Force protection

Army parachute riggers, civilians in Kaiserslautern improvise face masks

By Jennifer H. Swan
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — Sewing machines continue to hum inside the work-shop at Rhine Ordnance Barracks, where U.S. Army parachute riggers who normally mend torn canopies have taken up a new project: face masks.

The 5th Quartermaster-Theater Aerial Delivery Company soldiers have produced about 150 a day since Monday, as part of an effort to contain the spread of the coronavirus.

The first batches of masks have been distrib-uted to cooks, gate guards, postal workers and finance specialists — essential workers in jobs where social distancing is difficult, soldiers said this week.

SEE PROTECTION ON PAGE 8

Spc. Robert Walker, a parachute rigger with the 5th Quartermaster-Theater Aerial Delivery Company at Rhine Ordnance Barracks, Germany, holds up one of the masks he and fellow parachute riggers made this week from bed sheets and parachute rigging.

Jennifer H. Swan/Stars and Stripes

Claims for jobless aid in US reach 22 million

By Christopher Rugaber
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The wave of layoffs that has engulfed the U.S. economy since the coronavirus struck forced 5.2 million more people to seek unemploy-ment benefits last week, the government reported Thursday.

Roughly 22 million have sought job-less benefits in the past month — the worst stretch of U.S. job losses on record.

It means that roughly one in seven work-ers have lost their jobs in that time.

The grim figures point to an econo-my that is tumbling into what appears to be a calamitous recession, the worst in decades. The nation's output could shrink by roughly 10.5% before it starts to rebound, according to Ryan Sweet, an economist at Moody's Analytics.

SEE JOBLESS ON PAGE 10
**EUROPE GAS PRICES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Super unleaded</th>
<th>Super plus</th>
<th>Diesel</th>
<th>Change in price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>$2.110</td>
<td>$2.570</td>
<td>$2.770</td>
<td>-7.1 cents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>$3.123</td>
<td>$3.129</td>
<td>$3.494</td>
<td>-1.3 cents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.K.</td>
<td>$2.409</td>
<td>$2.735</td>
<td>$2.680</td>
<td>-5.3 cents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PACIFIC GAS PRICES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Unleaded</th>
<th>Super unleaded</th>
<th>Super plus</th>
<th>Diesel</th>
<th>Change in price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guam</td>
<td>$1.919**</td>
<td>$2.379</td>
<td>$2.629</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>$2.619</td>
<td>$1.859</td>
<td>$1.830</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okinawa</td>
<td>$2.099</td>
<td>$2.599</td>
<td>$2.629</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Diesel EFD  ** Midgrade

For the week of April 17-23
By John Vandiver
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — A Russian fighter jet maneuvered dangerously close to an American Navy ship on Wednesday, according to the Navy.

The Iranian ships “repeatedly conducted dangerous and harassing approaches” of six U.S. ships: the USS Lewis B. Puller, an expeditionary mobile base platform ship; the USS Paul Hamilton, an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer; the USS Firebolt and the USS Si-rocco, cyclone-class coastal patrol ships, and the USCGC Wrangell and the USCGC Maui, U.S. Coast Guard island-class cutters.

The ships were identified as Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy vessels in a statement Wednesday by U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa said in a statement.

The encounter with the Russian fighter, which caused turbulence aboard the P-8A, lasted for 42 minutes.

“The latest incident with the Russians comes one week after U.S. Air Force F-22 fighter jets intercepted a pair of Russian maritime patrol planes 50 miles off the western coast of the Aleutian Islands, in what military officials said at the time was a test of U.S. capabilities amid the coronavirus pandemic,” the Navy said.

And on Wednesday, 11 Iranian military vessels moved dangerously close to several American ships conducting operations in the northern Persian Gulf, the Navy said.

Last week, as coronavirus cases surged in the ranks, Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Mark Milley issued a warning to rivals.

“I wouldn’t want any mixed messages going out there to any adversaries that they can take advantage of an opportunity,” Milley said.

“Unsafe actions increase the risk of mis-calculation and potential for midair collisions,” NAVYEUR said. “The U.S. aircraft was operating consistent with interna-tional law and did not provoke this Russian activity.”

In Europe, risky encounters with Russian military aircraft have occurred on occasion in recent years, most notably in the Black Sea. But the latest action also comes at the U.S. military contends with the coronavirus.

The U.S. has been forced to cancel nu-merous military exercises and training plans because of the virus, raising con-cerns that adversaries could use the crisis as an opportunity to test American mili-tary readiness.

The American sailors gave multiple warning radio messages and moved away from the American ships.

“U.S. 6th Fleet remains at sea, ensuring maritime security and demonstrating our commitment opposing the jets, but the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce has been a vocal supporter. The chamber, which represents businesses in Madison, praised the awarding of the jets to the base in Madison.

Navy's City Council passed a resolution opposing the jets, but the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce has been a vocal supporter. The chamber, which represents businesses in Madison, praised the awarding of the jets to the base in Madison.

The jets will replace older F-16 aircraft and will allow the Air Force to meet other requirements for readiness and training, the Air Force said in a statement.

Locating the jets in Madison has divided the state and community over the past three years, with many people who live near the airport saying noise and pollution from the jets will lessen their quality of life and value of their homes. The Air Force said in a preliminary report that noise from the F-35s could not exceed more than 1,000 homes “incompatible for residential use.”

But there was a broad base of support that included businesses, communities, eco-nomic developers, office holders, veterans and the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Supporters argued that concerns over the noise and pollution and there won’t be much difference from the current F-16s. Advocates said having the next generation of jets will be an economic development boost, ensuring the future of the base in Madison, which employs about 1,200 people.

Madison’s City Council passed a reso-lution opposing the jets, but the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce has been a vocal supporter. The chamber, which represents businesses in Madison, said the Air National Guard wing has a $100 million annual economic impact on the community. There was also bipartisan support from Wisconsin politicians, including both its Democratic and Republican U.S. senators.

U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, a Democrat who represents Madison, said Wednesday that the Air Force never sufficiently ad-dressed his request that the Air Force pay for soundproofing or any financial losses those who live near the base may suffer due to reduced property values.

And Democratic state Rep. Chris Tay-lor, one of the most vocal critics of the jets, called placing them in a Madison an “un-fortunate and harmful decision” that will hurt people’s health, quality of life and lower property values.

“Instead of listening to our community, the Air Force is intent on foisting these jets on a place they are not wanted,” she said.

Maj. Gen. Paul Knapp, leader of the Wisconsin National Guard, praised the awarding of the jets to the base in Madison and said he looked forward to working in partnership with the city and surrounding communities.

“With collaboration, I'm confident we will continue to be good stewards of the communities in which we work and live,” he said.

The three other bases considered for the jets were in Boise, Idaho; Harrison Township, Mich.; and Jacksonville, Fla.
**SIGAR: Recommendations going unheeded**

By J.P. Lawrence  
Stars and Stripes

The Pentagon has followed less than half of recent recommendations made by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, a report by the watchdog group released Thursday said.

SIGAR has issued more than 200 recommendations since 2014 on how to improve oversight and prevent waste, fraud and abuse. Of the 47 recommendations made by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, 200 since 2014, the Pentagon is following less than half.

In one case, after finding that the Pentagon funded, trained and equipped enemy units linked to human rights violations and child sexual assault, SIGAR issued seven recommendations for how the military could avoid running afoul of the “Lawy,” which bars assisting groups if credible evidence exists of gross human rights violations.

The Pentagon did take action but as of January hadn’t fully addressed the recommendations, including one requiring contractors to report human rights violations, the SIGAR report said.

The Defense Department thoroughly reviews SIGAR recommendations, officials said.

“In some cases, the Department does not concur or partially concurs in SIGAR’s prescribed solutions,” said an April 7 DOD memo in response to the report. “In other cases, the Department takes action, but does not always receive a response from SIGAR about whether the action taken was sufficient to close the recommendation.

SIGAR established SIGAR in 2008 to audit government projects, such as the Pentagon’s efforts to develop the Afghan military.

Federal law gives agencies like DOD one year after an audit to either submit a plan on how they’re making fixes identified by an IG, or state that they don’t plan to do so.

From 2009 to 2014, the Pentagon implemented more than 75% of SIGAR’s recommendations, an earlier report said. Less than 60% have been adopted since 2014, the latest SIGAR report said.

The Pentagon recently addressed 10 of its pending recommendations since SIGAR highlighted the disconnect, defense officials said in their response to the report.

The Pentagon concurred with the latest recommendations calling for a top-level audit official to ensure timely responses or “an institutional process that ensures remedies are considered.”

SIGAR’s recommendation that the military react more quickly by using existing information about the coronavirus outbreak a global pandemic.

“In the Spanish-American War, there were major epidemics of typhoid fever and dysentery,” according to a report written in 1951 at Brooke Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston in Texas. “World War II saw wide-spread outbreaks of influenza and malaria. In World War II, there was a high incidence of malaria and infectious hepatitis... In all wars prior to World War II, losses from disease exceeded losses from battlefield.”

“The Pentagon to follow a recommendation that the military leaders throughout history have learned the hard way about the danger that disease poses to troops.”

“In the Spanish-American War, there were major epidemics of typhoid fever and dysentery,” according to a report written in 1951 at Brooke Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston in Texas. “World War II saw wide-spread outbreaks of influenza and malaria. In World War II, there was a high incidence of malaria and infectious hepatitis... In all wars prior to World War II, losses from disease exceeded losses from battlefield.”

“Researchers, in some cases, have more success in learning information from the botched up not from the central communist government, but from localities,” he said. “That’s where some guy in Wuhan might be saying ‘I can’t report this because I don’t want to look bad to my boss’ or there’s a guy who wants to keep the avian flu because his cousin runs the bird market and doesn’t want to hurt his business.”

**Medical intelligence sleuths tracked, warned of new virus**

By Deb Rhode  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In late February, when President Donald Trump was urging Americans not to panic over the novel coronavirus, alarms were sounding at a little-known intelligence unit situated on a U.S. Army base an hour’s drive north of Washington.

Intelligence, science and medical professionals at the National Center for Medical Intelligence were quietly doing what they have done for decades — monitoring and tracking global health threats that could endanger U.S. troops abroad and Americans at home.

On Feb. 25, the medical intelligence unit raised its warning that the coronavirus would become a pandemic within 30 days from WATCHCON 2 — a probable crisis — to WATCHCON 1 — an imminent one, according to a U.S. official. That was 15 days before the World Health Organization declared the rapidly spreading coronavirus outbreak a global pandemic.

At the time of the warning, few in the U.S. military knew what the virus — called COVID-19 — was, didn’t know how to protect against it or how it might spread.

The center’s work typically is shared with defense and health officials, including the secretary of defense, the military assistant to the secretary, the military assistant to the secretary of the Air Force and the assistant secretary of defense for health affairs. Defense and health professionals at the National Security Agency can share satellite imagery and terrain maps to help assess how a disease, like Ebola or avian flu, might spread through a population.

Every day, all of those work into words and read and research our area for anything that’s different — anything that doesn’t make sense, whether it’s about disease, health care, international affairs... our system that documents progress.
Army offers guidance on housing

By Corey Dickstein
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Soldiers stopped by the coronavirus pandemic from moving to new locations should attempt to work with their landlords to remain in their housing through the outbreak, Army officials said.

Service officials acknowledged Wednesday that, in some cases, soldiers might run into problems with housing and the Army is working to help troops mitigate issues that they could face with landlords at either the current location or their planned next duty station. Army lawyers have drafted letters that soldiers can provide to landlords in an effort to solve any lease-agreement disputes, said Lt. Gen. Doug Gabram, the chief of Army Installations Management Command.

“We’re kind of in the process to work through that, quite frankly,” he said. “We don’t want to have a situation where… or housing-wise,” he said. “We have to work through that. We have to do the right thing.”

The Pentagonal has not announced a new target date for the travel restrictions to end, but some military leaders have acknowledged they could remain in place well into the summer.

Gabram said Wednesday that he expected the opening of travel and other activities at American military bases worldwide would occur gradually, based on the outbreak’s impacts in their local areas.

“It’s not a cookie cutter [solution],” he said. “I’d like to wave a wand and it’s all going to be the same on one day. I don’t believe it’s going to go like that.”

The Army had taken some steps to help the thousands of soldiers stuck in place amid the pandemic.

Among the new measures, the Army is allowing soldiers who like their current assignment to request to remain in it for up to one additional year, canceling their planned permanent-change-of- station orders.

Federal law protects active-duty service members from facing penalties for breaking their leases to move to a new duty station or deploy for more than 90 days. But it does not require landlords to extend leases or reinstate previous agreements for troops whose plans change — including under unusual circumstances such as the stop-move orders meant to help thwart the coronavirus pandemic.

The guidance issued April 7 on lease issues caused by the stop-move orders instructs a soldier who cannot come to terms with a landlord to contact their chain of command and Army attorneys at their installation.

If a soldier cannot reach an agreement with a landlord to remain in their current housing, the soldier could request the Army pay for them to move to a nearby location, said Melissa Halsey, the legal assistance policy division chief for the Army’s judge advocate general.

The Army can authorize such short-distance moves when soldiers are forced to stay at their current assignment without being given a choice, she said.

For soldiers who have already signed leases for their next assignments, Halsey said they also should attempt to resolve it with their landlord or property managers before seeking Army legal assistance.

“We are suggesting service members contact their landlords directly and explain their situation,” she said. “They should then ask the landlord to end their lease voluntarily.

Ultimately, Army lawyers could work with Human Resources Command to issue new orders with a delayed PCS date, which could allow soldiers to terminate those leases through the federal Service Member Civil Relief Act, she said.

Gabram said installation commanders across the service were engaged with soldiers and community leaders in the areas around their posts to work to help soldiers dealing with the crisis.

“They understand that folks may have a problem financially … or housing-wise,” he said. “We have to work through that. We have to do the right thing.”

DICKSTEIN.COREY@STRIPE.COM
Twitter: @CDickstein

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky. — More soldiers from Fort Camp- bell have deployed to help with coronavirus relief efforts.

About 10 soldiers with the 101st Airborne Division’s sustainment brigade deployed this week to New Jersey to help with coordinating and supporting Army logistical efforts in the region, according to a statement from the Army post on the Kentucky-Tennessee line.

“I am incredibly proud of our sustainment Soldiers from the Lifeliner brigade, and I know they are going to have a big impact to our nation’s response against COVID,” said Maj. Gen. Brian Winski, commanding general, 101st Airborne Division and Fort Campbell. “Sustainment is absolutely critical to ensure front line medical personnel are well supplied and able to continue their vital work.”

The troops are ready to conduct operations in more locations if necessary, he said.

Fort Campbell also deployed around 300 soldiers last month from the 531st Hospital Center to New York.

 Soldiers
deploy to NJ for aid effort

Associated Press

Car Loan Decisions in Five Minutes or Less

You know what you want. We can help you get it. Get the car of your dreams with a Navy Federal car loan.

- Great interest rates
- Fast approval process
- Low monthly payments

Stationed Abroad?
Use our Overseas Auto Buying Program and get up-front guaranteed pricing.

Visit navyfederalautooverseas.com for details.

CAR LOAN DECISIONS IN FIVE MINUTES OR LESS

Easily apply with our mobile app. online or at your local branch.

You can also visit your closest branch to learn more about our car loan offer.

www.navyfederal.org/auto

Insured by NCUA. Message and data rates may apply. Visit navyfederal.org for more information. Credit and collateral subject to approval. © 2020 Navy Federal NCUA 17794-B (5-20)
6th sailor from carrier moved to hospital on Guam

By Caitlin M. Kenney
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON—A sixth sailor assigned to the USS Theodore Roosevelt and fighting the coronavirus has been hospitalized on Guam, the Navy announced Thursday, as cases of the disease surpass 650 among the crew.

The sailor is being treated at U.S. Naval Hospital Guam, where five other sailors were transferred this week. One sailor remains in intensive care for observation due to shortness of breath.

The cases follow the death Monday of a Roosevelt sailor who had been in intensive care after being found unresponsive April 9 while in quarantine on Guam. The sailor has not yet been identified pending notification of next of kin.

As of Thursday, there are 655 Roosevelt sailors with positive tests for the virus. Most of the about 4,800 member crew has been tested, with 3,919 receiving a negative test result. About 4,059 sailors have been transferred from the ship to Guam. The Navy has 983 cases of the virus among its military personnel.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Wednesday during an interview with Fox News that once the aircraft carrier has been cleaned, the ship will return to sea in a few weeks.

The Roosevelt has been in port in Guam since March 27 after an outbreak of the virus aboard the nuclear-powered carrier diverted it during a scheduled deployment.

Capt. Brett Crozier, the former commanding officer of the ship, fired April 2 after his emailed letter about the ship's virus outbreak was leaked to the media. Then acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly, who resigned amid the Roosevelt controversy, initiated an investigation into Crozier's actions and the climate of Pacific Fleet "to help determine what may have contributed to this breakdown in the chain of command," he said at the time.

Esper said Wednesday that the investigation was completed last week and it will be reviewed by new acting Navy Secretary James McPherson this week. Esper said he will see the report sometime after that.

In a message to sailors Thursday, Adm. Robert Burke, the vice chief of naval operations, said the Navy's goal is to deploy ships with no cases of the coronavirus. However, the nature of the virus makes it difficult to achieve that goal.

Burke cited measures such as social distancing and staying home that can help stop the virus's spread.

"We understand these measures are especially challenging in a shipboard environment, but they are not impossible. We need your complete cooperation to pull together as we fight this virus," he said in the message.

"I'm not surprised if it happens," he said, adding that 51 patients have been treated on the ship since it arrived and 17 were on board as of Wednesday. The ship has seen an average of 20 to 21 people a day.

Reducing the Mercer's capacity, he said, won't hurt its ability to relieve local hospitals.

Hospital ship might scale back

By Lolita C. Baldor
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The USNS Mercy hospital ship docked in Los Angeles may be able to scale back its medical operation a bit over the next couple of weeks as the coronavirus workload at area hospitals stabilizes, according to the ship's captain and military documents.

The ship also will be available to help other missions, as a result of the decision to send up to 66,000 beds to the hospital on Guam.

The ship left San Diego on March 23 and arrived in Los Angeles four days later to provide relief by taking patients who were not infected with the virus.

Many of the worst outbreaks now occurring are in nursing homes, and some are having staffing issues as workers are infected or stay home.

Rotruck said there has been no final decision, but 250 beds would be a reasonable size to maintain.

He said that "probably in the neighborhood of 100 or more people" could be made available for other missions, as a result of the reduction in beds. He said no decisions have been made on where medical staff may go.

"I'm not surprised if it happens," he said, adding that 51 patients have been treated on the ship since it arrived and 17 were on board as of Wednesday. The ship has seen an average of 20 to 21 people a day.

Reducing the ship's capacity, he said, won't hurt its ability to relieve local hospitals.

2 American sailors among 668 in French strike group to test positive

By Caitlin Doonbos
Stars and Stripes

Two U.S. sailors are among the 668 crewmembers assigned to a French navy strike group who have tested positive for the coronavirus, according to Navy documents reviewed by the Associated Press. The ship was deployed to the Pacific from France, homeport April 13, the ministry said in a tweet Thursday.

The ship left San Diego on March 21 after its 14-day quarantine at a French naval base in Toulon, according to the French navy statement.

The ship is deploying to the Pacific "to help determine what may have contributed to this breakdown in the chain of command," he said at the time.

Burke cited measures such as social distancing and staying home that can help stop the virus’s spread.

“Still considering the deployment,” he said at the time.

Burke cited measures such as social distancing and staying home that can help stop the virus’s spread.

“Our goal is to deploy ships with no cases of the coronavirus,” he said in the message.

"Still considering the deployment," he said at the time.

Burke cited measures such as social distancing and staying home that can help stop the virus’s spread.

“The de Gaulle leads the strike group, which includes multiple frigates, a command and refueling vessel, and a nuclear-powered attack submarine, according to a Jan. 23 USNI News report.

“As part of the (personnel exchange program), sailors are integrated into the French crew in all daily operations, which include medical care, if needed,” according to the U.S. Navy update.

The de Gaulle is the only non-U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carrier in the world.

All De Gaulle sailors are undergoing a 14-day quarantine at the French naval bases in Toulon, according to the French navy statement.

The U.S. Navy in its Wednesday afternoon coronavirus update said it is “working closely with our NATO Ally to fight against the virus.”

“We look forward to continued operations with the Charles de Gaulle and the French Navy in the future,” it said.

The de Gaulle outbreak mimicked that of the USS Theodore Roosevelt, which was sidelined at Guam on March 26 after eight sailors on the ship tested positive for the coronavirus. As of Wednesday, that number had grown to 615 positive cases, according to the Navy update.
Airmen boost academics during pandemic

By James Bolinger
Stars and Stripes

At an Air Force base in California famous for pushing the envelope, senior enlisted leaders have devised a social media method of keeping work-at-home airmen around the world connected and learning during the coronavirus pandemic.

Ian Abrams, the commander of the 412th Test Wing at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., conceived the idea along with, Master Sgt. Chad Hardesty and Tech. Sgt. Fabian Guzman.

“We built this group with the idea of crowdsourcing education across the Air Force,” Eishen said. “Tremblay’s email on April 7 email to Stars and Stripes. ‘We have leaders at all levels with knowledge to give, and Airmen at all levels with a desire to learn but we needed a place that would allow these two groups to find each other.’

The group has more than 18,000 members and has begun weekly meetings with enlisted leaders from across the Air Force. Topics discussed have included mental health, bullet writing for evaluations and emotional intelligence. All the videos created are available on the page.

The group’s decentralized nature makes it one of the best ideas to stem from the lockdown, said Tech. Sgt. Cam Kopeck, the noncommissioned officer in charge of cyber systems support for the 18th Intelligence Squadron at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, in an email to Stars and Stripes on Monday.

“This is not something that was directed by the chief of staff of the Air Force or the command chief master sergeant of the Air Force,” he said. “This was born out of a desire to help others and better our force. So you’re going to get at situations right now, and we don’t have all the specifics as to when we may return back to a sense of normalcy. Personal and professional development is one of the biggest things we can take from this ‘downtime.’ It’s amazing how the group is doing it.”

For example, he discovered Quarantine University through others in his unit already taking advantage of it.

“Because one of the leadership workshops that was put on shortly after the quarantine started, promptly joined the Facebook group, and since then it has been an absolute trove of information,” he said. Although many of the classes focus on improving leadership qualities, Kopeck said there are webinars, training and meetups on a variety of topics. It’s fascinating to see how everyone bought in quickly and is focused on helping others, he said.

Quarantine University has hosted speakers from outside of the Air Force, too. For example, on Wednesday, award-winning author Whitney Johnson, a frequent lecturer at Harvard Business School, spoke about her book: “Disrupt Yourself: Put the Power of Disruptive Innovation to Work.”

Several of the live training sessions, such as “Hybrid Airmen” and “The Future of the Enlisted Force,” were attended by more than 9,000 people, Eishen said.

Hybrid airmen, a concept unveiled in 2018 by Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Kaleth Wright, calls for creating service members able to take on multiple roles during a major conflict.

“In the future, especially against a near-peer adversary, we will need hybrid airmen who have more skills than the ones they learned through their career field,” Eishen said. “The current COVID-19 situation is an excellent-use case to test this hypothesis.”

Quarantine University allows airmen to choose their own adventure and focus on their development, he said.

“We have Airmen across the base who are training to augment security forces, command post, medical and other critical jobs,” he said. “We also have Airmen with varying backgrounds who are learning iterative design and fundamentals of prototyping who are now building robots to help disinfect rooms and various surfaces.”

The group’s success has hinged on the dynamic communication of social media platforms like Facebook, Zoom and Meetup, Eishen said, although the Defense Department recently directed all personnel to stop using Zoom for security reasons.

“Social media has been key to this project, and it would not have grown this fast without it. We launched and had 2,000 users within 24 hours,” he said. “It is easy for anyone to provide content because we are able to live-stream from a smartphone.”

Those interested in checking out Quarantine University can find it at www.facebook.com/groups/574605376589462/.

bolinger.james@stripes.com
Twitter: @bolingerj2004

Camp Humphreys to slowly reopen gyms, barbershops

By Kim Gamel
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — As the daily count of coronavirus cases declines in South Korea, Camp Humphreys will take a step toward normalcy this weekend by reopening gyms, barbershops and some other services, the commander said Thursday.

Anticipating crowds, garrison commander Col. Michael Tremblay said military standards for haircuts would be phased back in slowly.

“We don’t want to have a rush on the barbershop,” he said in a community update via Facebook live. “We know you’re all shaggy out there and that’s fine.”

“We’re going to do this deliberately. So you’re going to get at least a week before there’s going to be any type of haircut inspection,” he said.

U.S. service members have been largely held in barracks or off-base residences for about three weeks after a soldier and several American contractors at Camp Humphreys tested positive for the virus, which can cause severe lung illness.

The largest overseas Army garrison, which is home to the military headquarters on the divided peninsula and a population of more than 37,000, closed several services and restricted on-base movement in response. Nearby Osan Air Base followed suit after it reported three cases.

In all, 24 people linked to USFK have tested positive for the virus, including two soldiers. But the overall pace of infections across South Korea has slowed, with only 22 new infections logged on Wednesday, the eighth day that the daily count was below 50.

On Thursday, USFK commander Gen. Robert Abrams authorized Camp Humphreys and Osan Air Base to return to Health Protection Condition C from C+, meaning the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Enlisted Force, was attended by more than 9,000 people, Eishen said.

Hybrid airmen, a concept unveiled in 2018 by Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Kaleth Wright, calls for creating service members able to take on multiple roles during a major conflict.

“In the future, especially against a near-peer adversary, we will need hybrid airmen who have more skills than the ones they learned through their career field,” Eishen said. “The current COVID-19 situation is an excellent-use case to test this hypothesis.”

Quarantine University allows airmen to choose their own adventure and focus on their development, he said.

“We have Airmen across the base who are training to augment security forces, command post, medical and other critical jobs,” he said. “We also have Airmen with varying backgrounds who are learning iterative design and fundamentals of prototyping who are now building robots to help disinfect rooms and various surfaces.”
Japanese prime minister broadens stay-at-home order to whole country

In order to stem new infections, Abe urged, as the number of cases climbed to nearly 10,000, including 712 on a cruise ship quarantined near Tokyo in February. About 180 people in Japan have died of COVID-19, the respiratory disease caused by the virus.

The government “needs to take measures to keep the flow of people to minimum” before this year’s Golden Week holidays that start in late April, Yasutoshi Nishimura, the country’s economic minister, told a government meeting.

Abe’s government has been criticized for hiding the true number of coronavirus cases by limiting tests.

The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare had focused on clusters of coronavirus cases instead of testing as many people as possible.

The declaration requests — not orders — residents to stay at home, meaning there will be no punishment for those who do not comply with the measures aimed at containing the spread of the coronavirus.

So, even after the declaration, many people still went to work in major cities in the seven prefectures.

The government and local leaders urged people to work from home, but many Japanese companies still do not allow telework.

On Thursday, Abe also said the government will provide cash handouts of 925 dollars to all citizens.
WASHINGTON — The coronavirus has taken hold in long-term care facilities across the country and caused thousands of deaths — including state-run homes for aging veterans and their family members.

Veterans homes in 16 states had reported at least one case of the virus as of Tuesday, said Mark Bowman, president of the National Association of State Veterans Homes. The association, with 157 members, provides support for state veterans homes, which receive payments from the Department of Veterans Affairs based on the number of residents.

Bowman said it was hard to get a full accounting of the positive cases among residents and staff of veterans homes, which receive payments from the Department of Veterans Affairs based on the number of residents. Bowman said it was hard to get a full accounting of the positive cases among residents and staff of veterans homes, which have proved to be ideal places for the virus to spread. While he’s asked members to alert him to cases in their facilities, Bowman believes some have not yet reported because they’re busy responding to crises.

“This thing is going so quick,” Bowman said. “When it strikes a state veterans home, their sole purpose is making sure residents are safe. Other communication doesn’t come as quick.”

At the Holyoke Soldiers’ Home in Massachusetts, 36 residents had died of the virus as of Tuesday. The state government and the U.S. Justice Department are investigating whether leadership failed in its response.

According to local news reports Wednesday, there were 45 positive cases of the coronavirus in two of Alabama’s four veterans homes, as well as two deaths. In New Jersey, the Paramus Veterans Memorial Home was overwhelmed with sick residents, and more than two dozen had died as of Tuesday.

National Guard members and medical staff from the Department of Veterans Affairs had been sent to help residents of veterans homes in multiple states, including Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

That’s just a snapshot of the coronavirus clusters in long-term care homes nationwide. The New York Times reported Tuesday that about 3,800 residents and employees at U.S. nursing homes had died — a likely undercount, the report said.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued special guidance for nursing homes. It advised restricting all visitors, canceling group activities and communal dining, and actively screening residents and employees for signs of the virus.

While state veterans homes are always prepared and stocked for an infectious outbreak, such as the flu, they never accounted for a pandemic of this magnitude, Bowman said.

Some veterans homes have reported shortages of personal protective equipment, he said. Through “town hall” meetings arranged by the National Association of State Veterans Homes, facility leaders have shared ideas. One home was using sanitizer made by a local distillery until they could get more through regular channels, Bowman said. Another was accepting donations of cloth masks made by local veterans organizations.

Bowman, the executive director of the Kentucky VA, said there were no cases of the virus in the four veterans homes he oversees. His and other veterans homes across the country — regardless of whether they have found positive cases — have prohibited visitors, canceled group activities and communal dining, and implemented regular temperature checks on residents and employees, he said.

Most facilities have stopped admitting new residents. The lack of new residents, combined with the cost of protective gear and overtime pay, has come at a tremendous cost, Bowman said. The association was looking to states and the federal government for support.

The payment rate from the VA increases every October to account for inflation. Early in the pandemic, the VA moved up the October increase to April, raising the per diem rate by nearly 3%, Bowman said.

For fiscal 2020, nursing homes received slightly more than $112 a day per veteran. That increased to about $115.

While it won’t mitigate the entire cost of the pandemic, Bowman said, the boost was an “immediate infusion of cash” that started going to facilities this month.
Glitches prevent aid checks from reaching millions

BY HEATHER LONG
AND MICHELLE SENGLEY
The Washington Post

Many Americans woke up Wednesday expecting to find a payment of $1,200 or more from the U.S. government in their bank account, but instead they realized nothing had arrived yet—or the wrong amount was deposited. Parents of young children complained they did not receive the promised $500 check for their dependent children.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin has instructed the Internal Revenue Service to get payments out as fast as possible to help offset the pain of losing jobs, and shutting down businesses, but numerous glitches—affecting thousands who used the new non-filers tool on IRS.gov, they enter their information in a home—may keep people from getting their payments.

Customers who use popular tax preparation services such as H&R Block, TurboTax and Jackson Hewitt customers didn’t get their payments.

Customers who use popular tax preparation services such as H&R Block, TurboTax and Jackson Hewitt customers didn’t get their payments.

Up to 21 million tax filers could be affected, said consumer law expert Vic Raghavan, because the IRS does not have these people’s direct deposit information on file if they received an economic impact payment.

The tax preparation companies received these people’s tax refund first, deducted their fees and then distributed the remaining refund to the customers. Because of that, the IRS had a “temporary bank account” on file that the tax preparer created for the 2019 tax season, Raghavan said.

Payment Status Not Available.

Frustrated taxpayers also took to Twitter to vent about their inability to track when and how they would be getting their money. Some posted an image of the message they received after entering their information: “Payment Status Not Available.”

There are a number of reasons the tool can’t check the status of a stimulus payment, the IRS said.

You aren’t eligible for a payment.

Your payment is based on your status as a Social Security, disability or railroad retirement beneficiary. In this case, the IRS will not have a stimulus payment on file if you did not receive a Social Security, disability or railroad retirement benefit.

Your payment information isn’t available on the Get My Payment website.

You have not filed a 2018 or 2019 federal tax return.

You filed your 2019 return, but it hasn’t been fully processed.

You are using the non-filers tool, but the information you entered is still being processed.

You aren’t verifying your identity when answering the security questions.

Information on the site is updated only once a day, so checking more than once in a 24-hour period won’t yield a different result.

■ Receiving the wrong payment amount or no money for dependent children

A number of people indicated that they received the incorrect payment amount.

FROM FRONT PAGE

That would be more than double the contraction that occurred during the 2008-2009 recession, which was the worst downturn since the Great Depression of 1933.

All businesses deemed nonessential have been closed in nearly every state. Deep job losses have been inflicted across nearly every industry. Some economists say the unemployment rate could reach as high as 20% in April, which would be the highest rate since the Depression. By comparison, unemployment never topped 10% during the Great Recession.

Glitches prevent aid checks from reaching millions

Many of the jobless whose applications for unemployment aid haven’t been accepted are likely self-employed and gig workers. The government’s $2.2 trillion economic relief package provides jobless benefits to those groups for the first time. But most states have to set up new computer systems to process those claims—a process that could take weeks in some cases.

The rescue package also established a $350 billion loan program to small businesses, with the loans forgiven if companies retain or rehire their workers. But Michelle Meyer, chief U.S. economist at Bank of America, said that so far there’s little evidence that the program has stemmed job losses. Meyer said she thought some companies may feel that laying off workers is a better option, given that the government has added $600 to the weekly unemployment aid that states provide. The total jobless benefit could replace all or even more than a low-income worker’s normal paycheck.

On Thursday, the small-business aid program ran out of money after more than 1.6 million loans were approved, though it isn’t clear that much of the money has yet been disbursed. Members of Congress are seeking a deal for additional funding.

In recent days, economic reports have contributed to a bleak economic picture. Sales at stores and restaurants fell by the most on record in March, the government said Wednesday. U.S. industrial output fell by the most since 1946. And home building plunged 22% in March from the previous month.

Retailers and other service companies keep cutting jobs. The federal government said this week that it will forgo $1,000 of its hourly employees, including nearly all its part-time workers. Royal Caribbean Cruises will cut one-quarter of its 5,000 corporate employees.

But now, job losses are not only deepening but also broadening, a trend that is sure to continue the longer the economic downturn lasts. The software company Toast, which works with the restaurant industry, last week cut half its workforce—1,300 people—citing a dizzying drop in restaurant sales. Yelp, the customer review company, said it would furlough 1,000 employees, or 60% of its workforce. Guardian, the online discount company, shed 2,900.

Employee discussion of layoffs on Zhao’s website have jumped 47% among information technology firms and 64% in finance, he said. Salaries are cut for many workers, some are laid off, and some are being furloughed or having their work time reduced. The rescue package also established a $350 billion loan program to small businesses, with the loans forgiven if companies retain or rehire their workers. But Michelle Meyer, chief U.S. economist at Bank of America, said that so far there’s little evidence that the program has stemmed job losses. Meyer said she thought some companies may feel that laying off workers is a better option, given that the government has added $600 to the weekly unemployment aid that states provide. The total jobless benefit could replace all or even more than a low-income worker’s normal paycheck.

On Thursday, the small-business aid program ran out of money after more than 1.6 million loans were approved, though it isn’t clear that much of the money has yet been disbursed. Members of Congress are seeking a deal for additional funding.

In recent days, economic reports have contributed to a bleak economic picture. Sales at stores and restaurants fell by the most on record in March, the government said Wednesday. U.S. industrial output fell by the most since 1946. And home building plunged 22% in March from the previous month.

Retailers and other service companies keep cutting jobs. The federal government said this week that it will forgo $1,000 of its hourly employees, including nearly all its part-time workers. Royal Caribbean Cruises will cut one-quarter of its 5,000 corporate employees.

But now, job losses are not only deepening but also broadening, a trend that is sure to continue the longer the economic downturn lasts. The software company Toast, which works with the restaurant industry, last week cut half its workforce—1,300 people—citing a dizzying drop in restaurant sales. Yelp, the customer review company, said it would furlough 1,000 employees, or 60% of its workforce. Guardian, the online discount company, shed 2,900.

Employee discussion of layoffs on Zhao’s website have jumped 47% among information technology firms and 64% in finance, he said. Salaries are cut for many workers, some are laid off, and some are being furloughed or having their work time reduced. The rescue package also established a $350 billion loan program to small businesses, with the loans forgiven if companies retain or rehire their workers. But Michelle Meyer, chief U.S. economist at Bank of America, said that so far there’s little evidence that the program has stemmed job losses. Meyer said she thought some companies may feel that laying off workers is a better option, given that the government has added $600 to the weekly unemployment aid that states provide. The total jobless benefit could replace all or even more than a low-income worker’s normal paycheck.

On Thursday, the small-business aid program ran out of money after more than 1.6 million loans were approved, though it isn’t clear that much of the money has yet been disbursed. Members of Congress are seeking a deal for additional funding.

In recent days, economic reports have contributed to a bleak economic picture. Sales at stores and restaurants fell by the most on record in March, the government said Wednesday. U.S. industrial output fell by the most since 1946. And home building plunged 22% in March from the previous month.

Retailers and other service companies keep cutting jobs. The federal government said this week that it will forgo $1,000 of its hourly employees, including nearly all its part-time workers. Royal Caribbean Cruises will cut one-quarter of its 5,000 corporate employees.
Economic fallout from pandemic worsens

Associated Press

PARIS — Economic pain from the coronavirus pandemic deepened Thursday, as health authorities warned that returning to normal is a distant goal despite leaders’ hopes of reopening stores, factories, airplanes and schools quickly and safely.

The World Health Organization’s European chief said optimism that the spread of the virus was declining in Italy, Spain and France was tempered by the knowledge that it was rising or sustained at a high level in Britain, Russia and Turkey.

“The storm clouds of the pandemic still hang heavily over the European region,” Dr. Hans Kluge said.

The International Monetary Fund says falling from what it calls the “Great Lockdown” will be the most devastating since the Great Depression in the 1930s. That has made leaders all the more anxious to send people back to work and school and to rebuild economies devastated by the pandemic that has infected more than 2 million people and claimed more than 137,000 lives, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

Italy’s hardest-hit region of Lombardy is pushing to relaunch manufacturing on May 4, the day that the national lockdown is set to lift. Regional officials are considering ordering companies to stagger opening hours to avoid cramming public transport.

In Germany, economic develop-ment minister, Stefan Buffagni, called the plan premature.

“Going in a random order risks fueling confusion among citizens and businesses,” Buffagni said.

In China, where the virus first emerged in December, even people who still have jobs have been wary of spending much or going out. Some Chinese cities tried reassuring consumers by showing officials eating in restaurants.

The U.S. began issuing one-time payments this week to tens of millions of people as part of its $2.2 trillion coronavirus relief package.

The U.S. has seen nearly 640,000 infections — more than the next four countries put together — and leads the world with nearly 31,000 deaths, according to Johns Hopkins University.

Experts say, however, the true toll of the pandemic is much higher due to limited testing, uneven counting of deaths and some governments’ attempts to downplay their outbreaks.

In Brussels, the pandemic was making the European Union redraft all of its budget plans to focus on tackling the coronavirus pandemic. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said the 27-nation bloc’s next trillion-euro budget will have to be re-imagined as “the mother-ship of our recovery.”

Troubling data indicate the worst may still be to come in many parts of the world. Japan’s prime minister announced he would expand a state of emergency to the entire country, rather than just urban areas, as the virus continued to spread.

Britain, with over 13,700 dead, extended its nationwide lockdown on schools, pubs, restaurants and most stores for at least three more weeks as health officials said the outbreak was nearing its peak, and the move appeared to have wide public support. Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said, “Any change to our social distancing measures now would risk a significant increase in the spread of the virus.”

European countries announced a staggered series of reopenings, starting April 27 with stores up to 800 square meters, or about 8,600 square feet, will be allowed to do business, starting Monday. If they can maintain hygiene precautions, Merkel said in a televised address Wednesday night.

In Brazil, President Jair Bolsonaro’s lackadaisical approach to the virus came under increased pressure for the dangers it placed Brazilians in. “We’re fighting against the coronavirus and against the ‘Bolsonaro-virus,’” Sao Paulo state Gov. Joao Doria told the AP, adding that he believes the president has adopted “incorrect, irresponsible positions.”

In Korea, where the virus first emerged, experts say the country has been successful in being agile in relaxing restrictions while holding down new infections.

In France, Amazon suspended operations after a court ruled it wasn’t doing enough to protect its workers in the country. The online retailer, which has six warehouses in France, said it would evaluate the court decision.

In Britain, a government survey found that a quarter of companies have sus- pend ed business. Cargo traffic at Europe’s busiest port of Rotterdam in the Netherlands sank 9.3% in the first quarter from the same period a year ago and its CEO warned of worse to come.

The U.S. governor reported Thursday that 5.2 million more people applied for un-employment benefits last week, bringing the running total to about 22.2 million out of a U.S. workforce of roughly 159 million — easily the worst stretch of U.S. job losses on record.

— easily the worst stretch of U.S. job losses on record.

In Brazil, President Jair Bolsonaro’s lackadaisical approach to the virus came under increased pressure for the dangers it placed Brazilians in. “We’re fighting against the coronavirus and against the ‘Bolsonaro-virus,’” Sao Paulo state Gov. Joao Doria told the AP, adding that he believes the president has adopted “incorrect, irresponsible positions.”

Some smaller stores in Germany to reopen amid ‘fragile’ success

By Marcus Kloeckner

Smaller stores in Germany to reopen soon as masks are now recommended while shopping in Germany to maintain its “fragile” success in containing the coronavirus, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Thursday.

Stores up to 800 square meters, or about 8,600 square feet, will be allowed to do business, starting Monday. If they can maintain hygiene precautions, Merkel said in a televised address Wednesday night.

Some smaller stores in Germany to reopen amid ‘fragile’ success

BY MARCUS KLOECKNER

KAIERSLAUTERN, Germany — Smaller stores in Germany to reopen soon as masks are now recommended while shopping in Germany to maintain its “fragile” success in containing the coronavirus, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Thursday.

Stores up to 800 square meters, or about 8,600 square feet, will be allowed to do business, starting Monday. If they can maintain hygiene precautions, Merkel said in a televised address Wednesday night.

Some smaller stores in Germany to reopen amid ‘fragile’ success

BY MARCUS KLOECKNER

KAIERSLAUTERN, Germany — Smaller stores in Germany to reopen soon as masks are now recommended while shopping in Germany to maintain its “fragile” success in containing the coronavirus, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Thursday.

Stores up to 800 square meters, or about 8,600 square feet, will be allowed to do business, starting Monday. If they can maintain hygiene precautions, Merkel said in a televised address Wednesday night.

Some smaller stores in Germany to reopen amid ‘fragile’ success

BY MARCUS KLOECKNER

KAIERSLAUTERN, Germany — Smaller stores in Germany to reopen soon as masks are now recommended while shopping in Germany to maintain its “fragile” success in containing the coronavirus, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Thursday.

Stores up to 800 square meters, or about 8,600 square feet, will be allowed to do business, starting Monday. If they can maintain hygiene precautions, Merkel said in a televised address Wednesday night.

Some smaller stores in Germany to reopen amid ‘fragile’ success

BY MARCUS KLOECKNER

KAIERSLAUTERN, Germany — Smaller stores in Germany to reopen soon as masks are now recommended while shopping in Germany to maintain its “fragile” success in containing the coronavirus, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Thursday.

Stores up to 800 square meters, or about 8,600 square feet, will be allowed to do business, starting Monday. If they can maintain hygiene precautions, Merkel said in a televised address Wednesday night.

Some smaller stores in Germany to reopen amid ‘fragile’ success

BY MARCUS KLOECKNER

KAIERSLAUTERN, Germany — Smaller stores in Germany to reopen soon as masks are now recommended while shopping in Germany to maintain its “fragile” success in containing the coronavirus, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Thursday.

Stores up to 800 square meters, or about 8,600 square feet, will be allowed to do business, starting Monday. If they can maintain hygiene precautions, Merkel said in a televised address Wednesday night.

Some smaller stores in Germany to reopen amid ‘fragile’ success

BY MARCUS KLOECKNER

KAIERSLAUTERN, Germany — Smaller stores in Germany to reopen soon as masks are now recommended while shopping in Germany to maintain its “fragile” success in containing the coronavirus, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Thursday.

Stores up to 800 square meters, or about 8,600 square feet, will be allowed to do business, starting Monday. If they can maintain hygiene precautions, Merkel said in a televised address Wednesday night.

Some smaller stores in Germany to reopen amid ‘fragile’ success

BY MARCUS KLOECKNER

KAIERSLAUTERN, Germany — Smaller stores in Germany to reopen soon as masks are now recommended while shopping in Germany to maintain its “fragile” success in containing the coronavirus, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Thursday.

Stores up to 800 square meters, or about 8,600 square feet, will be allowed to do business, starting Monday. If they can maintain hygiene precautions, Merkel said in a televised address Wednesday night.

Some smaller stores in Germany to reopen amid ‘fragile’ success

BY MARCUS KLOECKNER

KAIERSLAUTERN, Germany — Smaller stores in Germany to reopen soon as masks are now recommended while shopping in Germany to maintain its “fragile” success in containing the coronavirus, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Thursday.

Stores up to 800 square meters, or about 8,600 square feet, will be allowed to do business, starting Monday. If they can maintain hygiene precautions, Merkel said in a televised address Wednesday night.

Some smaller stores in Germany to reopen amid ‘fragile’ success

BY MARCUS KLOECKNER

KAIERSLAUTERN, Germany — Smaller stores in Germany to reopen soon as masks are now recommended while shopping in Germany to maintain its “fragile” success in containing the coronavirus, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Thursday.

Stores up to 800 square meters, or about 8,600 square feet, will be allowed to do business, starting Monday. If they can maintain hygiene precautions, Merkel said in a televised address Wednesday night.

Some smaller stores in Germany to reopen amid ‘fragile’ success

BY MARCUS KLOECKNER

KAIERSLAUTERN, Germany — Smaller stores in Germany to reopen soon as masks are now recommended while shopping in Germany to maintain its “fragile” success in containing the coronavirus, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Thursday.

Stores up to 800 square meters, or about 8,600 square feet, will be allowed to do business, starting Monday. If they can maintain hygiene precautions, Merkel said in a televised address Wednesday night.

Some smaller stores in Germany to reopen amid ‘fragile’ success

BY MARCUS KLOECKNER

KAIERSLAUTERN, Germany — Smaller stores in Germany to reopen soon as masks are now recommended while shopping in Germany to maintain its “fragile” success in containing the coronavirus, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Thursday.

Stores up to 800 square meters, or about 8,600 square feet, will be allowed to do business, starting Monday. If they can maintain hygiene precautions, Merkel said in a televised address Wednesday night.

Some smaller stores in Germany to reopen amid ‘fragile’ success

BY MARCUS KLOECKNER

KAIERSLAUTERN, Germany — Smaller stores in Germany to reopen soon as masks are now recommended while shopping in Germany to maintain its “fragile” success in containing the coronavirus, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Thursday.

Stores up to 800 square meters, or about 8,600 square feet, will be allowed to do business, starting Monday. If they can maintain hygiene precautions, Merkel said in a televised address Wednesday night.
VIRUS OUTBREAK ROUNDPUP

Thousands protest restrictions

Associated Press

LANSING — Thousands of flag-waving, honking protesters drove past the Michigan Capitol on Wednesday to show their displeasure with Gov. Gretchen Whitmer’s orders to keep people at home and businesses locked during the coronavirus outbreak.

As snow fell, others got out of their vehicles and raised signs, one of which read, “Gov. Whitmer We Are Not Prisoners.” Another said, “Michiganers Against Gretchens Abuses.”

Hours later, Whitmer shut back, telling reporters that the rally put health at risk.

Whitmer, a Democrat, extended a stay-home order through April 30 and has shut down schools and businesses deemed non-essential. The governor acknowledged the pain but said that the restrictions were necessary to stop the spread of the coronavirus, which has killed more than 1,900 Michigan residents and overwhelmed hospitals in the Detroit area.

Arizona

PHOENIX — Public health officials in Arizona’s largest county said that they’re seeing improvements in the number of people hospitalized for the coronavirus.

The Maricopa County Department of Public Health said Wednesday that the rate of growth in hospitalizations is slower. Officials said that’s likely due to the social distancing measures which have closed businesses and left people avoiding large gatherings.

The county also released data showing that people with high blood pressure, diabetes or heart, kidney, lung or liver disease are more likely to be hospitalized. People with high blood pressure, for example, make up 35% of hospitalizations but only 17% of the total group of people with cases of COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus.

Meanwhile, state health officials said that 11 more people in Arizona have died from complications of the coronavirus, bringing the total number of deaths since the start of the outbreak to 142. The 11 deaths reported Wednesday were in Maricopa, Pima, Coconino and Navajo counties.

California

SACRAMENTO — California will be the first state to give cash to immigrants living in the country illegally who are hurt by the coronavirus, offering $500 apiece to 150,000 adults who were left out of the $2.2 trillion stimulus package approved by Congress.

People living in the country illegally are not eligible for any of that money, and advocates have been pushing for states to fill in the gap. On Wednesday, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced that he would spend $75 million of taxpayer money to create a Disaster Relief Fund for immigrants living in the country illegally.

Senate Republican Leader Shannon Grove said that Newsom should spend the money instead on food banks, equipment for students to continue their education online and local governments struggling with revenue losses. California has an estimated 2.2 million immigrants living in the country illegally, the most of any state, according to the Pew Research Center.

State officials won’t decide who gets the money. Instead, the state will give the money to a network of regional nonprofits to find and vet potential recipients.

Hawaii

HONOLULU — Hawaii state worker unions on Wednesday pushed back at what they said was a proposal from Gov. David Ige to cut employee pay by 20% to cope with a sharp drop in tax revenue brought on by the coronavirus pandemic.

Ige said at a news conference that he was in discussions with unions and lawmakers about potential cuts, but no decision has been made. He said that the tax shortfalls meant the state needed to cut $1.5 billion from the state budget over the next 15 months.

U.S. cases, recoveries, deaths

As of noon April 16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Recoveries</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total confirmed cases</td>
<td>640,014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total recovered</td>
<td>52,772</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31,002 Deaths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Steve Polet holds a sign during a protest at the State Capitol in Lansing, Mich., on Wednesday. He noted that the state has essentially shut down the tourism industry to slow the spread of the virus, which has hammered two major sources of state income: the hotel tax and the general excise tax.

He said that tax increases weren’t under consideration “at this point in time.” The governor said that he and members of his cabinet would take a similar pay cut to any taken by employees.

Mississippi

JACKSON — Facing two freedom-of-religion lawsuits and pushback from the U.S. attorney general, a Mississippi mayor said Wednesday that people may attend drive-in church services during the coronavirus pandemic, but they must keep their windows up.

Greenville Mayor Errick D. Simmons said that local churches may allow up to 10 people at a time in a building for worship services that are shown online or carried on TV or radio, as long as those inside the church follow public health guidelines to maintain a safe distance from one another.

A conservative legal group called Alliance Defending Freedom filed a federal lawsuit Friday challenging the Greenville ordinance as unconstitutional. On Tuesday, U.S. Attorney General William Barr took the rare step of filing papers to side with those suing the city. Gov. Tate Reeves tweeted thanks to Barr “for this strong stand in support of religious liberty.”

North Dakota

BISMARCK — Bismarck city commissioners have rejected a request by local restaurant owners to temporarily allow the businesses to sell alcohol with takeout orders.

Several North Dakota cities have made such adjustments to help restaurants deal with a reduction in business because of the coronavirus stay-at-home order.

Mandan is one city allowing restaurants to sell sealed cans or bottles of alcohol with takeout meals.

The Bismarck Tribune reported that Mayor Steve Bakken said restaurants have typically told the city that alcohol is an add-on and that food is their primary source of revenue.

New York

New York residents will be required to wear face coverings anytime they come into close contact with other people outside their homes, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said Wednesday.

The mandate will require a mask or face covering, like a bandanna, on busy streets, public transit or any situation where people cannot maintain 6 feet of social distancing, even if it is passing a person briefly on a wooded trail. The order takes effect Friday.

The governor, who has himself eschewed masks during his daily news briefings, though he comes within six feet of his staff, said that there will initially be no civil penalties for noncompliance, but he’s urging merchants to enforce it among customers.

Though hospitalizations from the outbreak have leveled off, New York officials are still trying to reduce the rising death toll. New York recorded 752 deaths Tuesday for a total of nearly 11,600 since the outbreak began.
Pandemic provokes spike in demand for US food pantries

BY Terasa M. Walker and Elana Schor  
Associated Press

FRANKLIN, Tenn. — BrooklynDotson needed food. Her first unemployment check had yet to arrive after she was let go by the warehouse where she used to work. So the 25-year-old Nashville woman scrounged up some gas money and drove 30 miles to the GraceWorks Ministries food pantry in Franklin. There, at the pantry’s new drive-thru, workers wearing masks and gloves loaded her van with about $350 worth of groceries.

“I don’t have any income coming in, I don’t get any food stamps, so it’s just hard to get any help right now,” Dotson said while waiting in line at GraceWorks. Food pantries stay busy even in the best of economic times; the coronavirus pandemic has prompted a spike in demand as millions of people like Dotson find themselves furloughed, laid off or with businesses that have closed. In the best of economic times, one in five people like Dotson find themselves furloughed, laid off or with businesses that have closed. In the best of economic times, one in five people like Dotson find themselves furloughed, laid off or with businesses that have closed.

“The food’s coming in the best of economic times; the coronavirus pandemic has prompted a spike in demand as millions of people like Dotson find themselves furloughed, laid off or with businesses that have closed. In the best of economic times, one in five people like Dotson find themselves furloughed, laid off or with businesses that have closed.

Food pantries play a crucial role in helping communities when they are in need. In the best of economic times; the coronavirus pandemic has prompted a spike in demand as millions of people like Dotson find themselves furloughed, laid off or with businesses that have closed. In the best of economic times, one in five people like Dotson find themselves furloughed, laid off or with businesses that have closed.

Just as demand is skyrocketing, however, many of the food banks’ sources are drying up. Restaurants, hotels and resorts — many of which are shuttered or sharply limiting their operations — are no longer supplying them with food, while other suppliers are busy restocking grocery shelves. Farmers have also stopped delivering fresh produce because many of the people like Dotson find themselves furloughed, laid off or with businesses that have closed.

“The perfect storm scenario,” said Katie Fitzgerald, chief operating officer for Feeding America, a nationwide association of 200 food banks and 60,000 food pantries. “It is a perfect storm scenario.”

FederaingAmerica has seen an increase in demand from 98% of its member banks, according to a recent survey. The average increase for a member was 63%, while 95% of the association’s food banks reported an increase in operating expenses, the organization said.

Congress included a significant boost for emergency food assistance in its coronavirus relief legislation, but Fitzgerald warned that funding may take months to reach localities while food banks were already dealing with a flood of need in the near term. The $100 million that billionaire Jeff Bezos pledged to the association on April 2 was already being deployed last week, she said.

“When people say what do you need the most, we need food and money,” said Nancey Kiel, president and CEO of Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee.

Nestlen said that the bank, which acts as a food distribution center for hundreds of member agencies, moved to a six-day work week this month and would consider moving to seven days a week if demand called for it.

Oklahoma had ranked among the states with the highest increase in demand before the coronavirus, Nestlen noted. “This pandemic on top of it just shines a light on how so many households, not just in Oklahoma but around the country, live paycheck to paycheck,” she said. “When a household becomes economically insecure, they almost immediately become food-insecure.”

Food banks like Nestlen’s are realizing that the sharp increase in demand could continue for months, which she said makes donations even more crucial. For now, one thing is certain: Whatever food they do acquire is flying off the shelves just as fast as it arrives. “The food’s coming in the best of economic times; the coronavirus pandemic has prompted a spike in demand as millions of people like Dotson find themselves furloughed, laid off or with businesses that have closed. In the best of economic times, one in five people like Dotson find themselves furloughed, laid off or with businesses that have closed.

The Paycheck Protection Program is about to run out of money — millions of jobs are hanging in the balance. Congress MUST ACT!

With leaders unable to readily summon lawmakers to Washington, the usual power dynamics are scrambled, especially in the House. There, Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi of California, for example, can stymie legislation more easily than if members are present, and Pelosi, D-Calif., cannot rule the House with her typical tight grip on discipline.

But Democrats want money for hospitals burdened under COVID-19 caseloads and additional aid to state and local governments straining as the economy slides into recession.

“Congress needs to pass, and President Donald Trump’s $250 billion emergency request despite Democrats’ added over the weekend that funding may take months to reach localities while food banks were already dealing with a flood of need in the near term.

The Capitol is largely shuttered, requiring consensus from all sides for any legislation to pass, and top GOP leaders have vowed to stick closely to Trump’s request despite Democrats’ added need for the week.

The program has been getting swamped by businesses applying for funds, and it reached its $349 billion lending limit within days. At issue is a $350 billion paycheck protection program that’s a centerpiece of last month’s $2.2 trillion rescue bill. The program gives grants to businesses with fewer than 500 workers that can show they can maintain payroll and pay rent while shutting down their businesses during social distancing restrictions.

The program has been getting swamped by businesses applying for funds, and it reached its $349 billion lending limit within days. At issue is a $350 billion paycheck protection program that’s a centerpiece of last month’s $2.2 trillion rescue bill.

Democrats are also keen to boost funding to state and local governments “at an additional $250 billion is necessary immediately.”

But Democrats want money for hospitals burdened under COVID-19 caseloads and additional aid to state and local governments straining as the economy slides into recession.
Trump threatens to bypass rules to get nominees

BY KEVIN FEEKING AND LISA MASCARO
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Citing the coronavirus, Donald Trump is threatening unprecedented action — adjourning both houses of Congress — to entice the Senate to approve more of his nominees. So far, he has refused to fully adjourn during most breaks precisely to prevent the president from making recess appointments. Little or no business is conducted in such “pro-forma sessions,” but they give members of both chambers of Congress the chance to go back home without going into recess. It’s a process lawmakers also employed to thwart President Barack Obama’s nominees.

Trump says he’s had enough and warns that he will seek to adjourn both chambers of Congress if lawmakers don’t formally declare a proper recess. That way, he could appoint some nominees without the Senate’s approval. Trump said, “Perhaps it’s never been done before, nobody’s even sure if it has, but we’re going to do it.”

The Constitution does not spell out a unilateral power for the president to adjourn Congress. It states only that he can decide to adjourn it, and warns that he will seek to adjourn it when that decision is in “extraordinary occasions” to prevent “the present evacuation of the public service.”

The current practice of leaving Congress in session amid the coronavirus outbreak is a dereliction of duty that the American people cannot afford during this crisis,” Trump tweeted Wednesday at the White House.

Doug Andres, a spokesman for Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., and McConnell, the senator talked with Trump and shared his frustration about the progress, but Andres also indicated that the current rules regarding adjournments will remain. He said McConnell “pledged to find ways to confirm nominees considered mission-critical to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under Senate rules, Andres said, that will require consent from Minority Leader Chuck Schumer.

Progressives weigh backing Biden to avoid second Trump win

BY SARA BURNETT AND WILL WEISSERT
Associated Press


Four years later, the couple is still passionate about the Vermont senator’s progressive agenda. But they’re open to voting for the relatively centrist Joe Biden if that’s what it takes to defeat President Donald Trump.

“It’s like hold your nose and vote,” said Gibbons, 59.

A week after Sanders’ exit left Biden as the presumptive Democratic nominee, the former vice president is working to win over voters such as Machado and Gibbons.

The party is desperate to avoid a repeat of 2016 when ideological divides helped Trump win the White House.

Biden has made a series of proposals intended to appeal to progressives and won endorsements this week from Sanders and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, another liberal rival during the Democratic primary.

But the tensions that have weighed on Democrats for years aren’t suddenly evaporating. While some voters are making a practical calculation to beat Trump by supporting Biden, other leaders of the movement are urging caution until Biden embraces priorities such as the universal health care plan known as “Medicare for All.”

“The Biden that exists now will not get a lot of votes from progressives currently inclined to vote at all or to vote third party,” said Norman Solomon, co-founder of the activist organization Roots Action. “The only tool now to defeat Trump is Joe Biden, and the only way to sharpen that tool is to move him in a more progressive direction.”

AP VoteCast surveys of the electorate conducted before Sanders dropped out of the race showed skepticism among his supporters about Biden. Across 17 states where the survey was conducted, 54% of Sanders backers said they would be dissatisfied if Biden were the nominee. Just 28% of all Democratic primary voters said the same.

In the three states that voted on March 17 — Florida, Arizona and Illinois — some Sanders supporters went further, vowing not to support Biden. Thirteen percent said they would definitely not vote for Biden, and an additional 10% said they probably would not.

A slim majority, 54%, indicated that they definitely would support the Democrat against Trump, while 23% said they probably would.

In Arizona, a state that Democrats are hoping to flip in November, 8% of Democratic primary voters overall said they would not vote for Biden in November. But among Sanders supporters, that figure increased to 17%. In Michigan, which flipped to support Trump in 2016 and is now a key 2020 battleground, 19% of Democratic primary voters said their vote in November depended on which candidate the party nominated. That figure climbed to 26% among Sanders voters.

There are factors working in Biden’s favor. For one, he’s consolidating support in the party much earlier than nominee Hillary Clinton did in 2016. That year, Sanders waited until just before the party’s July convention to endorse Clinton. Warren also waited until the primary was over to back Clinton.

In 2020, they are backing Biden sooner, and more aggressively.

Sanders told The Associated Press on Tuesday that it would be “irresponsible” for his supporters to sit back and see “the most dangerous president in modern American history” reelected.

“My job now is to not only rally my supporters but to do everything I can to bring the party together to see that (Trump) is not elected president,” Sanders said.

The future of the progressive movement may rest with leaders such as Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. The New York Democrat has long said she would back the ultimate Democratic nominee. She told Politico on Wednesday that she supports Biden “in solidarity with the families I represent.”

Prospects for reconciliation between Biden and progressives may not all be bleak, however, especially with the election still more than six months away.

Jorge Trejo-Ibarra, a Las Vegas high school senior who will turn 18 in July, said he flirted with the idea of not backing Biden. But with the economy largely shuttered amid the coronavirus outbreak, he said he doesn’t think the U.S. can survive another four years of Trump.

No injuries in paper mill blast

Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine — An explosion at a paper mill in Maine shook the ground Wednesday and produced a plume of black smoke that was visible for miles around, but it appeared no one was injured.

The blast rocked the Androscoggin Mill in Jay, in central Maine, around noon, state police spokesman Steve McCausland said. Mill personnel told police no one was injured, though some people suffered respiratory distress.

A rising cloud of smoke that reverberated around, but it appeared no one was injured.

Gov. Janet Mills urged residents to stay far from the Jay site, Lassetter said. The explosion was a day when we should believe in miracles, today is it,” she said.

“I just want to say, if ever there was a day when we should believe in miracles, today is it,” she said.

Disaster.

Joe Biden has made a series of progressive and won endorsements this week from Sanders and Musk.”

Hillary Clinton did in 2016. That year, Sanders waited until just before the party’s July convention to endorse Clinton. Warren also waited until the primary was over to back Clinton.

In 2020, they are backing Biden sooner, and more aggressively.

Sanders told The Associated Press on Tuesday that it would be “irresponsible” for his supporters to sit back and see “the most dangerous president in modern American history” reelected.

“My job now is to not only rally my supporters but to do everything I can to bring the party together to see that (Trump) is not elected president,” Sanders said.

The future of the progressive movement may rest with leaders such as Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. The New York Democrat has long said she would back the ultimate Democratic nominee. She told Politico on Wednesday that she supports Biden “in solidarity with the families I represent.”

Prospects for reconciliation between Biden and progressives may not all be bleak, however, especially with the election still more than six months away.

Jorge Trejo-Ibarra, a Las Vegas high school senior who will turn 18 in July, said he flirted with the idea of not backing Biden. But with the economy largely shuttered amid the coronavirus outbreak, he said he doesn’t think the U.S. can survive another four years of Trump.
New life

Period of heartbreak, change culminates in bass virtuoso Thundercat’s brilliant fourth studio album, ‘It Is What It Is’

Music, Page 30
S TARS  AND  S TRIPES

entirely.

working around trouble spots to find more effi -

underlying protocols adapt to shifting conditions,

has managed them automatically because its

and surges. To a substantial extent, the network

they've been able to manage the shifting loads

part of the internet design,” explained Cerf.

has groaned here and there, as anyone who has

parents — have moved online in this era of social

ment services, chats with friends, calls to aging

banking, shopping, fl irting, live music, govern-

ment in his voice. “And the thing is not collaps-

eryone is online,” Cerf noted in a video interview

nected at a time of global catastrophe.

internet overall is handling unprecedented surges

of their lives creating. Despite some problems, the

debilitating.”

Comcast, the nation’s largest source of residen-

— were determined to design a system that could

among them, from his position at the Pentagon

Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency,

internet protocols in the 1970s, while working

Cerf was a driving force in developing key

charging.

connect your cable for device

input for a direct connection

There’s also a 3.5 mm aux

for a direct connection and

USB charging port to

There’s also a 3.5 mm aux

for a direct connection and

USB charging port to

There’s also a 3.5 mm aux

for a direct connection and

USB charging port to

There’s also a 3.5 mm aux

for a direct connection and

USB charging port to

There’s also a 3.5 mm aux

for a direct connection and

USB charging port to

a metal chassis and

battery, good for 8 months

or 1,200 unlocks. The app

shows the battery level and

when it needs a charge. A

blinking light goes off on the

lock when the level is below

percent. One feature

allows it to unlock with just

an 8-second charge with a

portable battery, in the

event the lock’s battery goes by
dead.

Online: tapplock.com;

$39 each, 2-pack for $72

and a 3-pack is $105

Twelve South’s limited
edition AirBag for AirPods and AirPods Pro will store, carry

and protect the expen-

sive earbuds in a

unique style.

The mini satchel

bag can be worn

around your neck or

just take the leather

strap off to carry it

with the leather top

handle or just carry

it in a purse, pocket or

backpack. Your AirPods will stay in the

AirBag securely when closing the

front-sided metal snap but-

ton, which also allows wireless

charging for the AirPods Pro.

There’s also an opening for a

Lightning cable for charging.

The limited edition AirBag is

made with full-grain leather and

protects all sides of the AirPods case.

Online: twelve south.com;

$49.99

ON THE COVER: Thundercat recently released his fourth studio album, “It Is What It Is.”

Eddie Alcazar
he superhero movie formula is simple. Hero appears to be riding high, hero is temporarily humbled by supervillain, hero regains the advantage and saves the day. Now, the real world has delivered a twist: The coronavirus pandemic makes these costumed heroes seem powerless.

COVID-19 has forced studios to postpone the release of some of their most lucrative movies and halt production on future installments of these ongoing series. Yet the threat the virus poses to superheroes isn't limited to the immediate toll on the box office. When theaters reopen, will the fantasy that a few spanxied do-gooders can save us from disaster seem like a salve, or a sick joke?

This is a key question for Hollywood — or at least for its current business model — and it explains the industry's reluctance to delay its spate of planned superhero movies even as China's movie theaters went dark and it became clear the rest of the world would follow.

Given how profitable the superhero genre has proved to be, and the extent to which the profits from these movies underwrite the production of other, smaller movies, companies such as Disney were understandably reluctant to acknowledge the looming catastrophe. Delaying a movie, or shutting down a production that may employ hundreds of people, is no small financial sacrifice. Still, as the realities of the coronavirus' spread and lethality became clear, and as movie theaters shut their doors in the name of public health, the studios retreated.

One question for Hollywood is how soon theaters can reopen; a related issue is whether audiences will have the confidence to sit in close proximity to strangers for an extended period of time. But there is a deeper question, too: After the recovery, will superheroes, Hollywood's most reliable breadwinners, still appeal to the moviegoers who once loved them?

Superheroes reliably come out on top in the movies in part because they tend to face off with the same kind of opponents over and over: brilliant individuals with diabolical plans who find a way to get a temporary drop on our costumed avengers before going down ignominious defeat. Sure, some of those supervillains are bigger or badder than the norm — think Thanos' desire to eliminate half of all life in the universe. But at a certain point, if the Avengers or the Justice League didn't figure out how to beat the Red Skull or Lex Luthor, they'd hardly be worthy of their cowls and titles.

Viruses are very different from supervillains. They lack the ideological motivations that drive antagonists like General Zod, who squares off with Superman over their differences about how to treat humanity, or the charm of Marvel's anti-heroic trickster god, Loki. Pathogens have expertise, widespread community sacrifice and patience, aren't the stuff of frenetic CGI spectacles.

There are pandemic stories in superhero comics that could be adapted for the screen, but even those parallels aren't exact. These diseases are the creation of terrorists, or are personified by characters like Host, a mutant who can communicate with pathogens, all of whom can be defeated by conventional superheroic methods. Even stories that end with genius superheroes finding cures might leave audiences feeling bitter: The idea of a scientist like the Beast fast-tracking vaccine development is less comforting fantasy than a reminder of a terrifying reality.

Maybe superhero movies will retain a kind of nostalgic pleasure as a reminder of a time when our greatest enemies were a small number of imaginary individuals with murderous agendas who could be defeated with a combination of detective work and force. But I suspect they'll remind us of an innocence that is simply too much to bear.

In “Watchmen,” Alan Moore's revisionist superhero comic, the disillusioned crimefighter Rorschach fantasizes about a day when ordinary people will ask him for the help they have refused, and he'll be able to punish them by rejecting them in turn. Faced with a pandemic, it's not so much that superheroes will look down on us and whisper “No.” It's that, sadly, they never had the power to save us in the first place.
Four years ago, when “Master of None” co-creator Alan Yang started writing a film loosely based on his Taiwanese father, Hollywood wasn’t exactly clamoring for Asian American stories. “Crazy Rich Asians” had not made more than $200 million, “The Farewell” was only a “This American Life” episode, and “Parasite” hadn’t yet swept the Oscars. It was a long shot that “Tigertail” would even get made, let alone with a partner like Netflix, where it is currently available to stream.

“This was a crazy, crazy choice on my part to write a movie with no white people in it,” said Yang from his home in Los Angeles. “This is the only movie I know that starts in Taiwan, segues into Mandarin and ends in English.”

But he carried on, winnowing down the 250-page odyssey to something more focused: A story about a Taiwanese man named Pin-Jui who leaves his great love for an arranged marriage and a new life in America. It splits between his life as a young man in the 1960s and the present day with his now-grown daughter.

Yang has described it as his “fever dream of my dad’s stories melded with some Wong Kar-Wai and some Hou Hsiao-Hsien.”

Thanks to “Master of None,” Yang had a pre-existing relationship with Ted Sarandos, the streaming giant’s chief content officer. So while it was easy to get the script to him, anything beyond a read was hardly a guarantee.

“It’s an art house-inflected movie that’s almost entirely in Mandarin and Taiwanese and features no Marvel stars,” Yang said with a laugh about its marketability.

But Sarandos didn’t need convincing: He loved the script and that was that. The movie was a go.

“I’m incredibly grateful to Netflix for taking a chance and allowing us to make the movie in the way we saw fit,” Yang said. That included shooting the past on 16mm film to give it a dreamier feel and the present on digital.

Yang cast Chinese-American actor Tzi Ma to play Pin-Jui (also called Grover) in the present day. Ma, who recently played a version of filmmaker Lulu Wang’s father in “The Farewell,” knew that his character was inspired by Yang’s father, but said that’s where the similarities end.

“The first thing Alan told me was his dad was a doctor,” Ma said. “Already I know this is a huge departure. (Pin-Jui) is a common man. This is a common man’s journey.”

Regardless, Ma knew just who this character was. “This character is modeled after my brother,” Ma said.

His brother was an architect in Hong Kong before their family immigrated to the United States, where his degree wasn’t recognized.

“Basically, in the ’60s there were two businesses we could get into as Asian Americans, Chinese Americans in particular: Restaurants and laundry,” Ma said. “So we bought a restaurant on Staten Island and he became the cook.”

When they moved, Ma remembers a distinct change in his brother, who was once so vibrant and full of life.

Actress Christine Ko, who plays his grown daughter, Angela, in the present-day scenes, had a similarly personal connection to the material.

“It felt like therapy for me, two years of therapy,” Ko said. “I grew up in a home that was a little more strict and wasn’t as emotionally forthcoming with discussions of feelings and all that, so I felt like I could really relate to the distance that Angela has with her father.”

Netflix had planned on having a premiere and a simultaneous theatrical release for “Tigertail” before theaters shuttered due to coronavirus. Yang said he was a little disappointed that he wouldn’t be able to celebrate with everyone who worked on it, but that there are discussions to hold some select screenings down the line and maybe even a make-up premiere.

It also means he won’t even be able to watch it with his family.

“Right now, everyone is excited to be working in this moment where Asian American films are having such mainstream success. I just told my family, this movie is a love letter to you guys, and please don’t take offense at anything,” Yang said.

Even though things are strange right now, everyone is excited to be working in this moment where Asian American films are having such mainstream success.

“For the first time it feels like we have solid footing, whereas in the past it always felt like we’re the flavor of the month,” Ma said. “The talent has always been there; they’ve just not had the opportunity to show the world how wonderful they are.”

A man (played by Lee Hong-chi, top right, and Tzi Ma, above left) reflects on the lost love of his youth and his long-ago journey from Taiwan to America in “Tigertail,” co-starring Kunjue Li, top left, and Fiona Fu, above right, and directed by Alan Yang.
By Glenn Whipp

Los Angeles Times

In the opening 10 minutes of his affecting new film “Tigertail,” writer-director Alan Yang introduces us to the movie’s central character, Pin-Jui, in three stages of his life — as a young boy, a fledgling adult and, finally, a retiree — asking viewers to reconcile how a once-vital human could have turned so inward that he now leads a life that amounts to solitary confinement.

It’s a mystery that Yang reveals methodically, purposefully, building toward a moving resolution that could prompt a few parents to share life stories with their adult children. I mean, we’ve got the time and the sheer exhaustion that can break us, right now, don’t we? And since “Tigertail” is streaming on Netflix, you don’t have to set up a Zoom meeting for an after-movie heart-to-heart. Just remember to keep a box of tissues within reach.

“Tigertail” examines those unspoken family stories and, specifically, serves as a nuanced look at the Taiwanese immigrant experience — the sacrifices, the loneliness and the sheer exhaustion that can break people and leave them unrecognizable.

The heart of Yang’s film — his feature debut after co-creating the vibrant Netflix comedy series “Master of None” and Amazon’s underrated marriage story show “Forever” — is the relationship between the adult Pin-Jui (played by the great Tzi Ma) and his grown daughter, Angela (Christine Ko).

Of course, the absence of a relationship. Their time together is marked by pained silence. What wounds Angela is not just the lack of conversation, but her father’s willful impenetrability. “Maybe it’s easier if we just stopped trying,” she tells him.

Certainly, the notion of the emotionally distant Asian father has been mined in movies. What distinguishes “Tigertail” is the way Yang explores Pin-Jui’s earlier life as a means of showing how duty and obligation brought him to that place. And as Yang takes us on that journey with him, he also offers a low-key lesson for redemption — examine the past to escape regret.

Pin-Jui’s history in Taiwan is steeped in loss, resulting in tears, which bring about familial reprimands. “Crying never solves anything,” his grandmother (Li-li Pan) tells him. “Be strong. Never let anyone see you cry.”

But when we see Pin-Jui as a carefree young man (a charming Lee Hong-chi), he’s far from a tortured soul. Yes, he’s impoverished, working in a sugar factory and living with his mother (Kuei-Mei Rong) and his sister, a good dancer, picking up his technique from watching American movies, and he’s enjoying romancing the beautiful Yuan (Yo-Hsing Pang) with his impetuousness and impeccable appreciation for music. (Who could resist Yao Su Rong?)

Because Yang himself possesses discriminating taste (the music choices on “Master of None” were consistently wide-ranging and inspired), the scenes between Yuan and Pin-Jui owe a certain debt to Wong Kar-wai, boasting a restrained sensuality tinged with sadness. And because we’ve already glimpsed the graying Pin-Jui, flabby and stoic, we know, like the entanglements in Wong’s masterpieces, this particular story doesn’t have a happy ending.

But there are a few stories in “Tigertail.” I haven’t even mentioned the one that brings Pin-Jui to America, its revelations are best left to be discovered. (Another surprise: Joan Chen’s in this movie, appearing memorably toward the end.) Most of the film’s episodes and characters are fully realized, save for Angela’s, whose personal upheavals are only broadly sketched. Her journey is tied to her father’s, separate lives longing for a mutual understanding that eventually, fittingly, begins and ends in silence.

A Taiwanese factory worker (Lee Hong-chi, right) leaves his homeland to seek opportunity in America, where he struggles to find connection while balancing family and newfound responsibilities in “Tigertail,” co-starring Kunjue Li, left.

‘Trolls World Tour’ a candy-colored battle of the bands

By Jake Coyle

Associated Press

Music snobbery is making a comeback. On the heels of the excellent serial remake of “High Fidelity,” about a tasteful Brooklyn record store owner, comes “Trolls World Tour,” in which different pixie clans each representing a music genre vie for sonic domination. Both are quaint in their own way, pretending that our musical borders didn’t years ago disintegrate into a digital soup.

“Trolls World Tour,” a sequel to the 2016 DreamWorks original, had been planned for the theatrical release before the coronavirus pandemic. On April 10, Universal Pictures instead released it straight into the home, as a $19.99 digital rental — a rare breaking of the theatrical release window by a major studio.

That makes “Trolls World Tour” a kind of trial balloon, albeit a very glittery one. Is it worth it? That may depend on just how bored your housebound kids are. It is, at least, a shiny new object when there are few about.

Directed by Walt Dohrn and David P. Smith, “Trolls World Tour” is a sped-up version of the jukebox musical. It runs through so many songs that it might be better called a Spotify musical, with infinite skips.

Both “Trolls” movies can be hard to look at. They’re so garishly colored that I’d recommend dimming your TV set. But when they’re not too loud and you’ve sufficiently shielded your eyes, their sugary highs are pleasant enough and occasionally tuneful. An animated movie can do worse than indoctrinate another generation to the joys of Earth, Wind and Fire’s “September.”

In “World Tour,” our original clan, including Poppy (Anna Kendrick) and Branch (Justin Timberlake), discover a wider world of trolls. The trolls we know believe in the power of pop, but it turns out there are others out there devoted to techno, classical, country, funk and rock. There are even other pockets they find along the way, too, including those for hip-hop, Reggaeon and even dedicated yodelers.

While the story is thin, the musical pomp is magnificent. There’s a good hip-hop interlude and a fine Kelly Clarkson country ballad.

It’s the Rock Trolls that start the trouble in “World Tour.” Their leader, Queen Barb (voiced by Rachel Bloom), sets out to dominate the other groups. Armed with heavy-metal power chords and Metallica-esque bombast, Queen Barb plots a rock reign to Metallica-esque bombast, Queen Barb plots a rock reign to Metallica-esque bombast, Queen Barb plots a rock reign to Metallica-esque bombast, Queen Barb plots a rock reign to Metallica-esque bombast, Queen Barb plots a rock reign to Metallica-esque bombast, Queen Barb plots a rock reign to Metallica-esque bombast, Queen Barb plots a rock reign.

Both “Trolls” movies exuberantly exalt the glories of diversity, and maybe some young ones will get a decent primer on a musical landscape far more vast than Kidz Bop. But “World Tour” can also sound like a bad Grammy medley that puts every genre into a blender until all the taste is wrung out.

“Trolls World Tour” is rated PG for some mild rude humor. Running time: 94 minutes. Available for streaming on Amazon, Apple TV, Google Play, Vudu and other platforms.

Poppy (voiced by Anna Kendrick, left), and Queen Barb (voiced by Rachel Bloom) appear in a scene from “Trolls World Tour.”
Doom Eternal staves off another demonic attack with more content, crushingly hard difficulty level

By Christopher Byrd
Special to The Washington Post

Most of the time when playing Doom Eternal, I hover between life and death. During those moments, I am both predator and prey. Dashing around the map, I do my best to avoid the mancubus, an obese demon with cannons for arms that is particularly deadly when encountered in pairs or trios.

I’m low on health, I search frantically for something to introduce a new, difficult demon to the mix. I might try a few shots for health, or broil with an over-the-shoulder pike or flame cannon for armor, or chainsaw in half for easy health sources. — the ones who don’t look as if they can be turned into a fully automatic weapon — the ones who don’t look as if they can be turned into a fully automatic weapon as weapon mods that can be swapped in the middle of combat.

After a short intro sets the stage for a demonic invasion of Earth, players find themselves in a non-descript dungeon that evokes the muddy-colored past of old video games. (The environments become more colorful later.) From there, Eternal slowly rolls out its many systems — introducing such things as weapon mods that can be swapped in the middle of combat.

The pacing of the encounters in Eternal reminded me of its predecessor. Both love to do things such as introduce a new, difficult demon-type and then present you with an escalating number of them to face. It didn’t take long for my muscle memory to get used to the combat field and prioritize targets, you likely wouldn’t make it very far. I remember the game being more cerebral than I had any right to expect from the poster child for a AAA shooter. If anything, Doom Eternal is even more mentally taxing.

Eternal opens with a whisper than a bang in comparison to the last entry and, structurally speaking, the priorities appear to be different. Whereas the last game seemed to be in a hurry to show off how vigorous it could be (who can forget the moment where the Doom Slayer rips a computer terminal off a wall to shut up the dude offering a bit of story exposition?), the new game is slower to show its hand and the narrative jolts take a little longer to arrive. Eternal’s opening stages seem much harder than those I remember from the last game. But it’s as though they serve to bring the player quickly up to speed on the strategic thinking required to tackle the game’s greater challenges. Looking back on them, it was almost as if they exist as a training ground.

The new frills are nice — such as the Slayer Dungeon where you can go hog wild and sharpen your skills by shooting demons without the threat of dying, or Slayer Gates where you can face off against harder enemies. But they have not yet convinced me that they make for a qualitative improvement. One aspect of Eternal I’ve found baffling is its platforming sections, which are often confusing and, frankly, unhelpful.

The July debut, they say, will be scaled down — some 35 programming slates that can be more easily produced at this time.

So a docuseries with overseas shoots? Shelved. A late-night show or content featuring gamers and influencers? More likely. “We know it’s not easy to do everything we want to do,” Horn said. “But we can be on our heels, or we can be proactive.”

The partners have long felt that gaming, a $150 billion business, is ripe for a full-time television network. That’s the most prominent effort to date, a mid-2000’s channel called G4, was niche and short-lived.

But VENN executives point to the recent spike in gaming popularity among Americans playing more while under lockdown because of COVID-19 — as a particular reason their service fills a need. Activision, Blizzard’s Call of Duty: Warzone brought in 30 million players in 10 days, according to one of its co-founders and the New York Times. “In the age of Covid-19 — and, structurally speaking, the priorities appear to be different. Whereas the last game seemed to be in a hurry to show off how vigorous it could be (who can forget the moment where the Doom Slayer rips a computer terminal off a wall to shut up the dude offering a bit of story exposition?), the new game is slower to show its hand and the narrative jolts take a little longer to arrive. Eternal’s opening stages seem much harder than those I remember from the last game. But it’s as though they serve to bring the player quickly up to speed on the strategic thinking required to tackle the game’s greater challenges. Looking back on them, it was almost as if they exist as a training ground.

The new frills are nice — such as the Slayer Dungeon where you can go hog wild and sharpen your skills by shooting demons without the threat of dying, or Slayer Gates where you can face off against harder enemies. But they have not yet convinced me that they make for a qualitative improvement. One aspect of Eternal I’ve found baffling is its platforming sections, which are often confusing and, frankly, unhelpful.

The July debut, they say, will be scaled down — some 35 programming slates that can be more easily produced at this time.

So a docuseries with overseas shoots? Shelved. A late-night show or content featuring gamers and influencers? More likely. “We know it’s not easy to do everything we want to do,” Horn said. “But we can be on our heels, or we can be proactive.”

The partners have long felt that gaming, a $150 billion business, is ripe for a full-time television network. That’s the most prominent effort to date, a mid-2000’s channel called G4, was niche and short-lived.

But VENN executives point to the recent spike in gaming popularity among Americans playing more while under lockdown because of COVID-19 — as a particular reason their service fills a need. Activision, Blizzard’s Call of Duty: Warzone brought in 30 million players in 10 days, according to one of its co-founders and the New York Times. “In the age of Covid-19 —
Late-night pandemic illusions
You’re not imagining it: We’re all having intense coronavirus dreams

BY RACHEL SCHNALZER
Los Angeles Times

What do a tidal wave, a lethal injection and masses of thin white worms have in common? They are all images that have cropped up in dreams people are having about the coronavirus pandemic.

Many people are reporting more vivid dreams while self-quarantining, taking to social media to comment on the phenomenon. "I feel pain in my right shoulder, and a huge grasshopper-like insect there. It has already chewed through the fabric of my sweater and is now gouging my flesh," one respondent described in a survey currently underway and conducted by Deirdre Leigh Barrett, Ph.D., author of "The Committee of Sleep: How Artists, Scientists, and Athletes Use their Dreams for Creative Problem Solving — and How You Can Too" and an assistant professor of psychology at Harvard Medical School’s psychiatry department. Barrett supports the idea that people are dreaming more about aspects of life they miss while in quarantine. Barrett has noticed some respondents are dreaming more about aspects of life they enjoy while detained. "They had dreams of yearning for things they couldn’t point out that dreams can indicate feelings that are repressed during waking life. For someone who is experiencing more anxious dreams while in quarantine, Barrett posits, “They may be more scared (of the coronavirus pandemic) than they think.”

Many experts recommend journaling as a helpful way to reflect on and learn from our dreams. Barrett, a proponent of dream journaling, explains, “We forget dreams so easily that writing them down helps us continue to relate to them longer. You just see another side to yourself.” She recommends looking for patterns in dreams and keeping tabs on any themes that come up regularly. Barrett isn’t fuzzy about how people dream journal, saying that while some people may enjoy keeping old-fashioned logs of their dreams, others may find dictating to a smartphone easier and less time-intensive.

For those who have trouble remembering their dreams, Naiman suggests, “The first step to remembering a dream is to linger in grogginess.” Upon waking, keep your eyes closed and wait for the memories of the dream to resurface. Then write your recollections of the dream down — or draw, if that feels more natural, Naiman says. He encourages dreamers to recognize that the waking world and the dream world are connected, saying, “Bridge whatever memory you have of the dream into the waking world.”

REM cycles get longer. That’s why we do more dreaming in the latter third of the night, Naiman says. It’s also possible that people may be dreaming more about aspects of life they miss while in quarantine. Barrett has noticed a parallel between dreams about the coronavirus pandemic and dreams had by a group of British soldiers imprisoned in a Nazi prisoner-of-war camp during World War II. The soldiers’ dreams included elements of yearning for things they couldn’t have or enjoy while detained. “They had more food content (in their dreams) than any other sample I’ve ever seen,” Barrett explains. In her current dream survey, she has noticed some respondents are dreaming about foods they aren’t able to have in quarantine. So, can we learn anything from the dreams we experience during the coronavirus crisis?

Another major reason why we’re dreaming like crazy? Many of us are getting more sleep than usual while cooped up inside. “Dream recall is very correlated with how many hours of sleep you get, and most of America runs around pretty sleep-deprived,” Barrett explains, adding that if you’ve been sleep-deprived and are now catching up on sleep, you may be experiencing more intense dreams. Dreams occur during our REM cycles, and the more REM sleep we get in a night, the more dreams we typically experience. As your night of sleep progresses, your REM cycles get longer. That’s why we do most of our dreaming in the latter third of the night, Naiman says.

First of all, changes in one’s routine can stir up dream recall, explains Barrett. “When waking life is more vivid, so is dream life,” agrees Rubin Naiman, Ph.D., a psychologist, clinical assistant professor of medicine and the sleep and dream specialist at the University of Arizona. “My patients routinely increase dreaming at times like this.”

Naiman draws a parallel between the gut, which decides what food we consume is useful and what is waste, and the brain, which similarly consumes and processes information throughout the day. When we observe something normal, our brains don’t need to “digest” it, he says. However, when something out of the ordinary happens — like a pandemic — our brains may process the experience through dreaming. That’s why “difficult-to-digest” experiences may give us dreams, Naiman explains. “At a time like this, we’re all directly or symbolically digesting information about the threat, about contagion,” he says.

So, can we learn anything from the dreams we experience during the coronavirus crisis?

Many experts recommend journaling as a helpful way to reflect on and learn from our dreams. Barrett, a proponent of dream journaling, explains, “We forget dreams so easily that writing them down helps us continue to relate to them longer. You just see another side to yourself.” She recommends looking for patterns in dreams and keeping tabs on any themes that come up regularly. Barrett isn’t fuzzy about how people dream journal, saying that while some people may enjoy keeping old-fashioned logs of their dreams, others may find dictating to a smartphone easier and less time-intensive.

For those who have trouble remembering their dreams, Naiman suggests, “The first step to remembering a dream is to linger in grogginess.” Upon waking, keep your eyes closed and wait for the memories of the dream to resurface. Then write your recollections of the dream down — or draw, if that feels more natural, Naiman says. He encourages dreamers to recognize that the waking world and the dream world are connected, saying, “Bridge whatever memory you have of the dream into the waking world.”

Many people are reporting more vivid dreams while self-quarantining, taking to social media to comment on the phenomenon. Take a moment to think back on your dreams over the past few weeks. Have they seemed a little more intense — or upsetting — than usual?

“Sometimes you can get a practical, useful idea,” Barrett suggests, while also
When I travel, I make it a habit to collect things that capture memories. The most treasured keepsake of any trip I take is the journal I start before I leave, filled with descriptions and observations of the people I’ve met, the places I’ve seen and the experiences I’ve had.

Thinking back, it seems I’ve always had a desire to capture my discoveries and eureka moments in a journal. On my first trip to Europe, as a 14-year-old, I collected and logged my experiences in a file of a hundred postcards, each numbered and positioned with my notes.

Thereafter, every trip I took inspired my passion for filling up an empty journal, even when I was just a footloose vagabond with no career goals. But with practice, I became a keen and disciplined journaled. I now have a set routine: On the flight over to Europe, I make it a habit to fill out a personal inventory of my mindset and my hopes for the trip. On the plane ride home, I write with a similar introspective wrap-up. And each night in between, I don’t drift off to sleep before cataloging my day’s experiences, discoveries and thoughts into that book. Without capturing your thoughts on paper (or on your laptop or tablet), the lessons of travel are like shooting stars you just missed — and you will surely forget what you thought you saw. Collecting intimate details on the road, and then distilling them into your journal, sharpens your ability to observe and creates a keepsake you’ll always cherish.

You don’t have to give a chronologically detailed account of your journey. In fact, you probably shouldn’t. Consider just sitting somewhere interesting and writing about your immediate surroundings or focusing on a specific interaction you’ve had with a local. Leave out the boring stuff. Ten years from now, you won’t feel the need to recall the mediocre meal you grabbed at that cafe or the quality of the hotel’s complimentary breakfast. You want to include insights, details that capture the character of a place as well as your personal, favorite fest, or seek out discoveries and thoughts into that book. Without capturing your thoughts on paper (or on your laptop or tablet), the lessons of travel are like shooting stars you just missed — and you will surely forget what you thought you saw. Collecting intimate details on the road, and then distilling them into your journal, sharpens your ability to observe and creates a keepsake you’ll always cherish.

Rick Steves

Read more about things to do in the Europe Traveler blog: strips.com/blogs/europe-traveler

Top travel picks

Marvelous mountain huts

When things get back to normal, what will you do first? Revel in the midst of thousands at your favorite fest, or seek out distant horizons for more solitary pursuits? The latter might be a better way to ease back into the workings of society as we once knew it.

These craving exploration of heretofore unchartered territories could do well to head into the hills — or, better yet, mountains. While a five-star resort in the Swiss Alps could be a welcome base for exploration, you certainly don’t need all those bells and whistles to enjoy a few good days of hiking. What you do need is a hearty meal and a place to stretch your weary legs. Have you considered exploring just a few of the accommodations open to hikers?

The Deutscher Alpenverein (DAV), or German Alpine Club, bills itself as the world’s largest climbing association. This one million-plus member organization is open to all willing to pay its modest annual membership fees of about 35 to 90 euros. By signing on the “section” you join, generally the closest to where you live, Members enjoy discounts on overnight stays in more than 2,900 mountain huts in Germany and other Alpine nations including Austria, France, Italy, Liechtenstein and Switzerland.

Nonmembers as well can make use of many of the DAV’s 323 huts countrywide, many of which are looked after by on-site hosts and serve hot meals made from regional product. Most beds are located in common rooms, although some do offer space for small groups or families. At the most remote huts, the model is self-service, and hikers must make do with the provisions they’ve carried in themselves.

To illustrate the variety of accommodations available, let’s contract two facilities at either end of the scale:

The Kaufingerhaus am Trettensee is a hut located at a 3,375-foot elevation in the Berchtesgaden National Park. The large facility is capable of sheltering about 200 outdoor enthusiasts per night during its June through October operating seasons and makes an ideal jumping-off point for half-day walks or more strenuous tours lasting several days. A popular way to reach is by parking at the Koenigssee, taking the ferry across the lake to the red-domed pilgrimage church and then hiking for approximately four hours. The simplest accommodations, a matter of space in a large common space, goes for 13 euros for DAV members and 26 euros for nonmembers. Guests can order from a standard menu from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., or book a half-pension package with evening meal included. Breakfasts and lunches to go are also available. Reservations are essential; the experience of being alone with that private stone — with its barbed wire, tour buses and port-a-loos — won’t quite make it.”

It was on the boat to France the next day that I worked on those rough notes. And it was then that I realized what I wanted to do for a living: finding hidden gems of Europe and bringing them home through my writing. With my notes, I can stoke my memories and revisit a cherished location for the rest of my life. Enjoy the physical act of putting pen to paper, and gathering new experiences, lessons, thoughts and feelings while they are fresh and vibrant. Travel brings new color to your life, and journaling lets you stand back to understand and enjoy the art as it unfolds.

Rick Steves (ricksteves.com) writes European travel guidebooks and hosts travel shows on public television and public radio. Email him at rick@ricksteves.com and follow his blog on Facebook.

Rick Steves

Postcards, such as this card Rick Steves sent from Greece to a friend back home in 1973, can be a wonderful record of a memorable trip.
Crust challenge

Hunt Brothers Pizza and Da Peppino will both satisfy your hunger, but one is clearly better

By Immanuel Johnson
Stars and Stripes

The takeout choices are limited right now for the thousands of soldiers and others at the Grafenwoehr Training Area in Bavaria, even for a pizza.

For those restricted to Grafenwoehr, the simple choice is Hunt Brothers, an addition over the past year to several bases in Germany. Off post, there’s Restaurante Da Peppino, a local mainstay since 2009.

Hunt Brothers pizza has convenience going for it — it’s in the shoppette, it’s open most of the day and there’s a respectable variety. If you’re not that hungry, they sell slices, as well as “hunks” that equal 2-3 slices.

Da Peppino has only 13-inch and 16-inch offerings, but they’re also a full-service restaurant with pasta, salmon, schnitzel and most of the regular dishes you’re likely to find at an Italian spot in Germany. But in this case, I stuck to pizza for the sake of comparison.

At Hunt Brothers, I tried a slice of the sausage and bacon, and another of the “loaded” pizza, which had pepperoni, green peppers, black olives, banana peppers, onions, mushrooms, cheese and ham. At Peppino, I went for a ham and spinach pizza.

Was it a fair contest between Peppino’s wood-fired oven pizza and Hunt Brothers’ pizza that had been sitting under a lamp? Probably not, but hey, I was hungry.

The Peppino pizza’s flavors all came through, with a good balance between the toppings, cheese, tomato and bread. The loaded Hunt Brothers slice was just too much grease. The sausage and bacon pizza didn’t have its toppings falling off and was the better of the Hunt Brothers options.

The winner on taste and presentation? Da Peppino. If you’re short on cash or hungry at odd hours, Hunt Brothers satisfies a craving, and they do make made-to-order pizzas as well.

Da Peppino also offers either a free soft drink or bottle of wine for orders over 35 euros, according to their takeout menu.

johnson.immanuel@stripes.com
Twitter: Manny_Stripes
With movie theaters, outdoor cafes, parks, shops and swimming pools closed in Germany during the coronavirus pandemic, the great outdoors beckons. But coronavirus restrictions on Defense Department personnel in Germany limit the distance you can go in pursuit of outdoor adventure to less than a 20-mile radius from your home.

If you live in Rheinland-Pfalz, that’s not a problem. The Kaiserslautern area has countless trails to explore, from those criss-crossing the low mountains of the Palatinate Forest south of the city to the open farmland and meadows to the west, near Ramstein Air Base.

For the past few weeks, my kids and I have been keeping stir-craziness at bay by venturing out on hikes.

Recently, we discovered something new while making our way down a favorite trail near the Seewoog, a small lake near Ramstein-Miesenbach. Walking northeast toward Mackenbach, we followed a dirt path that crosses a meadow and leads into the woods. Right before the trail makes a long uphill climb, we took a path to the left and found something unexpected: Deer that live in an enclosed meadow in what looks to be a small animal reserve.

There were more than a half-dozen deer, grazing and sitting in the dirt. Some were completely white, and one had antlers. A deer harem, perhaps?

Most of the animals paid us little heed, either napping with half-shut eyes or nipping at an itch on their hindquarters. They didn’t even flinch when we called to them — except for the one with the antlers. He immediately sauntered over to us, getting so close we could reach through the gaps in the wire fence and gently touch his rack.

My kids found a few tufts of green grass and some pine-needle branches to poke through the fence. He ate the grass and pine needles and brushed his antlers against the branches. Whichever direction we went along the fence line, the buck followed.

The interaction was a nice diversion from being cooped up at home. After circling around the deer reserve, we headed back toward the Seewoog and explored another trail, this one in the direction of Kusel.

We covered about five miles but with more time, or a bicycle, we could have done a lot more. The trail from the Seewoog to Kusel is nearly 17 miles, and to Weilerbach, it’s just over four miles. We saw serious hikers walking briskly with trekking poles, and people on bikes, walking their dogs or riding horses.

Social distancing was hard at times, but we did our best to give everyone a wide berth.

In non-pandemic times, the children’s playground by the lake is open, as is an Imbiss that sells hot food and drinks in winter and ice cream in the summer. But in these times of the virus and social distancing, they’re closed.

The nearby Seewoog pizzeria is still open for takeout, though, so we picked up two brick-oven pizzas and headed home.

The Seewoog is a good starting point for hiking and biking in the countryside outside of Kaiserslautern.
The coronavirus pandemic left dozens of cruise ships temporarily stranded at sea, not allowed to dock because of onboard outbreaks of the deadly virus. It happened with the Norwegian Jewel in the South Pacific, the Zaandam off the coast of Florida and the Grand Princess in the waters off Northern California, among several others.

Despite such harrowing news, Chris Schuck hasn’t canceled three cruises he has booked over the next two years, with the earliest in September.

“After this virus, I truly believe the cruise lines will institute even more guidelines to keep guests and crew safe,” said Schuck, who works in the scheduling and labor department at Walt Disney World in Florida. Schuck isn’t the only cruise fan who remains faithful. Travel agents and industry experts say bookings for cruise sailings in 2021 are up considerably compared with precoronavirus data.

Cruise lines that canceled sailings in the past few months have offered refunds or credits toward future trips. Still, travel agents and experts say the booking rates for cruise trips in 2021 represent more than just passengers rebooking their canceled trips. In the past 45 days, CruiseCompete.com, an online cruise marketplace, has seen a 40% increase in bookings for 2021 compared with 2019, said Heidi M. Allison, president of the company. Only 11% of the bookings are from people whose 2020 trips were canceled, she said.

“People are still booking cruises and are anxious to sail again when this is all over,” she said.

In an analysis of the cruise industry, Swiss banking giant UBS wrote that cruise booking volume for 2021 was up 9% in the past 30 days compared with the same time last year. The UBS report, issued March 31, said the bookings for 2021 cruise trips included people using their credit for canceled sailings but added that volume “still shows a surprising resilience in desire to book a cruise.” Booking volume was even higher for trips to Asia and Alaska, UBS said, “so there is pent-up demand for Asia travel next year.”

AAA has also noticed an increase in cruise bookings beyond the numbers attributed to people rebooking canceled trips, said Paula Twidale, a senior vice president at AAA Travel.

“We are optimistic that once this crisis is behind us, travel will rebound quickly, which bodes well for 2021,” she said.

An online poll of more than 4,600 cruise passengers found that about 75% said they plan to either resume taking cruises at the same frequency as before or more often once the coronavirus crisis subsides, according to CruiseCritic.com, a cruise review site.
The Appalachian Trail has closed due to the pandemic, forcing hikers to head home

The trail now less traveled

By Sarah Blake Morgan
Associated Press

When Alexandra Eagle first mentioned plans to hike the entire Appalachian Trail alongside her new husband, her sister told her they'd either be divorced in five months or married forever.

Eagle, 33, and Jonathan Hall, 36, had just moved out of their Brooklyn apartment when they married on March 2, the third anniversary of the blind date that brought them together. They had talked about the Appalachian Trail in their first conversation and, when it came time to plan a honeymoon, they decided to make the hike.

"This was going to be an epic adventure," Eagle told The Associated Press. The couple spent a year researching, training and saving before setting off on the roughly 2,190-mile journey seven days after their wedding. They knew about the new coronavirus spreading across the globe but considered themselves lucky to be trading Brooklyn for a tent on the trail, especially as New York fell under restrictions to prevent the virus’ spread.

"We always figured that being out on the trail and seeing a dozen people a day was a fine position to be in," Hall said. As the pandemic grows, hikers face the difficult decision to postpone their dreams or ignore virus fear was changing the vibe of my hike," said Selvage, who started the hike, in part, to experience the culture of trail towns. "I chose to pause to get the full experience when it was less controversial."

Selvage rented an SUV and drove back home to Las Vegas. She slept in the back of the car. Now, she’s renting out a room in a friend’s house until the all-clear is given to hike again.

"I still think I was safer on the trail," Selvage said. For Eagle and Hall, deciding to stay or go was brutal. The couple debated day after day as they hiked over rocks and waterfalls. They hadn’t yet come to terms with their choice when they loaded their backpacks into the trunk of a rental car in Tennessee.

"Even right now, I don’t know if we’re doing the right thing," Eagle said through tears.

Their decision came down to the small chance that they might catch and spread the virus, something Eagle said she couldn’t live with. For now, they’ll stay with her parents in Louisiana, which has more than 12,000 confirmed cases.

"Is that better? That’s hard to say," she said.

They’ll try to stay in shape while they wait for the all-clear. Hall joked about looking into a treadmill sale he saw online. But as the timeline becomes grimmer with each passing day, he thinks they might be saying goodbye to the trail for good.

His wife disagrees and sees them starting again in a few months. Until then, she’s trying to keep her disappointment in perspective.

"I’m just trying to focus in on the fact that we are in such a better position than most of the world," she said.
I could, with some neurological effort, be aware of the beers I knew my friends were enjoying, while I couldn’t share the celebratory feeling of carving down a wave face and came pretty close to re-experiencing the joy of heli-skiing in British Columbia, kayaking in Baja California and mountain biking in the Arizona desert. And I've done it all without leaving my neighborhood.

I’m not talking about virtual travel videos or Oculus Rift or recreational drugs, without leaving my neighborhood. Instead, I’m traveling using only the memories of saying that the gratification we derive from experiences, is that “experiential consumption resists adaptation.” That’s a fancy way of saying that the gratification we derive from a great trip far outlasts the positive emotions of buying, say, a new rug.

“We quickly lose interest in a new material possession, but, as Humphrey Bogart said, ‘We’ll always have Paris,’” he explains. “I often reflect on some of my favorite hikes in New Zealand and think, ‘Wow, I can’t believe I got to do that.’”

This is a good place to acknowledge the obvious: Any annoyance that I or any other healthy individual is experiencing because we can’t take a leisure trip pales in comparison to the problems many people face every day, especially those who are sick, grieving, jobless or otherwise unmoored because of COVID-19. Still, traveler frustrations are valid and may be most acute in hardcore adventurers, says Frank Farley, a Temple University psychology professor and former president of the American Psychological Society who coined the term “Type T personality” to describe thrill seekers and risk takers.

“People who are governed by T behavior are probably among the least likely to enjoy” the physical limitations of a quarantine, Farley says. “It’s the exact opposite of what they want, and they’ll probably start looking for a ‘Type T break out’ — a way to escape incarceration.”

For some, that might mean throwing caution to the wind and traveling in search of adventure — and by now you don’t need me to tell you how socially irresponsible that would be. Instead, Farley recommends shifting from what he calls “T-physical” to “T-mental.” My consciousness journeys are one way to do that because they allow me to kinda-sorta believe I’m engaged in a sport, which in turn triggers at least a minor surge of the pleasure-yielding neurotransmitter dopamine in my brain. Other T-mental activities include reading adventure literature — among my favorites are accounts of early polar explorations and the first forays by foreigners into the Sahara and journaling on past trips.

People, love stories, and adventurers are usually very interesting in the sense that they’ve let go of the handrails,” he says. “If you’ve done interesting adventures, share them. Your friends and family would love to have that. You’re not going to be out there for a while, so sit down and write.”

But what Farley said next really grabbed me. In his extensive study of adventurers, he found one prevailing trait: their focus on the future.

“Sure, they shared their stories of all they’d done, but mostly it was all about the next gig, the next huge challenge,” he says. “So use this time to plan your big post-pandemic adventure,” with friends or other like-minded travelers through, for example, online clubs and forums. Of course, even with stay-at-home directives and other harsh realities, the entire world isn’t shut down, so get out locally if you can do so safely and legally. For me, that has meant mountain biking, kayaking, trail running and kitesurfing — all of which have been somewhat pinched by weather, work, parenting duties and governors’ orders.

So when I’m really starting to go nuts, I recall a quote from the late novelist Philip Roth’s book “The Dying Animal”:

“You tasted it. Isn’t that enough? Of what do you ever get more than a taste? That’s all we’re given in life, that’s all we’re given of life. A taste. There is no more.”

Instinctively I want to shout, “No, Philip Roth, a taste isn’t nearly enough, and who in their right mind would accept that?” On the other hand, I think about all those people who’ve never had the resources to leave their city, village or slum, people who can’t even imagine buckling up $600 boots, stepping into $900 skis and paying $150 for a seven-hour lift ticket so they can ski the day away, pausing only for a $30 lunch.

From that vantage, a taste seems far more than I deserve, no matter how hard I’ve toiled in my first-world job. As I type this, my wife is reading a news story about Indian workers walking, in some cases hundreds of miles and with small children in tow, to their native villages because the COVID-19 shutdown ended any hope they had of making money in the cities. So, yes, pausing to feel ridiculously lucky in life can help, too.
A complicated ‘new normal’

Amid coronavirus-induced chaos and madness, making plans can create a bit of normalcy

By Jocelyn Noveck
Associated Press

As owners of a wedding and event-planning business, Karina Lopez and Curtis Rogers have always known how the best-laid plans can go awry. But there’s no way they could have imagined just a few weeks ago what would happen to their very own wedding plans.

First, the joyous bash they’d been meticulously planning for many months — a three-day celebration for 200 guests — was thrown into indefinite limbo. Then they both tested positive for the coronavirus.

Yet now, as they recover in quarantine and try to keep their distance from each other in a one-bedroom New York City apartment, Lopez and Rogers are still making wedding plans — methodically and, indeed, defiantly. After all, they’re planners. It’s what keeps them going.

“I definitely had one or two meltdowns,” says Lopez, 32, who is still experiencing symptoms but feels she’s on the mend. “Which I look back and realize is so silly, considering what people are going through.” But now, she says, wedding planning has become therapy: “It went from making me insane, to keeping me sane.”

Making plans. In normal times, it’s a process we don’t really think about. But during this pandemic, the process of planning — be it a short-term grocery list or organizing an entire summer wedding — has taken on an entirely different meaning, serving for some as a life preserver amid all the fear and uncertainty.

It depends on the personality. Some people thrive by living in the moment. But others really need their plans. “For many, having schedules and structure and timelines and things they can count on is important. Knowing they can count on something happening gives them security, some stability, some purpose,” says Helen Park, a family therapist, social worker and specialist in mindfulness.

In current conditions, Park notes, even non-planner types are seeking ways to organize their lives. If you’re hunkered down at home, suddenly Friday doesn’t seem like Friday because the weekend hardly feels different. Monday morning carries little of that back-to-the-trenches feeling, even if a Zoom call is waiting at the kitchen table.

On social media, jokes abound about this unsettling sense of timelessness. “What year is it this week?” asks one meme. “It’s the 87th of March,” goes another. Or: “Today is Blursday the 87th of March,” going another. “Now THIS, she says, “scares me.”

A couple of weeks ago, Bushee had what she admits was “a really bad mental health week, I’ll be honest. I think it was the shock and the anger of the situation. I kind of got off track.”

She decided to double down on her morning routine. For years, this has included rituals like journaling, writing down three things she’s grateful for and deciding what will be the “win” of the day.

“Just something so that at the end of the day, regardless of how crappy it was, there’s something that was a win — even taking the dog for a walk,” she says. Most helpful, though, is when she’s able to do something for others — for example, a recent initiative to deliver 500 catered meals to a hospital emergency room for health care workers.

“If I think that my purpose is somewhat displaced right now, I’m trying to find another purpose,” she says. “So part of my planning has become, ‘Who can I help today?’”

A big music fan, she’s also holding onto the list of concerts she bought tickets for this spring and summer: the Rolling Stones, the Doobie Brothers, Dave Matthews. Some have been canceled; others surely will be. But she keeps the list.

Park, the family therapist, appreciates that people need their plans. She worries, though, that trying to hold onto a rigid structure that no longer makes sense may produce a sense of fear: The entire month of April is empty — big white pages of miserable nothingness. “Now THIS,” she says, “is scary.”

As Park conducts therapy sessions to help families eke out a quasi-normal existence, she finds them unmoored “because it’s not just day-to-day life that has been upended,” she says. “The nature of what we’re dealing with is so new and unknown. Is it two weeks like this, two months, until the summer, or after? If we knew, we could start to internally organize our lives. But the sands are shifting constantly.

“Today is Blursday the 87th of March,” goes another. Or: “Today is Blursday the 87th of March,” goes another. “Now THIS, she says, “scares me.”

A couple of weeks ago, Bushee had what she admits was “a really bad mental health week, I’ll be honest. I think it was the shock and the anger of the situation. I kind of got off track.”

She decided to double down on her morning routine. For years, this has included rituals like journaling, writing down three things she’s grateful for and deciding what will be the “win” of the day.

“Just something so that at the end of the day, regardless of how crappy it was, there’s something that was a win — even taking the dog for a walk,” she says. Most helpful, though, is when she’s able to do something for others — for example, a recent initiative to deliver 500 catered meals to a hospital emergency room for health care workers.

“If I think that my purpose is somewhat displaced right now, I’m trying to find another purpose,” she says. “So part of my planning has become, ‘Who can I help today?’”

A big music fan, she’s also holding onto the list of concerts she bought tickets for this spring and summer: the Rolling Stones, the Doobie Brothers, Dave Matthews. Some have been canceled; others surely will be. But she keeps the list.

Park, the family therapist, appreciates that people need their plans. She worries, though, that trying to hold onto a rigid structure that no longer makes sense may produce anxiety in itself. “You can be putting in a lot of energy to fight to keep that structure in place,” she says.

If a day is particularly bad — and Bushee says she’s had plenty — she finds she can at least draw comfort from a very simple set of prescribed structure that’s really a built-in piece of planning in miniature: a recipe. Cooking at home has become not only a necessity, but a release.

“I made chicken pot pie for my family the other day,” she says, “including homemade crust, which I never do. You know what? It was pretty awesome.”

Karina Lopez, left, poses with her fiance Curtis Rogers and their dog Fiji on April 4 at their home in the Long Island City section of the Queens borough of New York.

Kasey Woods works from her home in Mount Vernon, N.Y. Woods, a mother of three who works in public relations, alternates her anxiety about the pandemic with feelings of pride for her oldest son, who’s been accepted for the fall to Howard University.

And yet Woods keeps planning, too, whatever she can. “One of my ways of regulating my life and my mental health is that I have to write everything down,” she says. “My notebook and my calendars are my lifeline.”

Michelle Bushee, a real estate broker in Pittsburgh, has plenty of things to do during her distance from each other in a one-bedroom New York City apartment. Lopez and Rogers refuse to accept they won’t be getting married on Aug. 1. A few days ago, they agreed their wedding would proceed, whether as the extravaganza they’d planned or, if necessary, a marriage via Zoom, much as she’d like to. Woods, a New York mother of three who works in public relations, alternates her anxiety about the pandemic with feelings of pride for her oldest son, who’s been accepted for the fall to his mother’s alma mater, Howard University.

She was hoping that attending admitted students day would seal the deal for him, since he’s choosing between several schools. That, of course, was canceled, along with prom and a surprise 18th birthday party she’d been planning.
The pandemic provides the perfect time to learn how to be self-sufficient

By Julia Rubin
Associated Press

Mending clothes. Cutting hair. Fixing a squeaky door or a dripping faucet. Baking bread. A generation or two ago, household skills like these were common, learned at home and at school. Then it became easier to toss things out rather than to fix them, quicker to call the professionals.

Now, in an unsettling era of staying at home and not knowing what will be available tomorrow, the old ways are being dusted off and relearned.

Since the coronavirus has shuttered many small businesses that do our work and supply our things, millions of people trying to stay home are driven by necessity — or boredom — to do more cooking, cleaning, fixing, grooming and other practical skills themselves.

“It’s during uncertain times like these when we take stock of all the basic life skills we’ve forgotten, or never learned in the first place, because they sure could come in handy right about now,” says Erin Bried, a magazine editor in Brooklyn.

For her book, Bried interviewed women who had lived with their two teenage sons, with her husband, David, of a real estate agent and children’s book author, said after installing a new thermostat herself in her Castle Park, Mich., house. She followed online advice to figure out the wiring in the old house. Her husband, meanwhile, has begun chopping wood.

“We’re making this up as we go along,” she said.

Bill Hughes, a business consultant in University Place, Wash., had to wash some shirts to save some money. It was tedious, and he looked forward to the day when he could afford to drop off his shirts to be cleaned,” says Hughes.

Janice Simonsen, who works in corporate communications in Philadelphia, helped sew masks for medical personnel, following instructions on a YouTube video.

“I haven’t pulled my sewing machine out for many years. I never really had the time,” she says. “Those junior high sewing classes kicked back in.”

She plans to keep the machine out and try some projects, like pillow covers, that she’s put off for years. “It felt good to create something useful again,” Simonsen says.

Yes, you can still order takeout in most places and call the plumber or electrician. But more people are trying to do that only when absolutely needed. Hardware stores have seen high demand for home repair and lawn tools. Social media feeds everywhere are full of posts from newbies planting vegetable gardens, giving themselves haircuts and baking bread — especially sourdough. Lots of sourdough.

YouTube has seen a spike of more than 100% in average daily views of videos with “Cook with Me” in the title since March 15 compared to the rest of the year, said spokeswoman Veronica Navarrete.

“We’re seeing this trend across several verticals, including cleaning, she said.

For her book, Bried interviewed women who had lived through the Great Depression and imparted lessons on how to make do and get by.

“I feel a new, closer connection to all of their stories now,” she says. “It was a difficult time, and it left its mark on all of them. I think this pandemic, too, will leave its mark on us much in the same way. It’s caused us all to halt our lives and reevaluate, maybe for the first time, what is truly important and what we’re equipped to handle.”

Jeanne Huntley, who taught high school home economics for 35 years in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, thinks society lost something important when schools phased out home economics and shop classes in favor of computer science, robotics and STEM.

“A lot of younger people have been brought up in a consumer society — you don’t fix things, you replace things,” she says. “Parents are busy too, and there’s not a lot of time to pass on those skills. But knowing you can make things and fix things gives us a sense of confidence in ourselves.”

This is not new for everyone. There’s always been a countercurrent of people yearning to get back to basics. The DIY movement has blossomed in recent years, and long before the coronavirus, “urban homesteaders” experimented with backyard chickens, homemade dyes, wooden toys and organic food. Concerns over climate change have kick-started a movement toward buying fewer things and leaving a lighter footprint on the environment: “Reduce, reuse, recycle.”

Now, in a time of feared shortages and limited mobility, this emphasis on self-sufficiency is going wider.

Sharon Bowers, co-author with her husband, David, of a book about life skills called “The Useful Book,” embraces the trend. But she cautions people to be smart — and check out books and YouTube videos first.

“I’m urging you to boldly go and try something new, but not something that you know is way outside your ability. ... You could probably wire a lamp, but don’t mess around with the circuit board in your house,” she says.

“Making a mess — assuming you break something you really need — you can always call the professionals when we’re out the other side.”

Even the Bowerses, fix-it pros who live outside Dublin, Ireland, with their two teenage sons, “have a plumbing problem that’s complicated” to deal with. “And,” she says, “we’re just going to have to wait.”
Getting in tune

After a "really, really hard year" that included the death of his best friend and collaborator, jazz-funk bass virtuoso Thundercat beat his demons and made peace with himself.

By Jeff Weiss ■ Special to The Washington Post

...continued on page 31...
FROM PAGE 30

**STARS AND STRIPES**

The September 2018 death of rapper Mac Miller — Thundercat’s best friend and close collaborator — has colored almost every day since then. Miller’s death, on Sept. 7, 2018, was ruled a probable drug overdose. The 26-year-old died roughly one month before the pair were set to embark on a national tour, which would have featured Thundercat as both opening act and the bassist in Miller’s band. Miller already forced Thundercat to grapple with his own demons involving alcohol abuse, triggering a newfound but hard-fought and shaky sobriety.

That same year, Thundercat set out to go vegan and lost 100 pounds. “I didn’t notice until I saw a picture of myself, and it freaked me out. It’s still kind of hard to process.” Shortly thereafter, he experienced an emotional ransacking of a breakup. Somewhere in the fog, he found the clarity to finish his fourth studio album, the typically brilliant “It Is What It Is,” which cements his unlikely but deserved ascent to the ranks of jazz-funk fusion superstar — roughly 35 years after critics read the genre’s last rites.

When Mac died, I realized I couldn’t drink my way through it,” Thundercat explains. “I sat with it, let the pain in, and accepted that this would be a roller coaster. I needed to feel every part of it, and I still don’t know how to feel. There are moments when I break down about it.”

To understand Thundercat, you need to accept his natural duality. In one moment, the 35-year-old bassist/producer/general musical virtuoso can be unfinchingly open, vulnerable, generous and sincere. In the next, he will comically hurl one of those machines where you put in a dollar and try to grab stuffed animals with a giant claw. This is what he briefly does while we wait to bowl, squandering a couple bucks in a vain effort to win an oversized plush Snowpup from the Hedgehog.

“It took me a while to deal with my struggles with alcohol and the friends I’ve lost,” he continues, as we play air hockey amid the chirping whirs and epileptic lights of the arcade adjacent to the alley’s 32 lanes.

“Some days I feel good about it, some days I feel horrible. I spent a lot of time self-medicating, and it served its purpose until it couldn’t anymore,” he says wistfully. “Sometimes, when I look behind, I see smoke and fire. It’s still kind of hard to accept that this would be a roller coaster.

It’s a quality he transmute his intense grief into art. It’s a quality he particularly suited for this moment — filled with both postmodern irony and fluorescent intergalactic synesthesia and maudlin indulgence. Thundercat’s genius is in his ability to both reinvent that frayed calculus and combine it with a hilarious streak of absurdist indulgence. He is a maniac who can be very silly but also someone who is super emotional and wears his heart on his sleeve.

“We’re both super grateful to have the art to turn to,” Louis continues. “The closing track on ("It Is What It Is") was the first thing we did after we heard the news about Mac. It was so cathartic for me, because I was like, ‘Are we really going to try to do this — feeling this way?’ But he was, like, ‘Let’s go!’ We listened back to it for days, just crying, but how else could that have manifested into something beautiful?”

Thundercat embarked on what was supposed to be a two-month-long national tour — his first since the death of Miller. The tour was, of course, eventually canceled because of the coronavirus outbreak.

About a week after he returned home, we spoke about the surreal nature of the present moment: “I’ve never dealt with anything like this, and I know it’s not like I’m playing it off, but the music that I’ve been making has been very emotionally supportive to my homies and homies’ girls,” he says wearily via phone.

“---"

"The music is right where I need it to be.

---"

"The name hits a little different now," Thundercat says, laughing.

We talk a little more about his last year and the emotions stirred by yet another false start. The tour was a chance to forget it all and focus on the music, but now he’s back in the studio.

---"

"It’s not the same now."
**Clem Snide**

*Forever Just Beyond* (Thirty Tigers)

There have been many iterations of Clem Snide over the years, but by now it’s turned into a personal alias for Eef Barzelay. “Forever Just Beyond” shows him and his current ensemble at their most quietly devastating. Produced by Scott Avett, who also performs and helped write some of the material, the predominantly acoustic album contains soothing melodies and gentle interpretations tackling weighty subjects like life, death and transcendence.

Barzelay and Avett are a great creative match with the help of an ace backing group, and the songs’ philosophical musings make for keenly melodic observations on the circumstances of our fleeting lives. Like Steely Dan, the Clem Snide moniker also is taken from the William S. Burroughs oeuvre and refers to a recurring character who also stars as a private eye. It’s an apt analogy for Barzelay’s own inquisitiveness.

Album opener “Roger Ebert” centers on some of the movie critic’s final words — “It’s all an elaborate hoax” — and the passage from this life into whatever comes next. The title track, one of the album’s most melancholy, attempts to define the divine as something outside the confines of faith and reason: “God is simply no, it’s probably not dinner music, and yet it still has the pacing of a deep sigh.”

**Dave Simonett**

*Red Tail* (Thirty Tigers)

Dave Simonett does just fine well. On his first solo project bearing his real name, the Trampled by Turtles frontman delivers eight gently achy songs that sound like their names: “In the Western Wind and the Sunrise,” “There’s a Lifeline Deep in the Night Sky” and — well, you get the idea.

Simonett’s new album, “Red Tail,” is the logical successor to “Purricane,” a wonderful but underrated album he put out under the name Dead Man Winter in 2017 while sorting through the storm damage of a divorce.

“Red Tail” finds him further along the cathartic path, and yet it still has the pacing of a deep sigh.

On the opener “Reckoned,” Simonett allows from the start that he’s “feeling fine now.” But the setting is a folk minuet with lyrics that match the somber tone: “A braceing pond a whippoorwill, awake but I’m just standing still, and morning came with shaky nerves, where can we go, when will I learn?”

None of that is meant to cast this album as a road map to depression, and despite its emotional heft it doesn’t come off as self-absorbed. There’s more going on here than that. All the songs have a poignancy that reflect Simonett’s craftsmanship and his penchant for achy lyrics. In a song called “Pices, Queen of Hearts,” he builds to a gentle crescendo and then sings, “I remember thinking we would meet again, in the space between the starlight and the tree line.”

So no, it’s probably not dinner music, and it’s definitely not party music, but it has more depth than his work with the band for which he’s known. And if you’re in a certain mood, maybe one that has you gazing out a window on a quiet rainy evening, this might be the vibe you’re looking for.

— Scott Stroud

Associated Press
familiar, but also different

Anne Tyler discusses new book, Baltimore and social distance

BY HILLEL ITALIE
Associated Press

After more than 20 books, Anne Tyler still finds ways to challenge herself.

Her new novel, “Redhead by the Side of the Road,” is, of course, set in her longtime home of Baltimore and features the family and romantic entanglements and other narrative touchstones Tyler fans know well. But the story’s main character, a self-employed tech consultant/repairman confronting the fallout of decisions made years before, pretty much came out of nowhere.

“My new protagonist, a quirkier figure than most of my others, moved in on my morning walk, although you’d think I would have learned after the first time. The experience started me thinking: How many other mistakes, more serious perhaps, do we repeat in the course of our lives? How often do we fail to realize that they were mistakes, even if we thought it would be fun to explore the issue.”

I was baffled. Why should I have to worry? I thought, and then up popped the next sentence: “He lives alone; he keeps to himself.”

“The rest of the book was up to me, but at least I was on my way.”

The computer man’s name is Micah Mortimer. He lives alone and wonders if he’s meant to be that way as he alienates his current girlfriend and unexpectedly reconnects with the woman he loved — and drove away — back in college. Tyler tries to minimize politics and topical references in her books, but is quite specific about locations, placing Micah in north Baltimore, in a three-story home near York Road, with an “incongruous front porch” and a “splinterly front porch swing that nobody ever sits in.”

During her recent AP interview, the 78-year-old Tyler discussed the mind of Micah, the book’s tricky title, Baltimore and her life during the coronavirus outbreak.

On Micah, whom she describes in one passage as “narrow and limited” but still aware of the world’s horrors, whether the 2018 shooting at a Pittsburgh synagogue or the tragedies along the U.S.-Mexican border:

“I found it easy to ‘be’ Micah, so to speak, throughout the book, but especially in that passage. We all have lone-some moments, after all; it’s no stretch to imagine those. But also the events that he’s reflecting upon here — the synagogue shooting, the plights of immigrant children — weigh so heavily on my mind these days, as I imagine they do on everyone’s, that I felt even Micah would have to be affected by them.”

On the book’s title, based on a recurring hallucina-
tion of Micah’s:

“Several times I took it down to the place I have. First Micah and then, I think, you. I was so amazed with how I could possibly invent a whole new spirited group.

On how Micah would handle social distancing:

“I think he would have handled it the way I have. First I took it personally, though, how I’d known to write pages 94-95, so I checked to see what she meant. Lo and behold, there was Micah on his early-morning run fantasizing, briefly, that the empty streets were due to some global disaster and he was the last person left alive. Then he comes upon two women talking up a storm together, and he’s extremely pleased to see them. I relate to that scene more than much more than when I wrote it.”

On writing while sheltering in place:

“For the first few days, I seemed to keep writing the same three pages over and over again. I just had a gen-
tle spell. And yet it’s such a kindhearted city, paradoxical though that sounds. Just about everyone here, across all classes and cultures, behaves with grace and patience. Watch some trying episode in, say, a supermarket check-out line — a customer taking too long counting coins or a cashier who doesn’t know his produce codes. Balti-
moreans stand by quietly, or they try to help out if they can. Not even an eye-roll! I think this has an influence on my writing. In such surroundings, how could I possibly invent a more spiritless group.”

Redhead by the Side of the Road

Anne Tyler

Anne Tyler’s new novel, “Redhead by the Side of the Road,” is either wholly irrelevant or just what we need — or possibly both. Slight and slightly charming, it’s like the cherry Jell-O that my writing. In such surroundings, how could I possibly invent a more spiritless group.”

Redhead by the Side of the Road

Anne Tyler

Anne Tyler’s new novel, “Redhead by the Side of the Road,” is either wholly irrelevant or just what we need — or possibly both. Slight and slightly charming, it’s like the cherry Jell-O that

Redhead by the Side of the Road

Anne Tyler

Anne Tyler’s new novel, “Redhead by the Side of the Road,” is either wholly irrelevant or just what we need — or possibly both. Slight and slightly charming, it’s like the cherry Jell-O that nobody ever sits in.”

During her recent AP interview, the 78-year-old Tyler discussed the mind of Micah, the book’s tricky title, Baltimore and her life during the coronavirus outbreak.

On Micah, whom she describes in one passage as “narrow and limited” but still aware of the world’s horrors, whether the 2018 shooting at a Pittsburgh synagogue or the tragedies along the U.S.-Mexican border:

“I found it easy to ‘be’ Micah, so to speak, throughout the book, but especially in that passage. We all have lone-some moments, after all; it’s no stretch to imagine those. But also the events that he’s reflecting upon here — the synagogue shooting, the plights of immigrant children — weigh so heavily on my mind these days, as I imagine they do on everyone’s, that I felt even Micah would have to be affected by them.”

On the book’s title, based on a recurring hallucina-
tion of Micah’s:

“Several times I took it down to the place I have. First Micah and then, I think, you. I was so amazed with how I could possibly invent a whole new spirited group.

On how Micah would handle social distancing:

“I think he would have handled it the way I have. First I took it personally, though, how I’d known to write pages 94-95, so I checked to see what she meant. Lo and behold, there was Micah on his early-morning run fantasizing, briefly, that the empty streets were due to some global disaster and he was the last person left alive. Then he comes upon two women talking up a storm together, and he’s extremely pleased to see them. I relate to that scene more than much more than when I wrote it.”

On writing while sheltering in place:

“For the first few days, I seemed to keep writing the same three pages over and over again. I just had a gen-
tle spell. And yet it’s such a kindhearted city, paradoxical though that sounds. Just about everyone here, across all classes and cultures, behaves with grace and patience. Watch some trying episode in, say, a supermarket check-out line — a customer taking too long counting coins or a cashier who doesn’t know his produce codes. Balti-
moreans stand by quietly, or they try to help out if they can. Not even an eye-roll! I think this has an influence on my writing. In such surroundings, how could I possibly invent a more spiritless group.”

Redhead by the Side of the Road

Anne Tyler

Anne Tyler’s new novel, “Redhead by the Side of the Road,” is either wholly irrelevant or just what we need — or possibly both. Slight and slightly charming, it’s like the cherry Jell-O that

Redhead by the Side of the Road

Anne Tyler

Anne Tyler’s new novel, “Redhead by the Side of the Road,” is either wholly irrelevant or just what we need — or possibly both. Slight and slightly charming, it’s like the cherry Jell-O that

Redhead by the Side of the Road

Anne Tyler

Anne Tyler’s new novel, “Redhead by the Side of the Road,” is either wholly irrelevant or just what we need — or possibly both. Slight and slightly charming, it’s like the cherry Jell-O that

Redhead by the Side of the Road

Anne Tyler

Anne Tyler’s new novel, “Redhead by the Side of the Road,” is either wholly irrelevant or just what we need — or possibly both. Slight and slightly charming, it’s like the cherry Jell-O that
NEW ON DVD

"Bad Boys for Life": It's been a minute since we last heard from Martin Lawrence and Will Smith’s wisecracking Miami detectives Marcus and Mike. (Want to feel old? “Bad Boys II” came out 17 years ago.) But, thanks to directors Adil El Arbi and Bilall Fallah, the ’90s nostalgia keeps on coming.

In the film, Mike (Smith) is injured by a family seeking revenge for the detective’s role in a drug lord’s prison sentence. He seeks help from his partner, Marcus (Lawrence), and an elite team called AMMO to track down and stop the cartel.

This third installment of the franchise has plenty of love for the genre and even more love for its characters. “El Arbi and Fallah have done seemingly the impossible. They’ve taken over an action franchise 17 years after the last installment and made a film that’s a delightfully dizzying love letter to action filmmaking of yore, while respectfully preserving the franchise’s best elements,” wrote Tribune News Service critic Katie Walsh in her review.

Also available on DVD:

“Party Hard, Die Young”:

The 1987 film haunts a nanny (Mackenzie Davis) who’s taking care of two orphans in an East Coast Gothic mansion.

“The Turning”:
The 1987 hit thriller starring Michael Douglas and Glenn Close is being rereleased on Blu-ray with a remastering under the supervision of director Adrian Lyne.

“The Gentlemen”:

An expat in London (Matthew McConaughey) faces layers of schemes while attempting to sell off his weed business.

“Ip Man 4: The Finale”:
The Kung Fu master Ip Man (Donnie Yen) heads to the United States as his student opens up a martial arts school and faces discrimination from the community. In Cantonese, English and Mandarin.

“King Creole”:
The 1958 film starring Elvis Presley as a young man supporting his family as a club singer after joining a gang is being released on Blu-ray.

“The Last Full Measure”:

Airman William H. Pitsenbarger (Jeremy Irvine) is awarded the country’s highest military honor for his principled act of heroism in Vietnam.

“Looking for Alaska”:

Based on the John Green novel of the same name, the Hulu miniseries follows boarding school student Miles (Charlie Plummer), whose love story with Alaska (Mackenzie Foy) comes to an end.

“Party Hard, Die Young”:

A trip to a techno party in Croatia turns deadly for a group of friends celebrating their graduation. Stars Marlon Boess, Markus Freistatter and Michael Glantschnig. In German.

“Sea Fever”: A trapped-at-sea crew attempts to ward off a deadly parasite. Stars Connie Nielsen, Hermione Corfield and Dougray Scott.

"To Catch a Thief":
The Alfred Hitchcock classic is being rereleased on Blu-ray for its 65th anniversary.

“I was just relieved to not be doing the show and being released on Blu-ray. It’s nice seeing veteran black actors in that show within a show. It’s a way to honor our legends. It’s so fulfilling to be able to work with them — to have them be a part of our cultural moment.”

By MESPIN FERADU

Associated Press

Hey, Issa Rae

The creator of HBO’s ‘Insecure’ discusses fourth season details, reasons for delays

AP: What can we expect from season four?

Rae: This season is really about whether the people in your life are there for a reason, or a season. It really is about that transitional period when you go from your 20s and you’re kind of figuring out who you are, to your 30s when you really know who you are. You know what you’re going to tolerate and what you’re not going to tolerate and who you want around you to continue that journey.

This season specifically, there’s a lot of relationships mirrored to my own personal friendships and my own relationships dealing with the same kind of transitions and the questions.

It was funny seeing Porsha Williams from “Real Housewives of Atlanta” and Masika Kalish from “Love and Hip-Hop” on the show. Did they have to audition? Masika auditioned. That was just a surprise of going through the audition tape and being like, “Oh good, she’s good. It’s great.” And just being like, “OK, cast her.”

For a show within a show, those are always very specific and you have a cast in mind, and then we just approach them and they’re down.

It’s nice seeing veteran black actors in that show within a show. (It also includes Terri J. Vaughn and Carl Anthony Payne.) It’s a way to honor our legends. It’s so fulfilling to be able to work with them — to have them be a part of our cultural moment.

Even the storyline is interesting. It’s so ridiculous. That even came about from our random obsession with true crime podcasts and true crime docuseries and being like, “There’s never black people.” Nobody would dedicate a whole podcast or docuseries to missing black people. Nobody does a “To Live and Die in L.A.” if the girl is black. We were just trying to document that.

How have you been able to balance all of your projects?

I’m not going to lie — I’m toppling plates over here. I have not been great at balancing, but the people that I work with have been amazing. This quarantine, I would have been on a three- week press tour for “Insecure” and “Lovebirds” while having to meet a deadline to rewrite a movie and write a pilot. I don’t know how I was going to do that. I wasn’t going to do that. I was going to kill myself. Now to be able to have this forced time to be able to dedicate to creating and writing has been so fulfilling. Obviously these circumstances are terrible, but it’s really just allowed me to put a pause on so much and to focus on what I love to do — the parts that I like to do. I actually don’t like traveling for the press, really. I don’t like the promotional stuff for the most part. It’s stressful. It takes a lot of time. You forget, “Oh this is what I love to do. I’m a writer.”

Issa Rae, left, and Yvonne Orji appear in a scene from the fourth season premiere episode of “Insecure.”

By KATIE FORAN-MCHALE/TNS

Hey, Issa Rae

The creator of HBO’s ‘Insecure’ discusses fourth season details, reasons for delays

AP: What can we expect from season four?

Rae: This season is really about whether the people in your life are there for a reason, or a season. It really is about that transitional period when you go from your 20s and you’re kind of figuring out who you are, to your 30s when you really know who you are. You know what you’re going to tolerate and what you’re not going to tolerate and who you want around you to continue that journey.

This season specifically, there’s a lot of relationships mirrored to my own personal friendships and my own relationships dealing with the same kind of transitions and the questions.

It was funny seeing Porsha Williams from “Real Housewives of Atlanta” and Masika Kalish from “Love and Hip-Hop” on the show. Did they have to audition? Masika auditioned. That was just a surprise of going through the audition tape and being like, “Oh good, she’s good. It’s great.” And just being like, “OK, cast her.”

For a show within a show, those are always very specific and you have a cast in mind, and then we just approach them and they’re down.

It’s nice seeing veteran black actors in that show within a show. (It also includes Terri J. Vaughn and Carl Anthony Payne.) It’s a way to honor our legends. It’s so fulfilling to be able to work with them — to have them be a part of our cultural moment.

Even the storyline is interesting. It’s so ridiculous. That even came about from our random obsession with true crime podcasts and true crime docuseries and being like, “There’s never black people.” Nobody would dedicate a whole podcast or docuseries to missing black people. Nobody does a “To Live and Die in L.A.” if the girl is black. We were just trying to document that.

How have you been able to balance all of your projects?

I’m not going to lie — I’m toppling plates over here. I have not been great at balancing, but the people that I work with have been amazing. This quarantine, I would have been on a three-week press tour for “Insecure” and “Lovebirds” while having to meet a deadline to rewrite a movie and write a pilot. I don’t know how I was going to do that. I wasn’t going to do that. I was going to kill myself. Now to be able to have this forced time to be able to dedicate to creating and writing has been so fulfilling. Obviously these circumstances are terrible, but it’s really just allowed me to put a pause on so much and to focus on what I love to do — the parts that I like to do. I actually don’t like traveling for the press, really. I don’t like the promotional stuff for the most part. It’s stressful. It takes a lot of time. You forget, “Oh this is what I love to do. I’m a writer.”

Issa Rae, left, and Yvonne Orji appear in a scene from the fourth season premiere episode of “Insecure.”
COVID camp conundrum

Uncertain summer plans leave parents, kids dangling

BY LEANNE ITALIE  
Associated Press

F or 17-year-old Morgan Carney, missing her seventh summer at overnight camp in the Ozarks would be worse than what she's feeling now in isolation without her school friends and usual slate of activities. "She says she can't even think about not going to camp this summer or she'll be depressed," said her mother, Amy Carney. "Her best friends in life are her camp friends." Virginia is the only state with a stay-at-home edict that stretches into June. But regardless of whether such orders continue, are imposed anew or lifted, will parents feel comfortable that the coronavirus threat has lessened enough to make camps safe? Thomas Bradbury in Augusta, Virginia is the only state with a stay-at-home edict that stretches into June. But regardless of whether such orders continue, are imposed anew or lifted, will parents feel comfortable that the coronavirus threat has lessened enough to make camps safe? Thomas Bradbury, who owns and operates the Forest Lake Camps in New York's Adirondacks region, serving about 1800 campers annually, "It's an existential threat to not drive," Rothman said. "This is our extended family." For 17-year-old Morgan Carney, missing her seventh summer at overnight camp in the Ozarks would be worse than what she's feeling now in isolation without her school friends and usual slate of activities. "She says she can't even think about not going to camp this summer or she'll be depressed," said her mother, Amy Carney. "Her best friends in life are her camp friends.

A camper tries a wooden climbing wall at JCC Abrams Camps in East Windsor Township, N.J. This year's summer camps face uncertainty.

As coronavirus cases increase, the virus spreading any more than it has no idea how summer will play out. This year's summer camps face uncertainty. As coronavirus cases increase, the virus spreading any more than it has no idea how summer will play out. This year's summer camps face uncertainty. As coronavirus cases increase, the virus spreading any more than it has no idea how summer will play out. This year's summer camps face uncertainty.

Most camps have long dealt with distance outbreaks and critters like lice. Screening and health protocols exist. But Tracey Gaslin's phone hasn't stopped ringing in recent days. She's the executive director of the Association of Camp Nursing, which advises nurses and camp directors. "There's genuine concern about new emergency! And how many times do I have to ask — can someone please buy oat milk?! Ugh!" she blared. "My Senior Fashion Show was canceled! I've been working on my collection for two years! I won't have photos for my portfolio!" she wailed. "My friends had so many fun things planned for our senior spring break. Now we'll never see each other again!" she moaned. "Graduation is postponed! It won't be the same! I wanted a party!" she barked. "I'm in an induced coma! My parents are predicted to die!" 30%! Internships and jobs openings are being canceled! What am I gonna do?!" she bellowed. "Who are my tiptoeing continued for three weeks while we sheltered at home, until the tension reached its peak. While carrying laundry upstairs, I found Anna and her younger sister, Lilly, locked in a circular argument. Something about "never want to hang out!" and "always on your phone!" and "literally a thousand times" and "serious!" and a lot of that adjective that rhymes with "itchy."" Lilly, locked in a circular argument. Something about "never want to hang out!" and "always on your phone!" and "literally a thousand times" and "serious!" and a lot of that adjective that rhymes with "itchy."" Lilly, locked in a circular argument. Something about "never want to hang out!" and "always on your phone!" and "literally a thousand times" and "serious!" and a lot of that adjective that rhymes with "itchy."" Lilly, locked in a circular argument. Something about "never want to hang out!" and "always on your phone!" and "literally a thousand times" and "serious!" and a lot of that adjective that rhymes with "itchy."

"What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying. "What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms. Then I realized that she was crying.

"What is it, honey?" I asked.
"Oh! We're out of avocados!!" my 22-year-old sister exclaimed as she dropped our empty grocery bag in front of me. "And where are the goat cheese truffles??"

People all over the country are covering their faces and hands before entering grocery stores to buy life-sustaining food staples for their families sheltering at home, only to find them sparsely stocked. But in Anna's world, being out of avocados is an emergency.

A month ago, I picked Anna up from Syracuse University, where she is a senior fashion design major, because the school had shut down due to the coronavirus crisis. I was looking forward to the five-hour drive home with her, catching up and joking around.

But she was in a mood. I listened to my audiobook. She texted friends, ate trail mix and slept.

At home, the rest of the family and I tiptoed around Class of COVID-19. Certainly, these young men and women are talented enough, resourceful enough and strong enough to overcome this challenge. But there's no tiptoeing around it — they've earned the right to cry.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari's columns at: themeandpotatoesoflife.com
Email: meatandpotatoesoflife@gmail.com
WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

DOUBLE TALK
BY JIM PEREDO / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Joe Peredo of Lakewood, Wash., is a star-astronomy dad and former communications engineer in the Air Force. He got into crosswords by way of preaching — posting puzzles online whose answers are geographic coordinates. (Search for "Joe Peredo" for examples.) Joe, owner himself as a cartoonist. Both his penname and his cartoon are Geographer, although he hasn’t lived in Qatar for only a year. This is his ninth puzzle for The Times and his second Sunday — W.S.

ACROSS
1 Orchestra
2 Heavyweight
6 Mushroom in ramen
11 When tripled, a comment of annoyance
14 "Oh, my!"
18 It has a very big bed
19 One of a pair of explorers on the Missouri state quarter:
20 Spring feature
21 Golden rule word
22 Run-on sentence?
25 ___ by date
26 Common female middle name
27 Wax theatrical
28 Sharply dressed, absently?
30 Boring events
32 Bit of conspiring
34 Free-letter world capital that locals spell as two words:
35 Dumps neighbor
36 Pushing comment?
38 Riding the waves
41 Something a bib catches
43 Busy bee, for short
44 Single quote?
50 Doesn’t touch
55 Head to bed
56 Survival finale?

DOWN
57 Big name in student grants
59 Order to attack
60 ___ Patridge, "On the Road"
61 Weapon associated with the film quote "Here’s Johnny!"
63 Sack cloth
65 Hats, slangily
66 Jun sayings?
72 ___ Roddenberry, first TV writer on the Hollywood Walk of Fame
72 Ancient Greek poet sometimes called the "Father of Tragedy"
74 Smear
75 Preacher
77 Nickname for Baseball Hall-of-Famer Bruce Banks
79 When tripled, "yet,"
80 "American Idol" TV spot, for short
83 Square dance move
85 Fireplacel stair
87 Rock plaza?
90 Not commercial: Abbe
95 Burying
99 Being in
94 Self expression?
100 Trade jobs
101 Sports venue
105 "Onts book"
106 Magical powder
110 Prepped for surgery
110 Children is-a song
113 "Gunston Street in "Pulp Fiction"
114 Yonder, in dialect
115 Old saw!
119 Aper
120 Spew anger
121 ___ Mitchell, creator of the Tony-winning musical "Hedwig"
122 Living
123 "What are you ___ ?"
124 Deli sandwich, kind of the vowels
125 Lake stereotypical Seattle weather
126 Symbol of the National Audubon Society
127 Coverings on ancient Roman statue
128 Women’s basketball powerhouse, for short
129 Game-changing brand
40 T’s an anagram of ___ "A Space Odyssey" computer
42 Diamond star
42 Second-letter-common Vietnamese surname
46 Home of Windsor Falls
47 Magn__ 48 Guns-ball material
49 The seat got her tongue, you might say
50 Where bills pile up
51 Slow, stupid, or hard
52 New or less, in baseball
53 Secret target
54 Captain’s assistant, maybe
58 Milk: Ft
62 Where the meaning of life was sold in 2000 for $3.26
63 Part of a job application
64 European museum whose name means "inward"
65 "Old ___ road," longest-running No. 1 single in Billboard history (20 weeks)
66 "You might open one at a job"
67 "I’m the one," for short
68 "Clark Kent’s "man of steel"
69 "I’m not that kind of girl"
70 "I’m not that kind of girl"
71 "I’m not that kind of girl"
72 "Today" rival, for short
73 Not worry
74 Country whose most widely spoken language is Wolof
75 "Flower of the corset"
76 "First name in the 1970s White House"
77 "Get used to (it)
78 "Gotcha, e.g.,"
79 "Fighting pilot’s wear"
80 "Newcomer informally"
81 Last, in charge of the 23-down

RESULTS FOR ABOVE PUZZLE

GUNSTON STREET

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

STARS AND STRIPES: 15 YEARS IN AFGHANISTAN

The story of the U.S. military’s role in Afghanistan, as seen through the eyes of Stars and Stripes journalists covering America’s longest war.

Only $14.99 with Free Shipping

ORDER NOW at www.stripesstore.com
Celebs ‘All In’

Athletes, entertainers donating prizes for raffle to help needy

By Tom Canavan
Associated Press

With factories closed, tens of millions out of work and a recession looming because of the coronavirus pandemic, athletes, teams, entertainers and business leaders are donating prizes, possessions in response to a challenge to feed families suddenly in need.

The “All In Challenge” was started by Philadelphia 76ers partner Michael Rubin on Tuesday, and some of the biggest names in sports and entertainment have answered the call.

After 24 hours, there was already an impressive roster of athletes offering prizes.

They include quarterbacks Tom Brady and Peyton and Eli Manning; musician Justin Bieber; Meek Mill and Robin Thicke; actors Robert De Niro, Leonardo DiCaprio, Kevin Hart and Matthew McConaughey; directors Martin Scorsese; TV hosts Ellen DeGeneres and Ryan Seacrest; TikTok stars Charli and Dixie D’Amelio; basketball Hall of Famer Magic Johnson; Chicago Cubs infielder Anthony Rizzo and retired baseball star Alex Rodriguez; and several NFL, NHL and NBA teams.

This list is growing, said Rubin, who came up with the idea two weeks ago.

“I had two goals from the second this popped in my mind,” Rubin told The Associated Press on Wednesday. “The first was to feed as many people as possible. It was an important cause and need. The second thing was, I love a good come together to have every athlete and actor come together, the sports and entertainment world coming together. To me, that is incredibly special.”

Rubin said all the money raised will go directly to one of four organizations that feed the hungry: Feeding America, Meals On Wheels, World Central Kitchen and No Kid Hungry.

A billionaire who made his money with an e-commerce company he started in 2011, Rubin has donated what might be the biggest prize.

The winner of a digital raffle will receive a Super Bowl experience with 20 friends, along with tickets to the NBA Finals, Stanley Cup Final, World Series, Masters, Final Four, tennis’ U.S. Open, the Daytona 500 and the Olympic opening ceremonies.

Entries for Rubin’s prize can be purchased in amounts of $10, $25, $50 and $100. The winning ticket will be selected randomly by computer.

Other prizes are being auctioned.

Those who answered the challenge were required to post a video about their donation and explain why they chose their prize.

Rubin said donations topped $4 million by midday Wednesday. His goal is to collect donations in the tens of millions of dollars, and his dream objective is $100 million.

Brady, who left New England to sign with Tampa Bay after winning six Super Bowls with the New York Giants’ Super Bowl win over the Patriots in February 2012.

Meek Mill is auctioning his 2018 Rolls-Royce Phantom. Bid- ding starts at $200,000.

Mill was the person Rubin ran his idea past and his response was, “I’m in.”

Rubin asked him if he was serious.

“He said: ‘I don’t need the car. I need to do what helps people eat,’” said Rubin, whose job brings him in contact with people in the sports and entertainment industries on a daily basis.

Hart is offering a speaking role in his next movie. DeGeneres and Seacrest plan to have their winners as co-hosts on their shows.

Longhorns superfan McCo- naughey is offering a sideline experience at a University of Texas football game.

Rachael Ray still cooking up contributions from her home

By Kelli Kennedy
Associated Press

Rachael Ray had big plans for the quar-antine break at her home in upstate New York. She envisioned “a Renaissance time,” rereading the classics, studying her Italian heritage, learning Italian.

“I was going to get more serious about painting. I had all these lofty goals … and none of that’s happening,” the popular daytime talk show host told The Associated Press in a phone interview.

“We have never worked this hard in our entire lives,” said Ray, who is taping “#STAYHOME With Rachael” two days a week from her home.

Her husband, John Cusimano, is now the cameraman, producer, cockpit-maker and musical guest. Their beloved pit bull Isaboo accounts for the entire studio audience.

She wears sweats and no makeup, cooking low-budget meals based around pantry staples like chickpeas and pasta, offering a refreshing peak in her kitchen — she misplaces the garlic sometimes — and a comforting smile.

“This is a weird time. I can’t say there’s a silver lining … but there are found moments every day,” she said at the start of the first at home show.

She recently announced that her organization will donate $4 million to several charities including food banks and relief funds for laid off restaurant workers, say- ing she wanted to “help people more than just, ‘hey, here’s three things you can do with canned tuna.’”

Half the money will go to animal rescue.

“The animal lover says ‘a lot of the shelters can’t afford to keep going; there’s no workers. Animals are in crisis too.’”

The more you earn in life, the more you owe in service and the more you owe to your community,” said Ray. “It is our absolute responsibility to take care of each other.”

That’s the answer she gives when asked why she’s donating so much — and also that she’s afraid of her mother.

No, she’s not afraid that she might contract the virus, she’s “absolutely scared to death” of the 85-year-old tough Sicilian who lives across the street.

“I’m scared because she’s tough,” Ray said. “She wants a daily update of what you’re doing to help the world.”

In detail.

Ray grew up cleaning shrimp and helping out in her mother’s restaurant kitchen.

They spent holidays alongside police and firefighters feeding hungry families.

Their family celebrated the following day.

“Every holiday was like that. You had to be of service.”

In rare down moments, Ray catches up with friends by phone and cooks Moroccan couscous in bone stock for her dog, garnishing it with carrot tops, mint and parsley. Her husband plays a mini banjo concert for Isaboo a few times a day.

“It feels so good to get on the phone and kibitz and share,” she said. “I just like how much we’re using the old-fashioned telephone.”

Tower of Power’s Castillo suggests 6 hidden gems

Since cutting its first record 50 years ago, Tower of Power has released such classic cuts as “You’re Still a Young Man,” “So Very Hard to Go,” “Don’t Change Horses (in the Middle of a Stream)” and “What Is Hip?” Yet the famed Oakland, Calif., soul-funk act has a number of hidden gems.

We asked Tower of Power bandleader Emilio Castillo to name some of his favorite lesser-known tunes from the band’s songbook. Here are his picks and comments:

“Of the Earth” (from “Bump City,” 1972)

“I just love the vibe, the vocals, and the message of this tune!”

“Both Sorry Over Nothin’” (from “Tower of Power,” 1973)

“To me, this song has the Memphis sound that we always loved with an Oakland bump to it on the ride out.”

“Just When We Start Makin’ It” (from “Back to Oakland,” 1974)

“To this day, still one of my most favorite ballads Tower ever did.”

“I Believe In Myself” (from “Urban Renewal,” 1975)

“A great positive message, groovey rhythm track and soulful vocals.”

“It’s So Nice” (from “Ain’t Nothin’ Stoppin’ Us Now,” 1976)

“Vocally one of my faves. Good song to cruise in your car to on summer night.”

“You Can’t Fall Up (You Just Fall Down)” (from “Monster on a Leash,” 1991)

“I just love the crafty lyrics … and the horn arrangement is world-class.”

— The Mercury News
Arrest made in theft of Arboretum bronze gates

WA SEATTLE — Seattle police on Monday arrested a 47-year-old man who is allegedly behind the theft of two ornamental bronze gates that stood since the 1970s at the entrance to the Washington State Arboretum.

The gates, which were commissioned in 1971 and designed by renowned sculptor George Tsutakawa, were reported stolen March 19 after gardeners discovered the gates missing and bolt cutters on the ground. Two people tried to sell the gates to a recycling center on March 20, but the business refused to buy them, according to police.

Police questioned a man who said he drove the suspect to the recycling center and later dropped him off at a homeless encampment, according to the probable cause statement. Detectives found remnants of one gate under a box truck in the encampment, the statement says. Police have also located the second gate, which was largely intact.

Woman gives stimulus check to food pantry

MS BAY ST. LOUIS — A woman donated the $1,200 relief check she received from the federal government to a Mississippi food pantry amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Sheron Lambert gave the one-time stimulus payment to the Hancock County Food Pantry, WLOX-TV reported Tuesday. The checks are part of the $2.2 trillion economic recovery bill that will give $1,200 to individuals and $2,400 to married couples. Parents are also set to receive an additional $500 per child.

Lambert said she doesn’t need the money and gifted it to the pantry to help feed hungry people in the county. “That’s what we all need to do,” she said. “Open our hearts first.”

Suit: Overturned bounce house

NM SANT FE — A Santa Fe woman is suing Meow Wolf after she says her children were injured when wind overturned the arts and entertainment company’s rented bounce house.

The Santa Fe New Mexican reported that attorneys for Anita Vargas didn’t say in court documents how the children were injured at the 2018 block party but alleged that the children were trapped underneath the bounce house.

The case was filed in state district court this week. After the episode, Vargas posted a picture on Facebook of her son, showing his bruised and bloody face.

Amazing Jump LLC, the Albuquerque bounce house that owned the bounce house, also is named as a defendant in the lawsuit. The company declined to comment on the pending litigation Monday. A spokesperson for Meow Wolf also didn’t respond to emails.

Home workout not a stretch

People work out on their balcony in a high-rise during the coronavirus pandemic Tuesday in Miami. People who have been cooped up inside as their companies mandate work-at-home policies and have seen their fitness centers shut down are getting creative with their workouts.

Ice on expressway leads to 50-vehicle pileup

IL CHICAGO — Portions of a Chicago expressway left icy by a wintry blast that brought overnight snowfall led to a pileup involving dozens of vehicles early Wednesday, sending 14 people to hospitals, officials said.

About 50 vehicles were involved in the 5 a.m. pileup along the Kennedy Expressway, the Chicago Fire Department said. The crash prompted Illinois State Police to temporarily close all of the expressway’s southbound lanes near Chicago’s North Avenue, and multiple northbound lanes were also closed.

Police: Highway closed after cows fell off truck

FL DADE CITY — Interstate 75 in Florida was shut down for about two hours after six cows, three dead and three injured, were found along the highway, authorities said.

Troopers responded just before 11 a.m. Tuesday to a call of several cows near the north and southbound lanes of I-75, just north of Tampa, according to a Florida Highway Patrol news release. The Pasco County Sheriff’s Office and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission also responded.

The cows appear to have fallen from an unknown passing truck, investigators said. Officials didn’t immediately say what would happen to the injured cows.

Man charged in theft of dump truck, standoff

AZ FLAGSTAFF — A Flagstaff man is facing multiple charges after stealing a dump truck and then barricading himself inside the vehicle, authorities said.

Coonan County Sheriff’s officials said Tyler Littlefield, 27, has been booked into jail on suspicion of theft, criminal damage and resisting arrest. Littlefield is accused of stealing the dump truck from a Flagstaff landscape company last Saturday.

Authorities say he then drove it to Grey Mountain, where he stole items from a convenience store. Littlefield then drove the vehicle back to Flagstaff and was seen driving erratically and causing damage to property, authorities said.

Sheriff’s deputies were called when the dump truck got stuck in the mud. Littlefield barricaded inside for about an hour and then was taken into custody.

Supervisor accused of hitting officer with car

GA ATLANTA — An Atlanta police supervisor hit a fellow officer with her car while he was directing traffic and then bit him, authorities said.

Lt. Sharonne Annette Steed was charged last Friday with obstruction, aggravated assault, battery and violation of oath by a public officer, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported. Steed turned herself in Tuesday. Atlanta police spokesman Carlos Campos said Steed was trying to go to the bank when she ignored orders from Officer Joel Paul Curtis Richardson, who was working an off-duty job assisting with traffic.

Richardson tried to remove Steed from the car after she hit him, but she bit him on the hand, Campos said.

Authorities help replace girl’s alpaca on Easter

OH PATRIOT — A young girl who lost her pet alpaca after the animal was killed during a drive-by shooting in Ohio was gifted another one from local authorities.

Josie Blazer, 5, of Patriot, was surprised to find a 6-month-old alpaca Easter morning, the Gallia County Daily Tribune reported Monday. The alpaca that died had been given to Josie as a present following her battle with cancer.

Four Season Veterinary Clinic found a replacement alpaca for Josie, and the Gallia County Sheriff’s Office delivered the pet.

The sheriff’s office had responded to a call on April 7. A pickup truck had reportedly stopped along a road, and someone fatally shot one of the alpacas belonging to the Blazer family. The sheriff’s office said the shooter or shooters had been identified and will be charged.
Round-the-world news for America’s military.

Stripes.com supplies constant updates, on news of interest — including reports from our overseas military bases in Europe, Pacific, Southwest Asia and the Mideast, and coverage of the Pentagon and Capitol Hill. Also available on mobile apps for Android smartphones and as an iOS app for both iPhone and iPad.

To advertise in the next Relocation Guide, reach out to Doug Dougherty at dougherty.doug@stripes.com

Round-the-world news for America’s military.

Stripes.com supplies constant updates, on news of interest — including reports from our overseas military bases in Europe, Pacific, Southwest Asia and the Mideast, and coverage of the Pentagon and Capitol Hill. Also available on mobile apps for Android smartphones and as an iOS app for both iPhone and iPad.
Eugene Sheffer Crossword

ACROSS
1 NFL six-pointers
4 Rebuff
8 Corp. leaders
12 Seminary subj.
13 Ex-Yankee
14 Enlist again
15 Confident words
17 Gumbo need
18 Galoot
19 Conceit
21 “Fresh Air” ailer
22 — Hines (cake mix brand)
26 Play place
29 Apr. check
30 Unpaid TV promo
31 Elegance
32 Spring month
33 Endure
34 Devoured
35 Triumphed
36 Sticke
37 Roman god of fire
39 Drunkard
40 TV spots
41 Roman orator
45 Madhouses
48 Circular file
50 Redact
51 Bronte heroine
52 Tolkien monster
53 Takeout order?

DOWN
1 Chicago paper, briefly
2 He loved Lucy
3 Punch
4 Treeless tract
5 More pleasant
6 Actress Merkel
7 Parched
8 Sing like Sinatra
9 “A mouse!”
10 Wilder’s “— Town”
11 Resort
16 Mountain chain
20 Gloomy guy
23 IRS employees
24 Admin. aide
25 Cager Archibald bread

Across hints:
54 Clarinet insert
55 Formerly known as
26 Serb or Croat
27 Ballet attire
28 Skater’s leap
29 Actor McShane
32 Dr. Frankenstein’s creation
33 Gate fastener
35 Bankroll
36 Ready for action
38 Social group
39 Frighten
42 Nobel Prize subj.
43 Scarce
44 As soon as
45 Last letter in London
46 Praise in verse
47 Squeak
48 Stopper
49 Reuben
50 Bread

Cryptquip:
Yesterday’s Cryptquip: WELL-KNOWN FRENCH ARTIST WHO PAINTED A PLETHORA OF FLUFFY SKY FORMATIONS: CLOUD MONET.

Today’s Cryptquip Clue: U equals M

THE TELL-TALE UVULA
Eugene Sheffer Crossword

ACROSS
1 Choir members
6 Shrewd
12 Broccoli bit
13 Arm bones
14 Harshly bright
15 Squirrel’s
16 Soother
17 Grand tale
19 Spelldown
20 Andean land
22 Pig-poke link
24 Docs’ bloc
27 Bigwigs
29 Detail
32 Al fresco
35 Small combo
36 Donate
37 Chaps
38 Orange Muppet
40 Not difficult
42 —cone
44 Org.
46 High hairstyle
50 Target at a fiesta
52 “Whatever you want”
54 Giraffe cousins
55 Band around a sleeve
56 Mates for mortises
57 19th president

DOWN
1 Pond
2 Growth
3 “Lady and the —”
4 Not ‘neath
5 At the wheel
6 Spiced tea
7 Emmy winner
8 Comic
9 Not paraphrased
10 Sea eagle
11 Ascend
12 “Terrif!”
13 Young canines
18 Wife of Adam
21 Little louse
24 Sales rep
25 Blemish
26 Native of Phoenix
28 Treeless plain
30 Shoe width
31 AOL rival
33 Scooby —
34 Scale members
39 Dine at home
41 Delicious
42 Leopard’s feature
43 Goddess of victory
44 Back talk
47 Soccer legend
48 Conks out
49 Slugger Mel
51 Mill address
53 Parseghian of football

Answer to Previous Puzzle

CRYPTOQUIP

BJZW BSTGO KSDCMOSQ NZGG
Z VSQNJ BHWJ KWDVK HF
XQSFW SX KHFAQ DGF’K
JSTKD? NZCVMDGG’K KWSSV.

Yesterday’s Cryptoquip: WHICH MUSICAL MANUSCRIPTS SHOULD BASEBALL PLAYERS ESPECIALLY WANT TO STUDY? BACH’S SCORES.

Today’s Cryptoquip Clue: J equals H
Put Americans back to work fighting the virus

By TRACY WALSH
Bloomberg Opinion

Millions of Americans have lost their jobs since mid-March, when the coronavirus started roaring across the country. Many won’t be able to return to work until the outbreak is contained. Meanwhile, there’s a rapid buildup of those to whom people are trying to contain the spread. Right now, the coronavirus is too widespread and testing too limited for such a targeted approach to work. But once case numbers become more manageable, the U.S. will move away from what epidemiologists call the “population-based” approach, which requires everybody to self-isolate, and toward one focused on containing individual cases. This will be the only way out in 2020, but it took 4,000 workers to protect the country’s 5 million citizens. Wuhan, a city of 11 million, ramped up the contact-tracing system, ramping. Wuhan’s 9,000 contact tracers to suppress COVID-19. Estimates vary, but the U.S. will need 100,000 to 300,000 contact tracers to contain the coronavirus. That’s a lot of manpower.

Digitally, social apps used in Singapore and South Korea to automatically alert people who have been exposed to the coronavirus, can augment human labor — but the U.S. will need 100,000 to 300,000 contact tracers to contain the coronavirus. That’s a lot of manpower.

But it is not too early to think about how one should transition from a population-based approach, which requires everybody to self-isolate, and toward one focused on containing individual cases. This will be the only way out in 2020, but it took 4,000 workers to protect the country’s 5 million citizens. Wuhan, a city of 11 million, ramped up the contact-tracing system, ramping up the contact-tracing system.

For more, see thoughts and recommendations from experts and leaders:

- The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine have recommended setting up a 10-member commission that would begin work next February. Trump, during a press conference, suggested the idea of a 10-member commission that would begin work next February. This is a response to the idea of a 10-member commission that would begin work next February.

- The Long-Term Care Technical Group of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has called for a Public Health Infrastructure Fund, which would raise $13 per person to ensure that the public-health system can meet its “foundational capacities.” That would amount to $4.5 billion, a tiny fraction of the money allocated for coronavirus relief so far, and $4.5 billion, a tiny fraction of the money allocated for coronavirus relief so far, but the U.S. is short a quarter-million such workers — who will need to be hired if we want to avoid a future pandemic.

- Expanding contact tracing is one of many ways to shore up the public-health workforce.

- Lawmakers from both parties have called for a Public Health Infrastructure Fund, which would raise $13 per person to ensure that the public-health system can meet its “foundational capacities.” That would amount to $4.5 billion, a tiny fraction of the money allocated for coronavirus relief so far, and $4.5 billion, a tiny fraction of the money allocated for coronavirus relief so far, but the U.S. is short a quarter-million such workers — who will need to be hired if we want to avoid a future pandemic.

- Expanding contact tracing is one of many ways to shore up the public-health workforce.

- Lawmakers from both parties have called for a Public Health Infrastructure Fund, which would raise $13 per person to ensure that the public-health system can meet its “foundational capacities.” That would amount to $4.5 billion, a tiny fraction of the money allocated for coronavirus relief so far, and $4.5 billion, a tiny fraction of the money allocated for coronavirus relief so far, but the U.S. is short a quarter-million such workers — who will need to be hired if we want to avoid a future pandemic.

- Expanding contact tracing is one of many ways to shore up the public-health workforce.

- Lawmakers from both parties have called for a Public Health Infrastructure Fund, which would raise $13 per person to ensure that the public-health system can meet its “foundational capacities.” That would amount to $4.5 billion, a tiny fraction of the money allocated for coronavirus relief so far, and $4.5 billion, a tiny fraction of the money allocated for coronavirus relief so far, but the U.S. is short a quarter-million such workers — who will need to be hired if we want to avoid a future pandemic.

- Expanding contact tracing is one of many ways to shore up the public-health workforce.

- Lawmakers from both parties have called for a Public Health Infrastructure Fund, which would raise $13 per person to ensure that the public-health system can meet its “foundational capacities.” That would amount to $4.5 billion, a tiny fraction of the money allocated for coronavirus relief so far, and $4.5 billion, a tiny fraction of the money allocated for coronavirus relief so far, but the U.S. is short a quarter-million such workers — who will need to be hired if we want to avoid a future pandemic.

- Expanding contact tracing is one of many ways to shore up the public-health workforce.

- Lawmakers from both parties have called for a Public Health Infrastructure Fund, which would raise $13 per person to ensure that the public-health system can meet its “foundational capacities.” That would amount to $4.5 billion, a tiny fraction of the money allocated for coronavirus relief so far, and $4.5 billion, a tiny fraction of the money allocated for coronavirus relieve...
Postal Service is showing its worth. Show it some support.

The Boston Globe

Last month, two postal workers delivered “President Trump’s Coronavirus Guidelines for America” to households across the country. But the Postal Service, of course, has no interest in helping the agency he relied on to get out his message and save lives. Postal workers are on the front lines of essential service delivery during the coronavirus pandemic, putting their own health at risk to supply Americans with the medicine, supplies and information they need.

Instead, the Trump administration has a long-range plan to privatize the Postal Service. In the meantime, the president wrongly blames longstanding financial problems on his–the Postal Service’s plan to carry that $170 billion debt. Of course, the U.S. Postal Service has with Amazon. That leaves any rescue plan up to Congress. Unions have made it clear that the Trump administration and a diminutive mail-in package connected to COVID-19 just might accomplish what the Internet threatened to do: kill a service that delivers medicine and ensures that ballots are counted.

Trump wants to reopen the states, but we’re not there yet.

Los Angeles Times

Columnist Holman Jenkins offered an analogy in The Wall Street Journal last weekend that captures the conundrum created by the U.S. response to COVID-19. “Imagine a problem that can be solved by holding your head underwater,” Jenkins wrote, “but stops being solved when you lift your head out.” In other words, the stay-at-home measures adopted to protect against the outbreak are damaging in their own right, and not just for the disease.

In fact, there is no known cure, just a number of drug therapies being tested and vaccines in development. That’s why it’s so disturbing to hear President Donald Trump assert, as he did again Monday, that he has the power to “open up the states,” presumably by lifting the restrictions on movement and commerce.

“When somebody’s the president of the United States, the authority is total,” Trump said at Monday’s coronavirus briefing. “It’s total. And the governors know that.”

Oh please. Trump has a lot of influence over the country’s response to COVID-19, but states’ decisions will matter for better and worse. But thankfully, one thing he cannot do is order states to change their doors to full-service delivery. Of course, the Postal Service is losing billions for a fiscal year and predicts $54 billion in losses over 10 years. To offset those grim numbers, the Postal Service is asking for a few things. The trouble is, many or most Congress members are resisting it too.

At a recent press conference, Trump said the Postal Service “is losing billions of dollars a year, and I’d love to cut that down to nothing.” He was referring to a deferred-revenue package. However, the Trump administration is fighting that request, and some Republucan lawmakers are resisting it too.

At a recent press conference, Trump said the Postal Service “is losing billions of dollars a year, and I’d love to cut that down to nothing.” He was referring to a deferred-revenue package. However, the Trump administration is fighting that request, and some Republucan lawmakers are resisting it too.

At a recent press conference, Trump said the Postal Service “is losing billions of dollars a year, and I’d love to cut that down to nothing.” He was referring to a deferred-revenue package. However, the Trump administration is fighting that request, and some Republucan lawmakers are resisting it too.

At a recent press conference, Trump said the Postal Service “is losing billions of dollars a year, and I’d love to cut that down to nothing.” He was referring to a deferred-revenue package. However, the Trump administration is fighting that request, and some Republucan lawmakers are resisting it too.

At a recent press conference, Trump said the Postal Service “is losing billions of dollars a year, and I’d love to cut that down to nothing.” He was referring to a deferred-revenue package. However, the Trump administration is fighting that request, and some Republucan lawmakers are resisting it too.
Every controversial topic has two sides. We look into the ones that matter to you.

New episodes available now

Available on

at Stripes.com/podcasts

Sponsored by
**Football dependent on campuses**

The commissioners of the major college football conferences held a 30-minute conference call Wednesday with Vice President Mike Pence, above, and stressed that college sports cannot return from the coronavirus shutdown until campus facilities have been opened.

The White House has said it is important to reopen the U.S. economy, though the details on how that will happen will be complicated and likely involve local, state and federal guidelines on safety. President Donald Trump has also been engaged with professional sports leagues with the multibillion-dollar sports industry on hold.

The college football season is scheduled to begin Labor Day weekend, but many questions remain to be answered for a sport that is the lifeblood for many athletic departments.

"(We) made the point we were concerned and wanted to get back to having kids attending college and opening up our colleges and universities," Bowlsby said. "That until that happened, we weren't going to have any sports."

The commissioners would like major college football to start at the same time all over the country, which could be difficult depending on how the pandemic fades.

"We talked a little about whether there would be a national policy because, obviously, if governors have different policies you're going to have some issues," Aresco said. "If California isn't allowing football and Ohio is that's going to be issue for what is obviously a national enterprise."

"There will be the first big sporting event of the coming months, the schedule in France is suddenly looking very busy."
Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith said discussions are just beginning on prepare-to-play issues after most programs had spring football practice shortened or wiped out and had to deal with their spring sports being called to a halt.

"Do we feel we need a longer period of time to help them physically get back into the grind?" Smith said last week. "Maybe you need two weeks straight without pads. I don't know that. That's where the collaborative of the medical people and strength coaches and everybody across the country has to occur. A hard date will come in relation to what we figure out there, and we haven't figured it out yet."

Buckeyes coach Ryan Day, in an interview on ESPN, said six weeks would be a reasonable "starting point" for getting ready to play. Two weeks ago, Alabama coach Nick Saban suggested "teaching sessions on the field" over the summer.

"If you look at statistics historically on concussions, injuries, the most concentrated time that you prepare and get ready is in fall camp," Saban said on a conference call with reporters. "You have more practices, you have to spend more time on the field. So I don't know that increasing that is going to be beneficial in getting people ready to play."

On the financial side, losing football would be a devastating blow. Ohio State and other top football programs pump millions into their athletic department budgets, funding less lucrative sports. The NCAA is also slashing $375 million in funding that would normally be distributed to various programs from the NCAA tournaments that were canceled.

Georgia Tech has made no cuts to staffers' salaries, but said an early estimate of losses blamed to losses of $3 million. Wisconsin deputy athletic director Chris McIntosh estimated the Badgers lost some $4 million in revenue due to the loss of the NCAA Tournament and Big Ten Tournament.

"So far, the biggest lesson in terms of planning that we've experienced as it relates to COVID-19 is it's incredibly humbling and it's unpredictable," McIntosh said. "We're in the mode of preparing for anything, ready, and predicting nothing."

Louisville last week announced 10% salary cuts for coaches and athletic staff, including football and men's basketball. At Stanford, football coach David Shaw, volleyball coach Tara VanDerveer and men's basketball coach Jerod Haase all volunteered to take less pay.

NCAA trying to plan for upcoming season

By Mitch Stacy
Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Spring football was shelved because of the coronavirus. There is still plenty of work going on in college football.

With the pandemic casting uncertainty on the 2020 season, programs are starting to wrestle with two weighty issues: Getting ready to play some kind of season if it is safe to do so and trying to manage what for many would be a substantial financial blow if the season is shortened or canceled.

The NCAA two weeks ago formed a working group to look at issues such as how much pre-season practice and conditioning would be required once play is green-lighted again. The NCAA said "it is premature to establish a timeline for when these scenarios may be put into place."

Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith said the discussion is just beginning on prepare-to-play issues after most programs had spring football practice shortened or wiped out and had to deal with their spring sports being called to a halt.

"Do we feel we need a longer period of time to help them physically get back into the grind?"

Smith said last week. "Maybe you need two weeks straight without pads. I don't know that. That's where the collaborative of the medical people and strength coaches and everybody across the country has to occur. A hard date will come in relation to what we figure out there, and we haven't figured it out yet."

Buckeyes coach Ryan Day, in an interview on ESPN, said six weeks would be a reasonable "starting point" for getting ready to play. Two weeks ago, Alabama coach Nick Saban suggested "teaching sessions on the field" over the summer.

"If you look at statistics historically on concussions, injuries, the most concentrated time that you prepare and get ready is in fall camp," Saban said on a conference call with reporters. "You have more practices, you have to spend more time on the field. So I don't know that increasing that is going to be beneficial in getting people ready to play."

On the financial side, losing football would be a devastating blow. Ohio State and other top football programs pump millions into their athletic department budgets, funding less lucrative sports. The NCAA is also slashing $375 million in funding that would normally be distributed to various programs from the NCAA tournaments that were canceled.

Georgia Tech has made no cuts to staffers' salaries, but said an early estimate of losses blamed to losses of $3 million. Wisconsin deputy athletic director Chris McIntosh estimated the Badgers lost some $4 million in revenue due to the loss of the NCAA Tournament and Big Ten Tournament.

"So far, the biggest lesson in terms of planning that we've experienced as it relates to COVID-19 is it's incredibly humbling and it's unpredictable," McIntosh said. "We're in the mode of preparing for anything, ready, and predicting nothing."

Louisville last week announced 10% salary cuts for coaches and athletic staff, including football and men's basketball. At Stanford, football coach David Shaw, volleyball coach Tara VanDerveer and men's basketball coach Jerod Haase all volunteered to take less pay.

Jimmie Johnson finds farewell season stuck in limbo

By Jenna Fryer
Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Jimmie Johnson, seven-time NASCAR champion and all-around Everyman, has added home-schooling elementary teacher to his résumé.

The sports stoppage from the coronavirus pandemic has thrown a red flag on Johnson's farewell tour. He had planned a final season of racing a full NASCAR schedule, but so far that has lasted just four races.

Amid all the uncertainty, Johnson said he still knew when he'll be back in his beloved No. 48 Chevrolet.

NASCAR is planning on targeting a May return at Martinsville, privately holding its breath for a May 24 reopening at the Coca-Cola 600 at Charlotte but vowing to complete the entire 36-race points schedule.

In the meantime, Johnson teaches his two daughters' daily school lessons, continues his fanatical fitness routine, spends hours upon hours on his racing simulator and waits to see how his pending retirement plan goes.

"I don't know what's going to happen in the coming months and if we'll be able to run the full season or not," Johnson said last week. "I feel like I set out to make 2020 my last full-time year, but I've always left the door open for other racing in NASCAR and abroad for the future."

"I feel like I am still pretty experienced as it relates to COVID-19," he said. "I really don't have to be his last as a full-time driver."

Johnson, now 44 and father of two active young girls, doesn't want to live in a motorhome at tracks across the country 38 weekends a year. Johnson wanted to shift his racing to focus on a bucket list — the kind of schedule for-mer Formula One champion Fernando Alonso, a new friend, has created.

This unconventional route works for drivers who still have the skills and ability to compete but are exhausted from their full-time jobs. NASCAR has the longest season in sports and participants average three nights a week — the weekend — away from home.

Johnson figured he'd transition to the kind of competitions he could never do as a NASCAR racer. Besides triathlons, Iron Man competitions and cycling pursuits, Johnson was locked in on trying IndyCar and had a test scheduled for early April that was canceled because of the pandemic.

Now he's adapting to what he described as the most free time he's ever had as an adult and is eager to get back to work. Johnson was off to a decent start before the season was suspended; through four races he had a pair of top-10 finishes and was fifth in points.

Impressive for Johnson, who has slugged through a wireless streak dating to June 4, 2017. He's unburdened himself this year to the内部 pressure to win a record eighth championship that would separate him from Richard Petty and Dale Earnhardt. And he is far more comfortable in the new Camaro that General Motors is racing this year.
Speedway Motorsports, LLC announced Wednesday that it has laid off 180 employees across its facilities and furloughed another 100 employees due to the coronavirus pandemic. Its tracks include Bristol Motor Speedway, in Bristol, Tenn., shown above, and seven other speedways.

No races have led to job cuts of 15% at 8 NASCAR tracks

By Alex Andreaey
The Charlotte Observer

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Layoffs are in effect at Charlotte Motor Speedway and seven other NASCAR tracks after parent company Speedway Motorsports, LLC announced Wednesday that it has laid off 180 employees across its facilities and furloughed another 100 employees due to the coronavirus pandemic. Approximately 15% of Speedway Motorsports’ overall staff was affected by the job cuts that took place Tuesday and Wednesday.

In addition to Charlotte Motor Speedway, the motorsports entertainment company owns and operates Atlanta Motor Speedway, Bristol Motor Speedway, Kentucky Speedway, Las Vegas Motor Speedway and Sonoma Raceway and Texas Motor Speedway.

About one-third of the staff at Texas Motor Speedway was let go, according to the Fort Worth Star Telegram.

Speedway Motorsports, LLC said the company is providing a severance package to each person affected by job eliminations. Some of the impacted staff may also be rehired as event day staff once racing resumes.

“The extraordinary circumstances presented by this pandemic and the subsequent shutdown of the economy have had a significant impact on our business,” a company statement read. “Since the beginning of the shutdown four weeks ago, we have kept our entire team on full pay while our properties remained dormant. In that time, it has become clear that we must be a more nimble, more efficient organization.”

The layoffs and furloughs impacted all departments across all Speedway Motorsports subsidiaries.

Speedway Motorsports, LLC also owns souvenir merchandising company SMI Properties, race car manufacturer U.S. Legend Cars International, radio network Performance Racing Network and zMAX Micro Lubri oils, which maintain operations in the Charlotte region.

SMI does not qualify for the forgivable loans through the Paycheck Protection Program, designed by the government to help small businesses get through this crisis. The restructuring at the speedways follows pay and job cuts at NASCAR, as well as individual teams. In late March, NASCAR announced 25% pay cuts for executives and 20% pay cuts for other employees.

“We understand this is a difficult time for all of you and your families, but these steps are necessary measures for our company without races on track each week,” NASCAR President Steve Phelps said in a letter to employees. “A lot of time and thought was put into how to approach this in a manner that results in the least impact to our employees.”

On April 3, NASCAR further announced company-wide layoffs that were the result of October’s merger with International Speedway Corporation, which owns and operates tracks such as Daytona International Speedway, Talladega Superspeedway and Richmond Raceway, among others, in addition to radio network Motor Racing Network.

Those layoffs primarily impacted staffing at Iowa Speedway, which dismissed a majority of its employees, according to NBCSports.com, but NASCAR has not confirmed the total number of layoffs across the company.

As NASCAR, its speedways and teams juggle staff reductions, the organizations and its fans are looking ahead to when the season will likely be able to resume. NASCAR’s next event is scheduled for May 9 at Martinsville, but the timing of that race is unlikely given Virginia’s stay-at-home order that extends through June 10.

When the order went into effect March 30, NASCAR said in a statement that it was “aware of the stay-at-home order issued for Virginia” and that it “will continue discussions with public health officials and medical experts as we assess rescheduling options.”

An updated schedule has not yet been released by NASCAR.

PGA hopes to resume events in June, play into December

By Doug Ferguson
Associated Press

The PGA Tour laid out an ambitious plan Thursday to resume its season the second week of June and keep fans away for at least a month, conceding that any return to golf depends on whether it can be played safely amid the coronavirus outbreak.

The Charles Schwab Challenge at Colonial in Fort Worth, Texas, was pushed back to June 11-14. Assuming golf gets the green light from government and health officials, the tour then would have an official tournament every week through August except for a Thanksgiving break.

“Our hope is to play a role — responsibly — in the world’s return to enjoying the things we love,” PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan said. “But as we’ve stressed on several occasions, we will resume competition only when it is considered safe to do so under the guidance of the leading public health authorities.”

Golf is the first sport to announce plans for a restart, although its arenas are far different from other sports because it is played over some 400 acres.

Even as it announced a truncated schedule, several leagues that were still being contemplated, such as testing for COVID-19 at tournaments.

“We have a level of confidence that is based upon changes and developments being made in the world at large, whether it be on the availability, said Andy Pazder, the tour’s chief officer of tournaments and competition.

The RBC Heritage at Hilton Head will be played after Colonial on June 18-21.

Report: Halladay was on drugs, doing stunts before crash

By Terry Spencer
Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — Baseball Hall of Fame Roy Halladay had high levels of amphetamines in his system and was flying at an excessive speed when he lost control of his small plane and nosedived into the Gulf of Mexico in 2017, killing him, a National Transportation Safety Board report issued Wednesday said.

Halladay had amphetamine levels about 10 times therapeutic levels in his blood along with a high level of morphine and an anti-depressant that can impair judgment as he performed high-pitch climbs and steep turns, sometimes within 5 feet of the water, the report says about the Nov. 7, 2017, crash off the coast of Florida.

The maneuvers put loads of nearly two-times gravity on the plane, an Icon A5 Halladay had purchased a month earlier. On the last maneuver, Halladay entered a steep climb and his speed fell to about 85 mph. The propeller-driven plane went into a nose dive and smashed into the water. The report says Halladay, 40, died of blunt force trauma and drowning.

The report does not give a final reason for the crash. That is expected to be issued at some point.

About a week before the crash, the former Toronto Blue Jays and Philadelphia Phillies star had flown the plane under Tampa Bay’s iconic Skyway Bridge, posting on social media, “Flying the Icon A5 over the water is like flying a fighter jet!”

Halladay, an eight-time All-Star, pitched a perfect game and a playoff no-hitter in 2010. He played for the Blue Jays from 1998 to 2009 and for the Phillies from 2009-13, going 203-105 with a 3.38 ERA. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame posthumously last year.

Halladay had taken off from a lake near his home about 15 minutes before the crash and a previous report says he was flying at about 105 mph just 11 feet above the water before he started doing his maneuvers. He had about 700 hours of flight time after getting his pilot’s license in 2013, the previous report said, including 51 hours in Icon A5s with 14 in the plane that crashed. The report says Halladay was treated for substance abuse twice between 2013 and 2015.

Because of that crash, Icon issued guidance to its owners two weeks before Halladay’s accident saying that while low-altitude flying “can be one of the most rewarding and exciting types of flying,” it “comes with an inherent set of additional risks that require additional considerations.”
With no ice, players get creative

Simulating skating an impossible task

BY STEPHEN WHYN
Associated Press

Taking ice away from NHL players has caused some to resort to desperate measures.

New York Islanders captain Anders Lee bought a Peloton. Anaheim defenseman Josh Manson wants a pair of roller blades. League leading scorer Leon Draisaitl of Edmonton stockhandles around his dog.

Whatever works.

“You're kind of going back to that 'Rocky' mentality where you're doing push ups and sit ups and punching the cow,” Columbus forward Nick Foligno said.

NHL players are running, biking and trying to stay in shape in case the season resumes after being put on pause because of the coronavirus pandemic. While many athletes can replicate the workouts and movement of their sports — NBA players are missing the gym — hockey players have no way to truly replace skating while rinks are closed.

“I don’t think too many people have access to rinks or anything like that, and that’s a huge hurdle for a player,” Washington defenseman John Carlson said. “It doesn’t matter how hard you train, the on-ice stuff is different and we’re going to have to pick it up pretty quick when things turn around here.”

While there remains plenty of uncertainty over whether the NHL will play again this season, players are proceeding as though they will. Aside from a few exceptions, most haven’t skated since before play stopped March 12, and self-quarantine guidelines will keep them off the ice for at least another week and likely longer.

This is nowhere near normal for athletes used to spending the spring gearing up for the intensity and brutal grind of the NHL playoffs.

“I can just do my workouts and just try to stick as close to a routine as you can,” New Jersey defenseman P.K. Subban said. “It’s hard because you’re anticipating the season coming back, but at the same token it’s so much time. And when you’re not skating, there’s nothing you can do that’s going to mimic skating.”

Little things have to fill the void for now. Team trainers are sending out customized plans to players with home gym setups. Running has replaced practicing. Biking might be the only way to simulate the high intensity of a shift — sort of.

“That all helps and it’s great, but there’s absolutely nothing you can do to prepare for the ins and outs of a shift and the physicality of it,” Boston defenseman Torey Krug said. “Not only are you trying to mimic the skating motion, but there’s no way you can train for going into the corner with a guy who’s 6-foot-2, 210 pounds and trying to out-battle him and get the puck and skate away from him.”

Draisaitl’s Edmonton teammate, Connor McDavid, is staying strong by lifting his dog. Lenny, and Lee takes his dogs for a run to keep his mind and body sharp.

Manson said he doesn’t want to risk going to a store to get roller blades. Anaheim teammate Hamppus Lindholm has taken his blades for a spin or two during quarantine, but he and others around the league are quick to point out it doesn’t require the same balance or train the same muscles as ice skating.

“You just try to do what you can, make it fun,” Foligno said. “It’s our job. We’re pros and athletes for a reason, so it’s something we have to make sure we continue to do and be ready if called upon.”

Minnesota’s Zach Parise tries to stay sharp playing 1-on-1 in the basement with his 6-year-old son, Jax. He also bought a bike because he is not much of a runner.

“You just try to do what you can, make it fun,” Foligno said. “It’s our job. We’re pros and athletes for a reason, so it’s something we have to make sure we continue to do and be ready if called upon.”

AP hockey writer John Wawrow and AP sports writer Dan Gelston contributed.
Tough times

Jordan says Bulls’ final championship season was ‘trying’

By Steve Reed

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Michael Jordan describes his decision to start the Chicago Bulls’ 1997-98 season as ‘trying.’

“It was a difficult decision for us as a team,” Jordan said during a press conference on Monday. “We were all feeling the pressure of a long season, and it was clear that things were not going to be easy.

“When the season started, we knew we had to be prepared for anything,” Jordan said. “We knew we had to be ready to face any challenge that came our way.”

The documentary shows Bulls owner Jerry Reinsdorf and Jordan arguing about a foot injury he suffered during his second season. The injury forced Jordan to miss several games.

“Michael Jordan was one of the greatest players in the history of the NBA,” Reinsdorf said. “He was a true leader and a true player’s player.”

The documentary also includes interviews with past and present Bulls players, as well as footage from past Bulls games.

“Michael Jordan was a true champion,” said Scottie Pippen, a former Bulls teammate of Jordan. “He was a true competitor and a true winner.”

The documentary is set to air on ESPN on Sunday, June 14, 1998. It is expected to be the final hurrah for Jordan’s Bulls dynasty, winners of six NBA titles in eight years.

Michael Jordan holds the MVP trophy after Chicago defeated the Utah Jazz 87-86 in Game 6 of the NBA Finals in Salt Lake City on Sunday, June 14, 1998. It proved to be the final hurrah for Jordan’s ‘90s Bulls dynasty, winners of six NBA titles in eight years.

Rams’ Allen is first player to reveal a positive virus test

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Los Angeles Rams center Brian Allen said Wednesday that he tested positive for COVID-19 three weeks ago.

Allen is the first active NFL player to acknowledge testing positive during the coronavirus pandemic.

The third-year pro is not hospitalized and is “feeling good,” according to a statement issued by the Rams on Wednesday night only after Allen spoke to Fox Sports about his positive test.

Allen became the team’s starting center last season. He played in nine games before missing the rest of the year with a knee injury.

Allen is expected to start at center again this season. He was a fourth-round draft pick out of Michigan State in 2018, playing largely on special teams as a rookie.

The 24-year-old Allen was training and rehabilitating at the Rams’ training complex when he began to feel symptoms last month. He told Fox Sports that he lost his sense of smell and taste, and they haven’t returned even after his other symptoms abated.

New Orleans Saints center Andrus Peat last week revealed that he tested positive for the virus. The Los Angeles Chargers last week revealed a positive test and symptoms for unidentified members of their organization, but the Rams hadn’t acknowledged Allen’s positive test.

Rams general manager Les Snead and coach Sean McVay both dodged the question last week when asked if any members of the organization had fallen ill.

“Everybody is doing really well,” McVay said at the time. “There’s been a couple guys that we’ve had some conversations with, but they’re in a good place right now.”

Chargers employee tests positive for virus

COSTA MESA, Calif. — At least one member of the Los Angeles Chargers organization has tested positive for the coronavirus and two others have reported symptoms.

Team spokesman Josh Rupprecht said Wednesday that “everyone is doing well and is on the road to recovery.”

Rupprecht added that owner Dean Spanos, general manager Tom Telesco and coach Anthony Lynn are fine.

ESPN reported that the first positive diagnosis happened two weeks after the team facility was shut down on March 12. Everyone who had been exposed to the infected employee was notiﬁed and all self-quarantined.

Packers Hall of Famer Willie Davis dies at 85

Wife Davis, a Pro Football Hall of Fame defensive lineman who helped the Green Bay Packers win each of the first two Super Bowls, has died. He was 85.

The Packers confirmed Davis’ death to the Pro Football Hall of Fame on Wednesday, as did his former teammate and fellow hall member, Dave Robinson.

Davis died in a Santa Monica, Calif., hospital. His wife, Carole, told the Packers her husband had been hospitalized for about a month with kidney failure and passed away peacefully.

“The Green Bay Packers family was saddened today to learn about the passing of Willie Davis,” said Packers President/CEO Mark Murphy. “One of the greatest defensive players of his era, Willie was a significant contributor to the Packers’ five NFL championship teams during the 1960s.

“I enjoyed getting to know Will- ie and his wife, Carol, especially when he served as our honorary captain for the 2010 NFC championship game and Super Bowl 45, and again for the 2014 NFC championship game. He also was a great role model for all of our players, having gone on to a very successful career after football and serving on the Packers Board of Directors.”

A 15th-round draft pick from Grambling, Davis began his NFL career by playing both offense and defense for the Cleveland Browns in 1958 and ’59.

Los Angeles Rams center Brian Allen said Wednesday that he tested positive for COVID-19 three weeks ago.
Virtual pro day helps overlooked prospects

Football academy hosted event in N.J. for 30 NFL hopefuls as lockdown loomed

By Rob Maaddi  
Associated Press

Hours before New Jersey closed all gyms indefinitely last month because of the COVID-19 pandemic, 30 NFL Draft hopefuls had a chance to showcase their talents in a “virtual” pro day at TEST Football Academy in Martinsville.

It was the culmination of countless hours the players had spent training and preparing, both physically and mentally, for their actual pro days that ended up being canceled. None of the players at TEST’s virtual pro day attended the NFL combine, so this was their best shot to show what they can do.

“I spent 12 weeks at TEST with 5-6 hours of work a day,” said Griffin Clancy, an offensive lineman from the University at Albany. “We were very close to getting our opportunity eliminated because of COVID-19.”

But Kevin Dunn, founder and CEO of TEST Sports Clubs, and Geir Gudmundsen, the director of football operations, weren’t going to let that happen. They quickly organized the event in anticipation of a nationwide lockdown that forced sports to shut down.

“We just huddled up on Friday the 13th to figure it out,” Dunn said. “We had to do something for these guys.”

Dunn and Gudmundsen decided to turn their typical, mock pro day into a live event streamed online on Facebook. Players gathered at the facility on March 16 and performed various drills — 40-yard dash, shuttle, three-cone — for four hours. The video has more than 8,500 views.

“We just tried to make it as authentic and real as possible and give scouts the opportunity to view the whole thing from where their perspective would be and bring a virtual experience right to their living room,” Dunn said.

“That was the only way that these kids would have the opportunity. We’ve sent multiple scouts to our Facebook page because we saved the feed. They’ve watched it and reached out to us about the times.”

TEST uses a laser timing system and Rick Serritella, creator of NFL Draft Bible, registered hand-held times. Serritella posted the results on his website.

Serritella says he expects 15-20 scouts to come to make that list.

“With everything going on, this pro day allowed us to display all the hard work we put in since the end of the football season,” Ligges said. “Being able to put numbers on tape is a huge win for guys during this time because it gives each player one last fighting shot at making their dreams come true, especially small-school guys like myself. This was a giant win toward making my NFL dreams come true.”

NFL agent Cary Fabrikant had five players participate in TEST’s pro day.

“It was an awesome opportunity for them to get this time to showcase their talent,” Fabrikant said. “NFL scouts have seen the video and are able to take this information and share it with the decision-makers.”

Shippensburg University wide receiver Kyle Haines ran a 4.48 40-yard dash and showed off reliable hands.

“The virtual pro day was vital for us athletes,” Haines said. Since TEST opened in 1999, Dunn said 253 out of 397 athletes they’ve trained made it onto a professional football team’s roster. Among those were 2013 Super Bowl MVP Joe Flacco, eight-time Pro Bowl corner Patrick Peterson, and four-time Pro Bowl fullback Kyle Juszczyk.

Thirty more players are hoping to make that list.
Bill Polian ran many an NFL Draft, making him the main man in the room for several successful franchises.

Next week, the Pro Football Hall of Famer knows who the guys in the room, and will be for all teams: the techs.

“I would say simply, IT IF IT,” Polian explains. “Make sure from the outset your communication is seamless and flawless. If you can get the name of the pick in on time and can effectuate trades, the rest of it is relatively easy.

“If I were running a club,” adds the man who built the Bills, Colts and Panthers through the draft, “I’d take a little more time to make sure I rehearsed everything for the actual draft. We would always make sure all the communications work and every line is up, but do it all in spades now. Don’t take for granted ed they will work.”

The league and teams say they are ensuring that everything will run smoothly, and a mock draft will be held soon as a test. But really, this is uncharted territory.

NFL teams are in a sea of uncertainty as they prepare for a draft like no other.

The collection of information has been strong, but hardly as thorough, as in normal times. Cancellations of pro days, in-person visits and workouts at team headquarters, and in-depth medical exams by team doctors adversely affect preparation for each franchise.

That said, Polian and former executive Pat Kirwan point directly to team scouts who, like every year, were on the road gathering data since last summer. So clubs with the best personnel staffs, who usually have an edge heading into the draft, could have an even bigger advantage now.

But as Kirwan points out, the logistical limitations caused by the coronavirus pandemic could outweigh some of that diligence.

“Trading, which has become a bigger part of the draft than ever, becomes problematic,” says Kirwan, who like Polian is an analyst for SiriusXM. “Say we are all in a room and three guys are working phones, trying to get the best deal. The decision maker, he is not going to have the visual contact with them that he usually has. How fast can they respond to make the move?”

One topic Polian and Kirwan disagree on is actually staging the draft next week. Several general managers had sought a delay into May at least, something the owners shot down quickly. Could there be competitive advantages for some teams by maintaining the status quo?

“It’s largely moot because it isn’t being pushed back,” Polian says. “In a certain sort of offset sense, it is probably a good thing to have now. While it is trivial in the extreme compared to what is going on everywhere, it takes people’s minds off the news they are hearing.”

From a football sense, though, Kirwan wonders why wasn’t a potential delay in the NFL’s game plan?

“Doing a first-time draft with a coach and GM together, and they don’t know each other’s job. And now adding all of these technical elements will add more pressure,” he says. “I thought we could have moved the draft back until the middle of May and not affected it adversely.”

“I think it reeks too much of people who never ran a draft. I respect that we are in an enter- tain- ment business. But the GMs were told to shut up, basically. I want to know where the impetus was, who thinks the show must go on? It shows a lack of real understanding of the moment.”

Perfect: Simmons has ability to line up all over the field on defense

He doesn’t have a position preference in the NFL.

“I like an interception just as much as I like getting a sack,” Simmons said. “I don’t think I have a favorite.”

Although he worked out with the line-backers at the NFL scouting combine, Simmons had a quick retort for anyone asking what position was in his blood.

“Defense,” he’d say with a million-dollar smile.

“It’s not as if he’ll have to choose one position or another in the pros, either.

“He can do anything,” Jeremiah said. “... So with a guy like Isaiah Simmons, whether you want to list him as a linebacker or safety, I know you plug him into that defensive scheme and week by week you can deploy him in different ways depending on what the strength of your opponent is.

“That’s why he has so much value.”

Simmons believes NFL coaches will prove he’s more creative as Venables and Dabo Swinney in capitalizing on his many skills.

“Mentally I feel like there isn’t anything I can’t do,” Simmons said, suggesting he’s the remedy for all those terrific tight ends winning so many mismatches on Sunday afternoon.

“The game is evolving,” Simmons said, “Something has to be done to stop these Travis Kelces and George Kittles out there.”

And he’s just the man for the job. Or jobs.
The Prototype

Versatile Clemson LB Simmons is perfect fit for modern NFL

BY ARNIE STAPLETON
Associated Press

Several years before building a Super Bowl roster in San Francisco, John Lynch the broadcaster was pining for a new kind of defensive playmaker. What the NFL needed to counter all the offensive innovations driving up scores, he said back in 2013, was a hybrid linebacker/safety who could stay on the field no matter the down and distance, regardless of the pace or the play.

Some players have started to fit that bill, none the likes of Isaiah Simmons. The 6-foot-4, 238-pound Clemson captain lined up at linebacker, over the slot and in the deep middle for the Tigers. He projects as an even more all-purpose pro.

“Simmons is built for today’s NFL,” said NFL Media analyst Daniel Jeremiah, “and his role could change week to week, depending on the opponent.”

Simmons’ specialty is his versatility.

“I can fit in anywhere,” Simmons said.

Clemson defensive coordinator Brent Venables lined him up all over the field except nose tackle and defensive tackle.

Back in Lynch’s playing days and even during most of his time in the broadcast booth, NFL teams leaned toward prototypical prospects who fit the mold as much as the scheme.

“Tweener,” as they were referred to — sometimes

SEE PERFECT ON PAGE 51

Inside:

- Former league exec Polian: Doing little things more important than ever ahead of unconventional NFL Draft, Page 51