March. Recapturing that skating stride and building back up to avoid injuries will be a big part of voluntary workouts before the anticipated start of training camps in July.

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