KOREAN WAR AT 70

Forgotten sacrifice

How the Korean War of 1950-53 set the stage for tensions

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea

The Korean War is often called the “Forgotten War” in the United States because the 1950-53 conflict was overshadowed between World War II and Vietnam. However, the legacy of the stalemated Cold War-era war looms large over the divided peninsula, setting the stage for decades of tensions as North Korea builds up its nuclear arsenal while the United States and China vie for influence in the region.

Just last week, North Korea blew up an inter-Korean liaison office on its side of the border and threatened to redeploy troops that had been withdrawn from the frontier as part of a 2018 military agreement.

That prompted an unusually angry response from South Korea and raised fears of renewed hostilities after the collapse of peace talks and parallel U.S.-North Korean nuclear negotiations.

As the 70th anniversary of the June 25 start of the war approaches, here’s a look at how the Korean War, one of the nastiest and most neglected conflicts of the Cold War, set the stage for tensions.

Q: When was the Korean Peninsula divided?

A: The former kingdom, which had been occupied by the Japanese from 1910 to 1945, was divided into a communist North and a U.S.-backed South Korean War at 70

This is the first in a three-part series commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Korean War. Coming up this week:

Wednesday: Daughter of South Korean immigrants works to honor, remember war veterans

Online: stripes.com/korea70

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Study: COVID-19 hits soldiers with underlying health conditions harder

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY
Stars and Stripes

Most of the small number of active-duty soldiers who became seriously ill after contracting the coronavirus had underlying health conditions such as obesity and high blood pressure, the first study to look at that group of service members has found.

The findings, which mirror what has been found among civilians, were “kind of a relief,” said Dr. John Ambrose, a senior epidemiologist with the Army Public Health Center.

“It tells us there’s no factor that’s changing outcomes in the military population. And so we know we can effect public health mitigation measures and interventions that have been proven to work, he said, such as social distancing, mask-wearing and good hygiene.

More than 200 active-duty soldiers who were diagnosed with the coronavirus between Feb. 11 and April 6 took part in the study, the results of which were published in the current issue of the military’s Medical Surveillance Monthly Report.

Only 12 of the 219 soldiers in the study — just over 5% — were hospitalized, and of those, four were treated in intensive care units. None required a ventilator and none died. No active-duty soldiers had died of the disease as of June 21, Ambrose said.

In the general U.S. population, 14% of people who became ill with the coronavirus required hospitalization, 2% were admitted to an ICU, and 5% died, data gathered through the end of May and published last week by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

SEE COVID ON PAGE 8

INSIDE: US airman tests positive for virus upon arrival in S. Korea

Page 8

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Online: stripes.com/korea70
By Tamara Lush
Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Tyson Foods is looking into reports that China’s customs agency has suspended poultry imports from a Tyson facility in the United States after coronavirus cases were confirmed among its employees.

A Tyson spokesman said Sunday that the plant in question is in Springdale, Ark.

“At Tyson, we’re confident our products are safe and we’re hopeful consultations between the U.S. and Chinese governments will resolve this matter,” wrote spokesman Gary Mickelson in an email to The Associated Press.

“Our top priority is the health and safety of our team members, and we work closely with the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food Safety and Inspection Service to ensure that we produce all of our food in full compliance with government safety requirements,” the statement added.

Mickelson also noted that all global and U.S. health organizations agree that there is no evidence to support transmission of COVID-19 associated with food.

On Friday, Tyson Foods announced the results of virus testing at its facilities in Benton and Washington Counties, Arkansas, and said that about 95% of employees who tested positive for the virus didn’t show any symptoms.

Of the 3,748 employees tested, 481 tested positive for COVID-19, and 485 were asymptomatic.

TYDAYS IN THE PACIFIC

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The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.
Cause of fire at Kadena hazmat facility unknown

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

KADENA AIR BASE, Okinawa — Approximately 45 people were “affected by smoke and/or chlorine gas” after a fire tore through a hazardous materials facility Monday at the home of the 18th Wing on Okinawa.

The blaze, which began around 8:40 a.m. at a building south of Kadena’s airfield in the central part of the base, was extinguished at approximately 2 p.m., according to statements and Facebook posts from the 18th Wing. Thick plumes of smoke smothered areas near the fire and closed off roads as firefighters worked to get it under control.

Authorities evacuated an area 500 feet upwind and 2,000 feet downwind of the site.

Later, the wing announced that the fire had released chlorine gas particles, prompting medical authorities to encourage anyone who experienced breathing or vision problems to seek treatment.

“Those individuals experiencing eye irritation, runny nose or throat irritation should report to the Kadena Medical Group,” a statement said. “Those with shortness of breath or coughing should call 098-934-5911 or proceed directly to the [U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa] Emergency Department.”

Smoke rises from a fire that started at a hazardous materials building at Kadena Air Base, Japan, on Monday.

By Seth Robson
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — A tactical airlift pilot with hundreds of combat flight hours has assumed command of the Air Force’s home in Tokyo, which remains ready to respond to “malign actions” by China, North Korea and Russia, according to U.S. Forces Japan commander Lt. Gen. Kevin Schneider.

Col. Andrew Campbell took charge of the 374th Airlift Wing on Monday in front of a sparse crowd at a hangar beside Yokota’s runway. Attendance was limited due to the coronavirus, but the event was broadcast on the base’s official Facebook page.

The wing, which operates 14 C-130 Super Hercules aircraft and several UH-1 Huey helicopters and C-12 transports, is the Air Force’s only airlift wing in the region. It also serves as a squadron of CV-22 Osprey tiltrotor aircraft.

Campbell entered the Air Force in 1997 through ROTC at Pennsylvania State University. He has already served two tours at Yokota—one as commander of the 36th Airlift Squadron and returns to Japan after a stint at Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan, where he served as vice commander of the 455th Expeditionary Wing.

The 374th’s outgoing commander, Col. Ottis Jones, did not attend Monday’s ceremony, because he is already on his way to an assignment as vice superintendent of the Air Force Academy near Colorado Springs, Colo.

Schneider, who presided over the event, told Campbell he’s inheriting a wing that’s already firing on all cylinders.

“Yokota boasts some of the most operationally ready and resilient airmen,” he said.

Those who may have questioned the wing’s ability to operate during the coronavirus pandemic got their answer during last month’s Samurai Surge drill, which involved launching about 20 aircraft, he added.

The drill involved many of the wing’s aircraft operating alongside two Osprey.

“It didn’t go unnoticed,” he said.

In the past two years, the wing has participated in 20 exercises with 15 partner nations, Schneider said.

“The 374th Airlift Wing will remain critically vital,” he said, adding that it can respond to any major crisis or contingency.

“Whether it is dealing with an unseen enemy like the coronavirus or more visible threats like typhoons or malign actions by Beijing, Pyongyang and Moscow, Yokota Air Base continues to demonstrate that it is one of the most capable and most resilient bases in the United States Air Force,” he said.

An experienced C-130 and C-21 pilot, Campbell has more than 1,700 flight hours and over 750 combat hours, Schneider added.

After taking command, Campbell told those assembled that his first Yokota tour was in 1999 as a junior officer. He came back in 2012 and led the 36th Airlift Squadron when it flew missions during the Kumamoto earthquakes in southern Japan in 2016.

Campbell trained for his single-engine pilot’s license at Yokota’s Aeroclub, and said in a March 2016 Air Force article about the club that he wanted to take his son flying, something he couldn’t do as a C-130 pilot.

Campbell said the coronavirus will be the first challenge of his command. The key to overcoming such challenges will be “danketsu,” he said, using the Japanese word for unity.

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Marine accused of assault while visiting Okinawa nightclub

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — An Okinawa-based Marine who apparently broke coronavirus restrictions was arrested by Japanese police Sunday after reportedly punching a local college student at a Naha nightclub.

Cpl. John William Thomas III, 24, of the 3rd Marine Logistics Group at Camp Hansen, was taken into custody outside the establishment in Naha’s Kumoji neighborhood, shortly after police were called at 4:40 a.m., a Naha Police spokesman said Monday.

Thomas reportedly first pushed the 21-year-old unnamed man on the dance floor, telling him not to come closer, the spokesman said. The student responded by saying he would call the police if Thomas did not leave him alone, and Thomas struck the man in the lower jaw.

The student called police and exited the building, the spokesman said. Police arrested Thomas as suspicion of assault.

Thomas denied the charges, the spokesman said. No injuries were reported.

The 21-year-old unnamed man said he felt “word for unity.

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Marine accused of assault while visiting Okinawa nightclub
War: Korea shows war doesn’t end when shooting stops

FROM FRONT PAGE

after World War II. Two Army colonels, Dean Ruski and Charles “Tic” Bonesteel, were tasked with drawing a border that would be agreeable to the United States and the Soviet Union. Ruski, who later became a secretary of state, recalled the moment in his memoir, “As I Saw It.”

“Neither Tic nor I was a Korea expert, but it seemed to us that Seoul, the capital, should be in the American sector. We also knew that the U.S. Army opposed an extensive area of occupation,” he wrote. “Using a National Geographic map, we drew just north of Seoul for a convenient dividing line but could not find a natural geographical line. We saw instead the 38th Parallel and decided to recommend that.”

After negotiations aimed at reunifying the peninsula failed, separate countries were established in 1948, with Syngman Rhee elected in U.N.-supervised elections in South Korea and Kim II Sung taking power in the North.

Q: When did the war start?
A: On June 25, 1950, about 100,000 North Korean troops poured across the border and pushed toward Seoul after Soviet leader Josef Stalin gave Kim II Sung the green light to invade South Korea and unify the peninsula under communist control. The United States and the Soviet Union had withdrawn most of their troops by the time of the invasion, but the Soviets left the North Koreans far better armed for battle. The ill-equipped South Koreans were caught by surprise and forced to retreat south. The U.N. Security Council approved a U.S. resolution calling for an “immediate cessation of hostilities” and the return of North Korean forces to the 38th Parallel. The Soviet Union missed its chance to veto the resolution because it was boycotting the Security Council over the U.N.’s refusal to recognize the communist People’s Republic of China as the true Chinese government.

Worried about the spread of communism, President Harry S. Truman ordered U.S. forces to Korea under U.N. auspices within a week of the invasion and appointed Gen. Douglas MacArthur to command the combined forces. Truman didn’t seek a formal declaration of war from Congress, insisting America’s presence on the peninsula was no more than a “police action.” But Congress voted to extend the draft and authorized Truman to call up reservists. “This was the first part of the domino theory,” said Michael Alexander, a retired colonel and the historian for the South Korea-based 2nd Infantry Division.

“It was the first hot flash in the Cold War.”

Q: Why did the war last so long?
A: The North Koreans pushed the U.N. forces back to a defensive line on the southeastern tip of the peninsula known as the Pusan Perimeter, but a daring amphibious assault behind enemy lines at Inchon forced the North Koreans to retreat and allowed the allied troops to recapture Seoul in September. MacArthur predicted troops would be home in time for Christmas dinner.

But victory was short-lived after the five-star general decided to make a push north of the 38th Parallel toward the Yalu River, capturing Pyongyang while prompting the Chinese to enter the war in late November as the Americans began planning for peace talks in July. 1951.

“We had the war won. MacArthur was right. We would have been home by Christmas. The North Koreans were defeated,” Alexander said in an interview at his office at the military museum on Camp Humphreys.

“But the U.S. over-reached, then China gets involved,” he said. “They overwhelm us with sheer manpower, and they push us all the way back to south of Seoul.”

Mainly U.S. and French forces won a decisive battle in February 1951 at Chipyong-ni, dealing a severe blow to the Chinese and eventually leading to the start of armistice talks in July. But fighting persisted for more than two years amid troubled negotiations.

Q: Why is it called the ‘Forgotten War’?
A: For one thing, Truman sought to prevent it from becoming a major conflict so he labeled it a “police action.” It also fell between the patriotic fervor of World War II and the first televised war in Vietnam.

The murky end result also failed to capture the American public’s imagination since there was no clear victory. The Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., wasn’t finished until 1995. The military also censored much of the media coverage.

Melinda Pash, the author of “In the Shadow of the Greatest Generation: The Americans Who Fought the Korean War,” said support for the war was initially high but dropped as the country failed to mobilize. “By the time you get to 1951, when you’re looking at the front pages of newspapers as I did for my book, you’re going to see everything but Korea — the stock market, union strikes, even UFOs,” she said in a telephone interview from her home in Fayetteville, N.C. “It doesn’t affect most Americans.”

Q: What was the damage?
A: More than 36,000 American troops died, according to the Pentagon. 7,580 remain unaccounted for after being lost in the war, with most remains irrevocable in North Korea. Both Koreas were devastated by three years of fighting and estimates of the overall death toll — mostly civilians — range from 3 million to 4 million. North Korea was particularly hard hit by airstrikes, including the use of napalm, which experts say helps explain its hatred by airstrikes, even UFOs,” she said in a telephone interview from her home in Fayetteville, N.C. “It doesn’t affect most Americans.”

Q: Why are American service members still stationed in South Korea?
A: The fighting officially ended at 10 p.m. July 27 after a U.S. Army general and a North Korean general acting on behalf of Pyongyang and China signed an armistice in lieu of a peace treaty, agreeing to suspend open hostilities and establishing the Demilitarized Zone that divided the peninsula as a buffer between the forces. South Korea’s president refused to sign it in frustration that the peninsula had not been unified, but Seoul has supported the agreement, which stands today.

The United States and South Korea signed a mutual defense treaty two months later, keeping tens of thousands of American troops on the divided peninsula. That has led to periods of high tension, but open conflict has not resumed.

“The Korean War is also a great example of how wars don’t stop when the shooting ends,” Pash said. “If you look at relations between China, South Korea, North Korea, Japan and the U.S. today, they continue to be shaped by that long-ago war.”
The Korean War 1950

June 25
Tens of thousands of North Korean soldiers pour across the 38th Parallel, which had divided the peninsula into a Soviet-backed communist North and a U.S.-backed South since 1945. (The 38th Parallel. (File)

July 5
American troops engage in their first ground action with the North Koreans during the Battle of Osan, (Task Force Smith arrives in South Korea, U.S. Army)

Oct. 25
The Chinese, who surprised allied forces by crossing the Yalu River to intervene on North Korea’s side, begin offensive operations against South Korea. (Chinese forces cross the Yalu River to join the Korean War. Li Min, PLA Daily)

Nov. 1
The Chinese People’s Volunteer Army routs American troops at Unsan in the first U.S.-Chinese combat of the war.

1951

March 14
U.N. forces regain control of Seoul. (Marines move out over rugged mountain terrain while closing with the hostile North Korean forces. Sgt. Frank C. Kerr, U.S. Marines)

Oct. 13
The 2nd Infantry Division seizes a battlefield known as Heartbreak Ridge after a month of fighting. (U.S. Army infantrymen of the 27th Infantry Regiment, near Heartbreak Ridge, take advantage of cover. Feldman, Army)

1953

April 30

Oct. 25
Truce talks resume in the border village of Panmunjom. (North Korean Army officers and U.S. military representatives initial maps defining the future Demilitarized Zone or DMZ at Panmunjom, October 1951. U.S. Air Force)

July 10
Truce talks begin at the border town of Kaesong, although fighting continues for nearly two more years. (UN correspondents center at Armistice Conference site, Kaesong, Korea, U.S. National Archives)

Aug. 23
The communist side breaks off negotiations.

July 27
Armistice agreement is signed, ending the fighting and creating the Demilitarized Zone. The sides fail to agree on a peace treaty, setting the stage for decades of continued tensions. (U.S. National Archives)
Service members, civilians honored for response to Pensacola terrorist attack

By Chad Garland Stars and Stripes

More than two dozen Marines, sailors and civilians have been recognized for their response to a terrorist shooting that left three sailors dead at Florida’s Naval Air Station Pensacola.

A ceremony last Tuesday recognized 13 security and emergency personnel who responded to the Dec. 6 attack in which Saudi Arabian 2nd Lt. Mohammed Alshamrani opened fire in a classroom, the Navy said in a statement.

A second ceremony on Friday recognized 12 members of the Naval Aviation Schools Command and Marine Aviation Training Support Group 23, a separate statement said.

“Without hesitation, these brave men and women ran toward untold danger, not knowing if they would return,” Capt. Tim Kinsella, the base’s commanding officer, said of the 13 people honored from NAS Pensacola Navy Security Forces and Fire and Emergency Services Gulf Coast. “They stared pure evil in the face, they stood their ground and they saved lives.”

Rear Adm. Kyle Cozad, head of Naval Education and Training Command, still found it hard to comprehend how the attack, in which eight other people were wounded, could happen at the base, he said Friday, “but it did happen, and I remain in awe at how those we honored here today responded.”

A New York Times review reported lapses at nearly every step of the screening, selection and monitoring program for foreign troops. Alshamrani had two years of contact with al-Qaida leading up to the fatal incident, during which the Saudi trainee was shot and killed by sheriff’s deputies, the report said.

Saudi security services had failed to spot early clues of the shooter’s ideology, the Times reported Sunday. State Department and Pentagon vetting failed to identify a “pattern of troubling social media activity” that linked him with extremist ideology, the newspaper said.

Later, an insider threat program set up by the Pentagon did not monitor his movements and activities after he arrived in the U.S. because he was a foreign trainee, the Times report said.

“The wake of the shooting, Defense Secretary Mark Esper suspended operational training for more than 450 Saudi military students in the United States. The U.S. later expelled 21 Saudi cadets, and Esper ordered an inspection and monitoring procedures.”

The gunman killed Ensign Joshua Kaleb Watson, 23, of Coffee, Ala., Seaman Apprentice Cameron Scott Walters, 21, of Richmond Hill, Ga., and Seaman Mohammed Sameh Haitham, 19, of St. Petersburg, Fla.

Amid the chaos, quick action by others, Marines and civilians saved “untold lives,” said Vice Adm. Yancy Lindsey, head of Navy Installations Command, in recorded remarks during last Tuesday’s ceremony. Awards included one Secretary of Defense Medal of Freedom, three Navy and Marine Corps medals, one Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, four Secretary of the Navy Distinguished Civilian medals for Valor and four Navy Installations Command lifesaving certificates.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Daniel, a naval air crewman and instructor at Naval Aviation Commandic, received a Purple Heart for his wounds and a Marine Corps Commendation Medal on Friday for providing first aid, the Navy said.

“I joined the Navy to be a rescue swimmer knowing that one day my number might be called to save someone,” Daniel said in the statement. “I wish it had not been under these circumstances. At the end of the day, I did what I did and I would do it again without skipping a beat.”

Awards presented Friday included two Navy and Marine Corps medals, two Purple Heart medals, six Navy and Marine Corps Commendation medals, two Navy Superior Civilian medals for Valor and one Navy Civilian Service Commendation Medal.

“It’s great that we are all being recognized for our actions, but I feel that we did what any other Marine or sailor would do when put in the same situation,” said Staff Sgt. Andrew J. Pfannenstiel, an instructor at MATSG-23, who received the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal for delivering medical supplies and helping others treat the wounded.

Two other service members were recognized in May, when one received a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, and the other received a Navy and Marine Corps Medal and Purple Heart. Two more sailors are due to receive medals in separate upcoming ceremonies.

“None of them came to work that day expecting to face the unimaginable,” Cozad said. “But the Navy made firsthand what it means to do what needs to be done in the face of adversity and to sacrifice for each other and our country.”

“By working together in this environment, we’re improving our tactical skills and readiness in the face of an increasingly pressurized region and COVID-19.”

By Caitlin Doornbos Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan Two aircraft carriers sailed in unison Sunday in the Western Pacific to kick off combined flight operations this week.

The USS Theodore Roosevelt and USS Nimitz teamed up for drills in the Philippine Sea to demonstrate “the United States’ commitment to regional security and stability as we protect the critical strait is an international water and lawful uses of the sea for the benefit all nations,” Nimitz Strike Group commander Rear Adm. Doug Verissimo said in the statement, referring to the disease caused by the coronavirus.

Sunday’s drills were the first dual-carrier operations in the Western Pacific since November 2018 when the USS Ronald Reagan and USS John C. Stennis trained together in the Philippine Sea. They take place as China is also flexing its naval muscle with two carriers scheduled for exercises in the region.

The Navy has beefed up its presence in June after more than three months of dual-carrier operations in the Indo-Pacific region other than the USS America, an amphibious assault ship with F-35B Lightning II multimile aircraft on board.

The Roosevelt had been patrolling the region since January when a coronavirus outbreak on the ship forced the carrier to stop in Guam in late March to sanitize the ship and test, isolate and treat ill sailors. More than 1,150 Roosevelt sailors ultimately tested positive for the virus, one of whom died.

The Roosevelt departed Guam on June 4, and the Nimitz left San Diego four days later. A third carrier, the Reagan, left Yokosuka on June 8 to start its patrol of the Western Pacific.

The Roosevelt and Nimitz strike groups plan the practice their defense drills, sea surveillance, replenishments at sea, defense air combat training, long-range strikes, coordinated maneuvers and other exercises,” according to a Navy statement.

Air Craft carriers launch drill flights in Philippine Sea

By Caitlin Doornbos Stars and Stripes

The United States has a long history of operating multiple carrier strike groups as a combined force in the Pacific,” he said. “Such operations are relatively infrequent. Sunday marked only the six time since 2001 that two carriers have operated together in the Western Pacific, said 7th Fleet spokesman Lt. Joe Keiley.

The U.S. typically conducts dual-carrier operations when West Coast strike groups deployed to the Western Pacific can be joined by strike groups coming from Japan, according to the statement. The Nimitz is homeported at Naval Base Kitsap, Washington, and the Roosevelt is homeported at Naval Base San Diego.

Planes come as China plans its own carrier operations this summer in the Philippine Sea, the South China Morning Post reported May 24. Beijing in December commissioned its second aircraft carrier, the Shandong, which left its shipyard for sea trials and training drills May 29, according to the Chinese Ministry of Defense.

Beijing’s first aircraft carrier, the Liaoning, was spotted twice in April sailing the Miyako Strait, 205 miles east of Taiwan and between the Japanese islands of Miyako and Okinawa. Though the Roosevelt and Nimitz strike groups plan the practical their defense drills, sea surveillance, replenishments at sea, defense air combat training, long-range

VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. John W. Raymond said the U.S. and allies watched the transits closely.

“By working together in this environment, we’re improving our tactical skills and readiness in the face of an increasingly pressurized region and COVID-19.”

Rear Adm. Doug Verissimo

Roosevelt Strike Group commander
The Air Force is investigating whether any of the 35 airmen who tested positive for the coronavirus in less than two weeks at Guam’s Andersen Air Force Base violated mandatory protection measures, a general said Monday.

All 35 belong to the same unit whose members arrived on the island May 25, according to a statement attributed to Brig. Gen. Gentry Boswell, commander of Andersen’s 36th Wing. Base health authorities discovered the unit’s first virus case June 12 and had tested all its members by Saturday.

“Our primary focus is to care for these airmen and ensure the safety of both our military and civilian community,” Boswell said in the statement. “We have and will continue to work with the governor and Guam Public Health as we move forward.”

Aircraft fly in formation over Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, during Cope North exercises in February. A surge in coronavirus cases at Andersen has prompted an investigation into possible violations of mandatory protection measures.
American in Kaiserslautern tests positive

Case is the first confirmed in area in over a month

By Jennifer H. Svan and Marcus Kloeckner
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — A member of the U.S. military community in Kaiserslautern has tested positive for the coronavirus, marking the first confirmed case among defense personnel in the area in more than a month.

The American is a resident of Ramstein-Miesenbach, said Georgie Matt-Haen, a spokeswoman for the Kaiserslautern landkreis, which is roughly equivalent to a district or a U.S. county.

No other details were releasable, including whether the person is a military member or a civilian, per district health department policy and at the request of local U.S. military officials, she said.

A base official at Ramstein on Monday declined to say whether the new infection involved a member of the 86th Airlift Wing, saying that “the Air Force and other military services will only provide total numbers of service members with COVID-19 at the service level,” a measure intended to “protect operational security.”

The 21st Theater Sustainment Command, which is responsible for Army personnel, said Monday that they had not reported any additional positive coronavirus cases in the area.

Ramstein’s lack of disclosure differs from some other commands, which have notified military communities of individual cases while continuing to follow a Pentagon order issued in March that prevents commands from discussing local coronavirus infection totals.

It’s unclear whether armed forces refers to U.S. personnel only, or all military members living in the Kaiserslautern area. Personnel from other countries assigned to NATO work at Ramstein.

The Kaiserslautern area has had a total of 291 confirmed cases of the virus, as of Sunday. All but 21 have recovered and six have died, according to the health office data.

The city and district, which include tens of thousands of Americans, have a population of about 256,000 in an area roughly as large as Austin, Texas.

In Germany there have been 190,559 confirmed cases of the virus, according to the Robert Koch Institute, as of Monday. Of those, 175,300 have recovered and 8,885 have died.

The agency Sunday said the number of new infections in the country continues to decrease in comparison to previous weeks, with about four new cases, on average, per 100,000 inhabitants reported in the past seven days.

Despite the downturn, health officials continue to emphasize the practices of proper hand-washing, hygiene, physical distancing and wearing masks when distancing isn’t possible.

The Air Force is the only branch to have reported any coronavirus cases in the next of the U.S. military personnel here since May 16. The other seven are all considered recovered.

The command has loosened quarantine procedures after arriving at Osan Air Base aboard the Patriot Express on Wednesday, USFK said.

The airman’s quarantine room was thoroughly cleaned, but military health professionals determined there was little need to do contact tracing since all passengers on the flight had been tested and immediately quarantined for at least two weeks.

Troops must also receive a negative coronavirus test result before being released.

The command has loosened anti-coronavirus restrictions on most bases in South Korea. Only three of the active-duty service members who tested positive remain in isolation, including the recent arrival, since the others have recovered, USFK said.

The airmen’s quarantine room was thoroughly cleaned, but military health professionals determined there was little need to do contact tracing since all passengers on the flight had been tested and immediately quarantined for at least two weeks.

US service member tests positive upon arrival in S. Korea

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — A U.S. service member tested positive for the coronavirus after flying on a government-chartered flight from the United States to South Korea for a new assignment, the military said Monday.

The report raised to 36 the number of confirmed cases affiliated with U.S. Forces Korea, including 12 active-duty service members, since an outbreak began in late February.

The airmen was tested and placed in a quarantine facility as part of mandatory procedures after arriving at Osan Air Base aboard the Patriot Express on Wednesday, USFK said in a press release.

“Since testing positive, the airmen has been moved to Osan’s isolation facility designated for confirmed COVID-19 cases,” it said, referring to the disease caused by the virus.

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Three medical airmen exit a C-17 Globemaster III aircraft at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, in April. A new study of active-duty members diagnosed with the coronavirus found that most had mild illness with no complications.

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WHO chief warns leaders not to ‘politicize’ pandemic

By Jon Gambrell
Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — World leaders must not politicize the coronavirus pandemic but unite to fight it, the head of the World Health Organization warned Monday, reminding all that the pandemic is still accelerating and producing record daily increases in infections.

The comments by Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, who has faced criticism from President Donald Trump, came as the number of reported infections soared in Brazil, Iraq, India and southern U.S. states, straining local hospitals.

It took more than three months for the world to see 1 million virus infections, but the last 1 million cases have come in just eight days, Tedros said during a video-conference for the Dubai-based World Government Summit.

Tedros never mentioned Trump’s name or the fact that he is determined to pull the United States out of the U.N. health agency but warned against “politicalizing” the pandemic.

“The greatest threat we face now is not the virus itself, it’s the lack of global solidarity and global leadership,” he said. “We cannot defeat this pandemic with a divided world.”

Trump has criticized the WHO for its early response to the outbreak and what he considers its excessive praise of China, where the outbreak began, as his administration’s response in the U.S. has come under scrutiny. In response, Trump has threatened to end all U.S. funding for the WHO.

Nearly 9 million people have been infected by the virus worldwide and more than 466,000 have died, according to figures compiled by Johns Hopkins University. Experts say the actual numbers are much higher, due to limited testing and asymptomatic cases.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that, indeed, the world was not prepared,” Tedros said. “Globally, the pandemic is still accelerating.”

India’s health care system has been slammed by the virus. The country’s caseload climbed by nearly 15,000 Monday to 425,282, with more than 13,000 deaths.

In Pakistan, infections are accelerating and hospitals are having to turn away patients, with new cases up to 6,800 a day. The government has relaxed pandemic restrictions, hoping to salvage a near-collapsed economy.

More than two-thirds of the new deaths of late have been reported in the Americas. The coronavirus has killed about 120,000 people across the U.S., over 50,000 in Brazil and nearly 22,000 in Mexico.

In The Hague, Dutch police arrested about 400 protesters and used a water cannon Sunday after violence erupted around a demonstration against measures put in place by the government to rein in the spread of the coronavirus.

A peaceful protest turned violent when dozens of what police said were soccer fans arrived and clashed with riot police near the city’s central railway station. Police used officers on horseback and a water cannon to disperse the crowd after police had been pelted with rocks and smoke bombs.

WHO chief warns leaders not to ‘politicize’ pandemic

The White House is cutting back on screening visitors for the coronavirus as President Donald Trump pushes to reopen the country.

According to an agency spokesperson, the White House Rose Garden and White House chief of staff Mark Meadows have tested positive for COVID-19. The test reportedly came after first lady Melania Trump tested positive.

“Virus testing is helping to reduce the spread of infection in society by detecting more positive results than would otherwise be found,” said a spokesperson.

In March, HHS officials announced that Cepheid would receive approximately $3.2 million through its Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) for coronavirus diagnostic development work; the Strategic National Stockpile also made a one-time $2.3 million purchase of Cepheid’s point-of-care tests, according to an agency spokesperson.

FDA under fire as errors grow with rapid virus test

The FDA has received 106 reports of adverse events for the Abbott Laboratories’ ID NOW test.

In mid-May, the Food and Drug Administration issued a public warning about an Abbott Laboratories COVID-19 test that for weeks had received high praise from the White House because of its speed: Test results could be wrong.

The agency at that point had received 15 “adverse event reports” about Abbott’s ID NOW rapid COVID test suggesting that infected patients were wrongly told they did not have the coronavirus, which had led to the deaths of tens of thousands of Americans.

The warning followed multiple academic studies showing higher “false-negative” rates from the Abbott device, including one from New York University researchers who found it missed close to half of the positive samples detected by a rival company’s test.

But then, in a move that confused lab officials and other public health experts, a senior FDA official later that month said coronavirus tests provided outside lab settings are not considered useful in fighting the pandemic even if they miss 1 in 5 positive cases — a worrisome failure rate.

The FDA has now received a total of 106 reports of adverse events for the Abbott test as testing rates have surged.

The agency has not received a single adverse event report for any other point-of-care test, including the CDC’s first and only FDA-authorized COVID-19, an agency spokesperson said.

In a statement, Abbott Laboratories said the NYU research was “flawed” and “an outlier,” citing studies with higher accuracy rates. Though the Abbott test is one of more than 100 COVID-19 diagnostic tests to receive FDA emergency use authorization during the pandemic, President Donald Trump has featured the product in the White House Rose Garden and the Health and Human Services Department’s preparedness and response division has issued more than $205 million worth of contracts to buy the test, according to federal contract records.

“Everybody was raving about it,” a former administration official said, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations. “It’s an amazing test, but it has limitations which are now being better understood.”

In its own COVID-19 testing policy for labs and commercial manufacturers, the FDA says a diagnostic test should correctly identify at least 95% of positive samples. But medical professionals are split over the lower 80% threshold for the Abbott and other point-of-care tests’ “sensitivity” — a metric showing how often a test correctly generates a positive result.

They are debating whether it’s sufficient, given the risks that an infected person unwittingly spreads COVID-19 after receiving a negative result.

False negatives increase the risk that patients will not self-isolate or exercise other precautions — such as wearing a mask — and make more people sick than if they had had an accurate diagnosis.

Evaluations of the Abbott test have been among the most mixed, with some researchers saying the test has bigger accuracy problems, but others saying it isn’t likely to miss sicker patients.

“There’s no way I would be comfortable missing 2 out of 10 patients,” said Susan Whittier, director of clinical microbiology at NewYork-Presbyterian/Columbia University Medical Center. Whittier and co-authors found that the Abbott test correctly identified 74% of positive samples compared with a rival test from Roche, another giant. A point-of-care test from Cepheid, a rival company, correctly identified 99% of positives.

An FDA official cited the 80% accuracy minimum for point-of-care tests in late May even after two White House aides tested positive for the virus.

The Executive Office of the President has spent roughly $140,000 on Abbott test kits.

In a statement, Abbott said when its test is used as intended “it is delivering reliable results and is helping to reduce the spread of infection in society by detecting more positive results than would otherwise be found.”

BY RACHANA PRADHAN
Kaiser Health News

BY ANDY WONG
AP

People wearing protective face masks to help curb the spread of the new coronavirus wait Monday to cross a street in Beijing.

The White House is scaling back complex-wide temperature checks, instead relying on focused screenings for visitors for the coronavirus as President Donald Trump pushes to reopen the country.

“The greatest threat we face now is not the virus itself, it’s the lack of global solidarity and global leadership,” he said. “We cannot defeat this pandemic with a divided world.”

Trump has criticized the WHO for its early response to the outbreak and what he considers its excessive praise of China, where the outbreak began, as his administration’s response in the U.S. has come under scrutiny. In response, Trump has threatened to end all U.S. funding for the WHO.

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By JOSHUA GOODMAN
Associated Press

MIAMI — Venezuela’s socialist government tried to recruit then-Congressman Pete Sessions to broker a meeting with the CEO of Exxon Mobil at the same time it was secretly paying a close former House colleague $50 million to help U.S. sanctions against the oil-rich nation.

The Associated Press has learned.

An official at state-run oil giant PDVSA sent an email to the Texas Republican on an audience list, asking for help arranging a meeting between Venezuela’s oil minister and Darren Woods, then Secretary of State Rex Tillerson’s successor at the helm of the Irving, Texas-based Exxon. The purpose: to have Exxon back to Venezuela after a decade’s absence and inject much-needed dynamism into the OPEC nation’s collapsing oil industry.

“The email, which was seen by the AP, has been shared with U.S. federal law enforcement looking into the person who allegedly instructed Sessions to send the email: former Miami Congressman David Rivera, according to two people familiar with the investigation who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the politically sensitive matter.

Rivera at the time was collecting part of a whopping $50 million contract for three months of consulting work for an American unit of PDVSA — a business deal now being investigated by federal prosecutors in Miami because he never registered as anagent of a foreign government.

It’s not clear how Sessions, who is running again for Congress this fall, acted on the request, though he did not reply directly to the email. In any case, Exxon rebuffed the sought-after meeting in Dallas, according to the two people.

But Sessions did engage in other mediation efforts in Venezuela over the next 15 months. At the urging of a Venezuelan media mogul who would go on to become a top U.S. fugitive, he secretly traveled to Caracas in April 2018 for a meeting with President Nicolas Maduro. The business- man, Raul Gorrin, was present at the meeting and Rivera served as a translator, a third person familiar with the visit said, also on condition of anonymity.

A few months later Sessions phoned the socialist leader with Rudy Giuliani, President Donald Trump’s personal lawyer, around the same time both men were involved in another shadow diplomatic effort to fire the U.S. ambassador to Ukraine. Both men’s interest in Venezuela and Sessions’ advocacy of a Trump- Maduro meeting came as a surprise to John Bolton, according to the former national security adviser’s new book on his time at the White House.

The AP first reported Sessions’ peacemaking trip to Caracas in 2018. The email to Sessions regarding Exxon and his connection to Rivera was not known at the time.

Sessions’ role in the ultimately futile channeling, expansive than previously believed, is part of prosecutors’ examination of Rivera’s paid consulting and how the money he received from Venezuela — at least $15 million of the promised $50 million — was spent, the two people said.

Did TikTok teens, K-Pop fans punk key Trump rally?

[Image: People attending the rally in Tulsa, Okla., on Saturday. Tulsa’s fire marshal’s office reported a crowd of less than 6,200 in the 19,000-seat arena.]

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Did teens, TikTok users and fans of Korean pop music troll the president of the United States?

For more than a week before Donald Trump’s first campaign rally in three months on Saturday in Tulsa, Okla., these tech-savvy fans of TikTok and fans of K-Pop were approaching one of the president’s events with a calm and cool attitude, according to two people familiar with the investigation who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the politically sensitive matter.

Rivera at the time was collecting part of a whopping $50 million contract for three months of consulting work for an American unit of PDVSA — a business deal now being investigated by federal prosecutors in Miami because he never registered as an agent of a foreign government.

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Inside Tulsa’s 19,000-seat BOK Center, where Trump thundered that “the silent majority is stronger than ever before,” numerous seats were empty. Tulsa Fire Department spokesperson Andy Little said the city fire marshal’s office reported a crowd of less than 6,200 in the arena.

In interview, Bolton calls Trump a ‘danger for the republic’

BY ALLYSON CHIU
The Washington Post

Former national security adviser John Bolton, a self-described “lifelong conservative,” said he will not vote for President Donald Trump in November, calling him “unfit” to be commander in chief.

The 948-page memoir, “A White House Memoir,” by the former national security adviser is out June 23.

In the book, which he argued supports his claims that Trump is “unfit for office” and lacks the “competence to carry out the job,” De- scribing the president as “erratic and impulsive,” Bolton slammed Trump’s handling of U.S. foreign policy, accusing him of prioritizing reelection and personal relationships over the country’s national security — highlighting his dealings with North Korea, Russia, China and Ukraine as prime examples.

Bolton said his book shows “a pattern quite contrary to the image [Trump] would like to convey, of a decisive president who knows something about what he’s doing.” He noted that Trump “very rarely read much” during intelligence briefings and also said Trump was unwilling “to do systematic learning so that he could make the most informed decisions.”

“‘There really isn’t any guiding principle, that I was able to discern, other than what’s good for Donald Trump’s reelection,’” Bolton said.

He added, “Decisions are made in a very scatter shot fashion, especially in the potentially mortal field of national security policy. This is a danger for the republic.”

Bolton also defended his deci- sion not to testify in impeach- ment proceedings against Trump — a move bashed by Democrats in light of the damaging details in his book about Trump’s actions toward Ukraine.

For instance, Bolton recounted a conversation he had with Trump in which the president “directly linked the provision” of sending aid to Ukraine with an investiga- tion into former Vice President Joe Biden’s son in an apparent attempt to dis- rupt a presumptive Democratic nominee. Trump has denied making such a statement.

Bolton declined to say Sunday whether he would answer questions in response to the subpoenas or what charges he’ll face. A source said police were responding to an emotionally disturbed person.

NY police use apparent banned chokehold

NEW YORK — New York Police Department officers used an apparent banned chokehold while arresting a man on a Queens boardwalk Sunday, video shows.

The scene unfolded at 8:45 a.m. near Beach 113th Street and Ocean Promenade in Rockaway Beach in the NYPD’s 106th Precinct.

The officer who used the apparent chokehold, David Afan- darov, was suspended without pay on Tuesday.

While a full investigation is still underway, there is no ques- tion that “that immediate action is necessary,” NYPD Commissioner Dermot Shea said.

Police also released footage from Afanador’s body-worn cam- era that shows three men taunt- ing and insulting the officers for about 30 minutes before one of them approached one of the officers, and was taken down.

Police declined to say Sunday whether Afanador’s device was acti- vated or what charges he’ll face. A source said police were responding to an emotionally disturbed person.

From New York Daily News

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Second shooting at Seattle rally leaves one hurt

Associated Press

SEATTLE — One person was wounded in what was the second shooting in Seattle’s protest zone in less than 48 hours, police said.

The shooting happened late Sunday night in the area near Seattle’s downtown that is known as CHOP, for “Capitol Hill Occupied Protest,” police tweeted, adding that one person was at a hospital with a gunshot wound.

The person arrived in a private vehicle and was in serious condition, Harborview Medical Center spokesperson Susan Gregg said in a statement.

The zone evolved after weeks of protests in the city over police brutality and racism, sparked by the police killing of George Floyd, a Black man, in Minneapolis.

The Sunday shooting followed a pre-dawn shooting Saturday in a park within the zone that left a 19-year-old man dead and a 33-year-old man critically injured. The suspect or suspects in that first shooting fled the scene, and no arrests had been made as of Sunday, Detective Mark Jamie-son had said.

It wasn’t immediately clear where within the zone Sunday night’s shooting took place. The Seattle Fire Department arrived at the scene at 10:46 p.m., fire department spokesperson David Cuerpo told the Seattle Times.

The fire department was soon notified that the injured person had already been taken away. Both victims in Saturday’s shoot- ing — whose identities hadn’t yet been released — were also transported to the same hospital via private car.

Seattle police tweeted that they had heard of a second shooting that they were unable to verify, given “conflicting reports.”

Further details about what transpired Sunday night weren’t immediately available. It wasn’t clear whether anyone was in custody.

The CHOP zone is a several-block area cordoned off by pro- testers near a police station in the city’s Capitol Hill neighborhood. President Donald Trump has criticized Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan and Gov. Jay Inslee, both Democrats, for allowing the zone.

On Monday, two people were killed and seven others were wounded in a shooting in North Carolina’s largest city, police said, while five others were hit by vehicles.

The shooting happened at an “impromptu block party” that was a continuation of Juneteenth celebrations, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Deputy Chief Johnny Jennings told reporters.

Police responding to a call about a pedestrian hit by a car found hundreds of people in the streets around 12:30 a.m., a po- lice statement said. As officers arrived, they heard several shots nearby.

No one was in custody as of Monday morning.

A female victim who was shot was pronounced dead at the scene, the release said. Her age and identity weren’t released. Another victim was pronounced dead at a hospital; no further infor- mation about the second fatal- ity was released.

The conditions of the seven people wounded in the shooting weren’t immediately clear.

Jennings initially said the five people were hit by vehicles while running away, but the police statement later said that the first victim was hit by a car believed to be the call officers were initial- ly responding to, while the other four were struck by vehicles fleeing the gunfire.

All five are believed to have suffered non-life-threatening injuries.

Richmond police stop group trying to pull down Confederate statue

Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. — Police in Virginia’s capital declared an unlawful assembly and broke up a gathering of protesters accused of attempting to pull down another Confederate monument along a prominent avenue Sunday night.

Richmond police declared the gathering near the statue of Confederate Gen. J.E.B. Stuart unlawful and ordered demonstra- tors to leave the area along Monument Avenue at around 9:30 p.m., news outlets reported.

Protesters had climbed atop the statue and tied ropes around it before authorities intervened, Virginia State Police said in a statement. The agency said it responded to dispel the protest- ers after some began throwing bottles at officers.

Photos obtained by news outlets showed a line of police in riot gear blocking the monument. Some demonstrators and news outlets reported that officers de- ployed chemical agents on them, including pepper spray and tear gas.

Multiple Confederate monu- ments in Richmond have been rallying points and sites of con- frontations with police during demonstrations in the weeks since George Floyd died in Min- neapolis police custody.

Statues of Confederate Presi- dent Jefferson Davis and Con- federate Gen. Williams Carter Wickham as well as Christo- pher Columbus were toppled. A massive statue to Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee remains on its pedestal along Monument Av- enue for now, as lawsuits seek to block its removal.

Minority officers at jail allege discrimination after Chauvin booking

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Eight mi- nority corrections officers who work at the jail holding a for- mer Minneapolis police officer charged with murder in the death of George Floyd allege that they were barred from guarding or having contact with the officer because of their race.

Floyd died on May 25 after Derek Chauvin, who is white, used his knee to pin down the handcuffed Black man’s neck even after Floyd stopped mov- ing and pleading for air. Chauvin is charged with second-degree murder and manslaughter. He is being held at the Ramsey County Jail on $1 million bond.

 Eight Ramsey County cor- rections officers filed racial discrimination charges with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights on Friday alleging that when Chauvin was booked into the jail, all officers of color were ordered to a separate floor, according to the Star Tribune, which obtained a copy of charges. The charges allege that a super- visor told one of the officers that because of their race, they would be a potential “liability” around Chauvin.

Bonnie Smith, a Minneapolis attorney representing the eight employees, said the order left a lasting impact on morale.

“They think they deserve to have employment decisions made based on performance and behav- ior,” she said. “Their main goal is to make sure this never happens again.”

Jail Superintendent Steve Lydon allegedly told superiors that he was informed that day that Chauvin would be arriving in 10 minutes and he made a call to protect and support” minority employees by shielding them from Chauvin.

“Out of care and concern, and without the comfort of time, I made a decision to limit exposure to employees of color to a murder suspect who could potentially ag- gravate those feelings,” Lydon said in a statement given during an internal investigation and pro- vided by the sheriff’s office to the Star Tribune. He has since been demoted.

The discrimination charges are expected to automatically trig- ger a state investigation. It would mark the second Department of Human Rights racism probe into a law enforcement agency in re- cent weeks. The state launched a sweeping inquiry into the Min- neapolis Police Department after Floyd’s death.
UK town mourns victims of possible terrorist act

By Danica Kirka
and Jill Lawless
Associated Press

LONDON — The English town of Reading mourned Monday for three people stabbed to death in what is being treated as a terrorist attack, gathering for a moment of silence as police questioned the suspected lone attacker.

More than 100 students lit candles and laid flowers in memory of history teacher James Furlong, who was named as one of the victims. A flag in the courtyard of the Holt School, where he taught in nearby Wokingham, had been lowered to half-staff.

“He was so passionate and enthusiastic about history and about learning, and anything that was boring, anything you didn’t find interesting, he would make it interesting,” former student Molly Collins told the BBC. “He would spend time with you, he got to know people individually, and he just always went the extra mile for everyone.”

Furlong’s friend, Joe Ritchie-Bennett, 39, was named by his family in Philadelphia as the second victim. The identity of the third victim has not been released.

U.S. ambassador to Britain Woody Johnson offered his “deepest condolences” to the families of those killed in the attack on June 20. A 25-year-old man who is believed to be the lone attacker is in custody but officials said the motive for the carnage was unclear.

“Our thoughts are with all those affected,” Johnson said. “We condemn the attack absolutely and have offered our assistance to British law enforcement.”

Three people were killed and three others seriously wounded in the stabbing attack Saturday evening in Forbury Gardens park in Reading, a town of 200,000 people 40 miles west of London.

The suspect, who is believed to be the lone attacker, is in custody but officials said the motive for the carnage was unclear.

Chief Constable John Campbell of Thames Valley Police said officers were called to reports of stabbings just before 7 p.m. and arrived to find a “horrific” scene. Unarmed officers detained a local man.

Police have not identified the suspect, but Britain’s national news agency, Press Association, and other media outlets named him as Khairi Saadallah, a Libyan asylum-seeker living in Reading.

The BBC reported that Saadallah was investigated by British security services last year over concerns he planned to travel abroad to join a jihadi group, but that he was not determined to be a major threat.

From The Associated Press

China to Canada: Stop remarks on spy case

BEIJING — China told Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Monday to “stop making irresponsible remarks” after he said Beijing’s decision to charge two Canadians with spying was linked to his country’s arrest of a Chinese tech executive.

The spying charges are “completely different” from the case of Huawei executive Meng Wanzhou, a foreign ministry spokesman said. Meng was arrested on U.S. charges connected to possible violations of trade sanctions on Iran.

Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor were detained in what was widely seen as an attempt to pressure Canada after Meng’s December 2018 arrest in Vancouver.

Iran arrested student charity founder, 2 aides

TEHRAN, Iran — Iranian security forces on Monday arrested the founder of an influential student charity organization and two of his aides, and sealed the organization’s offices in Tehran, a local news website reported.

The report by farararu.com said authorities appeared at the home of Sharmin Meimandinejad, the charity’s founder, and arrested him. It said that around the same time, Morzta Raymahazkh, the spokesman for the charity, and another of its employees, Katayoun Afrazeh, were also arrested.

The report gave no details or the reason for the arrests and the police did not announce any charges against the three or the charity, named after Imam Ali, the Shi’ite Muslim sect’s most revered figure after the Prophet Muhammad.

President’s party wins total power in Serbia

BELGRADE, Serbia — Serbia’s president led his party to a landslide victory in general elections boycotted by the opposition, securing a crushing majority in a country that’s at the center of a struggle for influence among global powers.

Aleksandar Vucic’s Serbian Progressive Party won 63.4% of Sunday’s vote, according to partial official results with 2.3% of polling stations counted.

Boosted by the boycott from opposition leaders and turnout marred by fears of coronavirus, the result is enough for his party to change any law uncontested. It also eclipses the majorities held by Croatia’s Prime Minister Zoran Milanovic to save those of Russia and Belarus.
Rare ‘ring of fire’ eclipse seen across Africa, Asia, Mideast

Associated Press

DUBAI — Stargazers in Africa, Asia and parts of the Middle East looked to the skies this weekend to witness a partial solar eclipse. It was known as a “ring of fire” because the moon covered most, but not all, of the sun. It started at 11:45 p.m. EDT Saturday and went until 5:34 a.m. EDT Sunday.

Millions from Dubai to Taiwan to Japan to India watched the solar spectacle.

In Dubai, people could see over 85% of the sun covered by the moon, with photographers taking stunning photos of the eclipse over the iconic Burj Khalifa building.

It was a sight that will not be possible in the country for another 14 years, according to Chief Executive Officer of Dubai Astronomy Group Hasan al-Hariri.

Al-Hariri said while the ongoing coronavirus pandemic had halted their plans for a gathering to see the rare phenomenon, the group has turned to the internet to help people observe the partial eclipse, providing a live feed of the moon as it passes between the earth and the sun.

“An eclipse is kind of a rare event. It usually happens two times in a year, but it differs from location to location so it’s not fixed in one location. Now we were fortunate to have it, the one which was in December last year and this one, and then we will have one similar to this after 14 years. So it’s kind of something a bit rare to observe.”

An overcast sky didn’t deter enthusiasts in India with the partial eclipse also visible in the New Delhi sky.

A man uses solar glasses to look at a partial solar eclipse near the Forbidden City in Beijing on Sunday.

Far left: Indians wearing masks as a precaution against coronavirus watch solar eclipse through solar filters in Hyderabad, India.

Left: The sun is seen through rain clouds during solar eclipse in Hong Kong.

Are you in the picture?

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AMERICAN ROUNDP

Police say Army vet shot at woman’s SUV

COLUMBUS — An Army veteran is in custody after he was accused of shooting at woman’s SUV.

The Minnesotans ranged in age from 24 to 79 and fell ill between June 1 and 9, the Health Department said.

Marking World Refugee Day

MUSKEGON — A large mass of grasses and other vegetation was swept into a western Michigan lake, creating what one professor calls a “bizarre” floating island.

Man floats down river to flee traffic stop

THE CENSUS

THE CENSUS

The approximater number of patients who had medical pot paperwork signed by a fake doctor in Missouri. The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services said in a news release that there is no evidence to indicate the affected patients were aware the physician listed was not the physician who met with them. Department of Health and Senior Services spokesperson Lisa Cox said the department could not comment on who was being impersonated. The affected patients will be notified and given 30 days to submit a valid certificate before their license is revoked.

Man charged with blowing up ATM

St. Paul — The Minnesota Department of Health said 13 people in Minnesota have gotten sick with an intestinal illness linked to bagged salads.

Man killed zoo animals

SAN FRANCISCO — A mountain lion that was captured roaming the streets of San Francisco may have killed three animals at the city zoo, authorities said.

Mountain lion may have killed zoo animals

CA

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Shi owned Global House Buyer, a China-based real estate development company, and was CEO of a Beverly Hills-based development company, according to court documents.

From 2015 to 2018, Shi solicited investments for what she claimed were a 207-unit luxury condo and hotel complex project.

Woman held in $21.6M real estate scam

LOS ANGELES — A Southern California woman was arrested on charges of swindling investors, mainly from China, out of $21.6 million in a phony condominium and hotel complex project.

Roxanne “Serena” Shi, 36, of Arcadia, was taken into custody by FBI agents on a criminal complaint charging her with wire fraud, a statement from the U.S. Attorney’s office said.

Shi owned Global House Buyer, a China-based real estate development company, and was CEO of a Beverly Hills-based development company, according to court documents.

From 2015 to 2018, Shi solicited investments for what she claimed would be a 207-unit luxury condo and hotel complex in the Coachella Valley, near Palm Springs, prosecutors said.

Instead of building the project, she spent a large chunk of the money on a lavish lifestyle that included luxury cars, travel and designer clothing, prosecutors said.

Man charged with blowing up ATM

PA

PHILADELPHIA — A 24-year-old Philadelphia man was charged with using explosives to blow up a cash machine as demonstrations rocked the city this month.

The U.S. Attorney’s Office said he was carrying three additional explosive devices and other weapons when he was arrested shortly after a cash machine in North Philadelphia was damaged.

Census

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Criss takes liberties on ‘Royalties’

Former ‘Glee’ star reveals songwriting chops and a goofy side in Qibi series

By MARK KENNEDY

Associated Press

Great songs have been inspired by all kinds of things, and Dave Franco is no different. For the co-writer and director of “The Rental,” going to a screenwriter’s get-together before his Hollywood train got running, was just the beginning.

“Going into a really racy, goofy comedy is what I was doing with the Langs before my Hollywood train got running,” said Criss. “So getting to go back to that—being a goofball, writing goofy songs, doing stuff that isn’t really totally serious—it is my wheelhouse.”

The show begins airing Monday and explores how songs from superstars are often crafted by unknown songwriters, something Criss has long been obsessed with. He’s a big fan of many of them, like Taylor Swift, Bruno Mars, and Lizzo.

“It was certainly a bit of a challenge to try to lure viewers to Qibi, which was launched at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic and has endured a rocky performance months before its death sold for $30 million, including Hamill’s song “Mighty as Kong.”

“Royalties” is just the latest show trying to lure viewers to Qibi, which has trouble getting performers to submit music for the show. Criss has started in everything for “Glee” to “The Assassination of Gianni Versace,” is optimistic that people will seek out a good show regardless of platform.

“At the end of the day, we hope that the content can speak for itself,” he said.

“People are spending hours and hours of their life on Instagram anyway. They might as well spend a couple of those chunks of time on our show.”

It’s a feeling Nick Lang shares: “If the content and entertainment is good and valuable and enjoyable, I think it will be valuable for people no matter what. So I hope that people can enjoy it.”

Franco gets drive-in premiere for directorial debut

Associated Press

Dave Franco says the drive-in premise for his directorial debut was “perfect” but admittedly “a little weird.”

The 35-year-old actor found himself at the center of Hollywood’s evolving response to the coronavirus pandemic June 18 as he premiered his directorial debut “The Rental” to more than 1,300 people at the Vineland drive-in theater in Southern California.

Joined by stars including wife Alison Brie, Dan Stevens and Sheila Vand, he took off his mask to pose for photographers in the center of a massive parking lot, then answered questions via Zoom from his car after the film ended.

It beat a traditional, more buttoned-up red carpet event, Franco said.

“It didn’t feel like there was a spotlight on me or the cast. It felt more like this communal experience where everyone was just excited to get out of their homes and you know, let loose with a group of fellow movie lovers. It was perfect,” he said.

Franco says Brie calmed him down about the shortcomings of an outdoor screening: patchy audio over the FM radio and ambient light drowning out darker sections of his horror thriller “The Rental.”

“Trust me, it is not what I do; I am a crazy perfectionist. I annoy everyone around me because I won’t stop until it’s perfect. And so it was hard for me to let go, but it was nice having Alison next to me — she forced me to let go,” he said.

His movie is set to be released via video-on-demand and at drive-ins and traditional theaters on July 24. But the nation’s largest theater chains have been adjusting their reopening plans regularly in response to health officials. Franco says that like many in Hollywood, he’s tracking Christopher Nolan’s “Tenet,” scheduled for release July 31.

“What’s frustrating is the uncertainty. It’s not like every show is going to open on time,” he said. “Some may open late and others may not open. It’s not just a one-year deal.”

Concert to promote coronavirus equity

Associated Press

Dwayne Johnson will host and Shakira, Miley Cyrus, Jennifer Hudson will perform on a globally broadcast concert calling on world leaders to make coronavirus tests and treatment available and equitable for all.

The advocacy organization Global Citizen and the European Commission announced Monday that Global Goal: Unite for Our Future — The Concert will air on Saturday.

Other artists performing in isolation include Usher, Justin Bieber, Coldplay and Chloe x Halle. The concert will also feature appearances from Billy Porter, Charli XCX, Chris Rock, Kerry Washington, Salma Hayek and David Beckham.

It will be broadcast on television stations, radio stations, websites and streaming outlets around the world.

“The event aims to lift up the global community that is tackling equitable access to healthcare, and just not being able to believe a... sec... second of it,” said Criss. “I have no idea how we pulled it off.”

Republic Records will be releasing the Season One music from the series on July 3, including Hamill’s song “Mighty as Kong.”

“Royalties” is just the latest show trying to lure viewers to Qibi, which was launched at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic and has endured a rocky start, with fewer subscribers than hoped for.

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Franco says Brie calmed him down about
How the pandemic has changed our greetings

By Deborah Tannen
Special to The Washington Post

F
rench President Emmanuel Macron and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson greeted each other with waves and thumbs-up this week. Even the elbow bump with which Joe Biden and Justin Trudeau opened their mid-March debate is a thing of the past. Forget handshakes or hugs. And gestures aren’t the only rituals learned over a lifetime that have adapted to the new months since the new coronavirus began changing the world. Verbal greetings and leave-takings have evolved, too.

Until recently, we could begin a conversation with “How are you?” or “How are you doing?” and expect a perfunctory “Fine” or “Good.” We would start an email with “I hope this finds you well,” never expecting a comment on that hope, regardless of how well or unwell the recipient happened to be. These greetings are what linguists call “formulaic expressions”: idiomatic phrases people say in certain circumstances without a thought to their literal meaning.

We might still be using these routinized openers, but they are no longer the usual opening. Someone who was sick or going through a tough time, we could change our tone and emphasis when saying “How are you?” or “How are you doing?” No one (except visitors unfamiliar with the culture) interprets these as literal questions, any more than Americans used to expect a medical greeting as literal questions, any more than Americans used to expect a medical

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Ft.

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Ft.
Looking at the news
A weekly sampling of U.S. editorial cartoons

In Other News, Indian and Chinese Troops Fight on the Border with Clubs and Stones

Jeff Danziger/Washington Post News Service

Gotta cross the bridge to move forward.

Black Lives Matter
Systemic Racism

Walt Handelsman/Tribune Content Agency

Supreme Court

Jack Ohman/Washington Post Writers Group

Ramp up

Ramp down

Jeff Danziger/Washington Post News Service

Six-Foot Summer
How you can have fun and stay safe!

Janziger

6 feet

Joe Janziger/The Rutland Herald/Washington Post Writers Group June 15, 2020

Jeff Danziger/Washington Post News Service
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**Eugene Sheffer Crossword**

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**ACROSS**

1. Sentry’s cry
2. 5 - Actress
3. Torch
4. 12 - Sided state
5. Netting
6. Mil. address
7. Monopoly
token, e.g.
8. Sailor’s chart
9. Some babies
10. Marshall growth
11. Spanish hero
12. Streel edge
13. Carrots’ males
14. Candle scent
15. “The Walrus”
16. Radiant glows
17. Bond rating
18. Kings and
knights, e.g.
19. Stopwatch noise
20. Swear
21. Bronx Bombers
22. Donnybrook
23. Vacationing
24. Pub pint
25. Office door
identifier
26. Botanist Gray
27. Quaker pronoun
28. Burden
29. Fortify
30. Kitchen fixture
31. 23 "Phoeey!"
32. “Printer’s blue"
33. Muccohs
34. Exist
35. Tibetan herd
36. Concurs
37. Take to court
38. "Lover"
39. Singer Swift
40. 6 Cask sediment
41. Chatter
42. Computer key
43. Sir’s counterpart
44. Frozen” snow
45. Queen
46. "So be it"
47. Calendar row
48. Sashimi fish
49. Santa — winds
50. Grand tale
51. Boy king
52. Wife of Jacob
53. Curved letter

**DOWNS**

1. Embrace
2. — glance
3. Felon’s flight
4. Dissertation
5. Whittaker’s Oscar
6. Singer Swift
7. Cask sediment
8. Computer key
10. Radiant glows
11. Bond rating
12. Kings and
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**CRYPTOQUIP**

RP OUI "FOVM OMIW"

BPPRZIM FJBZW UVC TBGIC OB

HSNQVMRV, JIBJNI TRQUO

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Yesterday’s Cryptoquip: ACTRESS WHO MAKES SOME MONEY MANAGING MULTIPLE COW AND SHEEP ENCLOSURES: STOCKYARD CHANNING.

Today’s Cryptoquip Clue: P equals F
Steelers’ Heyward: team will be united

By Will Graves
Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Cam Heyward is well-versed in the sometimes messy optics associated with taking a stand against social injustice.

The Pittsburgh Steelers defensive end and his teammates met head on in 2017, when a miscommunication with left tackle and Army veteran Alejandro Villanueva left Villanueva on the field in Chicago for the national anthem while the rest of the Steelers remained in the tunnel. The image — Villanueva with his hand over his heart, the other 52 players on the roster hidden in darkness — became a flashpoint in the debate on what is and what isn’t the proper way to protest.

Nearly three years later, it still stings.

“That thing that ticks me off about that, what we were trying to do was remain out of the spotlight and it got turned upside down,” Heyward said last week. “To know that we were looked at as leaving one of our brothers out and leaving Ali out to dry [burns].”

Heyward isn’t concerned about the Steelers making that mistake again as they prepare for a season unlike any other. The wave of high-profile nationwide protests in the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer has professional athletes again trying to piece together how to use their platform to bring about change.

While Heyward, a nine-year veteran and former defensive captain, stressed everyone has a voice in the locker room, he expects any public display by the team on the field to be one of togetherness.

“I think we want to stay united in what we do and what we want to accomplish,” Heyward said. “Coach [Mike Tomlin] has always told me if we’re going to prepare for a season unlike any other, we’re going to have those opportunities to reach out and be individuals and affect our community (off the field).”

Heyward is confident the climate in 2020 is more open to honest dialogue compared to 2017, when Kaepernick’s taking a knee in protest became a flashpoint in the debate on whether it’s appropriate to make dialogue during the playing of “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

“It was harder (in 2017) because I felt like ... no one really paid to the issues Colin was talking about at the time and they were mostly concerned with what he was doing the rest of that message,” Heyward said. “I think this time around you see the evidence and you see what he was talking about. It’s not like he was blowing smoke up. These are real issues that effect our communities and this is a chance for a lot of guys to speak up. We all have backwoods and we’ve all seen these tragic things happen. They’ve got to stop.”

The 31-year-old Heyward, a married father of three whose middle name in Arabic, added, “These issues hit home way more because my family is going to have to deal with it for the rest of their lives.”

Heyward called for more resources for law enforcement officers and having a national database that can track complaints against officers.

“If you have a prior complaint, that needs to be filed,” Heyward said. “There’s no reason you should be right back on the street. There should be no reason why the color of my skin or the color of my child’s skin or the color of my friend’s skin should threaten my family’s safety.”

While Heyward, who said he is in contact with his teammates every day, is optimistic social progress can be made — pointing to the Steelers’ decision to close their offices on Friday in honor of Juneteenth — “it’s a little less certain about how the NFL moves forward amid the Covid-19 pandemic.”

Racism: Hateful act prompts investigation from FBI, NASCAR

From Back Page

The early going. Disgruntled fans with Confederate flags drove past the main entrance to the Alabama race track prior to Sunday’s race, while a plane flew above the track pulling a banner of the flag that read “Defund NASCAR.”

Hours after the race was postponed by rain, NASCAR said the noose had been found. The sanctioning body vowed to do everything possible to find who was responsible and “eliminate them from the sport.”

“We are angry and outraged, and cannot state strongly enough how seriously we take this heinous act,” the series said in a statement. “As we have stated unequivocally, there is no place for racism in NASCAR, and this act only strengthens our resolve to make the sport open and welcoming to all.”

Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey said she was “shocked and appalled” by the “vile act” against Wallace, an Alabama native.

“I believe in my heart this despicable act is not who we are; he is a native of Mobile and on behalf of all Alabamians, I apologize to Bubba Wallace as well as his family and friends for the hurt this has caused and regret the mark this leaves on our state,” Ivey said. “Bubba Wallace is an Alabama native. To branch out and be individuals and affect our communities and this is a chance for a lot of guys to speak up. We all have backwoods and we’ve all seen these tragic things happen. They’ve got to stop.”

“Over the last several weeks, I have been overwhelmed by the support from people across the NASCAR industry including other drivers and team members in the garage,” he said. “Together, our sport has made a commitment to driving real change and championing a community that is accepting and welcoming of everyone. Nothing is more important and we will not be deterred by the reprehensible actions of those who seek to spread hate.”

Five years ago, former NASCAR chairman Brian France tried to ban flying the flags at tracks, a proposal that was not enforced and largely ignored. This year was different and it was Wallace who led the charge. Wallace, whose father is white, was not always outspoken about racism; even after Floyd was killed last month, he was not the first driver to speak out for racial equality. He has said he began to find his public voice on racism after watching video in May of Ahmad Arbery’s fatal shooting in Georgia. He said he now recognizes he must not let his platform as a prominent driver go to waste.

Talladega is one of the more NASCR stops on the NASCAR schedule, but the pandemic prompted the series, like all sports, to ban or sharply limit fans for months. With only 5,000 fans allowed in, the scene this week was a dramatic departure from the Talladega norm.
**HORSE RACING/COLLEGE FOOTBALL**

Tiz the Law has an ambitious schedule

**By Beth Harris**

Associated Press

Tiz the Law has been good and lucky, two ingredients essential to success in horse racing.

He’s been dominant, too. He raced to a 3¾-length victory Saturday in the Belmont Stakes to open the rescheduled Triple Crown. His five wins in six career starts have been by an average margin of 19¼ lengths. His only loss came at Churchill Downs in the Kentucky Jockey Club Stakes last year, when he finished third on a sloppy track.

In 11 weeks, he’ll get a chance to avenge that defeat over the same track in the Kentucky Derby.

Tiz the Law has an ambitious summer and fall campaign ahead of him if all goes according to plan.

Next up is the Travers on Aug. 8 at Saratoga, where Tiz the Law would be competing on his home turf in upstate New York. It’s where he won for the first time last August. As the first New York-bred Belmont winner since 1882, his following only figures to get bigger. However, it remains to be seen whether fans would be allowed to attend at any point in the Saratoga meet, which opens July 16.

“I’ve never won the Travers and I want to win it,” trainer Barclay Tagg said.

Then comes the Kentucky Derby on Sept. 5 and the Preakness on Oct. 3 — no word yet on spectators at either race — to close out the Triple Crown. The bay colt would finish the year in the Breeders’ Cup Classic at Keeneland on Nov. 7.

Jack Knowlton of Sackatoga Stable — comprised of 34 partners who paid $110,000 for Tiz the Law — hasn’t been able to cheer his colt in person since Feb. 1 at Gulfstream in Florida. He watched Tiz the Law win the Florida Derby on March 28 from his condominium near the track and the Belmont at a restaurant in Saratoga Springs. The colt has earned over $1.5 million.

“I keep telling everybody Bar- clay doesn’t get a lot of big horses and big opportunities,” Knowlton said about his trainer of 25 years, “but when he gets them he knows what to do.”

Keeping Tiz the Law healthy and happy is key, and becomes even more of a challenge with this year’s extended Triple Crown schedule. Instead of three races over five weeks, the coronavirus pandemic has forced the series to be run out of order over 15 weeks.

Instead of running in the Derby five weeks after his Florida Derby victory, Tiz the Law had to wait 15 weeks for the Belmont to open the Triple Crown series. Now, the colt is facing 11 weeks between the Belmont and the Derby, with the Travers as his only race in between. That’s a long time to train and avoid injury and illness.

“I’ve never been sick after losing the Haskell INVitational and didn’t compete in the Travers. Tagg and Sackatoga Stables teamed up last year to win the Kentucky Derby and Preakness with Funny Cide — a gelding that cost $750,000 — before his Triple Crown hopes were dashed with a third-place finish in the Belmont.

“You have to pay attention to your horse. He tells you whether it’s too much or too little,” Tagg said. “He tells you all that stuff if you pay attention to it. You have to show up every day. You have to see if he eats every day and if he eats every day.”

Tagg is always a man with a plan. The 82-year-old trainer gets on a pony to accompany each of his horses to the track in the mornings. He’s at the barn in the evenings, too, making sure each one eats its feed tub. Anyone that doesn’t is often a sign that something isn’t right.

Tiz the Law’s immediate schedule after a major race involves walking around the barn for a few days before jogging on the track, then galloping, followed by a workout at a moderate speed. It’s a tricky balance of not going too fast or too slow but just right.

Injuries have already decimated 3-year-old ranks. Charlatan and Nadal, trainer Bob baffert’s undefeated duo that each won a division of the Arkansas Derby are out. Charlatan could return in time for the Preakness; Nadal was retired. Louisiana Derby winner Wells Bayou could make the Derby. Maxfield is out until next year.

Ohio State players from left, Baron Browning, Chase Young, linebackers coach Al Washington and head coach Ryan Day celebrate after a victory over Michigan in November. As athletes return to campus across the country, what are they signing up for? Ohio State and Missouri have pledges they are requiring athletes or their parents sign before the players can take part in voluntary workouts.

### Pledge before you play

As athletes return to campus, schools want them to sign waivers

**By Ralph D. Russo**

Associated Press

Ohio State calls it the Buckeye Acknowledgement and Pledge, a two-page document the school asked its athletes to sign before they could begin using team facilities during the pandemic.

The document SMU is requiring its athletes to sign is much more direct: Acknowledgment of Risk for COVID-19 Summer 2020

Across the country, universities have begun the process of getting ready to play through a public health crisis. As athletes return to campus, what are they signing up for?

Missouri also has a pledge and Ohio State’s athletic director said the school got the idea for its document from Big Ten rival Indiana. Baylor’s AD said athletes there are being given a waiver and awareness form to sign.

How much legal protection any of these forms provide schools is up for debate, along with the ethics of requiring unpaid students to sign them.

“I worry that in some situations, athletes are being used sort of as guinea pigs to demonstrate what we can and can’t do as we bring regular students back to campus,” said Karen Weaver, associate professor of sports management at Drexel University. “I just don’t think that’s right.”

SMU has made it clear that at least in part the purpose of its document is to mitigate the school’s liability if an athlete contracts COVID-19. Ohio State has said its document is not intended to provide liability protection, though it was crafted with the help of legal counsel.

For some experts, the two documents are not so dissimilar.

“I don’t care what label they put on it,” said Carla Varrile-Bark er, an attorney in New York and chair of Segal McCambridge’s sports, recreation and entertainment group. “They could call it a pledge, they could call it a waiver, they could call it a release, they could call it a cantaloupe. If you are signing away rights that you would otherwise have, it’s a legally enforceable document and I would call it a waiver and release of claim.”

If college football is to be played this season, schools will need to build protective bubbles around their teams, frequently testing players, tracing contacts of those who become infected and executing elaborate hygiene protocols. Athletes have already tested positive at more than a dozen schools from Boise State to Clemson, though some schools are not releasing details.

On Saturday, Kansas State announced it was pausing voluntary workouts after 14 athletes tested positive, becoming the second school along with Houston to hit the brakes on what is essentially a ramp-up phase to returning to play.

“What you would worry about is, this is two hours a day, right?” Baylor athletic director Mack Rhoades said of the voluntary workouts players around the country are participating in this month. “And so what are our stu- dent-athletes … doing the other 22 hours?”

Educating athletes about risk and how to mitigate it is vital. Tapping into their sense of duty and dedication is a sound strategy to get them to modify behavior. Have them sign a document acknowledging that risk, and now it can be argued the schools are using that commitment to the team as a legal shield — even it doesn’t use the explicit terminology of a waiver and ensures that scholarships will be honored.

“While on the surface the language in the SMU waiver may look more bothersome than the language in the Ohio State pledge, among the two I consider the Ohio State pledge to be the more morally wrong of the two documents,” said Marc Edelman, a law professor at Baruch College in New York who specializes in sports law. “Because not only does the pledge seem to reduce Ohio State University’s liability, but it is written in such a way that college athletes themselves might not even have their guards up to what the university and lawyers are attempting to do.”

Edelman said even a permission slip can be used to claim a legal release of liability. Further muddling the legal questions, liability law varies from state to state. There may be pushback from athletes: Some UCLA football players reportedly are demanding some protections of their own, including an independent health official to ensure virus protocols are being followed.
Baseball talks stall, pushing start date back

By Ronald Blum

Associated Press

NEW YORK — An email from baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred to union head Tony Clark led to a ball in the drawn-out talks to start the pandemic-delayed season, which now won’t begin by July 19.

The executive committee of the players’ association was set to vote and reject Major League Baseball’s latest offer for a 60-game season on Sunday. The Associated Press has obtained a copy of the email.

“I really believe we are fighting over an impossibility on games,” Manfred said in the email, a copy of which was obtained by The Associated Press. “The earliest we will be ready for players to report is a week from Monday, given the need to relocate teams from Florida. That leaves 66 days to play 60 games. Realistically, that is the outside of the envelope now.”

Players want 70 games and $275 million more than teams are offering. They are worried that if a resurgence of the new coronavirus causes the 2020 season to be cut short, the deal being negotiated would lock in innovations for the game.

Tony, am writing to reiterate what I told you on the phone a few minutes ago,” Manfred wrote. “Given the COVID developments, I understand that the players are concerned that the 2020 season will be truncated beyond the agreed upon number of games (for example, we agree to play 60 and can only play 40). If that were to happen, I would be prepared to move beyond the terms of the deal. That would mean that we would not get the expanded playoffs in 2021 and the DH rule would revert to the current rule (DH in AL, no DH in NL).”

Players didn’t take a vote and will consider their next move Monday.

The 2020 only items in the deal include starting extra innings with a runner on second and a discussion of whether to allow tie games after a specified total of innings plus player reentry in extra innings.

Some players would prefer not to be a deal and that Manfred unilaterally order the schedule. Because players insisted on full prorated pay, he threatened a schedule of about 50 games. MLB agreed to prorated pay when Manfred met with Clark last week.

The proposed deal would give MLB the right to suspend cancel play if restrictions on travel throughout the United States are imposed or if he determines after consulting medical experts and the union that there has been a change in circumstances posing “an unreasonable health and safety risk to players or staff to stage those games, even without fans in attendance.”

MLB’s proposal for 60 games includes $1.48 billion in salary plus a $25 million postseason players’ pool, while the union’s plan includes $1.73 billion in salary and a $50 million pool.

Players’ association union would file a grievance claiming MLB violated the provision in the March 26 agreement recognizing “that each of the parties shall work in good faith to as soon as practicable commence, play, and complete the fullest 2020 championship season and post-season that is economically feasible,” subject to several provisions.

Those provisions say that without MLB’s consent, the season shall not start until there are no legal restrictions on playing in front of fans at the 30 regular-season ballparks, no relevant travel restrictions and no health or safety risk to players, staff or spectators to playing in the 30 regular ballparks. The agreement also says the sides “will discuss in good faith the economic feasibility of playing games in the absence of spectators or at appropriate substitute neutral sites.”

MLB had proposed having the season run from July 19 or 20 through Sept. 27, the shortest since the 1870s, while the union agreed to the start date and said it should end Sept. 30, or earlier due to the coronavirus pandemic and its players start the coronavirus-delayed season.

The New York Yankees and Mets would train in their home stadiums, as will at least 27 of the other 28 major league teams, if Major League Baseball and its players start the coronavirus-delayed season.

Couric is 2nd tennis player to test positive for virus

ZAGREB, Croatia — Borna Coric has become the second tennis player to test positive for the coronavirus after participating in an exhibition event in Croatia.

Coric, a Croatian player ranked 33rd in the world, was among several dozen of people who were tested for the virus after Grigor Dimitrov announced that he was positive. That led to the cancellation of the exhibition event in Croatia, where top-ranked Novak Djokovic was scheduled to play in the final.

Djokovic played a match against Dimitrov in the Adriatic resort of Zadar on Saturday in the second leg of the exhibition series.

“Hello everyone, I want to inform you that I am positive for Covid-19. Please everyone who has been in contact with me for the last few days gets tested!” Coric posted on Twitter.

He said he was feeling well and has no symptoms.

Dimitrov, a three-time Grand Slam semifinalist, is the highest-profile current player to say he has the virus. His announcement Sunday on his Instagram page comes at the end of a week when the U.S. Open said it would go forward.

The professional tennis tours have been suspended since March. Goran Ivanisevic, one of Djokovic’s coaches, said the news from Dimitrov was “shocking” and that “now everyone will have to be tested.”

After Dimitrov’s announcement, Djokovic flew to Belgrade to get tested. The other participants and their contacts were tested on Sunday in Zadar.

“He (Djokovic) will conduct all the tests,” the top-ranked player’s media team in Belgrade said in a statement on Monday. “Then, we’ll wait for the results. He is fine, he has no symptoms but nonetheless, he needs to do the test and then we will see what’s going on.”

There was criticism there was no social distancing at the exhibition, which took place before packed stands in Belgrade, the Serbian capital.

Djokovic has not said if he would play at the U.S. Open from Aug. 31 to Sept. 13, citing strict anti-virus measures at the Grand Slam event.

Some of the sport’s top names, including defending men’s champion Rafael Nadal and top-ranked Ash Barty, have expressed reservations about heading somewhere that was a hot spot for the COVID-19 outbreak. Others expressed an eagerness to return to action.
Final-round 64 gives him a Father’s Day win at the Heritage

By Doug Ferguson
Associated Press

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C.

Nothing can top the first time Webb Simpson won on Father’s Day, a U.S. Open title eight years ago at Olympic Club and hearing his father’s voice on the phone to share the joy.

Harbour Town was special in its own right.

Dressed in his Sunday yellow shirt — his late father’s favorite color — Simpson emerged from a crowd of contenders with five birdies in a six-hole stretch on the back nine for a 7-under 65 to win the RBC Heritage by one shot over Abraham Ancer and set the tournament scoring record.

“Crazy day,” Simpson said.

A three-hour storm delay nearly kept him from finishing. Nine players were still in the mix with an hour to go. Simpson was two shots behind and had only two birdies on his card when he dropped in a 10-footer at No. 12 and off he went.

“I don’t think it’s a good thing that guys were making birdies because they kind of forced me to be a little more aggressive and know that pars weren’t going to cut it,” said Simpson, who finished at 22-under 264 to break by two shots the tournament record Brian Gay set in 2009.

Father’s Day has been the final round for the U.S. Open since 1976, but it was moved to September in this most unusual year because of the COVID-19 pandemic that shut down golf for three months. The RBC Heritage filled the spot on the schedule and Simpson, now a father of five, became a winner for the second time this year.

“I won The Players on Mother’s Day after my dad passed away, and that was a special day,” Simpson said. “U.S. Open on Father’s Day, I’ll never forget calling my dad after on the way to the press conference, and when he picked up the phone, he just was laughing. That’s what kind of work he did when he was happy, he would just laugh. So I’m going to miss that laugh today for sure.

“But I thought a lot about him,” he said. “This morning I thought about him, and when I was on the golf course, I thought about him. He loved golf. He would have loved watching today.”

It was quite a show. Simpson, Ancer, Joaquin Niemann and Tyrrell Hatton were tied at 20 under at one point late in the round. It was a matter of who blinked first.

Ancer, who hit every green in regulation, pushed Simpson to the end in his bid to win his first PGA Tour title. He holed a birdie putt from 10 feet on the 17th to get within one, but his approach to the 18th was 40 feet away and his putt to force a playoff came up short. Ancer closed with a 65.

“That’s just golf. You’ve just got to keep trying,” Ancer said. “I’m not going to change anything or work on anything. I’m just going to keep doing what I’m doing, and I think that will eventually happen.”

Colonial winner Daniel Berger also stayed in the mix by chipping in for birdie on the 17th and closing with a 65.

Webb Simpson puts on the champion’s plaid jacket and poses with the championship trophy after winning the RBC Heritage, Sunday in Hilton Head Island, S.C. He won by one shot over Abraham Ancer.

Japan pulls out of bid to host 2023 Women’s World Cup

By Stephen Wade
Associated Press

TOKYO — Japan pulled out of bidding to host soccer’s 2023 Women’s World Cup on Monday, leaving the top-rated joint bid by Australia and New Zealand as the clear favorite in the FIFA vote.

Japan and Australia are both members of the Asian Football Confederation and were likely to split the top-rated joint bid by Australia and New Zealand was the “most commercially viable” bid.

Praising Japan’s decision as “another impressive show of Asian football unity,” AFC President Sheikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa of Bahrain also hailed the “historic cross-confederation bid.”

“Most importantly, this is the technically impressive of the bids,” Sheikh Salman said in an AFC statement, adding, “we must be guided by the experts.”

Colombia’s chances were hit by the lowest score from American soccer body CONMEBOL, which has had strained relations with FIFA in recent months.

FIFA said Colombia’s plan needed “significant amount of investment and support,” while Australia and New Zealand was the “most commercially favorable” bid.

That prompted a complaint last week by South American soccer body CONMEBOL, which has had strained relations with FIFA in recent months.

FIFA has promised to publish the voting preferences to continue a transparency started with the men’s 2026 World Cup vote by more than 200 member federations. The joint bid by the United States, Canada and Mexico beat Morocco two years ago. The policy was introduced under new FIFA President Gianni Infantino after long-standing criticism of secret votes by executive committee members in 2010 to pick Russia and Qatar as hosts for the 2018 and 2022 World Cups. Those hosting campaigns have been investigated by FIFA and prosecutors in the U.S., France and Switzerland.

Japan’s exit should clear Tashima to vote on which host to pick Tuesday in Zurich.

By Rick Johnson

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Japan’s exit should clear Tashima to vote on which host to pick Tuesday in Zurich.
FBI investigating ‘heinous act’ after noose is found in Bubba Wallace’s stall; NASCAR remains steadfast in eliminating racism

By Jenna Fryer
Associated Press

Federal authorities on Monday confirmed they are investigating the discovery of a noose found in the Talladega Superspeedway garage stall of Bubba Wallace, NASCAR’s only Black full-time driver who successfully pushed the stock car series to ban the Confederate flag at its venues earlier this month.

U.S. Attorney Jay Town said his office, the FBI and the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division were reviewing the situation.

“Regardless of whether federal charges can be brought, this type of action has no place in our society,” Town said.

The stock car series, founded in the South more than 70 years ago, has tried to distance itself from the flag for years at the risk of alienating a core group of its fan base. At Wallace’s urging, it went ahead with the ban as the nation grapples with social unrest largely tied to George Floyd, an unarmed Black man who died in the custody of Minneapolis police.

NASCAR has not outlined how it will enforce the restriction and this week’s race at Talladega, in the heart of the South, presented the series with its biggest test in

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We are angry and outraged ... There is no place for racism in NASCAR, and this act only strengthens our resolve to make the sport open and welcoming to all.’’

NASCAR statement after a noose was found in the garage of Bubba Wallace, the Cup Series’ only Black driver

‘I will not give in’

FBI investigating ‘heinous act’ after noose is found in Bubba Wallace’s stall; NASCAR remains steadfast in eliminating racism

Simpson scorches way to Father’s Day win

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COVID complications
Talks stall, pushing back potential start date for season » MLB, Page 22