Army veteran Stan Brown, a quadriplegic, relies on seven caregivers for nearly everything, from eating and dressing to running errands.

A few weeks ago, when one caregiver showed up to his St. Louis home with a cough, Brown, 72, sent her away and spent the next six hours confined to his bed until his next caregiver arrived for her shift.

Not long after that incident, another caregiver called in sick. She later tested positive for the coronavirus. Brown spent the following two weeks anxiously monitoring himself for symptoms, afraid he had the virus and could spread it to his other caregivers. Though he tried, he was never able to get tested.

“Your mind goes fairly wild,” Brown said. “I kept thinking, ‘Do I have a cough? Am I hot? Do I taste this? Can I smell this?’”

It’s been several weeks since his caregiver tested positive, and Brown hasn’t shown any symptoms. However, he’s still anxious, and he plans to remain

SEE PARALYZED ON PAGE 10
Walmart’s online sales surge 74% amid pandemic

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Walmart emerged as one of the few life-lines to millions of people as the coronavirus spread, leading to surging profit and sales for the world’s largest retailer.

Online sales in the U.S. jumped 74% for its fiscal first quarter that ended April 30, which captured the brunt of the pandemic’s outbreak. Same-store sales rose 10% at U.S. Walmart stores on strong sales of food, health and wellness goods.

At a time when a huge swath of stores that sell nonessential merchandise temporarily shut down, Walmart has the advantage of carrying the items that consumers need during a pandemic.

But unlike its online rivals like Amazon, Walmart enjoys an extensive network of nearly 5,000 physical stores and a variety of delivery and pick-up options that it ramped up to meet crushing demand for essential items, from paper towels to canned food. Walmart’s reputation for low prices also helped as the unemployment rate has spiraled to the high level since the Great Depression.

Walmart also said it’s seeing gains in new customers from across all income brackets.

This month, the company launched Express Delivery, which gets orders to a customer’s home in less than two hours. The program has been tested in 100 stores since mid-April and will be expanded to nearly 2,000 stores in the following weeks.

Thursday, May 21, 2020

WEATHER OUTLOOK

EXCHANGE RATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Rate to USD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Euro</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British pound</td>
<td>0.8891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese yen</td>
<td>107.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korean won</td>
<td>0.9654</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INTEREST RATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate Type</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prime rate</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discount rate</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal funds market rate</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-month bill</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TODAY IN STRIPES

American Roundup .. 15
Classified .......... 13
Comics .............. 17
Crossword .......... 17
Faces ............... 16
Opinion ........... 18-19
Sports ............. 21-24

However you read us, wherever you need us.

Mobile • Online • Print

INTEREST RATES

Military rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Rate to USD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bahrain (Dinar)</td>
<td>0.3776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British pound</td>
<td>1.067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada (Dollar)</td>
<td>1.380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China (Yuan)</td>
<td>6.996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark (Krone)</td>
<td>7.693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt (Pound)</td>
<td>18.581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euro</td>
<td>1.1086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong (Dollar)</td>
<td>7.502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary (Forint)</td>
<td>156.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel (Shekel)</td>
<td>4.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan (Yen)</td>
<td>105.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait (Dinar)</td>
<td>9.920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway (Krone)</td>
<td>6.308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines (Peso)</td>
<td>1.7564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore (Dollar)</td>
<td>1.4142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea (Won)</td>
<td>1,225.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Commercial rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Rate to USD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Korean won (May 21)</td>
<td>1,195.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese yen (May 21)</td>
<td>105.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British pound (May 21)</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euro costs (May 21)</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INTEREST RATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate Type</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prime rate</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discount rate</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal funds market rate</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-month bill</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INTEREST RATES

THE WEATHER is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.
Iran encounters prompt new Navy guidelines

BY JON GAMBRILL
Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates—The U.S. Navy warned Tuesday that it will take “lawful defensive measures” against vessels in the Mideast that come within 100 yards of its warships, offering specific guidelines after a recent close encounter with Iranian vessels in the Persian Gulf.

Naval officials have typically included turning a ship away from the approaching vessel, sounding its horn, shooting off flares and ultimately firing warning shots to force the vessel away. But offering a specific distance is new for the Navy.

“Our ships are conducting routine operations in international waters wherever international law allows and do not seek conflict,” said Cmdr. Rebecca Rebarich, a Bahrain-based 5th Fleet spokeswoman. “However, our commanding officers retain the right to self-defense if deemed necessary.”

While 100 meters may seem far, it’s incredibly close for large warships that have difficulty in turning quickly, like aircraft carriers.

The U.S. Navy has years of experience with Iranian forces getting that close, namely the hard-line, paramilitary Revolutionary Guard. Their armed speedboats routinely cut across their paths when going through the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which 20% of all oil passes.

Tensions have been high between Iran and the U.S. ever since President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew America from Tehran’s nuclear deal with world powers in 2018. Last summer saw a series of escalating attacks targeting oil tankers and other sites around the Persian Gulf. It reached a crescendo in January with the U.S. drone strike in Baghdad that killed Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani and an Iranian ballistic missile strike of American forces in Iraq in retaliation.

Those tensions had been expected to rise after Iran’s government overcame the initial chaos that engulfed its response to the coronavirus pandemic. In April, the U.S. accused Iran of conducting “dangerous and harassing” maneuvers near American warships in the northern Persian Gulf. Iran also had been suspected of briefly seizing a Hong Kong-flagged oil tanker just before that.

In April, Trump warned on Twitter: “I have instructed the United States Navy to shoot down and destroy any and all Iranian gunboats if they harass our ships at sea.”

Army reactivates V Corps for Europe mission

BY JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

The U.S. Army has reactivated V Corps, a unit of 635 soldiers that will bring more command and control support to missions in Europe, the service announced Tuesday.

The unit will be based at Fort Knox, Ky., and will include a command post in Europe that will be supported by 200 rotational troops.

The location of the Europe post hasn’t yet been announced. The headquarters is expected to be operational by the fall, the Army said.

The corps was inactivated in 2013 as part of an Army force reduction in Europe.

However, over the past five years the Army has expanded its mission on the Continent in connection with Russia’s forced annexation of Ukraine’s Crimean Peninsula and concerns about other aggressive moves directed at NATO allies and partners.

“The activation of an additional Corps headquarters provides the needed level of command and control focused on synchronizing U.S. Army, allied, and partner national tactical formations operating in Europe,” said Gen. James McConville, chief of staff of the Army, said in a statement.

The move came after a U.S. European Command request, the Army said. The corps’ history dates back to 1918, when the unit was activated during World War I. It activated again for World War II. It was a fixture in Europe during the Cold War and later supported the Army during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Corps commander Gen. James Terry, left, and Command Sgt. Maj. William Johnson case the V Corps colors at the unit’s inactivation ceremony in Wiesbaden, Germany, June 12, 2013. The Army is reactivating V Corps, it announced Tuesday.

F-35A stealth fighter crashes upon landing at Eglin

From staff and wire reports

Eglin Air Force Base in Florida’s Panhandle suffered its second jet fighter crash in just five days.

Tuesday night, an F-35A Lightning II assigned to the 58th Fighter Squadron crashed upon landing, according to an Air Force press release.

The pilot, who is not being identified, ejected before the crash and is reportedly in stable condition at the base medical facility.

“At the time of the accident, the pilot was participating in a routine night training sortie,” the Air Force said.

The crash site was secured and there was no loss of life or damage to civilian property. The accident is under investigation.

The crash, which happened around 9:30 p.m. local time, comes on the heels of an F-22 Raptor crash last Friday on the base’s practice range. In that incident, a lone pilot also ejected before the crash 12 miles north of the main base. That pilot was also in stable condition after the crash.

The F-22 was assigned to the 43rd Fighter Squadron, part of the 325th Fighter Wing based at Eglin.

The F-35A Lightning II is part of the 33rd Fighter Wing, also based at Eglin. The “Nomads” are a graduate flying and maintenance training wing for fighter jets. A single F-35A costs about $90 million.

Eglin, on the Florida Panhandle, is under the command of the 96th Test Wing, which tests and evaluates Air Force equipment and systems.

Tuesday’s accident marks the second time the A variant of the advanced stealth fighter has crashed. On April 9, 2019, one of the Japan Air Self-Defense Force’s F-35As plunged into the Pacific Ocean about 85 miles east of Misawa Air Base, its home field in northeastern Japan. The pilot, whose remains were recovered about two months later, likely experienced “spatial disorientation,” the JASDF said at the time.

The first F-35 crash happened on Sept. 28, 2018, when a B variant of the joint strike fighter, which is capable of short takeoffs and vertical landings, went down near Beaufort, S.C. The pilot safely ejected.

Correction

In a May 20 story about military retention, The Associated Press erroneously reported that the Air Force is already expecting to fall short of its recruiting goal by as much as 5,800 as a result of the coronavirus outbreak. The Air Force is on track to meet its recruiting goal, but expects to fall short of its effort to get recruits through the training pipeline by as much as 5,800 as a result of the virus.
**WAR ON TERRORISM**

**In Afghanistan, coalition employs remote advising**

**By J.P. LAWRENCE**
*Stars and Stripes*

KABUL, Afghanistan — The U.S.-led NATO coalition in Afghanistan has suspended face-to-face advising three times since February and has generally stuck to remote methods since mid-March, an inspector general report said Tuesday.

Advisers with the NATO Resolute Support mission were restricted from meeting Afghan troops and trained via phone calls, emails and text messaging apps like WhatsApp, even as Taliban violence flared in the country, said the report by the Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom's Sentinel.

Coalition advisers have been prevented from almost all face-to-face meetings since March 14 due to concerns over the spread of the coronavirus, the report said.

Remote advising can help protect U.S. and coalition troops from COVID-19, combat casualties and insider attacks, but there are clear drawbacks, said Jonathan Schroden, director of the Special Operations Program at CNA, a nonprofit research organization based in Virginia.

“It is much harder to advise troops and to build the relationships and trust that’s required to do this in a foreign country, if you’re not standing shoulder-to-shoulder with the partner force,” Schroden said.

Coalition troops have resumed some high-level advising in person, as shown by visits by U.S. forces commander Gen. Scott Miller to a few Afghan corps headquarters.

But advisers are allowed only minimal face-to-face interactions with Afghan troops and government officials, except when mission essential, the report said.

“Our first priority is protection of the force. We continue to advise Afghan partners through phone calls, emails and text messaging,” said Maj. Gordon Richmond, a student at the U.S. Marine Corps’ School of Advanced Warfighting.

Other analysts remained skeptical of its use on a broad scale.

“I thought also work with Afghanistan’s commandos but would be less effective with conventional army and police units, said Schroden, who said he anticipates corruption will increase in the absence of adviser oversight.

Zubair Babakarkhail contributed to this report.

lawrence.jp@stripes.com
Twitter: @jlawrence3

**Airmen who avoided RPG in Afghanistan receive medals**

**By J.P. LAWRENCE**
*Stars and Stripes*

Five airmen have received Combat Action Medals after their C-130 cargo plane narrowly avoided being hit by a rocket-propelled grenade fired by militants last fall, the Air Force said.

The insurgents fired the round at the C-130J Super Hercules from the 39th Airlift Squadron, based out of Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, and deployed with the 774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron, after it completed an emergency nighttime airdrop to Afghan troops in September, a May statement said.

“I noticed a flash of red behind the plane, but it was only for a second or two,” said Senior Airman David Doran, loadmaster on the flight, as quoted in the statement. “At the time I wasn’t scared because I didn’t realize it was an RPG, but possibly a flare.”

An infrared image of the incident released by the Air Force shows a bright white projectile zooming just behind the C-130.

The image appears to match video taken by a remotely piloted MQ-9 drone released by the Air Force in April. In it, two airmen assigned to the 20th Attack Squadron share their perspective of watching the RPG streak toward a C-130.

“My heart was racing,” Airman 1st Class Ashley said in the video, which did not provide the full names of either MQ-9 operator. The MQ-9 operators said they tracked the people they said fired the shot, and after waiting 34 minutes for proper clearance, launched a strike on them.

“If we weren’t there for the C-130 drop, the bad guys could have gotten away,” Ashley said.

Members of the C-130 crew received the Combat Action Medal, which was introduced in 2007 for airmen engaged in air or ground fighting in combat zones.


lawrence.jp@stripes.com
Twitter: @jlawrence3

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Gunmen killed 14 people in two separate attacks in Afghanistan while the Taliban targeted pro-government checkpoints in the northeast, killing nine militiamen, officials said Wednesday, the latest in relentless violence that continues to plague the war-torn nation.

The attacks come against the backdrop of renewed United Nations calls for an end to violence and as Washington’s special peace envoy, Zalmay Khalilzad, embarked on another round of talks with the Taliban to press them to start negotiating with the newly reconciled Afghan political leadership in Kabul.

In Parwan province, north of the capital, Kabul, an unknown number of gunmen stormed a mosque late on Tuesday, killing 11 worshipers and wounding several others, said Wahida Shahkar, spokeswoman for the provincial governor. Reports earlier in the day had said 12 were killed.

Also late on Tuesday, gunmen in eastern Khoot district attacked a family returning home from a nearby mosque, killing three brothers, according to Adil Haidari, spokesman for the provincial police chief. In both attacks, the gunmen fled the scene.

No one claimed responsibility for either attack but the Taliban promptly denied involvement. Islamic State, which has been increasingly active in Afghanistan after suffering battlefield losses, has carried out similar attacks in the past. Washington blamed the ISIS for last week’s horrific attack on a maternity hospital in Kabul that killed 24 people, including two infants.

In a third attack, the Taliban targeted checkpoints belonging to a local pro-government militia in northeastern Takhar province, killing nine militiamen, said Khalil Aser, spokesman for the provincial police chief.

Aser said that attack took place in the Khwaja Bahuddin district, and also late on Tuesday, and also left six militiamen wounded. There was no immediate statement from the Taliban.

Khalilzad, the architect of a U.S.-Taliban deal signed in February, has been trying to salvage the agreement and jump-start intra-Afghan negotiations between the Taliban and Kabul. A power-sharing agreement on Sunday between President Ashraf Ghani and his rival, Abdullah Abdul-
Forgotten time capsule

Contents of 1999 container from Aviano appears to predict Space Force

When the time capsule was found, and it appeared to address the first class graduating with a Space Force, it couldn't have been better timing.


A picture of the Aviano Airman Leadership School's class 99-A is shown at Aviano Air Base, Italy.

Defense firms urge criteria change for $17B in virus aid funds

By David McLaughlin and Tony Capaccio

Bloomberg

There's a $17 billion pot of money in the pandemic aid package for companies vital to national security — and no one seems to want it.

The $2 trillion rescue package Congress adopted in late March includes loans and loan guarantees specifically for companies "critical to maintaining national security." The funds at first were seen as largely directed at Boeing, which at the time had been pleading for a government bailout.

But after selling $25 billion in bonds to investors, the aircraft maker turned down the aid, which would have come with strings attached that it didn't like.

With the $17 billion up for grabs, the U.S. defense industry is asking the Trump administration to change the criteria for getting some of it, arguing that the terms are too strict.

The Treasury Department, which has sole authority over the $17 billion, has limited the companies that qualify to those whose work is designated D teaspoons, which means it ranks highest on the military's list of national priorities, or to companies that have facilities with top-secret security clearances.

Only about 20 companies applied by the May 1 deadline, according to the Defense Department. There are about 300,000 companies in the Pentagon's contractor supply chain.

"What we're hearing across the board is that the restrictions and requirements on the money are pretty onerous, and a majority of companies just can't apply for the money," said Hawk Carlisle, president of the National Defense Industrial Association, which represents defense contractors.

It's another example of the Trump administration's struggle to help businesses that have been decimated by the pandemic. The initial round of $349 billion aimed at small businesses sparked outrage after large restaurant chains, a professional basketball franchise and numerous publicly traded companies were able to get money while mom-and-pop businesses were shut out.

Congress stipulated that companies receiving the national-security loans must provide the government with warrants, equity or senior debt securities and agree to limits on dividends, stock buybacks and executive pay.

But it's Treasury's additional criteria that defense firms say are too narrow. It restricted loans to two groups: those with a contract with the D teaspoons or those with facilities that have top-secret security clearances.

Eric Fanning, president of the Aerospace Industries Association, whose members include Lockheed Martin and BAE Systems, said the criteria should be broadened to cover more companies.

BY NORMAN LLAMAS

Stars and Stripes

AVIANO AIR BASE, Italy — A forgotten time capsule whose contents predicted the creation of the U.S. Space Force was recently discovered inside a storage container where it was stowed away in 1999.

The "Toy Story" film quote "To infinity and beyond" was engraved on the front of a wooden speaking platform used as the time capsule by Airmen Leadership School graduating class 99-A.

A plaque, listing the names of all 23 class members, included a message asking for the capsule to be opened by the first leadership school class of the "U.S. Air and Space Force."

The capsule was opened during a live video broadcast Friday, following the graduation of ALS class 20-D, and its contents were shown to viewers on Aviano Air Base's Facebook page.

"I was very surprised (when) we found it inside a large metal shipping container that was being used for forklift training," said 2nd Lt. Connor D. Heneghan, of the 31st Logistics Readiness Squadron. The capsule was found earlier this month and turned over to the school.

"If I had to go with what was in it, I'd go with a Buzz Lightyear figure," Heneghan said.

In December, the U.S. Space Force was established as the sixth branch of the armed forces.

Did class 99-A know something others didn’t?

"When the time capsule was found, and it appeared to address the first class graduating with a Space Force, it couldn’t have been better timing," said Master Sgt. Kelani T. Mendiola, commandant of the Tech. Sgt. Adam K. Ginett Airman Leadership School.

Chief Master Sgt. Roger A. Towberman, the Space Force's senior enlisted advisor, said he was excited to participate remotely in the event.

"When the time capsule was found, and it appeared to address the first class graduating with a Space Force, it couldn’t have been better timing," Towberman said. "So, it’s really a reminder of how you can’t predict change, especially these days."

"Honestly, I had forgotten about the time capsule until I was contacted through email, with the motto ‘To Infinity and Beyond.’" Creamer said via email. "The fact that the US Space Force has now come about, it makes perfect sense that this class should have opened the time capsule.

"I really don’t remember what was put in the capsule. We wanted a class project that would share some of our experiences with future classes," Creamer said.

"I'm not sure if any of that had anything to do with the time capsule until I was contacted through email, with the motto 'To Infinity and Beyond.'" Creamer said via email. "The fact that the US Space Force has now come about, it makes perfect sense that this class should have opened the time capsule.

Creamer said that at the time he was a space systems technician assigned to Moron Air Base in Spain as a maintainer for the transportable optical system, a telescope that was part of Space Command.

"If I had to guess what was in it, I'd go with a Buzz Lightyear figure," said 2nd Lt. Connor D. Heneghan, of the 31st Logistics Readiness Squadron. The capsule was found earlier this month and turned over to the school.

"I was very surprised (when) we found it inside a large metal shipping container that was being used for forklift training," said Master Sgt. Kelani T. Mendiola, commandant of the Tech. Sgt. Adam K. Ginett Airman Leadership School.

Chief Master Sgt. Roger A. Towberman, the Space Force's senior enlisted advisor, said he was excited to participate remotely in the event.

"When the time capsule was found, and it appeared to address the first class graduating with a Space Force, it couldn’t have been better timing."


When the time capsule was found, and it appeared to address the first class graduating with a Space Force, it couldn’t have been better timing.


The initial round of $349 billion aimed at small businesses sparked outrage after large restaurant chains, a professional basketball franchise and numerous publicly traded companies were able to get money while mom-and-pop businesses were shut out.

Congress stipulated that companies receiving the national-security loans must provide the government with warrants, equity or senior debt securities and agree to limits on dividends, stock buybacks and executive pay.

But it’s Treasury’s additional criteria that defense firms say are too narrow. It restricted loans to two groups: those with a contract with the D teaspoons or those with facilities that have top-secret security clearances.

Eric Fanning, president of the Aerospace Industries Association, whose members include Lockheed Martin and BAE Systems, said the criteria should be broadened to cover more companies.

BY DAVID MCLAUGHLIN

Stars and Stripes

There's a $17 billion pot of money in the pandemic aid package for companies vital to national security — and no one seems to want it.

The $2 trillion rescue package Congress adopted in late March includes loans and loan guarantees specifically for companies "critical to maintaining national security." The funds at first were seen as largely directed at Boeing, which at the time had been pleading for a government bailout.

But after selling $25 billion in bonds to investors, the aircraft maker turned down the aid, which would have come with strings attached that it didn't like.

The $2 trillion rescue package Congress adopted in late March includes loans and loan guarantees specifically for companies "critical to maintaining national security." The funds at first were seen as largely directed at Boeing, which at the time had been pleading for a government bailout.

But after selling $25 billion in bonds to investors, the aircraft maker turned down the aid, which would have come with strings attached that it didn't like.

The $2 trillion rescue package Congress adopted in late March includes loans and loan guarantees specifically for companies "critical to maintaining national security." The funds at first were seen as largely directed at Boeing, which at the time had been pleading for a government bailout.

But after selling $25 billion in bonds to investors, the aircraft maker turned down the aid, which would have come with strings attached that it didn't like.

The $2 trillion rescue package Congress adopted in late March includes loans and loan guarantees specifically for companies "critical to maintaining national security." The funds at first were seen as largely directed at Boeing, which at the time had been pleading for a government bailout.

But after selling $25 billion in bonds to investors, the aircraft maker turned down the aid, which would have come with strings attached that it didn't like.

The $2 trillion rescue package Congress adopted in late March includes loans and loan guarantees specifically for companies "critical to maintaining national security." The funds at first were seen as largely directed at Boeing, which at the time had been pleading for a government bailout.

But after selling $25 billion in bonds to investors, the aircraft maker turned down the aid, which would have come with strings attached that it didn't like.
Military begins easing Okinawa restrictions

By Matthew M. Burke
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The two military branches making up the bulk of U.S. forces in the southern prefecture of Okinawa relaxed both on- and off-base restrictions Wednesday after three weeks with no new positive coronavirus cases on the islands.

Air Force Brig. Gen. Joel Carey, 18th Wing commander, ordered the “phased” lifting of force health protection measures in a message posted Wednesday afternoon on Kadena Air Base’s Facebook page. Marine Forces Japan followed suit with a statement that evening.

Starting Thursday, airmen are allowed to purchase take-out food from off-base restaurants, send their children to off-base schools and child care facilities, and visit beaches and public parks, the 18th Wing statement said.

Airmen will also be able to dine inside restaurants on base, attend chapel services and patronize gyms, pools, outdoor equipment rentals, libraries, movie theaters, beaches, camping and resort areas, among other base opportunities.

“The past three weeks, the Okinawa Prefectural Government has reported no new cases of COVID-19 as well as a steady decline in the number of patients still infected,” said the 18th Wing statement, referring to the respiratory disease caused by the coronavirus. “Our cases here on Kadena Air Base have also fully recovered and are doing well.”

Some 18th Force Support Squadron facilities may not open right away, the statement said. Updates will be posted to Facebook. The use of reopening facilities is contingent on following posted virus mitigation measures.

Other restrictions remain in place: the use of mass transit, visiting off-base bars, bars, hotels, nail salons and leisure shopping are still prohibited.

Base access is limited to mission-essential personnel, according to a wing Facebook post.

“We are not in the clear yet and we must remain vigilant,” the statement said. “Social distancing is still required for all personnel to the greatest extent possible.”

Cloth face coverings are required when social distancing is not possible, the statement said. The directives apply to all who have base access. Failure to obey could result in “administrative action.”

Marines participating in recreational activities are being told to do so individually, with family or in pairs, the statement said.

In addition to being able to purchase off-base take-out food again, Marines are also authorized to patronize eateries with drive-thru windows. However, inside dining remains restricted.

Marines are also allowed to visit off-base residences.

“These changes are based on a thorough review of the current COVID-19 pandemic situation in the region and the effectiveness of continued [health protection conditions] preventive measures,” the statement said.

Marine officials said the measures would constantly be reviewed.

The latest actions by military officials mirror the easing of restrictions by Okinawa government officials. Okinawa prefecture allowed most shuttered businesses to open May 14, as long as they follow social distancing and hygiene protocols. Cabarets and nightclubs, where close contact is part of the service, were scheduled to reopen Wednesday.

As of Tuesday, Okinawa had 146 positive cases, the prefecture’s website said. The prefecture has reported six deaths, and four people remain in critical condition.

The last new positive case on Okinawa was reported April 30.

Normal: Soldiers still remain under a travel ban

FROM FRONT PAGE

Defense Department schools on the military bases are still conducting classes online only, although people can now use local day care facilities.

‘New normal’

“I think it’s great that we are slowly rolling Bravo out so we are just not allowing the bars and clubs, but we are allowed to sit down in restaurants and to start to enjoy Korea again and allow us to start traveling,” Army Capt. Gabe Romero, 29, a medical operations officer from Covina, Calif., said as he enjoyed lunch at a kebab restaurant in the Anjeung-ri area outside Camp Humphreys.

USFK issued a chart with detailed guidelines Tuesday, explaining that people may resume traveling and going to local establishments such as restaurants, salons and museums in all designated areas, but must avoid bars and clubs, which were at the center of an outbreak in the popular district of Itaewon in Seoul.

The military also urged people to maintain social distancing and to wear masks when that’s not possible. Masks were still required for entry into on-base facilities.

“This is the ‘new normal’ — centered on 3 key tenets: protect yourself, protect your bubble, protect others,” USFK spokesman Gen. Robert Abrams said Tuesday in a tweet.

“We need to ease into this with an abundance of caution,” he said. “Protect the force = protect the mission.”

The military largely locked down its 58,000-strong community after being caught in the middle of the burgeoning pandemic in late February when a massive outbreak began in the southeastern city of Daegu and nearby areas with 500 or more cases reported each day.

The South has been lauded for an aggressive testing, tracing and social distancing campaign that appears to have brought the virus largely under control. Officials have expressed concern about recent “sporadic infections” in Itaewon and the Samsung Medical Center in Seoul but said strict social distancing measures did not need to be renewed.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 38 new cases Wednesday for a total of 11,110, with 263 deaths.

“Because of how well things are going everywhere, I’m glad they are taking the steps to just bring everything back to normal,” said Army Sgt. Shawn Fowler, 26, of Tucson, Ariz. “It’s been really constraining not being able to actually go out and basically live our lives.”

However, he noted it’s a small step since soldiers remain under a military-wide travel ban that has been extended by the Pentagon until at least June 30 as the virus continues to ravage other countries including the United States.

“The only thing that is really affecting me right now is the travel restrictions,” Fowler said, adding that he has applied for an exception to policy so he can return to his wife and daughters in Washington state on June 18. “I want to go home and see my family.”

Back to business

Local businesses, which had lost most of their customers due to the restrictions, were ready to make up their losses.

Song Ji Sue, supervisor of Hwa Hwa, a popular Korean barbecue restaurant near Camp Humphreys, said business had dropped by about 80% even though the Americans were allowed to order takeout. “We welcomed the full house on Wednesday.”

“We have gone through a rough patch. It has been a very difficult time of us,” she said. “But they’re coming off the installation and visiting our restaurant again, so we feel good.”

One community that wasn’t happy on Wednesday was on Yongson Garrison in Seoul, which used to be the main U.S. military base but is in the process of closing.

About 2,000 people are still stationed on Yongson and the nearby K-16 base, which both remain at HPCon-Charle and off-limits for nonessential travel from other bases until further notice. Residents may, however, go to other areas and participate in approved activities there.

Carla Reinsch, who lives in the U.S. Embassy residential area on Yongson, said it was the only major Army installation without an infection.

USFK has reported 28 confirmed cases, including four active-duty service members, but most have recovered.

“It’s very tiring hanging out here and not being able to go anywhere,” Reinsch said, noting it’s difficult even to go for a walk off base, but she loves it. “We’re not rewarded for all we’ve done so far,” she said.

From Stars and Stripes reporter Aya Ichihashi contributed to this report.

Burke.matt@stripes.com
Twitter: @MatthewMBurke

Stars and Stripes reporter Yoo Kyong Chang contributed to this report.

gamel.kim@stripes.com
Twitter: @gamel_kim

keeler.matthew@stripes.com
Twitter: @MattKeeler1231

Normal: Soldiers still remain under a travel ban.

Soldiers assigned to U.S. Forces Korea on Wednesday dine at a restaurant outside Camp Humphreys, South Korea, while continuing to social distance.

Stars and Stripes reporter Aya Ichihashi contributed to this report.

Burke.matt@stripes.com
Twitter: @MatthewMBurke

Stars and Stripes reporter Yoo Kyong Chang contributed to this report.

gamel.kim@stripes.com
Twitter: @gamel_kim

keeler.matthew@stripes.com
Twitter: @MattKeeler1231

Sgt. Ervin Dunston gets a haircut off base for the first time in months at a barbershop outside Camp Humphreys, South Korea.

Sgt. Ervin Dunston gets a haircut off base for the first time in months at a barbershop outside Camp Humphreys, South Korea.

Sgt. Ervin Dunston gets a haircut off base for the first time in months at a barbershop outside Camp Humphreys, South Korea.

Stars and Stripes reporter Aya Ichihashi contributed to this report.

Burke.matt@stripes.com
Twitter: @MatthewMBurke

Stars and Stripes reporter Yoo Kyong Chang contributed to this report.

gamel.kim@stripes.com
Twitter: @gamel_kim

keeler.matthew@stripes.com
Twitter: @MattKeeler1231
DODEA-Pacific students give AP online tests mixed reviews

BY DAVE ORNAUER
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Online versions of Advanced Placement tests, administered this year by the College Board due to the coronavirus shuttering high schools around the world, were met with mixed reviews by students and teachers in U.S. Defense Department schools in Asia.

AP tests online is new territory for the College Board, but a spokesman for the Department of Defense Education Activity-Pacific said just four of the 5,128 DODEA students that registered for the online tests reported technical problems. The tests are being given over a two-week period which began May 12 and ends Saturday.

“No other cases were reported to us,” DODEA spokesman Frank O’Gara said Tuesday via email.

But some students said they had trouble downloading and submitting their tests and getting them done within the allotted time. The tests normally require three hours to complete when administered in a classroom. This year students were given 45 minutes to complete the online versions. Students also said they were given multiple versions of the same tests.

“College Board said there would be only one version of the exams, which was their justification for making everyone take them at the same time,” said Cameron Murray, a senior at Kubasaki High School, Okinawa, who takes seven AP courses.

The College Board, citing test security, administered the tests worldwide at the same time, meaning Pacific students had to test at 1, 3 and 5 a.m. To give multiple versions of the same test would undo the need to take tests at the same time worldwide, students and teachers said.

Molly Austinson, an AP human geography teacher at Camp Humphreys, South Korea, reported five different sets of questions for her students.

And there were technical glitches; four of her students had to request makeup tests, even those who had answered all the questions, she said.

“I just know so many people (who) have had an issue with the process, and these aren’t kids who would typically have user-error issues,” said Addie Grainger, a senior at Kadena High School, Okinawa, who takes three AP courses.

Teachers and students said they acknowledge the need to be on guard against cheating and sharing answers, “but that’s what content creators at College Board are paid to do,” said Kristen Brown of Humphreys High School, who teaches honors subjects to prepare students for AP courses.

“It’s the most inconsiderate thing,” Brown said of having to take tests in early morning hours.

“If I was tasked with taking a test at zero-dark-thirty, I wouldn’t perform very well.”

DODEA officials indicated there have been problems, but they’re not as widespread as students and teachers are saying. O’Gara said the College Board reported Sunday that some students encountered challenges submitting tests.

In social media posts and in reports in state side newspapers, the College Board acknowledged problems and offered alternatives, including taking screen shots of tests and submitting them by email.

DODEA officials declined to comment on the possible existence of multiple versions of the same tests, citing the fact that they’re not DODEA exams. Repeated attempts to reach College Board officials were not successful.

Students reporting no issues with the AP tests included Ruth-Elizabeth Hansen, a junior at Matthew C. Perry High School at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan. She took AP literature at 3 a.m. Wednesday and said she had “no problems at all.”

Students and teachers said they hope that this year’s method would be a one-off. They might get their wish: O’Gara said the College Board has “shared their plan to return to the paper versions of the AP exams next year.”

One instructor, Michelle Pell, an AP literature teacher at Daegu, said she hopes that’s the case.

“They made all of this … much more stressful than it ever needed to be,” she said.

ornauer.dave@stripes.com
Twitter @DaveOrnauer

Ruth-Elizabeth Hansen, a junior at Matthew C. Perry High School, takes an Advanced Placement exam at 3 a.m. on Saturday, at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan.
VIRUS OUTBREAK

MCAS Iwakuni releases tentative reopening plan

By James Bolinger
Stars and Stripes

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION IWAKUNI, Japan — Marine Col. Lance Lewis has released a tentative plan to “re-open” the air station as long as coronavirus conditions in Japan continue to improve and the base remains free from infection.

The air station, about an hour south of Hiroshima in southern Japan, has reported zero infections.

Some base services were authorized to open Wednesday, depending on manpower, such as dine-in options at restaurants and several other support services, who wrote Tuesday on MCAS Iwakuni’s Facebook page.

Relaxing further restrictions must wait until the Navy’s Carrier Air Wing 5 deploys, in the coming weeks, he said. At the moment, the air station’s primary mission is to ensure that the sailors who will be away aboard the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan are infection free.

“In the coming days, we will see starting other bases around Japan loosen their posture, but those bases do not have the same strategic importance as MCAS Iwakuni and can afford a different risk calculus,” Lewis wrote. “Let me be brutally honest: Until (Carrier Air Wing 5) deploys we will maintain our current level of vigilance.”

Lewis released a tentative timeline for lifting some restrictions on base personnel, although he said all dates are subject to change.

On June 8, off-base employment will be authorized, except for jobs in health care, the commander said. Additionally, MCAS staff and Marines will be able to go off base for takeout food, and students who attend off-base schools and Japanese kindergartens may return to class.

Right now, 55 students, mostly children of Japan

Navy announces plans to restart promotion boards in July

By Caitlin M. Kenney
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON— The Navy will restart selection, promotion, and continuation boards July 1 after they were halted in March due to the coronavirus pandemic, the service announced.

“Our overriding commitment is that no sailor will be disadvantaged by the delay in boards,” Rear Adm. Jeff Hughes, the commander of Navy Personnel Command, said in a statement. “Although the boards were postponed, those who are selected for promotion can expect to be assigned the original date of rank and receive any back pay and allowances due from that time.”

The decision to postpone them was meant to prevent sailors from having to travel to Millington, Tenn., to sit on these boards, and to limit the number of sailors who would be working closely to one another, according to the Navy.

As part of the plan to restart the boards, the Navy has implemented mitigation precautions in order to minimize the health risks related to the coronavirus to personnel, according to the statement. These measures include adjusting the layout of board rooms to adhere to social distancing, additional cleaning of rooms and daily temperature readings, according to the Navy.

The Navy has also conducted administrative selection boards online during the pause and is working to continue that, according to the statement.

Kenney.Caitlin@stripes.com
Twitter: @caitlinmkenney
Trump threatens Michigan funding over ballots

**By Nicholas Riccardi and Darlene Superville**

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Wednesday threatened to hold up federal funds for two battleground states because they are trying to make it easier to vote during the coronavirus pandemic.

The president's tweets targeting Michigan and Nevada were his latest salvo against voting by mail, a practice that he has publicly warned will lead so many people to vote that Republicans will lose in November.

Trump began by targeting Michigan, erroneously describing Democrat Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson's announcement Tuesday that she would send absentee ballot applications to every voter in the state.

"Michigan sends absentee ballots to 7.7 million people ahead of Primaries and the General Election," Trump tweeted Wednesday. "This was done illegally and without authorization by a rogue Secretary of State. I will ask to hold up funding to Michigan if they want to go down this Voter Fraud path!"

Trump later made a similar threat against Nevada, which has actually sent ballots to voters for its June 9 state primary, due to the coronavirus pandemic.

A federal judge recently cleared Nevada's decision to mail ballots, which were sent by the Republican secretary of state.

"State of Nevada ‘thinks’ that they can send out illegal vote by mail ballots, creating a great Voter Fraud scenario for the State and the U.S. They can’t! If they do, ‘I think’ I can hold up funds to the State. Sorry, but you must not cheat in elections," Trump tweeted.

It was not immediately clear what funds Trump was referencing. The states are paying for their elections changes through coronavirus relief spending measures the president signed into law. Trump tagged his acting budget director, his chief of staff and the Treasury Department on the tweets.

Trump's threats drew an immediate sharp response from Democrats, who alluded to impeaching the president for his threats to withhold aid from Ukraine if that country did not help his reelection effort.

"Trump has gone Ukraine on Michigan and Nevada, threatening to cut off funding for their audacity to not make voters choose between protecting their health and exercising their right to vote," California Secretary of State Alex Padilla, a Democrat, said in a statement. "We will not allow our democracy to become a casualty of this pandemic."

Trump has been vocal about his opposition to voting by mail, claiming the practice is ripe for fraud although there is scant evidence of widespread wrongdoing with mail-in voting. Trump himself requested a mail ballot for Florida's GOP primary last month and he has voted absentee in previous elections.

While Republicans insist that Trump's position on the issue is nuanced and not simply an effort to suppress Democratic votes, the president undermined those arguments Wednesday morning.

Benson noted Trump was objecting to her doing something that Republicans are also doing in other states. "&amp;#3216;Hi! Also have a name, it’s Jocelyn Benson. And we sent applications, not ballots. Just like my GOP colleagues in Iowa, Georgia, Nebraska and West Virginia,'&amp;#3221; she tweeted at the president.

On Monday, Republican National Committee Chairwoman Ronna McDaniel portrayed the party's $20 million campaign against Democratic efforts to expand mail voting as principled stance to protect the sanctity of the ballot. McDaniel said she had no objection to a system like the one Benson would announce the next day because there is a difference between sending all voters a form to request a ballot as opposed to the actual ballot.

Trump's campaign has pushed his supporters to vote by mail and says its main objection is to mailing ballots to all voters. Five states that use this method have had no significant voter fraud cases. California earlier this month said it'd mail ballots to all voters for November.

The GOP-controlled Senate has so far stopped Democrats from mandating expanded mail and early voting as part of coronavirus relief bills, arguing states should be able to make decisions on their own election systems.

The battle has largely moved to the courts, with Democrats filing at least 15 lawsuits to force states to expand their programs.

The GOP has fought back. In Texas, Attorney General Ken Paxton, a Republican, has argued that the virus should not automatically entitle voters to request an absentee ballot. A federal judge on Tuesday ruled otherwise, ordering the state to let all voters cite the disease as a legal excuse to request a ballot. Paxton has vowed an appeal.
Paralyzed: ‘I haven’t figured out a plan if things go south,’ vet says

FROM FRONT PAGE

inside despite Missouri, his home state, beginning its reopening plan last week. It will be a long time before Brown feels safe, he said.

“I won’t feel back to normal again until we have a vaccine, even if it levels off,” he said. “I’m not going to feel safe getting out until that happens.”

As the coronavirus pandemic continues to be a deadly force in the United States, paralyzed veterans are struggling to meet their basic needs, such as washroom and kitchen privileges, according to Paralyzed Veterans of America, which aids and advocates for veterans with spinal cord injuries. The organization is also concerned about the mental health of its members, some of whom already suffer from anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder.

And for people with paralysis, the coronavirus poses an especially dire risk. The virus attacks the lungs, leading to breathing problems. Some people with paralysis have respiratory insufficiency, according to the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation. Because they may not have use of their abdominal or intercostal muscles, which form the wall of the chest, they lose the ability to force a cough, making them susceptible to respiratory infections.

The Department of Veterans Affairs operates 25 Spinal Cord Injury and Disorders Centers across the country and maintains a registry of 24,531 paralyzed veterans. As of this week, 96 paralyzed veterans had tested positive for the coronavirus, said VA press secretary Christina Noel. Of those, 15 veterans — or 16% — have died.

The fatality rate across the U.S. population has been difficult for experts to estimate because of a lack of testing. Early figures have shown that about 5% of Americans who were confirmed to be infected with the virus have died. According to VA data, 985 of its nearly 12,000 patients — or more than 8% — have died.

Sharon Moster, executive director of the Ohio chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America, delivers food to a veteran. Since the pandemic began, Moster has seen significant demand for help getting groceries.

Trump attacks study, defends using malaria drug

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump emphatically de- fended himself against criticism from medical experts that his announced use of a malaria drug against the coronavirus could spark wide misuse by Americans of the unproven treatment with potentially fatal side effects.

Trump’s revelation a day ear-lier that he was taking hydroxy-
**Nations reopen, struggle to define ‘a new normal’**

**BY NICOLE WINFIELD**

Associated Press

ROME — As nations around the world loosen coronavirus restrictions, people are discovering that the return to normal is anything but that. Schools, offices, public transportation, bars and restaurants are now on the front lines of post-lockdown life — back in business, in many cases, but not business as usual.

How each of those key sectors manages social distancing and ramps up expected new rules will determine the shape of daily life for millions as researchers race to develop a vaccine that is still probably months, if not years, away from being available.

What a return to normal looks like varies widely. For hungry migrant workers in India, it was finally being able to return to their farms. In southern California, it was returning to the newly reopened boutiques of America’s Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills, Calif.

In Britain, the leader of the House of Commons said that members of Parliament should return to London to work in person June 2 after weeks of remote working.

Jacob Rees-Mogg said that the decision recognizes “the need for business to continue.” Authorities are likely to limit the number of people allowed into the small chamber, where lawmakers sit shoulder-to-shoulder on long benches.

In Italy, where good food is an essential part of life, once-packed restaurants and cafes are facing a huge financial hit as they reopen under strict social distancing rules.

The losses are forecast to pile up to $132 billion this year.

In France, new normal should even be.

The new normal could push millions into extreme poverty in Africa, where the virus has reached every country.

Guterres said that Africa needs more than $200 billion and “an across-the-board debt standstill” for struggling nations.

**US extends heightened border enforcement during pandemic**

**Associated Press**

WASHINGTON — A Trump administration policy of quickly expelling most migrants stopped along the border because of the COVID-19 pandemic was indefinitely extended Tuesday with a top U.S. health official arguing that what had been a short-term order was still needed to protect the country from the virus.

The order issued by Dr. Robert Redfield, director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, authorizes Customs and Border Protection to immediately remove migrants, including people seeking asylum, as a way to prevent the potential spread of the virus while in custody.

President Donald Trump’s administration issued the initial 30-day order in March, and it was extended for another month in April. The order, which has no fixed end date, though it said that the CDC will review every 30 days to ensure it is still necessary.

Administration officials have defended the policy amid criticism from advocates who have said that the U.S. is using health as a pretext to block asylum-seekers and chil-
VIRUS OUTBREAK ROUNDUP

States join FEMA effort to counter misinformation

Associated Press

TRENTON — New Jersey's top homeland security official received nearly nonstop calls in early March from trucking companies and other logistics firms wanting to know if rumors of an impending national lockdown were true.

They weren't, and Jared Maples soon learned that the companies were trying to debunk misinformation stemming from text messages shared widely across the country.

State officials debunked the messages, but Maples said that the whole episode was a "whoa" moment for him and other state officials. Shortly before, New Jersey launched a website aimed at debunking misinformation and rumors about COVID-19.

New Jersey's effort mirrors a rumor-control site set up by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. It is too early to determine whether the effort will prevent the spread of the coronavirus, but some are going with full-fledged springtime commencement exercises as usual, with tweaks to account for health concerns.

Thousands of graduates, parents, siblings and grandparents will gather at a nearly 11,000-seat stadium, a baseball field and a keynote address for more than 540 graduates — among the largest high schools — among the largest in the state.

Arkansas

LITTLE ROCK — A federal judge on Tuesday rejected an effort to require Arkansas to release inmates at high risk of contracting the coronavirus and to take other steps to curb the virus's spread in its prisons.

U.S. District Judge Kristine Baker denied the motion for preliminarily injinied by a group of inmates who said that the state hasn't done enough to prevent the virus's spread. The lawsuit was filed in response to an outbreak at one prison, the Cummins Unit, where 95 inmates have tested positive for the virus and eight have died from the illness caused by it.

The lawsuit sought the release of elderly or disabled inmates at risk of contracting the coronavirus, or for those transferred to home confinement. Baker said that federal law prevented officials from moving such releases before the inmates have exhausted administrative remedies.

Delaware

DOVER — Democratic Gov. John Carney on Tuesday announced a further loosening of restrictions on Delaware businesses, but Republican lawmakers claimed that the moves were too slow and has abused his authority.

Carney said that retail establishments may start operating by appointment only Wednesday morning, and that restaurants and bars can begin applying Friday to expand outdoor-seating capacity when those businesses reopen next month.

Meanwhile, a group of 15 GOP lawmakers sent a letter to Carney calling for a broad easing of his coronavirus restrictions.

The lawmakers accused Carney's administrators of favoring "large and powerful business interests over our local merchants" and of spreading panic and fear "far and wide" through mixed messages and confusion.

Pennsylvania

HARRISBURG — Nearly 50 Pennsylvania nursing homes have reported 20 or more deaths related to COVID-19 according to partial data released Tuesday by the state Department of Health.

A sign on the door of a local bar asks the plant's employees not to come inside, and one employee of panic attacks as she prepares to go back to work, said Nancy Reynoza, who runs a Latino advocacy organization called ¿Que Pasa? Sioux Falls.

Several friends who planned a day of broader easing of his coronavirus restrictions on Monday.

Employees have faced stigmatization and anxiety even after the plant temporarily shuttered. A notice of state rules, and hours later, a judge granted a temporary order barring the gym from operating.

Sean Manovill, owner of Club Fitness of Vermont, had temporarily stopped operating the gym after the attorney general sent a cease-and-desist letter May 5, but he reopened Friday, the attorney general’s office said.

A police said that he saw people exercising without masks and not staying 6 feet apart, the office said. He also did not see any hand-sanitizing stations or signs advising people to wear masks, to maintain social distance or to clean equipment, it said.

Pennsylvania’s top prosecutor, Attorney General Josh Shapiro, has opened criminal investigations into several nursing homes. The attorney general’s office has not said how many facilities it is investigating, revealed their names or provided any other details about the specific allegations.

South Dakota

SIoux FAllS — A South Dakota city that was among the earliest to be hit by a major coronavirus outbreak in a meatpacking plant is planning a parade to thank workers, who organized the event.

Several friends who planned Wednesday’s event said that they hope hundreds of people will show up to see signs of thanks outside a Smithfield Foods pork plant that closed after hundreds of employees were infected with COVID-19.

Mayor Paul TenHaken is among those planning to attend.

Employees have faced stigmatization and anxiety even after the plant temporarily shuttered.

A sign on the door of a local bar asks the plant’s employees not to come inside, and one employee of panic attacks as she prepares to go back to work, said Nancy Reynoza, who runs a Latino advocacy organization called ¿Que Pasa? Sioux Falls.

Sidney Eisenberg, one of the organizers of the parade, said that it’s an attempt to bring a positive message to the employees and reach out as neighbors. They will also be paying for a billboard to thank the employees.

Tennessee

MEMPHIS — Demand for opioids such as fentanyl has surged during the coronavirus outbreak in Tennessee’s largest county, where more than 100 people have died of drug overdoses since mid-March, officials said Tuesday.

Officials in Shelby County, which includes Memphis, said that more than 750 drug overdoses and 112 deaths have been reported since March 15, when the county began issuing stay-at-home orders related to the virus response.

Overdose deaths have eclipsed the number of fatalities from COVID-19, Shelby County Health Department Director Alisa Haushalter noted during an online news conference Tuesday.

Haushalter said that she has received calls from nurses and pharmacists asking for help in managing the surge in drug overdoses.

Memphis' chief medical examiner, Dr. John Williams, said that the county has seen a spike in drug overdose deaths in recent weeks.

Williams said that the county has seen a spike in drug overdose deaths in recent weeks.

Memphis' chief medical examiner, Dr. John Williams, said that the county has seen a spike in drug overdose deaths in recent weeks.

Memphis' chief medical examiner, Dr. John Williams, said that the county has seen a spike in drug overdose deaths in recent weeks.

Memphis' chief medical examiner, Dr. John Williams, said that the county has seen a spike in drug overdose deaths in recent weeks.

Memphis' chief medical examiner, Dr. John Williams, said that the county has seen a spike in drug overdose deaths in recent weeks.
NEW YORK — Nine sex abuse lawsuits were filed Tuesday in New York against three Boy Scout local councils, signaling an escalation of efforts to pressure councils nationwide to pay a big share of an eventual settlement in the Scouts’ bankruptcy proceedings.

The lawsuits were filed shortly after an easing of coronavirus lockdown rules enabled courts in some parts of New York to resume the handling of civil cases.

One of the lawyers coordinating the filing, Mike Pfau, said that his Seattle-based firm expects to file scores more lawsuits in other parts of New York, as well as in New Jersey and California, after full reopening of courts there.

Two other firms, Oregon-based Crew Janci LLP and Chicago-based Hurley McKenna & Mertz, said that they had similar plans, indicating that there could be hundreds of such lawsuits altogether.

An injunction issued by the bankruptcy judge, Laurie Selber Silverstein, blocks the lawyers from proceeding with lawsuits against the local councils through at least June 8. But several lawyers said that they will press for it to be lifted unless the councils’ financial information is fully disclosed and they agree to contribute significantly to a proposed victim compensation fund.

“The local councils are required to make a substantial contribution,” said Stephen Crew of Crew Janci. “If they don’t, the plan won’t be approved.”

Proceedings are underway at federal bankruptcy court in Delaware aimed at creating a compensation fund for thousands of men molested as youngsters decades ago by scoutmasters or other leaders.

In its bankruptcy filing, the BSA said that the 261 local councils, which have extensive property holdings and other assets, are separate legal entities and should not be included as debtors in the case.

The councils are represented by an ad hoc committee in the proceedings, and negotiations are in progress over disclosure of their assets and records as a step toward determining their contributions to the compensation fund.

Plau said that he was skeptical the councils would agree to contributions large enough to forestall lawsuits against them.

The lawsuits filed Tuesday involve allegations of abuse from men who were Scouts decades ago in local councils in upstate New York that have subsequently merged into the Leatherstocking Council, the Baden-Powell Council and the Seneca Waterways Council.

Leaders of those three councils declined to comment on the new lawsuits. Two of them referred inquiries to BSA headquarters, which issued a statement reiterating its goal of fairly compensating abuse survivors while preserving the Boy Scouts’ mission.

“We are working with and actively encouraging the ad hoc committee, councils and attorneys representing survivors of abuse to find a solution that will appropriately fund a trust, while also ensuring the future of Scouting,” the statement said.
Thousands flee as dams break in central Michigan

Associated Press

MIDLAND, Mich. — Rapidly rising water overtook dams and forced the evacuation of about 10,000 people in central Michigan, where flooding struck communities along rain-swollen waterways and the governor said one downtown could be “under approximately 9 feet of water” by Wednesday morning.

The river rose Wednesday morning to 34.4 feet in Midland, topping a previous record reading of 33.9 feet set during flooding in 1986, the National Weather Service said.

Its flood stage is 24 feet, and its crest is going to make women and couples delay childbearing and abortion has become more popular because of short cycles in menstruation, and anxiety about the future, said Dr. John Santelli, a Columbia University professor of obstetrics and gynecology at Emory University.

“People are in a state of shock,” Santelli said. “They feel like they are living in a war zone.”

Experts believe the coronavirus is “wiping out” that was going on for the fewest number of newborns in 1986, the National Weather Service said.

Experts believe the coronavirus is “wiping out” that was going on for the fewest number of newborns in 1986, the National Weather Service said.

By the numbers

3.7M

Births last year in the United States, a roughly 1% drop from 2018. It’s the fifth consecutive year that births have declined.

34

Birth rates fell for women 34 and younger, and rose for women in their late 30s and early 40s.

Democrats protest removal of Transportation watchdog

By Matthew Daly and David Koenig

WASHINGTON — Congressional Democrats are protesting President Donald Trump's decision to remove the Transportation Department's acting inspector general, the latest in a string of actions by Trump to fire or replace government watchdogs.

The Democratic chairs of three House panels on Tuesday demanded that Mitch Behm be reinstated immediately as acting inspector general.

The lawmakers also demanded that the Trump administration turn over information about current investigations that might have played a role in Behm's removal, including a review of whether Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao has given preferential treatment to Kentucky. Her husband, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, a Kentucky Republican, is replacing Behm while continuing to lead the pipeline agency.

“Mr. Elliott will bring decades of valuable expertise to the role of acting inspector general, both in safety and in law enforcement,” a spokesman for Chao said. Elliott was not fired and continues to serve as deputy inspector general.

The CDC found the number of births fell about 1% from 2018, to about 3.7 million. Birth rates continued to fall for teen moms and for women in their 20s. The idea that there will be a lot of “coronababies” is “widely perceived as a myth,” said Hans-Peter Kohler, a University of Pennsylvania fertility researcher.

The Bay City Times photos by Kaytie Boomer, the Midland Daily News (below) AP

PHOTOS BY KAYTIE BOOMER, THE BAY CITY TIMES (ABOVE) AND KATY KILDEE, THE MIDLAND DAILY NEWS (BELOW)

Above: The dam on Wixom Lake in Edenville, Mich., Tuesday. Below: Mark Musselman brings a chair to the front of his house in flood-ravaged Edenville.

“They had risen a lot and the worst was yet to come,” he said Wednesday morning.

One couple who lives in their neighborhood decided to stay put, but Carlson said everyone else evacuated from the area. They spent the night in a hotel. He said they've been wearing face masks in the hotel to protect themselves from the coronavirus.

“The hotel was very happy to be see people coming in. There were refugees coming in,” he said with a laugh.

Further down the Tittabawassee River, communities in Saginaw County were on alert for flooding, with a flash flood watch in effect Wednesday.

By the numbers

3.7M

Births last year in the United States, a roughly 1% drop from 2018. It’s the fifth consecutive year that births have declined.

34

Birth rates fell for women 34 and younger, and rose for women in their late 30s and early 40s.
Porn actor fighting to save childhood tree

NEW YORK — Porn actor Ron Jeremy is fighting to save a tree his father planted outside their New York home the day he was born.

Jeremy took to Twitter, saying that utility Con Edison was going to cut down the tree that was planted in Queens in 1953.

Jeremy, who has been staying at a Hollywood hotel during the coronavirus pandemic, told the New York Daily News that a neighbor let him know the trunk was wrapped in yellow tape last week.

The tree is on city property, and the Parks Department can choose to remove it, according to Con Edison.

Jeremy said he considered traveling to New York to protest the tree’s removal but didn’t feel comfortable flying.

Scientists: Lava from eruption still cooling

HI — Lava from the Kilauea volcano eruption in May 2018 is still cooling down and estimated to be only halfway cooled, scientists said.

The U.S. Geological Survey’s Hawaiian Volcano Observatory said cooled exterior lava has inundated deeper areas of the lava flow, The Hawaii Tribune-Herald reported.

The exterior cooled because of exposure to air and rain, but the insulation is expected to keep some rock further below at extremely high temperatures for years, observatory geologist Carolyn Parcheta said.

Based on the average thickness of the lava of about 82 feet, Parcheta said there is a likelihood that liquid lava, or lava higher than about 1,500 degrees Fahrenheit, still exists in lava delta spots beneath the surface.

Police drag street racers to jail in crackdown

GA — Atlanta Police said that they arrested 44 people and issued 114 tickets over the weekend in crackdowns on offenses related to illegal street racing.

Racers have been particularly noticeable in Atlanta since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, with less traffic giving them more room to speed along Georgia’s roads and freeways.

Charges included speeding, reckless driving, and laying drag, which Georgia law defines as creating a danger by driving a car in circles or zigzags. Other criminal charges included driving while under the influence, drinking in public and marijuana possession, with 29 vehicles impounded.

Four guns were recovered, including a semi-automatic rifle.

Church begins removal of damaged statue

UT — The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints started work to temporarily remove a damaged statue from the church’s Salt Lake Temple.

Removal of the Angel Moroni statue with a crane began as part of a four-year project to renovate and restore the temple, The Deseret News reported.

Work progresses on multiple levels of scaffolding securing the statue, which is 210 feet above Temple Square in Salt Lake City.

Workers placed straps around the 12-foot-6-inch figure, which is made of hammered copper and covered in 22-karat gold leaf.

The statue was damaged during a 5.7 magnitude earthquake that struck west of Salt Lake City on March 18.

Bull’s-eye

Two young women relax in a circle marked on the grass for proper social distancing in Brooklyn’s Domino Park, as others do the same to prevent the spread of coronavirus Monday in New York. The small park, which offers good views of the Manhattan skyline and the Williamsburg bridge, was the site of severe overcrowding during a spate of unseasonably warm weather just over a week ago. The circles have been added to promote good behavior on the part of park visitors.

The approximate number of bronze vases a man is accused of stealing from a Maryland cemetery and selling as scrap metal, The Wicomico County Sheriff’s Office this week identified the suspect in the February thefts as Michael J. Salensky. He is wanted on a charge of theft by deception of $100,000 or more, the office said. Salensky is also wanted by Delaware State Police on burglary and theft charges, authorities said.

THE CENSUS

100

28 and June 2, city spokeswoman Christine Cunningham said.

Fire ruins nearly all of school’s football gear

FL — A fire on the campus of a Tampa high school destroyed nearly all of its football program’s equipment, from game day necessities to practice dummies and more.

Fire officials said the blaze at Blake High School was completely contained in under 45 minutes, but destroyed the 10-by-20-foot shed that housed the school’s equipment.

The school’s game-day equipment, field markers, pylons, chains, practice equipment, pop-up dummies, pads and all daily workout gear are presumed lost.

Boater injured by grizzly in attack near cub

OR — A grizzly bear attacked a boater who inadvertently came between the parent and her cub, a Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks official said.

A helicopter took the man to a hospital for treatment of non-life threatening injuries, The Great Falls Tribune reported.

Greg Lemon, a Fish, Wildlife and Parks department spokesman, said a man who was a member of a group taking boats down the Sun River was attacked after he stepped into some bushes without being aware of the animals.

“He put himself between the sow and the cub,” Lemon said.

“The sow saw him and immediately attacked him, bit him in a couple of places.”

“Right now the scene has been cleared and the sow swam the river and the cub stayed on the other side, but we’re not going to take any further action with the bears,” Lemon said.

Mayor fined for listing donors in small print

OR — Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler was fined $500 for listing his largest contributors on his campaign mailer in type that was too small, and two other candidates in city races were given warnings for not properly disclosing their largest donors on their websites and social media accounts.

The city charter says the disclosures have to be legible to a person “with average reading, vision and hearing faculties,” and that the font has to be the same size or larger than most other words on the material.

One of Wheeler’s opponents, Ozzie Gonzalez, and city council candidate Keith Wilson could also be fined for not listing top donors on their websites and social media accounts.

From wire reports
**Trying to strike the right chord**

Concert industry plans socially distant shows as states start to reopen

BY KRISTIN M. HALL
Associated Press

The last time bassist Jon Jones played a concert with his country group Eli Young Band was March 8. He hopes to hit the stage again in June to launch a new drive-in concert series in his first return to live music with fans since the devastating coronavirus.

“This is going to be a surreal kind of setting,” Jones said of plans to play acoustically to 400 cars full of people at the new Texas Rangers stadium in Arlington, Texas.

As states start to let businesses reopen under limitations, music industry organizers are testing new models of smaller, socially distant concerts. Jones is cautiously optimistic that drive-in concerts might help crack open a door for musicians that slammed shut quickly in March.

“We’re going to be one of those last industries, those last segments that opens up, unfortunately,” Jones said. “I do hope that everybody is cautious and opens up appropriately and slowly.”

George Couri, of artist management company Triple 8 Management, teamed up with the Rangers to put on the four-night concert called Concert in Your Car starting June 4. The interest was so high that tickets sold out quickly and additional shows were added. In all, 3,200 tickets have been sold.

“It’s about creating an experience for live music again,” Couri said. “The big driver for me is to prove it can work. It would give people hope that this can be repeated again and again in many different places.”

Bringing back live concerts hasn’t been easy. A venue in Arkansas had to postpone an indoor concert that would have defied the state’s ban on large gatherings after health officials ordered the show shut down. The concert featuring singer Travis McCready went on Monday night.

Drive-in concerts aren’t new, but in the wake of the pandemic, the idea is fresh in Europe and now the United States. Country star Keith Urban played a drive-in theater in Tennessee last week with scaled-back production and crew, but he said that he believes the concert industry in the near future will pivot to a drive-in style, but with larger capacity.

“The stage is going to be coming out to the parking lot and people will be staying in their cars,” said Urban. “It will be an endless tailgate party.”

In Florida, DJ D-Nice, who has been entertaining people online with his popular DJ sets on Instagram called ClubQuarantine, played music for first responders in their cars May 16. Concert promoter and venue operator Live Nation is planning to test fanless concerts, drive-in concerts and “reduced-capacity shows” indoors and outdoors, according to President and CEO Michael Rapino, who spoke about the ideas on an investor call.

Tailgate Fest in California proved the car-centered concert was a viable option before the pandemic. The festival where fans are encouraged to watch from their RVs, trucks or cars is going into its third year this August.

DeeDee Carbone, the CEO of Tailgate Fest, said there are a lot of changes coming to the festival this year because of the coronavirus, including removing a general admission pit area and a VIP pool party, and they are expecting attendance to drop from last year’s high of 25,000. The lineup of Dierks Bentley, Lynyrd Skynyrd and TLC hasn’t changed as yet.

The World Health Organization has guidance and risk assessments for mass gatherings during the outbreak, said Lucia Mullen, an analyst at Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security and part of the WHO’s expert cell for mass gatherings and COVID-19.

For concerts, Mullen said recommendations included moving events outdoors, limiting attendance, spacing people out, taking temperatures of participants and staff, hand sanitizing stations and extra cleaning. But she said organizers should also look at the aftereffects of holding a mass gathering in an outbreak, such as contact tracing.

“They know who is going there so they can follow up with them if they do find out there is a case and alert all of the participants so they can get themselves checked out,” Mullen asked.

In a rapidly changing outbreak, Mullen said event organizers should rely heavily on the advice of local health officials.

“Mere weeks can change an epidemiological context in a city,” she said.

The music industry is a large majority of their income, well above what they get from releasing albums. But Couri said this initial launch of drive-in concerts at the Texas stadium won’t be a huge money-making endeavor early on.

They are charging $40 for each car, and all tickets have to be purchased in advance. No concessions or merchandise will be available for sale to reduce contact between people. All bands will play acoustically, so there’s minimal production crew needed. There won’t even be outdoor speakers because the music will be transmitted by radio.

Jones said for him and the members of the Eli Young Band, they aren’t doing the drive-in shows solely to make up lost income, but instead to give music back to the fans.

“I think people need something safe that they can go do and if we can be that, that’s awesome,” Jones said.
**Eugene Sheffer Crossword**

| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z |
| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 | 55 |

**ACROSS**
1. Avocado dip, for short
5. NYPD alert
8. Overconfident
12. Author Ferber
13. Trio after R
14. Luau entertainment
15. Katy Perry
16. La — Bolivia
17. Doctrines
18. Hire
20. Galvanizing metal
22. Dated
26. World record?
29. Squealer
31. Golf prop
33. Curds’ partner
33. Morning moisture
33. Hammer part
34. Ad —
35. Museum-funding org.
36. Movies
37. Dated
40. Hybrid fruit
41. Italy’s continent
45. Hoopster Malone
47. “Today” rival, briefly
49. Study all night
50. Paris notion
51. Refusals
52. Off-white
53. Pitch
54. Drunkard
55. June honorees

**DOWN**
1. “Arbitrage” star Richard
2. Japanese noodle
3. Scrubbed wd.
4. Rye bread seed
5. Colorado ski resort
7. Noisy wood cutter
8. Glisten
9. Sweet variety of wine
10. Einstein’s birthplace
11. Petrol
13. Some fridges
14. Hairy Addams cousin
23. Pick up the tab
24. Consider
25. Hankerings
26. “Horton” Hears —!
27. Grand
28. Educational talks
32. Blueprints
33. Like some earlobes
35. Super Bowl org.
36. Winter ailments
38. Leers at
39. You’ll get a raise out of it
42. Sea predator
43. Crony, out West
44. Flightless birds
45. Tool set
46. Hubub
48. Cattle call

**Flap**

**Answer to Previous Puzzle**

```
M A S  R E G
H E R O  C A I N E
K O A L A  A N G E L A
O N T O P  O F  T H I N G S
S K Y  B R E S T  I R A
B O G S  A N E W
E P O X Y  C A N C E
A V O W  S I B S
S E W  C A T T Y  F O X
U N D E R  P R E S S U R E
S E N O R A  M O S E S
R I C E D  A L S O
D E S L O Y
```

**CRYPTOQUIP**

```
P F E Q X  P B O A V U E D L  0
M O Y G E D L A K D  Q E A W  M G B B U B
B I B U W K D B  R V A Y  K D  A O D X
A K R Y :   “ Y F B B I B F B Y Y  E D
Y B O A A F B .   ”
```

Yesterday’s Cryptoquip: THAT TRAVEL AGENT LADY IS TOUTING VACATIONS TO A CERTAIN ISLAND COUNTRY. SHE SELLS SEYCHELLES.

Today’s Cryptoquip Clue: P equals F
Trump can exploit Biden’s frequent left turns

By HENRY OLSEN

The Washington Post

Joe Biden’s announcement that he will revoke permits for the Keystone XL pipeline if elected is more than just an energy policy—it’s also a Freudian slip. It’s yet another sign that the former vice president will talk to the center but govern from the left.

Blocking the pipeline has been a central cause celebre for environmentalists for more than a decade. Because it ships crude oil produced from Canadian tar sands in Alberta, they argue, it promotes the exploitation of environmentally dangerous and fossil fuels. Environmentalists also argue that this encourages climate change by making another source of energy available for use. Gas is being fuel commercially viable. They succeeded in persuading President Barack Obama to block the project in 2015 by denying necessary federal permits, but President Donald Trump reversed that decision after taking office.

Biden, for his part, has campaigned as a more centrist candidate on energy policy. He’s refused to fully support the Green New Deal, acknowledging the need for oil and gas for the time being. But he did ban on fracking. But his decision to block an energy project already underway clashes with that message. So, too, does his decision to appoint the hard-line progressive Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., to co-chair one of his campaign’s committees on climate policy. It is a prime example of Biden accepting the left to court middle-grogressive support.

Throughout his career, Biden has moved to the left as Democratic politics changed. This is most clearly seen in his mutating stances on abortion. He began his Senate career as an abortion opponent, going so far as to vote for a constitutional amendment overturning Roe v. Wade. He abandoned his 40-plus-year history of supporting the Hyde Amendment, which prevents Medicaid funding from paying for most abortions, within days of being challenged on his views last summer by the Supreme Court.

Health care is another issue for which Biden has tilted leftward. During the Bill Clinton administration, Biden opposed the passage of the Affordable Care Act, but he gradually came against gay marriage in the 1990s, for it in 2012. He advocated increasing the Social Security retirement age; pushed for making contributions for possessing crack much harsher than those for having cocaine; and supported the Iraq War—all of which he has changed his mind on.

This is, in one word, is unremarkable. Politicians with long careers often bend with time and, in this, Biden is no exception. What’s remarkable is that the bending always seems to go to the left, and that he takes his new position with a righteous moralism that acts as a perfume to cover the stench of his past. And, to be sure, it will wound Biden’s pride. Like many pliant people, he is convinced he is strong and decisive to be likely to lash in fury at anyone who tries to force him to do something he does not want to do.

The list goes on. In the 1970s, he worked with segregationist Southern Democratic senators to oppose mandatory busing, which Sen. Richard B. Russell, D-Ga., oppositorily skrewed him for during the Demo- cratic debate last June. Now, he wants to get rid of restrictions on things as dangerous as against gay marriage in the 1990s, for it in 2012. He advocated increasing the Social Security retirement age; pushed for making contributions for possessing crack much harsher than those for having cocaine; and supported the Iraq War—all of which he has changed his mind on.

In one sense, this is unremarkable. Politicians with long careers often bend with time and, in this, Biden is no exception. What’s remarkable is that the bending always seems to go to the left, and that he takes his new position with a righteous moralism that acts as a perfume to cover the stench of his past. And, to be sure, it will wound Biden’s pride. Like many pliant people, he is convinced he is strong and decisive to be likely to lash in fury at anyone who tries to force him to do something he does not want to do.

The list goes on. In the 1970s, he worked with segregationist Southern Democratic senators to oppose mandatory busing, which Sen. Richard B. Russell, D-Ga., oppositorily skrewed him for during the Demo- cratic debate last June. Now, he wants to get rid of restrictions on things as dangerous as against gay marriage in the 1990s, for it in 2012. He advocated increasing the Social Security retirement age; pushed for making contributions for possessing crack much harsher than those for having cocaine; and supported the Iraq War—all of which he has changed his mind on.

In one sense, this is unremarkable. Politicians with long careers often bend with time and, in this, Biden is no exception. What’s remarkable is that the bending always seems to go to the left, and that he takes his new position with a righteous moralism that acts as a perfume to cover the stench of his past. And, to be sure, it will wound Biden’s pride. Like many pliant people, he is convinced he is strong and decisive to be likely to lash in fury at anyone who tries to force him to do something he does not want to do.

The list goes on. In the 1970s, he worked with segregationist Southern Democratic senators to oppose mandatory busing, which Sen. Richard B. Russell, D-Ga., oppositorily skrewed him for during the Demo- cratic debate last June. Now, he wants to get rid of restrictions on things as dangerous as against gay marriage in the 1990s, for it in 2012. He advocated increasing the Social Security retirement age; pushed for making contributions for possessing crack much harsher than those for having cocaine; and supported the Iraq War—all of which he has changed his mind on.

In one sense, this is unremarkable. Politicians with long careers often bend with time and, in this, Biden is no exception. What’s remarkable is that the bending always seems to go to the left, and that he takes his new position with a righteous moralism that acts as a perfume to cover the stench of his past. And, to be sure, it will wound Biden’s pride. Like many pliant people, he is convinced he is strong and decisive to be likely to lash in fury at anyone who tries to force him to do something he does not want to do.

The list goes on. In the 1970s, he worked with segregationist Southern Democratic senators to oppose mandatory busing, which Sen. Richard B. Russell, D-Ga., oppositorily skrewed him for during the Demo- cratic debate last June. Now, he wants to get rid of restrictions on things as dangerous as against gay marriage in the 1990s, for it in 2012. He advocated increasing the Social Security retirement age; pushed for making contributions for possessing crack much harsher than those for having cocaine; and supported the Iraq War—all of which he has changed his mind on.

In one sense, this is unremarkable. Politicians with long careers often bend with time and, in this, Biden is no exception. What’s remarkable is that the bending always seems to go to the left, and that he takes his new position with a righteous moralism that acts as a perfume to cover the stench of his past. And, to be sure, it will wound Biden’s pride. Like many pliant people, he is convinced he is strong and decisive to be likely to lash in fury at anyone who tries to force him to do something he does not want to do.

The list goes on. In the 1970s, he worked with segregationist Southern Democratic senators to oppose mandatory busing, which Sen. Richard B. Russell, D-Ga., oppositorily skrewed him for during the Demo- cratic debate last June. Now, he wants to get rid of restrictions on things as dangerous as against gay marriage in the 1990s, for it in 2012. He advocated increasing the Social Security retirement age; pushed for making contributions for possessing crack much harsher than those for having cocaine; and supported the Iraq War—all of which he has changed his mind on.

In one sense, this is unremarkable. Politicians with long careers often bend with time and, in this, Biden is no exception. What’s remarkable is that the bending always seems to go to the left, and that he takes his new position with a righteous moralism that acts as a perfume to cover the stench of his past. And, to be sure, it will wound Biden’s pride. Like many pliant people, he is convinced he is strong and decisive to be likely to lash in fury at anyone who tries to force him to do something he does not want to do.
F

faith in medicine and science is at risk based on trust. But today, in the rush to share scientific progress in combating COVID-19, that trust is being undermined.

Private companies, governments, and research institutes are holding news conferences to report potential breakthroughs that cannot be verified. The results are always favorable, but the full data on which the announcements are based are not immediately available for critical review.

This is “publication by press release,” and it’s damaging trust in the fundamental methods of science and medicine at a time when it is needed most.

The most recent example is Moderna’s claim Monday of favorable results in its vaccine trial, which it announced without revealing any of the underlying data. The announcement added billions of dollars to the value of the company, with its shares jumping almost 20%. Many analysts believe it contributed to a 900-point gain in the Dow Jones industrial average.

The Moderna announcement described a safety trial of its vaccine based on eight healthy participants. The claim was that in all eight, the vaccinated group had neutralizing antibody titers of neutralizing antibodies equivalent to those found in convalescent serum of those who recovered from COVID-19, the disease caused by the new coronavirus. What to make of that claim? Hard to say, because we have no sense of what those levels were.

This is the equivalent of a chief executive of a public company announcing a favorable earnings report without supplying supporting financial data, which the Securities and Exchange Commission would never allow.

There is a legitimate question regarding what Moderna announced, and the scientific and medical literature reports that some people who have recovered have low levels of neutralizing antibodies. There is even existing scientific literature that suggests it is possible neutralizing antibodies may not protect animals from infection or reinfection by coronaviruses.

Such “publication by press release” seems to be a standard practice lately. The National Institutes of Health announced last month that the drug remdesivir offered a clear benefit to COVID-19 patients with moderate disease, shortening the length of their hospital stay by several days. But did it really? Twenty days after the announcement, the supporting data has still not been published. Without the data, no doctor treating a patient can be sure they are doing the right thing.

Another paper, published the same day, found that remdesivir had no measurable effect on patient survival or the amount of virus detectable in nasopharynx and lung secretions. What then should a practicing physician do? Follow the unsupported advice of a news announcement or a medical report published in a leading scientific journal? This is not an idle question: The NIH announcement triggered a global stampede for limited supplies of the drug.

The case is more nuanced for the vaccine. But Moderna’s announcement described a safety trial of a potential vaccine for COVID-19 by Moderna Inc., at the Kaiser Permanente Washington Health Research Institute in Seattle on March 16.

A pharmacist gives Jennifer Haller the first shot in the first-stage safety study clinical trial of a potential vaccine for COVID-19 by Moderna Inc., at the Kaiser Permanente Washington Health Research Institute in Seattle on March 16.

The unsung war heroes of the National Rifle Association

By Frank Smyth
Special to Stars and Stripes

T

he National Rifle Association of America has a long, exquisite history of service to the nation. Many of its leaders from past generations were war heroes. But their legacies, largely for political reasons, are barely known today.

The NRA was founded in 1871 by veteran Union officers in New York City six years after the Civil War. They knew that both local and federal governments had tipped the balance in favor of recent European wars. Their aim was to improve rifle marksmanship in anticipation of future wars.

NRA co-founder William Conant Church had been a journalist, once slightly wounded at Gettysburg. He later became the Army brevet lieutenant colonel. The other co-founder, George Wood Wingate, who had served as an instructor at the Virginia Military Institute National Guard, was promoted to sergeant during fighting in Carlisle, Pa., during the nearby Battle of Gettysburg.

Wingate later wrote the Manual of Rifle Practice, and his training regimen was adopted by most branches of military service and state national guards. Church published his rifle manual in his Army and Navy Journal and Gazette of the Regular and Volunteer Forces, the first of its kind later renamed Armed Forces Journal. In its pages, Church also became the first to advocate the use of machine gun calibers — one that disparages blacks and one that disparages Indians — from its vocabulary, doing so a half century before the military finally integrated its forces.

James A. Drain led the NRA after the turn of the 20th century. By then he had lost his right hand in a hunting accident. But he still later served in World War I as a lieutenant colonel leading an ordnance corps in France. He later helped design and deploy the tanks credited with having helped defeat the Central Powers, earning him the Army Distinguished Service Medal.

Milton A. Reckord was, until recently, the longest serving chief executive of the NRA. Reckord served in the Mexican Expedition. During World War I, he led troops in the Battle of Meuse-Argonne in the Allied offensive, for which he was bestowed upon him the Croix de Guerre with Palm and his own nation awarded him the Distinguished Service Medal. In World War II, he first trained recruits and then became the Provost Marshal for Europe in charge of enemy prisoners of war, earning the Distinguished Service Medal with a bronze oak leaf cluster, and the Bronze Star.

The unsung war heroes of the National Rifle Association

The NRA has honored other war heroes among the NRA’s past leadership like the late World War II Marine fighter pilot and NFL All-Pro from the American Football League, Foss received the Medal of Honor for his aerial combat role in the Battle of Guadalcanal. But Foss, unlike many other war heroes, joined the NRA board after the organization’s “shift” to prioritize gun rights, as one former NRA president put it, in 1977 in what is still known in the lore as the “Cincinnati Revolt.”

Three years before, in 1974, Reckord, at 94, was interviewed by NRA officials in his home for an NRA oral history. In it, he described how a law that he and the NRA supported during the Tommy Gun days of Prohibition that outlawed automatic firearms (still on the books) was “sane, reasonable and effective.” The NRA oral history was never published.

Millionaire A. Edson led the NRA through the late 1950s. He became known as “Red Mike” back when he was commanding a Marine expeditionary detachment in the late 1920s in Nicaragua, where he earned the Navy Cross. He later earned the Medal of Honor for leading the defense of “Edson’s Ridge,” overlooking an airfield, in the Battle of Guadalcanal. Edson’s other honors included two Legion of Merit decorations, a Presidential Unit Citation with two bronze stars, and, from the United Kingdom, the Distinguished Service Order.

Frank L. Orth led the NRA through the 1960s. He entered World War II as a captain in the infantry who “served on extra-hazardous duty in long-range penetrations behind the Japanese lines in Burma.” Orth later served in the Eisenhower administration as deputy assistant secretary of the Army, and as president of the U.S. Olympic Committee.

Orth’s legacy, however, is also largely forgotten. “The NRA does not advocate an ‘ostich’ attitude toward firearms legislation,” said Orth in 1967, one year before the NRA supported the Gun Control Act of 1968. “We recognize that the dynamism and complexities of modern society create new problems which demand new solutions.” It was this federal gun law that radicalized the NRA along with others who formed the nation’s gun rights movement in the 1970s.

Since then, the NRA’s new leaders have focused more on the future than the past. Politics is never a good reason, however, to keep the legacies of any war heroes in the dark.

Frank Smyth is author of “The NRA: The Unauthorized History.”
Brighten your day!

Read letters from kids to deployed servicemembers and their heartwarming responses.

Letter from Emily
Dear Pen pal!
My name is Emily.
I live in Germany. Where do you live?

From Emily

Letter from Nick
Dear Emily,
My name is Nick. I live in Hawaii, but I used to live in Germany for 3 years. Do you have a pet?

From Nick

Stars and Stripes
Pen Pal Program

penpal.stripes.com
Brady holds workout with new teammates at prep field

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Tom Brady isn’t letting the coronavirus pandemic — or NFL rules against players working out at team facilities — keep him from preparing for a new season with his new Tampa Bay team.

Brady gathered some of his Buccaneers teammates on a high school field early Tuesday for a throwing session. Brady wore a Buccaneers helmet and an orange jersey over his shoulder pads.

It’s not unusual for quarterback Terry to organize passing workouts before training camp, but the pandemic has changed normal routines. Teams have had to rely on virtual meetings instead of traditional offseason programs as NFL tries to make plans for a 2020 season, possibly without fans at stadiums.

Because of the pandemic, which has forced social distancing and sheltering at home as the new rules, any gathering of players is notable — especially one involving Brady, a six-time Super Bowl champion with the New England Patriots. Brady, 42, signed a two-year, $50 million contract with the Bucs in March.

After signing with the Bucs, Brady asked for phone numbers of his teammates. He apparently made use of that list to organize Tuesday’s workout.

It was an encouraging sign for fans on the same day NFL teams began opening facilities to a limited number of personnel. The facilities are still off-limits for coaches and players, except for players undergoing injury rehabilitation.

Center Ryan Jensen practiced shotgun snaps to Brady on the artificial turf football field.

Though he’s the newcomer, Brady was in charge, according to the newspaper. Brady walked through a route with receiver Mike Evans, demonstrating for the veteran and other players exactly where to make their cuts.

Quarterbacks Blaine Gabbert and Ryan Griffin also threw passes.

Among other players attending the session were receiver Scotty Miller, tight ends Cameron Brate and O.J. Howard and running back Dare Ogunbowale.

Teams cannot organize such workouts, and the Buccaneers did not publicize Tuesday’s session. There was no immediate reply from the team to a request from The Associated Press for comment on the workout.

Tuesday’s session went better than Brady’s attempt to work out privately at a Tampa park last month. After he was told by a security guard that the park was closed and he had to leave, Brady received an apology from Mayor Jane Castor.

The facilities are still off-limits because of traditional offseason programs relying on virtual meetings instead of the in-person contact.

Brady asked for phone numbers of his teammates. He apparently made use of that list to organize Tuesday’s workout.

It was an encouraging sign for fans on the same day NFL teams began opening facilities to a limited number of personnel. The facilities are still off-limits for coaches and players, except for players undergoing injury rehabilitation.

Center Ryan Jensen practiced shotgun snaps to Brady on the artificial turf football field.

Though he’s the newcomer, Brady was in charge, according to the newspaper. Brady walked through a route with receiver Mike Evans, demonstrating for the veteran and other players exactly where to make their cuts.

Quarterbacks Blaine Gabbert and Ryan Griffin also threw passes.

Among other players attending the session were receiver Scotty Miller, tight ends Cameron Brate and O.J. Howard and running back Dare Ogunbowale.

Teams cannot organize such workouts, and the Buccaneers did not publicize Tuesday’s session. There was no immediate reply from the team to a request from The Associated Press for comment on the workout.

Tuesday’s session went better than Brady’s attempt to work out privately at a Tampa park last month. After he was told by a security guard that the park was closed and he had to leave, Brady received an apology from Mayor Jane Castor.

By Tom Withers
Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Browns center JC Tretter is cautiously optimistic the NFL season — and just some version of it — will take place in 2020. He’s just not certain when it will start.

The newly elected president of the NFL Players Association, Tretter said Tuesday that the COVID-19 virus outbreak has “hatched so many unknowns and created such a fluid situation it’s impossible to predict when football will be back — or what it will look like.

“This is a contact disease, and we play a contact sport,” Tretter said during a Zoom video conference.

Voted in by his peers just days before the global pandemic brought the sports world to a standstill in March, Tretter said he’s solely focused on the health of the league’s players, who have remained in virtual contact during an offseason none of them could have imagined.

Tretter said the union has been up in trying to fit coronavirus precautions into its game plan.

The 29-year-old Tretter, who graduated from Cornell with a degree in industrial labor relations, has been deeply involved in discussions ranging from scheduling medical conditions and other safety considerations.

Everything is in play. Nothing is higher on Tretter’s checklist than the well-being of players who are facing a ruthless, invisible opponent with an ever-changing game plan.

Although he’s a relative rookie when it comes to football diplomacy, Tretter gave several non-committal answers Tuesday.

“There’s no bad idea at this point, and you kind of have to think outside the box,” Tretter said when asked about the potential of players wearing modified face masks with surgical materials. “And just because it’s an idea doesn’t mean things are definitely going to happen, but you need to explore it, and you need to understand it.

“You have to focus on fitting football inside of this world of coronavirus and don’t get caught up in trying to fit coronavirus inside this world. The way coronavirus has kind of changed how every industry is working, you can’t expect just to throw football back in and think that the virus is going to kneel down to almighty football.”

Tretter said the union has held biweekly conference calls for players and their spouses.

For players to feel confident outside their homes, Tretter said they’ll need guarantees that every precaution has been taken.

“The way this thing passes along is through contact, and that’s what we do for a living,” he said. “We interact with other people at the facility, at practice, when we’re at the hotel, we’re at practice when we’re at the field. We have every industry working, you can’t expect just a throw football back in and think that the virus is going to kneel down to almighty football.”

Tretter said the union has been holding biweekly conference calls for players and their spouses. For players to feel confident outside their homes, Tretter said they’ll need guarantees that every precaution has been taken.

“How this thing passes along is through contact, and that’s what we do for a living,” he said. “We interact with other people at the facility, at practice, when we’re at the hotel, we’re at practice when we’re at the field. We have every industry working, you can’t expect just a throw football back in and think that the virus is going to kneel down to almighty football.”

Tretter said the union has been holding biweekly conference calls for players and their spouses. For players to feel confident outside their homes, Tretter said they’ll need guarantees that every precaution has been taken.

“How this thing passes along is through contact, and that’s what we do for a living,” he said. “We interact with other people at the facility, at practice, when we’re at the hotel, we’re at practice when we’re at the field. We have every industry working, you can’t expect just a throw football back in and think that the virus is going to kneel down to almighty football.”

Tretter said the union has been holding biweekly conference calls for players and their spouses. For players to feel confident outside their homes, Tretter said they’ll need guarantees that every precaution has been taken.

“How this thing passes along is through contact, and that’s what we do for a living,” he said. “We interact with other people at the facility, at practice, when we’re at the hotel, we’re at practice when we’re at the field. We have every industry working, you can’t expect just a throw football back in and think that the virus is going to kneel down to almighty football.”

Tretter said the union has been holding biweekly conference calls for players and their spouses. For players to feel confident outside their homes, Tretter said they’ll need guarantees that every precaution has been taken.

“How this thing passes along is through contact, and that’s what we do for a living,” he said. “We interact with other people at the facility, at practice, when we’re at the hotel, we’re at practice when we’re at the field. We have every industry working, you can’t expect just a throw football back in and think that the virus is going to kneel down to almighty football.”

Tretter said the union has been holding biweekly conference calls for players and their spouses. For players to feel confident outside their homes, Tretter said they’ll need guarantees that every precaution has been taken.

“How this thing passes along is through contact, and that’s what we do for a living,” he said. “We interact with other people at the facility, at practice, when we’re at the hotel, we’re at practice when we’re at the field. We have every industry working, you can’t expect just a throw football back in and think that the virus is going to kneel down to almighty football.”
Border poses possible hurdle for NHL

Restrictions could cause travel problems for Canadian squads

By John Wawrow and Stephen Whyno
Associated Press

The NHL is still more than a week away from determining a return-to-play format, a person familiar with discussions told The Associated Press on Tuesday.

And what that plan resembles could be complicated further should the U.S. and Canada extend border restrictions to nonessential travel into July, the person said, speaking on the condition of anonymity because the discussions are private.

The person spoke after Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced border restrictions will stay in effect through June 21. This marks the second time the restrictions have been extended since first being put into place March 18 because of the new coronavirus pandemic.

“I am hopeful that today’s announcement will not have a material impact on our return to play discussions and timeline,” NHL Deputy Commissioner Bill Daly wrote in an email.

Though the NHL has left open the possibility of having training camps open as late as early August, it was unclear what effect further border restrictions will have on a league with seven of its 31 teams based in Canada.

There’s also a question of how travel restrictions will affect players, many of whom have returned to their off-season homes including about 17% of players currently self-isolating overseas.

In a separate development, the NHLPA’s executive board voted to defer payment of players’ regular-season salaries through the end of May. Players were owed their final checks on April 15, before voting to defer those payments for a month.

The decision provides temporary relief to the NHL’s bottom line, opening the possibility of players forgoing some or the entire remainder of their final checks. The players stand to lose all or a portion of what they are owed under the collective bargaining agreement.

Players and owners split hockey-related revenue on a 50-50 basis, with each share of players’ salaries placed in an escrow fund. Owners can draw from the fund should their share fall below 50%, which is projected to happen this season.

Owners considered the players’ previous decision to defer payment as a sign of good faith. Daly declined to comment on the latest deferment, saying it’s a decision left entirely to players.

The NHL paused its season on March 12, with Commissioner Gary Bettman adamant the league intends to award the Stanley Cup, even it means extending the playoffs into September.

The decision on when and how to resume the season is being left with a committee made up of representatives of the NHL and NHL Players’ Association.

The topics of discussion include whether it’s feasible to conclude all or a portion of the regular season or go directly into the playoffs. The season was postponed with 189 games remaining and teams having played an uneven number of games.

Among the options discussed are an expanded playoff format, featuring as many as 24 teams, and the likelihood of having groups of teams gather and play games a select number of hub cities around the continent and without fans present.

There is no set deadline as to when play must resume before the NHL considers canceling the season. Games could feasibly be played into October with the 2020-21 season potentially opening in December or January.

New Jersey Devils defenseman Connor Carrick said both sides are attempting to make the best of a difficult situation.

“It’s going to be an interesting solution, and I think you embrace the novelty with it,” Carrick said.

AP sports writer Tom Canavan contributed.

Winging: Leagues implementing different processes for reopening

FROM BACK PAGE

make it as safe as they possibly can. And they’ll figure it out.”

There already have been several approaches in the United States:

• UFC took blood (antibody test) or swabbed nostrils (viral test) for roughly 1,200 people during its weeklong stay in Jacksonville, Fla., this month — part of the mixed martial arts behemoth’s health and safety protocols. It took minutes for antibody results and as little as a few hours for viral test results.

• NASCAR logged temperatures of about 900 people Sunday at its return race in Darlington, S.C.

• Major League Baseball delivered a 67-page proposal of a 2020 operations manual last week, still subject to negotiation with the players’ association. Proposed details include temperature checks twice a day and multiple fluid swabs weekly. 10-minute samples to detect COVID-19 antibodies will be collected less frequently.

• The NBA hasn’t implemented a full-scale plan for its 30 teams; a little more than half have reopened practice facilities for voluntary workouts. The NFL, NHL, tennis, golf and other sports are working on their procedures.

• Options differ internationally, too:

• South Korea’s top soccer league, the K-League, tested 1,100 players and staff at the end of April, and all came back negative, clearing the way to begin its season.

• Australia’s National Rugby League will mandate vaccines not for the coronavirus, but for the seasonal flu. It’s part of Queensland’s contentious “no-jab, no-play” policy that means players who skip an annual flu shot won’t be permitted to play north of the Queensland-New South Wales border.

• The English Premier League conducted its first wave of COVID-19 testing this week and found six of 748 people infected. Those six have to self-isolate for a week.

• UFC tested each of its employees before reopening its headquarters Monday. White said UFC will again test everyone before its next fights, May 30 in either Las Vegas or Arizona.

• The UFC spent, on average, $125 per test; that added up to around $150,000 in Jacksonville. White was tested three times partly because he walked around without a mask and was in close contact with fighters.

That price tag is peanuts for a multibillion-dollar business that reportedly notched more than 700,000 pay-per-view buys for UFC 249 — generating as much as $45 million in revenue for the first major sporting event in the United States during the pandemic.

UFC has far fewer competitors than other leagues, which means more manageable testing and contact tracing and easier social-distancing.

NASCAR would have to spend more than $2 million to test everyone it deems essential before each of its 20 races over the next month, but decided it didn’t need to because drivers are isolated and pit crews already wear protective equipment.

Other sports have difficult decisions to make.

Tennis and golf tournaments often involve more than 100 entrants from around the globe. NHL teams head to training camp with 90 players, plus about 20 coaches and dozens more support personnel. MLB suggested 50-man rosters for its season.

“The overall picture is that there’s a lot to be desired from testing to use it as a definitive indicator that everybody’s safe,” said Stuart Miller, the senior executive director of the International Tennis Federation, who is overseeing its COVID-19 advisory group and return-to-tournament efforts.

“There’s a number of risks from just the testing side,” Miller added.

AP tennis writer Howard Fendrich contributed.
Rain pushes back Darlington return for Xfinity Series

Race postponed until Thursday

BY PETE IACOBELLI
Associated Press

DARLINGTON, S.C. — Noah Gragson couldn’t get out to Xfinity Series racing at Darlington.

Instead, he and the rest of the competitors will have to wait until Thursday after heavy rain postponed the series’ first race since March, when the coronavirus pandemic shut down sports.

“After two months of waiting, what’s another couple of days?” Gragson said.

NASCAR officials called the race about two hours after the scheduled 6 p.m. start. The event is now set for Thursday at noon.

The track was dry and fast until the rains hit about 4 p.m. The storms increased and lessened several times during that stretch and NASCAR had Air Titans out at least three times when it looked like things might clear.

In the end, it was too wet to continue during one of the busiest weeks in Darlington history. It started Sunday with the NASCAR Cup Series’ return to racing and to continue Wednesday night when those racers were supposed to be back on the track for a rare midweek even.

Gragson, the series points leader who’ll start on the pole Thursday, acknowledged he was anxious about racing at Darlington without practice laps or fans in the stands. He walked around the track earlier Tuesday to get a reminder of what it was like.

“It’s going to be really difficult,” Gragson said. “We saw some guys in the Cup race who were pretty tame at the start and other guys who were pretty aggressive. That’s what I’m nervous of.”

Kevin Harvick won the Cup event on Sunday for his 30th victory in the sport’s top series. Cup drivers were scheduled to run again at Darlington on Wednesday night, although forecasts called for additional rain. NASCAR hasn’t raced on a Wednesday since Richard Petty won his series-leading 200th race at Daytona on July 4, 1994.

If that race is postponed, it would move to Thursday night, setting up a same-day doubleheader in a season like no other. NASCAR would likely inspect the Cup cars on Wednesday; then stagger the arrival times for Xfinity and Cup teams on Thursday.

Thursday’s Xfinity race will be the first in the series since March 7 at Phoenix.

All drivers, teams and essential personnel were screened at the track before being let in. All cars passed pre-race inspection. Now, they’ll have to wait and hope for better weather.

The 21-year-old Gragson said he spent much of the rain delay playing Xbox and keeping to himself.

“Once he fires up the engine, it will be racing as usual, no matter how long he’s been away.”

Still a lot of butterflies,” he said. “But once I get that helmet on and make a lap around this place, get back to that rhythm and feel comfortable again, it will feel natural.”

Angels plan employee furloughs

BY GREG BEACHAM
Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — The Los Angeles Angels will implement furloughs across their organization starting June 1, becoming the latest team to take steps against the financial impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

Angels spokesperson Marie Garvey issued a statement on the decision Tuesday.

“We, like businesses throughout the United States, are making difficult decisions to protect our long-term stability,” Garvey said.

“We are assisting all staff by providing health care through the end of the year. We are also contributing $1 Million to an Angels Employee Assistance Fund to provide grants for those in need.”

The Angels’ furloughs will impact employees across the front office, scouting department, player development department and minor league system. They had already pledged to pay their employees through May.

“The $1 million employee assistance fund is separate from the $1.2 million already put up by the team to pay Angel Stadium’s roughly 1,800 workers. The furloughed employees will keep their medical benefits for the rest of the year or until Oct. 31, depending on their contracts.”

The Tampa Bay Rays have already implemented furloughs, while the Miami Marlins and the Cincinnati Reds also plan furloughs, including some baseball operations employees. Other teams have cut employees’ salaries, and more announcements of furloughs are expected as the lack of game revenue widely impacts the sport.
Winging it

Standard playbook for testing in pro sports doesn’t exist yet

There is no universal playbook for coronavirus testing in professional sports. Protocols and procedures, guidelines and handbooks— they could be as different as rulebooks. There’s plenty of common ground, though, which explains why executives and doctors from various leagues have consulted with each other while moving closer to at least a partial return to competition amid a pandemic.

League officials essentially are choosing the best option from a list of bad choices, and it comes down to how much risk they are willing to take. “When you look at the people that run these other sports, these are all really smart guys,” UFC President Dana White said. “And nobody knows their business better than they do. They have to literally sit down and break through item by item on what they need to do and how they need to

JACKSONVILLE, Fla.

The overall picture is that there’s a lot to be desired from testing to use it as a definitive indicator that everybody’s safe.”

Stuart Miller
ITF Senior Executive Director

“See Winging on Page 22

BY MARK LONG
Associated Press

A worker wipes down areas of the octagon between bouts at UFC 249 on May 9 in Jacksonville, Fla.

Driver John Hunter Nemechek walks to his car before the start of Sunday’s NASCAR Cup Series race in Darlington, S.C.

BRYNN ANDERSON/AP

JOHN RAOUX/AP

BY MARK LONG
Associated Press

Brady holds workout with new teammates

NFL, Page 21

Home, sweet home
Rangers prefer to have spring training in their new ballpark » MLB, Page 23