Report lists military jobs with highest suicide rates

By Seth Robson
Stars and Stripes

Army and Marine Corps infantry and gun crews, Air Force service and supply handlers and Navy electricians or mechanics were among the military jobs that had the highest numbers of suicides in 2018, according to an analysis released Monday.

The Department of Defense Suicide Event Report presents data collected by the services about suicides and suicide attempts among service members during the 2018 calendar year.

"There were 325 deaths by suicide identified among active-component service members," the report states.

The data included 139 suicides in the Army, 60 in the Air Force, 68 in the Navy and 58 in the Marine Corps, according to the report.

The military jobs that had the highest number of suicides in each service in 2018 were:

- Army infantry, gun crews, with 40 suicides, or 37.4% of the service’s total.
- Marine infantry, gun crews, with 13 suicides, or 23.2% of the service’s total.
- Navy electrical/mechanical equipment repairers, with 13 suicides, or 19.4% of the service’s total.
- Air Force service and supply handlers, with 10 suicides, or 20.8% of the service’s total.

The suicide mortality rate was 24.8 deaths per 100,000 population, wrote analysts with the DOD Psychological Health Center of Excellence who authored the report.

The data included 139 suicides in the Army, 60 in the Air Force, 68 in the Navy and 58 in the Marine Corps, according to the report.

The military jobs that had the highest number of suicides in each service in 2018 were:

- Army infantry, gun crews, with 40 suicides, or 37.4% of the service’s total.
- Marine infantry, gun crews, with 13 suicides, or 23.2% of the service’s total.
- Navy electrical/mechanical equipment repairers, with 13 suicides, or 19.4% of the service’s total.
- Air Force service and supply handlers, with 10 suicides, or 20.8% of the service’s total.

SEE NORMAL ON PAGE 7

Nowhere near normal

The US reopening is coming, and it will be anything but routine

By Sarah DiLorenzo
Associated Press

NEW YORK

Everyone wants to know: When, oh when, will it go back to normal? As some governors across the United States begin to ease restrictions imposed to stop the spread of the coronavirus, hopes are soaring that life as Americans knew it might be returning. But plans emerging in many states indicate that “normal” is still a long way off.

White House adviser Dr. Deborah Birx says social distancing will be with Americans through the summer. Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards warns of a “different way of life” until there is a widely available vaccine — maybe not until next year. New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo says: “There is no return to yesterday in life.”

From the beginning, the pandemic forced impossible choices: physical health or mental health? Economic well-being or medical safety? Most states joined the world and turned the dial down hard, closing shops and restaurants, factories and schools. Asking people to largely keep to their homes. Now, the dial is beginning to inch in the opposite direction.

SEE SUICIDES ON PAGE 4
Reduced meat selection, higher prices expected

Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa — Meat isn’t going to disappear from supermarkets because of outbreaks of the coronavirus among workers at U.S. slaughterhouses. But as the meat plants struggle to remain open, consumers could face less selection and slightly higher prices.

Industry leaders acknowledge that the U.S. food chain has rarely been so stressed and that no one is sure about the future, even as they try to dispel concerns about shortages.

COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus, has infected hundreds of workers at meat-processing plants and forced some of the largest to close and others to slow production. While the output at beef and poultry plants has diminished, pork plants in the Midwest have been hit especially hard. The viral outbreaks have persisted despite efforts by the meat companies to keep workers at home with pay if they become sick.

The 15 largest pork-packaging plants account for 60 percent of all pork processed, so when even one of those plants closes for days or weeks, the consequences ripple across the industry.

Nationally, although the reduced meat supply is expected to cause consumer prices to rise, expectations are that the increases will be slight. The U.S. Department of Agriculture said late last week that it expects beef prices to climb 1% to 2% this year, pork as much as 1.5% and pork between 2% and 3%.

WEATHER OUTLOOK

The weather is provided by the American Forces Network, Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb., and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate ........................................ 3.25
Discount rate ..................................... 0.25
Federal funds market rate .................. 0.12
3-month bill ...................................... 0.12
30-year bond .................................... 1.25

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Rate (April 29)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Euro</td>
<td>$1.060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dollar buys</td>
<td>$1.4955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British pound</td>
<td>$1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese yen</td>
<td>106.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korean won</td>
<td>1,196.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Commercial rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Rate (April 29)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bahrain (Dinar)</td>
<td>0.3777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British pound</td>
<td>1.2452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada (Dollar)</td>
<td>1.3968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China (Yuan)</td>
<td>7.0700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark (Krone)</td>
<td>6.8768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt (Pound)</td>
<td>15.7505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euros</td>
<td>$1.0644/0.9222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong (Dollar)</td>
<td>1.7953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary (Forint)</td>
<td>329.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel (Shekel)</td>
<td>3.5007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan (Yen)</td>
<td>106.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait (Dinar)</td>
<td>8.3907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway (Krone)</td>
<td>10.3957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines (Peso)</td>
<td>50.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland (Zloty)</td>
<td>4.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia (Riyal)</td>
<td>1.7905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore (Dollar)</td>
<td>1.4177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea (Won)</td>
<td>1,219.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interest rates

Dollars buys (April 29) .................. 0.8955
Dollar cost (April 29) .................$1.060

Euro cost (April 29) ..................... 0.9742
Thailand (Baht) .......................... 32.44
Turkey (Lira) ................................6.9980

Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying or selling nonlocal currency (e.g., euros to dollars, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-euro, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

Commercial rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Rate (April 29)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Euro</td>
<td>$1.060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dollar buys</td>
<td>$1.4955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British pound</td>
<td>$1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese yen</td>
<td>106.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korean won</td>
<td>1,196.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Commercial rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Rate (April 29)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bahrain (Dinar)</td>
<td>0.3777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British pound</td>
<td>1.2452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada (Dollar)</td>
<td>1.3968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China (Yuan)</td>
<td>7.0700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark (Krone)</td>
<td>6.8768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt (Pound)</td>
<td>15.7505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euros</td>
<td>$1.0644/0.9222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong (Dollar)</td>
<td>1.7953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary (Forint)</td>
<td>329.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel (Shekel)</td>
<td>3.5007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan (Yen)</td>
<td>106.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait (Dinar)</td>
<td>8.3907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway (Krone)</td>
<td>10.3957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines (Peso)</td>
<td>50.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland (Zloty)</td>
<td>4.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia (Riyal)</td>
<td>1.7905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore (Dollar)</td>
<td>1.4177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea (Won)</td>
<td>1,219.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interest rates

Dollars buys (April 29) .................. 0.8955
Dollar cost (April 29) .................$1.060

Euro cost (April 29) ..................... 0.9742
Thailand (Baht) .......................... 32.44
Turkey (Lira) ................................6.9980

Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying or selling nonlocal currency (e.g., euros to dollars, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-euro, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

Commercial rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Rate (April 29)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Euro</td>
<td>$1.060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dollar buys</td>
<td>$1.4955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British pound</td>
<td>$1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese yen</td>
<td>106.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korean won</td>
<td>1,196.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Commercial rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Rate (April 29)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bahrain (Dinar)</td>
<td>0.3777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British pound</td>
<td>1.2452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada (Dollar)</td>
<td>1.3968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China (Yuan)</td>
<td>7.0700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark (Krone)</td>
<td>6.8768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt (Pound)</td>
<td>15.7505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euros</td>
<td>$1.0644/0.9222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong (Dollar)</td>
<td>1.7953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary (Forint)</td>
<td>329.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel (Shekel)</td>
<td>3.5007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan (Yen)</td>
<td>106.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait (Dinar)</td>
<td>8.3907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway (Krone)</td>
<td>10.3957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines (Peso)</td>
<td>50.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland (Zloty)</td>
<td>4.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia (Riyal)</td>
<td>1.7905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore (Dollar)</td>
<td>1.4177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea (Won)</td>
<td>1,219.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Navy scraps E-4 advancement exams this cycle

BY JOSHUA KARSTEN
Stars and Stripes

Sailors looking to tack on their petty officer crowns this cycle won’t be taking an advanced test, following a decision by the Navy to scrap the exams as a coronavirus prevention measure.

The Navy will instead rely on an advancement scoring formula that more heavily weighs job performance, a service statement said.

The exam is normally conducted in large groups aboard ships or in packed gymnasiums, where social distancing can’t be enforced, the statement said Monday.

About 20,000 sailors are eligible for advancement from E-3 to E-4, the Navy said.

The formula for this cycle will use a “rank-order” method dominated by sailors’ performance mark average, which averages rank-based annual evaluation scores and counts for 72% of the calculation. Other factors include awards, previous pass-but-not-advance points, time in rank and education. The Navy also directs sailors to ensure their enlisted advancement worksheets are accurate and up to date — 35,000 of them are not, the statement said.

About 65,000 exams for advancement to pay grades E-5 and E-6 were conducted prior to coronavirus prevention measures being put in effect. Another 5,000 exams will be conducted in May in small enough groups to maintain social distancing measures, the statement said.

“Our primary goal continues to be keeping all Sailors safe and healthy, while ensuring every advancement candidate has an equal and fair opportunity to advance despite the challenges of the current COVID-19 environment,” Nowell said in the statement.

The legislation we introduced expands study. “It’s long past time for those who served at the K2 air base,” Green said.

Pentagon releases 3 videos showing UFOs

BY DAVID MATTHEWS
New York Daily News

The Department of Defense has been watching, and recording, the skies.

The Pentagon released three videos Monday that depict unexplained “unidentified aerial phenomena” which were recorded by pilots between 2004 and 2015.

In each of the reconnaissance videos, a flying aircraft maneuvers strangely before emitting a bright light and flying away at great speed.

The Pentagon released the videos “to clear up any misconceptions by the public on whether or not the footage that has been circulating was real, or whether or not there is more to the videos,” spokesperson Sue Gough said.

“The aerial phenomena observed in the videos remain characterized as ‘unidentified.’”

The Navy originally verified the videos’ existence in 2019 after they were leaked by To The Stars Academy of Arts and Sciences, a UFO research group started by Blink-182 guitarist Tom DeLonge.

“A thorough review, the department has determined that the authorized release of these unclassified videos does not reveal any sensitive capabilities or systems, and does not impinge on any subsequent investigations of military air space incursions by unidentified aerial phenomena,” Gough said.

The Navy has previously said that releasing information from top-secret briefings about UFOs would cause “exceptionally grave damage” to U.S. national security.

According to the Navy, two of the videos were taken during training missions over military airspace.

“Any incursion into our training ranges by any aircraft or phenomena, identified or not identified, is problematic from both a safety and security concern,” Navy spokesperson Joseph Gradisher said in September 2019.

VA to study illnesses tied to deployment to Uzbek base

BY TARA COTT
McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs has notified Congress that it will study the health impact of toxic exposure on service members who served at a contaminated base in Uzbekistan after the 9/11 attacks, a key oversight subcommittee announced Monday.

The commitment to study the health effects on service members who served at Karshi-Khanabad, Uzbekistan, or “K2,” was outlined in a memo from the VA to the national security subcommittee of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform.

The subcommittee has been investigating hundreds of cancers reported by special operations and conventional forces who served at K2 between 2001 and 2005, after McClatchy broke the story about how many K2 veterans were now diagnosed with cancer.

The questions raised about K2 are important and VA is actively investigating the issues, the department said in its correspondence to the subcommittee, obtained by McClatchy.

“VA is awaiting declassification of the reports on environmental monitoring.”

In the memo, the VA said its new study would look at illnesses among K2 veterans that have surfaced up to 19 years after they deployed to the base, and would not just at cancers, but other chronic illnesses. It would then take the rates of illnesses found among the K2 veterans and compare those to rates found among those who served in Iraq and Afghanistan and also to the general population.

“The legislation we introduced moved the Department of Veterans Affairs to take action, and I look forward to continuing our critical oversight work to ensure K2 service members and their families receive the health care they need and the disability benefits they deserve,” said subcommittee chairman Rep. Stephen Lynch, D-Mass.

Subcommittee member Rep. Mark Green, R-Tenn., served as an Army special operations flight surgeon with the 166th Special Operations Aviation Regiment and had also deployed to K2. At a committee hearing on cancers among service members who were at that base, Green said he too had been diagnosed with thyroid and colon cancer.

On Monday, he welcomed news that the VA would conduct an expanded study. “It’s long past time to address veterans’ toxic exposure at K2 air base,” Green said.

The VA study will not impede the committee’s other ongoing legislative work on K2, to speed medical benefits and get cancer included as a presumptive condition for those who served at the base, a committee aide told McClatchy on the condition they not be identified.
Trump hints he knows N. Korean leader’s condition

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — President Donald Trump hinted that he knows how Kim Jong Un is doing amid speculation fueled by the North Korean leader’s absence from the public eye, but he wouldn’t elaborate.

Trump was asked if he had any update on Kim’s health during a press conference Monday at the White House.

“Yes, I do have a very good idea, but I can’t talk about it now. I just wish him well,” he said.

Trump and Kim have held three summits as the United States tries to persuade the North to give up its nuclear weapons program.

Talks have been stalled for more than a year, but the two leaders have said they maintain a good relationship.

“I’ve had a very good relationship with Kim Jong Un. If I weren’t president, you’d be in war,” Trump said Monday. “I hope he’s fine. I do know how he’s doing, relatively speaking. We will see. You’ll probably be hearing in the not too distant future.”

Satellite images published by the monitoring website 38 North showed that Kim’s train was parked near his coastal compound in the eastern area of Wonju last week.

Concern over Kim Jong Un’s whereabouts has mounted since April 15, when he missed celebrations of his late grandfather’s birthday on April 15 and his father’s birthday, which has long been a topic of concern because of his weight, a heavy smoking habit and a family history of heart disease.

The world did not learn Kim’s father, Kim Jong Il, had died of a heart attack in 2011 until it was announced publicly two days later.

Kim Jong Un, who assumed power after his father died, also disappeared in 2014 but reappeared with a cane after about six weeks. South Korea’s intelligence agency said he had a cyst removed from his ankle.

Suicides: Report says 2018 rate for guardsmen higher than US adult population

FROM FRONT PAGE

17-59 of 18.2 per 100,000 in 2017, according to the report.

“The annual suicide mortality rates for the active and reserve components demonstrated increases from (2011-2018),” the report states. “In contrast, the annual suicide mortality rates for the National Guard component did not increase.”

Some of the data analyzed in the report was released by the Pentagon in September in its first Annual Suicide Report. At that time Karin Orvis, director of the Defense Suicide Prevention Office at the Pentagon, said the rates were not where leaders wanted them to be.

“They’re not in the direction that we want them to be going,” she said. “We take this extremely seriously in our department, and it is a top priority” for Defense Secretary Mark Esper.

When last year’s report was released, Esper told reporters he wished he could say the department had “an answer to prevent further, future suicides.”

“We don’t,” he said. “We are caught up in what some call a national epidemic of suicide among our youth. And not just our youth, but it’s something we continue to wrestle with. I believe we have the means and the resources to get ahead of this and do better than our civilian counterparts.”

After accounting for differences in age and sex between the military and general U.S. populations, the 2018 suicide rates for both the active and reserve components were statistically no different from the 2017 U.S. adult population rate, according to Monday’s report.

“In contrast, the (2018) suicide rate for the National Guard was significantly higher than the U.S. adult population rate,” the report states.

Personal firearms accounted for 66.5% of military suicides in 2018. Overdose by drug and/or alcohol was the most common method of attempted suicide, accounting for 59%, the report states.

Less than half, or 44.6%, of troops who died by suicide in 2018 had a documented behavioral health diagnosis, the report states.

The Antonov-225, the world’s largest capacity cargo plane, arrives Monday at Leipzig/Halle Airport in Germany from China, bringing medical supplies to help curb the spread of the coronavirus.

Jumbo cargo plane delivers 10M masks from China to Germany

BY JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

On Monday, the six-engine Antonov-225 jet delivered 10 million protective face masks to Leipzig/Halle Airport. Two more flights are in the works that will deliver nearly 15 million more face masks from China, NATO said in a statement.

The first batch of supplies, procured by Germany for distribution throughout the country, was welcomed Monday by German Defense Minister Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer.

While the gear was made in China, and the aircraft built by the former Soviet Union, the airlift was part of a long-standing program backed by the Western military alliance.

Strategic Airlift International Solution, or SALIS, provides member countries with access to Antonov heavy transport aircraft. The An-225 was built in the 1980s and can carry up to 250 tons of cargo, NATO said.

There is only one such plane in the world, now owned by the Ukrainian company Antonov Logistics SALIS, operating out of Leipzig/Halle airport.

The plane’s smaller, four-engine version, the An-124, also has been involved in pandemic response efforts in NATO countries like the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania and Slovenia. The An-124 is roughly equivalent to Lockheed’s C-5 Galaxy strategic transport.

Nine NATO allies — Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia — participate in the SALIS program, which is managed by the NATO Support and Procurement Agency, the NATO statement said.

The Antonov-225 is unloaded at Leipzig/Halle Airport in Germany.
**By Chad Garland**

Stars and Stripes

U.S. military officials in Djibouti were preparing to lock down Camp Lemonnier definitively on Tuesday after a second contractor tested positive for the coronavirus and was promptly evacuated from the East African country.

The sick contractor was evacuated Tuesday morning, said another contractor who works at the base. The medical evacuation came a day after a defense official confirmed that the contractor had tested positive for the virus over the weekend.

Both the defense official who confirmed the positive test and the contractor asked not to be named because they were not officially authorized to speak on the matter.

No service members in the nation have tested positive for the virus, officials said. But as a precaution, military leaders were planning to block access to the contractor who works at the Camp in Djibouti to Capt. Scott Rye, spokesman for Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, which is headquartered at the former French Foreign Legion base in the small country's capital.

More than 1,030 people have tested positive for the virus in the country and two have died from COVID-19, according to MOH.

As of Tuesday, the Navy has newly reset 2,448 sailor and 98 cases being reset and 24 new cases of the virus, the overall number of Roosevelt sailors still considered sick increased by 122, according to the Navy's Department of Defense investigation.

The initial testing of all 4,800 sailors, drone-powered aircraft carrier has 833 cases of the coronavirus after a second positive test happening 24 hours after the first negative. Every sailor on the vessel is now being tested every day when they begin the process to leave their quarantine, Doss said.

As of Monday, one Roosevelt sailor is still being treated at U.S. Naval Hospital Guam for symptoms, but the individual is not in intensive care.

As of Tuesday, the Navy's investigation also found that the contractor asked not to be named because they were not officially authorized to speak on the matter. No service members in the nation have tested positive for the virus, officials said. But as a precaution, military leaders were planning to block access to the contractor who works at the Camp in Djibouti to Capt. Scott Rye, spokesman for Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, which is headquartered at the former French Foreign Legion base in the small country's capital.

More than 1,030 people have tested positive for the virus in the country and two have died from COVID-19, according to MOH.

As of Tuesday, the Navy has newly reset 2,448 sailor and 98 cases being reset and 24 new cases of the virus, the overall number of Roosevelt sailors still considered sick increased by 122, according to the Navy's Department of Defense investigation.
Air Force revives drive-in movies at Yokota base

BY SETT ROBSON
AND THERON GODBOLD
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — A hundred or so cars lined up in rows on a sports field Saturday night for a drive-in movie at the home of U.S. Forces Japan in western Tokyo.

Shortly after sundown an inflatable screen lit up at the end of Bronco Field, a grassy pitch normally used for soccer and baseball. The screen displayed a message advising viewers to tune their car radios to channel 89.3 FM before a Disneyland castle appeared signaling that the 2019 animated film “Toy Story 4” was about to begin.

Yokota’s drive-in movie echoes trends in Germany and South Korea, where outdoor screenings have had a resurgence during the coronavirus pandemic, according to an April 18 article in The Hollywood Reporter.

The coronavirus has wreaked havoc on the U.S. movie industry with over 40,000 screens closed. However, a few drive-in theaters remain in fight against coronavirus.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo is considering allowing drive-ins in his state to reopen, the New York Post reported April 20.

Yokota’s indoor movie theater is still open but many other leisure events and activities have been canceled. People living and working on Yokota are restricted to the base and their homes except for shopping and other for essential services nearby.

On Saturday, the Pompa family of Albuquerque, N.M., watched the film from the back of their Toyota Estima minivan. Helena Pompa, 5, was seeing a drive-in movie for the first time.

“I’m looking forward to seeing Jessie,” she said, referring to a talking toy cowgirl featured in the film.

Her 4-year-old brother, Rocco, said he wanted to see Forky, a googly-eyed white plastic spork with a blue plasticine who also appears in the film.

The family brought boxed pizzas and a few board games to kill time while they waited for the show.

The kids’ father, Air Force Col. Doyle Pompa, 45, who works at U.S. Forces Japan headquarters, said he was impressed by the screening during a time when airmen and their families face restrictions.

“Everyone can sit around and complain but there are positive messages,” he said.

Mom Gina Pompa, 41, recalled going to drive-in movies as a teenager.

“I think this is a great thing to do,” she said. “It gives us something to do on a Saturday night whereas the last several weekends we have been hanging out at home.”

Yokota Force Support Squadron managers came up with the idea while brainstorming things people could do while socially isolating, said Outdoor Recreation manager Caleb White.

“Our biggest thing is just getting something out to the community and get people out of the house and give them something to do,” he said.

Families gathered Saturday to watch a free drive-in movie on a sports field at Yokota Air Base, Japan.

“Toy Story 4” screened twice Saturday. Bronco Field can accommodate only 150 vehicles at a time and the second show time was added after hundreds of people tagged the event when it was listed on the squadron’s Facebook page.

The drive-in admission was free but cost the Air Force about $500 to stage.

“The hard part about this is figuring out what movie to play and getting the licensing,” he said.

White promised more drive-in movies.

“We plan on doing this staggered, once every couple of weeks,” he said, adding that the base has ordered a giant outdoor television for future screenings that will arrive May 6.

Benefits sought for military families who lose a service member to virus

BY ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

Army Capt. Douglas Hickok was set to deploy with the New Jersey National Guard on March 21. Instead, he was admitted into a Pennsylvania hospital and died one week later from the coronavirus.

Days prior, the 57-year-old physician assistant attended a training session for his upcoming deployment on state orders to combat the virus. Had he been preparing for a federal deployment, his family would receive the benefits eligible to the survivors of an active-duty service member. But, as it stands now, his family will not.

On March 28, the day that Hickok died, President Donald Trump authorized New Jersey to activate National Guard troops on federal orders known commonly as Title 32, which could allow troops to receive financial aid, health care, retirement payments, as well as death gratuity. At that time, only about 12,300 Guard troops were activated in response to the virus and only those troops in New York, California and Washington had federal approval.

As of Monday, about 44,500 National Guard members were activated in the fight against coronavirus and about 80% of those service members are now on Title 32 status.

But the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, or TAPS, an advocacy group for families of fallen service members, is looking to get the remainder of those troops on federal status and to backdate it to help Hickok’s family receive federal benefits, such as monthly survivor compensation, education benefits or a death gratuity.

TAPS representatives sent a letter Friday to the leadership of the House and Senate Committees on Veterans Affairs expressing concern about the benefits for service members deployed to combat the pandemic. The letter says the benefits are uneven and some troops could be without coverage should they become ill or die, according to the letter.

The letter is in advance of legislation being written to help get full active-duty benefits to National Guard and Reserve troops deployed in response to the pandemic.

“Our concern has been, first, that should they contract this virus they get the care they should be getting. Also, if they were to die from [the coronavirus], their family gets the full protections and benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Defense Department,” Wheeler said.

Troops should not be left with only state benefits because they vary too greatly, she said. The hope is to get the legislation passed on its own or as part of another coronavirus package.

More than 740 members of the National Guard have tested positive for the virus as of Friday, according to the Defense Department. The information does not clarify which of those troops were activated at the time that they tested positive. About 3,919 service members of all military branches have tested positive.

Hickok and Navy Chief Petty Officer Charles Robert Thack er Jr., 41, are the only two service member deaths from the virus, though another 97 were hospitalized by it.

Hickok’s widow, Marianne Abbruzzesi-Hickok, said Friday that she questions why the Guard is treated different.

“This is combat on American soil. It’s a pandemic,” she said. “They are all warriors, and they are out there fighting this. The Guardsmen and women do not have the same protections, their families do not have the same protections, yet they’re all fighting the same fight.”

Travel restrictions put on its own or as part of another coronavirus package.

More than 740 members of the National Guard have tested positive for the virus as of Friday, according to the Defense Department. The information does not clarify which of those troops were activated at the time that they tested positive. About 3,919 service members of all military branches have tested positive.

Hickok and Navy Chief Petty Officer Charles Robert Thack er Jr., 41, are the only two service member deaths from the virus, though another 97 were hospitalized by it.

Hickok’s widow, Marianne Abbruzzesi-Hickok, said Friday that she questions why the Guard is treated different.

“This is combat on American soil. It’s a pandemic,” she said. “They are all warriors, and they are out there fighting this. The Guardsmen and women do not have the same protections, their families do not have the same protections, yet they’re all fighting the same fight.”

“I’m impressed by the screening during a time when airmen and their families face restrictions,” he said. “Everyone can sit around and complain but there are positive messages,” he said.

Mom Gina Pompa, 41, recalled going to drive-in movies as a teenager.

“I think this is a great thing to do,” she said. “It gives us something to do on a Saturday night whereas the last several weekends we have been hanging out at home.”

Yokota Force Support Squadron managers came up with the idea while brainstorming things people could do while socially isolating, said Outdoor Recreation manager Caleb White.

“Our biggest thing is just getting something out to the community and get people out of the house and give them something to do,” he said.

White promised more drive-in movies.

“We plan on doing this staggered, once every couple of weeks,” he said, adding that the base has ordered a giant outdoor television for future screenings that will arrive May 6.

Benefits sought for military families who lose a service member to virus
VIRUS OUTBREAK

FROM FRONT PAGE

In Georgia, Gov. Brian Kemp is pushing one of the most aggressive reopening plans in the United States. Barbershops, gyms and nail salons were allowed to reopen Friday, and dine-in restaurant service and movie screenings were freed to resume Monday — despite warnings that, without sufficient testing, the state could see a surge in infections.

Even there, though, life was far from normal Monday. Patrons went to restaurants with X’s on some tables, chatted across the room to one another and gave orders to servers whose faces were covered by masks.

Draft guidance for reopening from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provided more evidence Monday that “normal” would not be on the menu — at restaurants or anywhere else. No break rooms for employees, no lunchrooms for school children, the guidelines recommended. Children should eat in their classrooms, not the cafeteria, and congregants should stay 6 feet apart in church.

In Maryland, Gov. Larry Hogan envisions a phased reopening — something the federal government also advocates. First small shops could open, and some outdoor recreation could resume, then perhaps restaurants and bars. Phase three, which the administration cautions it has no realistic time frame for reaching, would allow larger social gatherings and high-capacity bars, restaurants and entertainment venues could reopen.

You know, the stuff that two months ago might have just been called “city life.”

Even with strict rules in place, it’s a delicate dance, as Dennis McKinley learned this weekend. He had planned to open two of the three branches of his restaurant, The Original Hot Dog Factory, for dine-in service in the Atlanta area. He reversed himself Monday after getting about 40 calls from politicians, community leaders and customers urging him to keep diners out.

“Ultimately, The Original Hot Dog Factory can’t make it without the community’s support, so I felt it was important to hold back and wait,” McKinley said.

What he calls community support, employers might refer to as confidence. Economies run on that, especially the American one, in which consumer spending accounts for 70% of all activity. When people are scared or times uncertain, they tend not to shell out.

“After an initial pop to growth, when businesses do reopen, it’s going to be a slog until there’s a vaccine.”

Mark Zandi

NORMAL: Some states will adopt federal government’s phased reopening suggestion

Poll: Cost makes some cautious of seeking virus care

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — As states gear up to reopen, a poll finds a potential obstacle to controlling the virus: adults say cost would keep them from seeking help if they thought they were infected.

The Gallup-West Health Care Costs Survey out Tuesday finds that 9% of those 18-29 and 12% of those 30-54 would avoid seeking treatment because of concerns about the cost of care, even if they thought they were infected with the coronavirus.

A significantly higher number, 14%, would avoid seeking treatment because of worries if they had fever and a dry cough, two widely publicized symptoms of COVID-19.

And though President Donald Trump and President-elect Joe Biden have made coronavirus testing free to patients, and some insurers are waiving copays and deductibles for treatment within their networks, the survey suggests such messages may not be getting to the public.

The survey delivers “important and distressing information,” said John Auerbach, head of the nonpartisan Trust for America’s Health. “I hope that policy makers take note of this.”

With so many reluctant to seek care, “it could pose problems in testing people,” Auerbach added.

Without widespread testing, it will be problematic to lift the restrictions Auerbach’s group won’t work with government models to strengthen public health, and was not involved with the poll.

Experts say that to succeed, the nation’s reopening has to be based on three pillars: testing, tracing those who came in contact with infected people and treatment for those who become ill.

If people may be sick are reluctant to come forward, that could create a blind spot for government and public health officials trying to calibrate reopening plans.

The poll found that members of minority groups, younger people, those with less than a college degree and people making less than $40,000 a year were more likely to say they would avoid treatment for economic reasons.

Fourteen percent of nonwhite poll respondents said they would avoid treatment even if they suspected they had the coronavirus, compared with 6% of whites citing costs. Yet COVID-19 has proven to be more lethal among blacks and Hispanics, a grim phenomenon linked to higher rates of underlying diseases such as diabetes and lower rates of health insurance coverage.

The survey found those 18-29 were the most likely to avoid treatment.

Although COVID-19 claims a disproportionately high share of victims among older people, there’s plenty of evidence that healthy young adults can also get seriously sick.

In the poll, 12% of those 18-29 said they would avoid treatment because of cost worries.

Surprisingly, 7% of those 65 and older said cost would be an issue for them. Virtually all U.S. seniors are covered by Medicare, and many have additional protection for out-of-pocket expenditures.

The poll also found income was a significant attitude. Only 3% of those making $100,000 or more cited cost as a barrier to COVID care, compared with 14% of those earning under $40,000.

“A pretty substantial chunk of the population could remain hidden from view because of the U.S. health care cost crisis,” said Dan Witters, research director for the poll.

The Gallup-West Health Care Costs Survey was based on telephone interviews conducted April 1-14, with a random sample of 1,017 adults, ages 18 and older, living in all 50 U.S. states and Washington.

For results based on the entire sample the margin of error is plus or minus 3.7 percentage points.

by the numbers

Percentage of people, because of cost concerns, would avoid seeking COVID-19 treatment even with a fever and a cough.

12%

Percentage of those ages 18-29 who said they would avoid COVID-19 treatment because of cost concerns.

14%

Percentage of people who, because of cost concerns, would avoid seeking COVID-19 treatment even with a fever and a cough.

14%
Trump suggests opening schools before summer

By Collin Binkley
Associated Press

President Donald Trump says states should “seriously consider” reopening their public schools before the end of the academic year, even though dozens already have said it would be unsafe for students to return until the summer or fall.

Trump made the comments Monday in a call with governors, discussing how to reopen their economies, among other topics.

“You might start thinking about schools opening, because a lot of people are wanting to have the school openings. It’s not a big subject because children have done very well in this disaster that we’ve all gone through,” he said. While addressing Vice President Mike Pence, Trump added that it’s something “they can seriously consider, and maybe get going on.”

None of the governors on the call responded to the suggestion, according to a recording obtained by The Associated Press.

Reopening schools is considered key to getting the economy moving again. Without a safe place for kids, many parents would have difficulty returning to work.

But some education officials say opening schools quickly would bring major risk and little credit. For schools, that includes putting students’ desks 6 feet apart, serving meals in the classroom instead of the cafeteria and closing playgrounds.

Reopening schools is considered key to getting the economy moving again. Without a safe place for kids, many parents would have difficulty returning to work.

But some education officials say opening schools quickly would bring major risk and little credit. For schools, that includes putting students’ desks 6 feet apart, serving meals in the classroom instead of the cafeteria and closing playgrounds.
VIRUS OUTBREAK

France, Spain ready lockdown exit plans

Associated Press

PARIS — France and Spain, two of the worst-hit countries in the coronavirus pandemic, were laying out separate road maps Tuesday for lifting their lockdowns, while signs emerged that the virus has been all but vanquished in New Zealand and Australia.

But on the other side of the globe, Brazil was emerging as a new hot spot for infections. And new doubts were raised over whether Japan would be able to host the already postponed Summer Olympics next year without the development of a vaccine.

The key question of when to reopen schools loomed around the world as nations seek to restart their battered economies.

Although the coronavirus seems to affect children far less seriously than adults, many officials and parents are concerned about the health risks that school openings could pose. Some point to the difficulties of ensuring that children stick to social distancing and frequent hand washing, and to the health risks for teachers.

But many parents would struggle to return to work without schools being open, hampering efforts to counter the world’s deep economic tailspin.

In France, President Emmanuel Macron wants schools to start reopening May 11, but teachers, parents and some mayors are raising alarms. The government says parents can decide whether to send their children back to class and is releasing more details Tuesday later Tuesday.

Joel Wilmot is among a growing number of French mayors refusing to reopen their schools, at least for now.

“I am not against the reopening of schools, but he is the Facebook page of his northern town of Hautmont. But he listed seven reasons why he’s not ready to do so, including ill-equipped teachers and cleaning staff and a poll that suggests most French parents oppose school reopenings. So he’s keeping his town’s six schools closed “until further notice.”

Greece, which has managed to keep its coronavirus death toll low at 136 people, was also releasing more details Tuesday about easing its lockdown but schools remained a tricky topic.

 Schools will be reopened “gradually, with conditions” and subject to constant review, said the Health Ministry’s coronavirus spokesman, infectious diseases specialist Sotiris Tsiodras. No opening date has yet been set.

Hard-hit Italy, however, is keeping schools closed until September. That is putting parents in the difficult position of returning to work without access to their typical fallback babysitters: grandparents, who are now considered off-limits because they are the most vulnerable to the virus.

Emer McCarthy, who works in the Vatican’s child protection office, tweeted that Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte had addressed a lockdown exit “for everyone except Italy’s children. Incredible. No mention of schools, childcare options, nothing. But football yes.

#ChildrenNotSeenNotHeard.”

In China, where the pandemic began, schools began opening on Monday, but only to seniors at middle and high school levels preparing for exams. Class sizes were cut to no more than 30.

China’s daily number of new cases has fallen into the single digits, but authorities remain vigilant over the possibility of a second wave of infections.

The number of confirmed infections worldwide has risen to over 3 million and the confirmed death toll has topped 211,000, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. Italy, Spain, France and Britain accounted for more than 21,000 virus-related deaths each.

In Brazil, President Jair Bolsonaro has insisted COVID-19 is just a “little flu” and claimed there is no need for the type of restrictions that have slowed the infection's spread elsewhere.

Brazil, which has 211 million people, has reported 4,600 deaths and 67,000 confirmed infections. But the true numbers are believed to be higher given the lack of testing and the many people who haven’t sought hospital care.

Medical officials in Rio de Janeiro and at least four other major Brazilian cities have warned that their hospital systems are on the verge of collapse or are too overwhelmed to take any more patients. There are also signs that a growing number of Brazilian victims are dying at home.

Bolsonaro says Brazilians need to resume their lives to prevent an economic meltdown but most state governors have adopted restrictions to keep people home and slow the virus's spread.

New Zealand, on the other hand, reported just three new infections Tuesday. Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said people had done an incredible job of breaking the chain of virus transmission but cautioned they needed to remain vigilant.

“There may still be some smoldering ashes out there, and they have the potential to become a wildfire again, if we give them the chance,” she said, quoting a microbiologist.

Her government loosened its lockdown, which had shuttered schools and most businesses. Surfers hit the waves at dawn Tuesday, builders returned to construction sites and baristas fired up espresso machines.

In Australia, hundreds returned to the water after Sydney’s iconic Bondi Beach reopened to swimmers and surfers. Still, people can only use the beach during daylight, cannot linger and are limited to staying within 250 meters of it.

Australia has reported only 83 virus deaths, less than the tolls reported by over 25 U.S. states.

But the virus is still a long-term foe. The president of the Japan Medical Association, Yoshitake Yokokura, said he thinks it will be difficult to hold the rescheduled Tokyo Summer Olympics even in 2021 without an effective coronavirus vaccine. Japan and the International Olympic Committee agreed to postpone the Tokyo 2020 Games until July 2021 due to the pandemic. Japan is under a monthlong state of emergency amid a rapid increase of infections and some local warning say hospitals are overburdened.

Personal protective equipment from Turkey on the way to US

Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey — Turkey has dispatched a planeload of personal protective equipment to support the United States as it grapples with the coronavirus outbreak.

A Turkish military cargo carrying the medical equipment took off from an air base near the capital, Ankara, on Tuesday, the state-run Anadolu Agency reported. It was scheduled to land at Joint Base Andrews, Md., later in the day.

A top official said Turkey is donating 500,000 surgical masks, 4,000 overalls, 528 gallons of disinfectant, 1,500 goggles, 400 N-95 masks and 500 face shields.

Turkey has sent similar medical equipment aid to 55 countries including Britain, Italy and Spain — in an apparent attempt to improve its global standing by positioning itself as a provider of humanitarian aid in times of crisis.

“We pledge to help our friends and allies in need to the best of our ability and stand in solidarity with nations around the world at this difficult time,” said Fahrettin Altun, the presidential communications director.

The U.S. ambassador to Turkey, David Satterfield, issued a statement thanking Ankara for the donation.

“During times of crisis, like the worldwide effort to combat COVID-19, close coordination among like-minded allies and partners is key to developing a swift and effective response. None of us can do this alone,” he said.

He said: “On behalf of the U.S. Government, I want to thank our NATO Ally Turkey for today’s generous donation of medical supplies and other essential equipment.”

Satterfield said the equipment would be “received and managed” by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
VA vows to continue hiring at rapid pace

BY NIKKI WENTLING Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs hired nearly 1,000 nurses during a two-week period to help treat a growing number of coronavirus patients.

From March 29 to April 11, the VA hired 3,183 employees and 981 of them are registered nurses. The department looked to boost hiring in the early weeks of the pandemic, putting out calls for nurses, respiratory therapists and other health care professionals to help care for facilities across the country. Many of the jobs are temporary.

Some of the workers have come from health care systems that temporarily laid off employees, the VA said. Dozens of hospitals have furloughed or laid off dozens of nurses because of lost revenue after they postponed elective procedures.

The VA expects to hire an additional 4,500 employees in the next several weeks, VA Secretary Robert Wilkie said in a statement.

In Virginia, where the VA has required dedicated staff,” he said. “On behalf of the Veterans we are working with, I salute those who have recently joined the VA team so we can continue serving Veterans during this national emergency.”

The VA’s death toll continues to climb. As of Tuesday, 7,342 VA patients had tested positive for the virus, and 457 patients had died. The death toll does not include veterans who aren’t enrolled in the VA or VA patients who died at hospitals outside the VA system.

The VA was already facing a shortage of health care workers before the pandemic, and were more than 49,000 vacancies across the VA system during the first quarter of 2020, and more than 44,000 of those were vacancies in the VA health care system.

In order to hire employees faster, the White House’s Office of Management and Budget waived restrictions on salaries for retired health care workers who wanted to temporarily return to the VA.

The VA created a 262-page coronavirus response plan in March, in which the department predicted 30% of its employees would be absent from work because of travel restrictions during the pandemic, but a wide partisan divide suggests President Donald Trump’s public campaign against vote by mail may be resonating with his Republican backers.

The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research findsDemocrats are more than Republicans to support their state conducting elections exclusively by mail, requesting Monday and Tuesday.

All states conduct elections differently, and only five states automatically mail ballots to every voter. But in response to the virus, some states — including Ohio on Tuesday — have shifted their primaries to virtually all-mail elections.

The Republican National Committee has been fighting some of those moves. Republicans successfully petitioned a New Mexico court to block the state from holding its June primary exclusively by mail, forcing the state to open some polling places and only send applications for absentee ballots to voters.

The Republican attorney general in Texas argued unsuccessfully in a legal case that the coronavirus should not be an automatically accepted excuse for people seeking absentee ballots in that state.

Meanwhile, the Republican-controlled Wisconsin legislature rebuffed a last-minute request to hold that state’s April 7 primary and state court election by mail. Democrats won a contested Supreme Court race, but before shuttered polling locations left voters in long lines at polling places in Green Bay and Milwaukee, where only five of 183 stations were open.

But the debates over the primaries may only be a preview of the partisan battles ahead if the virus is still forcing stay-at-home orders and social distancing in November.

The poll finds that 39% of Americans favor conducting all-mail elections, up from 19% in 2018. Another 46% are opposed. But even more, 48%, favor a move to voting only by mail if the coronavirus outbreak is ongoing in November.

The poll also shows 60% of Americans support allowing people to vote via absentee ballots without requiring them to give a reason if the outbreak is still happening. That includes 73% percent of Democrats and 46% of Republicans. Some 40% of Republicans are opposed.

The partisan differences could have a strong impact across the presidential battleground states. Five of the top seven swing states — Michigan, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin — have divided government, and skirmishes over voting have already broken out in several. In some, there are signs that Democratic areas are moving faster than GOP ones to embrace mail voting.

In Wisconsin, Democrats have already started to bolster their mail voting operations for November. Reliably Democratic Milwaukee, the state’s largest city, will send every voter a request for an absentee ballot. Republicans, who have resisted a similar step statewide, acknowledge that Milwaukee’s move would put them at a disadvantage. “It makes winning Wisconsin harder,” said Andrew Hint, chairman of the state Republican Party.

The poll found roughly two-thirds of Republicans worried that voter fraud would be a major problem with all-mail voting.

Brynn Alexander, 36, who just moved with her husband to military housing in Alabama, is one of those who worries about security.

“How do you even identify that the mail got to the right person?” Alexander asked. She added that she favored exceptions for some, like her 70-year-old mother, but preferred votes at the polls.

“It’s going to be better to make everyone feel confident with the result,” she said of in-person voting in the presidential election.

“You don’t want one party or the other saying the other side cheated.”

POLL: Party key in mail voting views

Fewer flyers, but TSA still finding guns

Associated Press

With far fewer people flying because of travel restrictions during the coronavirus pandemic, airport security screeners are naturally finding fewer guns in carry-on baggage.

But the ratio of guns to passengers seeking to board airplanes has jumped sharply.

The Transportation Security Administration said Monday that it found 58 guns at checkpoints from March 22 to April 22, compared with 346 guns over the same stretch last year.

Adjusting for the 95% drop in passengers, that means TSA screeners found one gun for every 80,000 people screened — or 2.7 times the rate of a year ago, when they found one gun for every 216,200 people.

TSA declined to offer an explanation or theory about why the rate of finding guns has gone up this spring.

Jeffrey Price, who teaches aviation security at the Metropolitan State University in Denver, said he thinks there are several real reasons. Among them: travelers have fewer guns in public. The TSA has found a recent spike in gun sales, an “apocalypse mindset” that makes people feel justified carrying a gun on a plane, and shorter TSA lines.

With fewer people to screen, TSA screeners “can take a lot more time with each person and their belongings,” Price said.

Checkpoint screeners use X-ray machines that alert them to take a closer look if something appears unusual in the contents of a bag. In past government-run covert tests, TSA screeners processing pre-pandemic levels of passengers failed to find fake weapons a high percentage of the time, according to published reports.

While the exact numbers remain classified, the inspector general of the Homeland Security Department reported in an unclassified summary that a 2017 test found problems with both screener performance and TSA equipment.

One trend has held constant in 2019 and 2020: Most of the guns TSA screeners find in carry-on bags are loaded. The agency said that from Feb. 24 through April 22 its screeners found 317 guns, and 263 were loaded.

It is legal to ship guns on an airline plane if they are unloaded, packed in a locked case and stored in checked baggage that goes in the cargo hold.
**California governor weighs easing order for businesses**

**Associated Press**

SACRAMENTO — California Gov. Gavin Newsom is considering a strategy for slowly reopening businesses in a state divided between rural areas with small numbers of coronavirus cases and urban areas struggling with still-rising death tolls.

On Friday, Newsom planned to outline what it would take to ease his March stay-at-home order, which aimed to slow the spread of COVID-19 by keeping most people at home and closing all but essential businesses.

Health officials said that the efforts have helped flatten the curve of the virus outbreak, but they also came with an unemployment and economic upheaval.

On Monday, Newsom said that the state’s “a few weeks away, not months away” from making “meaningful changes” in the order. It was the governor’s most optimistic timeline yet, though he didn’t specify what “meaningful” meant.

**Arizona**

GLENDALE — Contractors overseen by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are completing the rehabilitation of a shuttered Phoenix hospital planned to house coronavirus patients. The work comes amid signs that a spike of cases may emerge in Arizona and as Gov. Doug Ducey nears a decision on whether to ease his closures and stay-at-home orders.

The $41 million rehabilitation of St. Luke’s Medical Center should be done by the end of the week and handed to the state Department of Health Services.

Health Services officials on Monday reported no new deaths for the first time in a month, holding steady at 275. The state reported its first death on March 21 and had only two other days without deaths before Monday.

Confirmed cases climbed to 6,190 with 190 new cases.

Last week saw a major surge of deaths, with three days of 20 or more. Idaho

BOISE — Idaho nursing homes have been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic, with at least 135 reported deaths at 16 different long-term care facilities in the state. So far, at least 26 people at such facilities have died from COVID-19.

In addition, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare officials are currently tracking 10 deaths, in eight long-term care facilities, department spokeswoman Nikki Forbing-Orr said last week.

State health officials have declined to release the names of the facilities that have had outbreaks, however.

The situation makes it difficult to gauge if the facilities had appropriate access to testing for staff and residents or whether they have had previous infection control problems.

**Kentucky**

LOUISVILLE — Gov. Andy Beshear hinted at business reopenings beginning in May, but said Kentucky’s “new normal” will require people and workers to wear masks in public areas while the coronavirus remains a threat.

Beshear said that beginning May 11, state officials are planning to ease restrictions over four weeks to reach Phase 1 of the White House guidelines for reopening. He did not give details on what kinds of businesses would be allowed to restart operations.

But with that easing comes new requirements for the public to wear masks even outdoors, and since contacts will increase as people go back to work and stop practicing social distancing.

The masks “help us to open things a little earlier,” Beshear said. He urged families to find cloth or surgical masks, and said that the state will be handing out masks in some areas.

**Louisiana**

BATON ROUGE — Gov. John Bel Edwards announced Monday that he is extending Louisiana’s stay-at-home order through May 15, saying that some regions haven’t shown enough progress in fighting the coronavirus outbreak to lessen widespread restrictions on businesses and public gatherings.

But if the state’s rate of infections continues to fall, the Democratic governor said that he expects his constraints to begin to loosen May 16. He said that more churches and retailers would thus be allowed to open statewide at that time, including hair and nail salons and some restaurant dine-in services — all at only 25% of their legal occupancy rate.

Until mid-May, however, Edwards’ current March 23 order banning gatherings of more than 10 people, limiting restaurants to takeout and delivery and closing casinos, gyms, bars, theaters, bowling alleys, tattoo parlors and salons will largely remain in place.

Edwards said that he made the decision in consultation with infectious disease specialists and other public health experts, as Louisiana ranks sixth in the nation for confirmed virus cases per capita. He said that they used the White House guidelines for phased reopening, and Louisiana didn’t yet meet the first phase.

He said that he told Vice President Mike Pence about the extension of the stay-at-home order, and Pence supported the decision.

**Michigan**

LANSING — Gov. Gretchen Whitmer said Monday that she will allow commercial and residential construction to restart in Michigan within a week or two, and is taking a “hard look” at whether to let industrial sectors reopen in the next phase of loosening her stay-at-home restrictions during the coronavirus pandemic.

The Democratic governor also said that she will ask the Republican-led Legislature to lengthen her emergency declaration by 28 days before it expires late Thursday.

A lawmaker-approved extension, she said, would keep liability protections for health care workers and first responders in place amid the outbreak. She noted that she generally does not need legislative approval to continue exercising her emergency powers, however.

Operations to be reopened besides construction include “outdoor enterprises.” Whitmer did not elaborate at her news conference, which also featured remarks from two of nearly 30 business, health care and other leaders who are advising the governor on how to safely restart the economy.

The advisers said that they split Michigan into eight work regions. Low-, medium- and high-risk sectors will be allowed to reopen in each region based on the pandemic’s risk levels: urgent; stabilizing and recovery.

**Mississippi**

JACKSON — All inmates and employees in Mississippi prisons have been given masks to try to slow the spread of the coronavirus, the state Department of Corrections said Monday.

Advocates have repeatedly raised concerns that the highly contagious virus is difficult to control in prisons, where inmates have little chance to keep distance from one another even when they’re told to do so. They have also pushed for wider testing for COVID-19 in prisons.

The corrections department said that four Mississippi inmates had tested positive for the highly contagious virus by Monday — two at the State Penitentiary at Parchman and two in the Winston-Choctaw County Regional Correctional Facility. The department has previously said that one of the Parchman cases was an inmate who died.

The department said that 21 inmates had tested negative for COVID-19 as of Monday. Two wards at the worst-affected site was at the Marshall County Correctional Facility and one was at Delta Correctional Facility.

**Pennsylvania**

HARRISBURG — Golfers, boaters, anglers and campers got some good news Monday when Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf announced that some restrictions on those outdoor activities will be loosened in the coming days.

Wolf said that golf courses, marinas, guided fishing trips and privately owned campgrounds will be allowed to reopen on Friday, as long as they comport with state-issued guidelines to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Campgrounds in state parks will remain closed until mid-May, at least.

Wolf said in a statement that the reopenings amount to “measured lifting of steps” that will help the economy and be good for mental health.

**South Carolina**

COLUMBIA — Gov. Henry McMaster has extended the state’s emergency declaration that allows him to issue executive orders necessary to deal with the coronavirus pandemic.

McMaster spokesman Brian Symmes said that the declaration came as the current 15-day declaration expires. McMaster’s initial declaration came on March 13.

The governor, who has said that his goal is to have the South Carolina economy “humming” again by June, has already begun to loosen the restrictions that have shuttered portions of the state’s business community for weeks.

Last week, he said that some businesses previously deemed nonessential — department stores, flea markets, florists, bookstores and music shops — would be allowed to reopen.
Democrats get new chance to force McGahn testimony

By Mark Sherman
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The federal appeals court in Washington is giving the House another shot at forcing former White House counsel Don McGahn to appear before Congress.

Nine of the Democratic-dominated court’s 11 judges were hearing arguments by telephone Tuesday in a dispute between House Democrats and President Donald Trump’s administration over a subpoena for McGahn’s testimony that was issued a year ago by a House committee.

The hearing comes two months after a three-judge panel of the court ruled that judges have no role to play in the subpoena fight between Congress and the White House over the testimony of high-ranking administration officials.

The full court threw out that initial ruling when it opted for new arguments. Tuesday’s session was also expected to include a separate dispute over the House’s effort to stop the Trump administration from spending billions of dollars that Congress didn’t authorize for a wall on the U.S.-Mexico border.

Both cases turn on whether the House can seek the help of federal judges.

Time is growing short for Democrats, who want McGahn’s testimony before the November elections. But it’s unclear whether the issue of Russia’s interference in the 2016 election will be a salient one.

The House Judiciary Committee first subpoenaed McGahn in April 2019 to compel the testimony of former special counsel Robert Mueller’s Russia investigation. Trump directed McGahn not to appear, and the Democratic-led panel filed a federal lawsuit to force McGahn to testify.

A trial judge ruled in November that the president’s close adviser does not have, as the administration claimed, absolute immunity from testifying to Congress.

But the appeals court judges said in a 2-1 ruling that the case should be dismissed because the Constitution forbids federal courts from refereeing this kind of dispute between the other two branches of government.

House lawmakers had sought McGahn’s testimony because he was a vital witness for Mueller, whose report detailed Trump’s outrage over the investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election and the president’s efforts to curtail it.

Special election

Delores Hospedales, right, hands a paper to a voting center worker at Edmondson High School to cast a vote in the 7th Congressional District special election Tuesday in Baltimore. Democrats Kweisi Mfume and Republican Kimberly Klacik won special primaries for the Maryland congressional seat that was held by the late Elijah Cummings. Voters have been encouraged to mail in their ballots and only three in-person polling centers have been set up across the district in an effort to contain the spread of the new coronavirus.

Family finds pet 54 days after deadly tornadoes

Associated Press

COOKEVILLE, Tenn. — A Tennessee family was reunited with their dog nearly two months after she went missing when tornadoes ripped through their home in early March.

Bella, the Australian shepherd who was missing for 54 days, was found Sunday, WTVF-TV reported. She was spotted again Friday, and Sarah Romeyn, a friend of the Johnsons who tracks missing animals after storms, received a call about her.

Eric Johnson helped with Bella’s capture after getting a call from Romeyn. He was then taken to a pet grooming store to receive care.

The family told WTVF-TV earlier this month that they plan to rebuild their house in the same place the tornado tore it apart last month. “We’re not going to let fear run us out of our property and our home,” Faith Johnson said.

Tesla’s new feature recognizes stop signs and traffic signals

By Tom Krisher
Associated Press

DETROIT — After testing on public roads, Tesla is rolling out a new feature of its partially automated driving system designed to stop stop signs and traffic signals.

The update of the electric car company’s cruise control and auto-steer systems is a step toward CEO Elon Musk’s pledge to convert cars to fully self-driving vehicles later this year.

But it also runs contrary to recommendations from the U.S. National Transportation Safety Board that include limiting where Tesla’s Autopilot driving system can operate because it has failed to spot and react to hazards in at least three fatal crashes.

In a note sent to a group of Tesla owners who were picked to test the stop light and sign recognition feature, the company said it can be used with the Traffic Aware Cruise Control or Autosteer systems. The feature will slow the car whenever it detects a traffic light, including those that are green or blinking yellow. It will notify the driver of its intent to slow down and stop, and drivers must push down the gear selector and press the accelerator pedal to confirm that it’s safe to proceed.

The company warns in the note obtained by The Associated Press that drivers must pay attention and be ready to take immediate action “including braking because this feature may not stop for all traffic controls.”

The note says that over time, as the system learns to avoid a tractor-trailer that was crossing in its path. The car struck the trailer, which sheared off the U.S.-Mexico border. Both cases turn on whether the house can seek the help of federal judges.

Time is growing short for Democrats, who want McGahn’s testimony before the November elections. But it’s unclear whether the issue of Russia’s interference in the 2016 election will be a salient one.

The House Judiciary Committee first subpoenaed McGahn in April 2019 to compel the testimony of former special counsel Robert Mueller’s Russia investigation. Trump directed McGahn not to appear, and the Democratic-led panel filed a federal lawsuit to force McGahn to testify.

A trial judge ruled in November that the president’s close adviser does not have, as the administration claimed, absolute immunity from testifying to Congress.

But the appeals court judges said in a 2-1 ruling that the case should be dismissed because the Constitution forbids federal courts from refereeing this kind of dispute between the other two branches of government.

House lawmakers had sought McGahn’s testimony because he was a vital witness for Mueller, whose report detailed Trump’s outrage over the investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election and the president’s efforts to curtail it.

Delores Hospedales, right, hands a paper to a voting center worker at Edmondson High School to cast a vote in the 7th Congressional District special election Tuesday in Baltimore. Democrats Kweisi Mfume and Republican Kimberly Klacik won special primaries for the Maryland congressional seat that was held by the late Elijah Cummings. Voters have been encouraged to mail in their ballots and only three in-person polling centers have been set up across the district in an effort to contain the spread of the new coronavirus.

Bella, the Australian shepherd who was missing for 54 days, was found Sunday, WTVF-TV reported. She was spotted again Friday, and Sarah Romeyn, a friend of the Johnsons who tracks missing animals after storms, received a call about her.

Eric Johnson helped with Bella’s capture after getting a call from Romeyn. He was then taken to a pet grooming store to receive care.

The family told WTVF-TV earlier this month that they plan to rebuild their house in the same place the tornado tore it apart last month. “We’re not going to let fear run us out of our property and our home,” Faith Johnson said.

The company warns in the note obtained by The Associated Press that drivers must pay attention and be ready to take immediate action “including braking because this feature may not stop for all traffic controls.”

The note says that over time, as the system learns to avoid a tractor-trailer that was crossing in its path. The car struck the trailer, which sheared off the U.S.-Mexico border. Both cases turn on whether the house can seek the help of federal judges.

Time is growing short for Democrats, who want McGahn’s testimony before the November elections. But it’s unclear whether the issue of Russia’s interference in the 2016 election will be a salient one.

The House Judiciary Committee first subpoenaed McGahn in April 2019 to compel the testimony of former special counsel Robert Mueller’s Russia investigation. Trump directed McGahn not to appear, and the Democratic-led panel filed a federal lawsuit to force McGahn to testify.

A trial judge ruled in November that the president’s close adviser does not have, as the administration claimed, absolute immunity from testifying to Congress.

But the appeals court judges said in a 2-1 ruling that the case should be dismissed because the Constitution forbids federal courts from refereeing this kind of dispute between the other two branches of government.

House lawmakers had sought McGahn’s testimony because he was a vital witness for Mueller, whose report detailed Trump’s outrage over the investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election and the president’s efforts to curtail it.

Delores Hospedales, right, hands a paper to a voting center worker at Edmondson High School to cast a vote in the 7th Congressional District special election Tuesday in Baltimore. Democrats Kweisi Mfume and Republican Kimberly Klacik won special primaries for the Maryland congressional seat that was held by the late Elijah Cummings. Voters have been encouraged to mail in their ballots and only three in-person polling centers have been set up across the district in an effort to contain the spread of the new coronavirus.

Bella, the Australian shepherd who was missing for 54 days, was found Sunday, WTVF-TV reported. She was spotted again Friday, and Sarah Romeyn, a friend of the Johnsons who tracks missing animals after storms, received a call about her.

Eric Johnson helped with Bella’s capture after getting a call from Romeyn. He was then taken to a pet grooming store to receive care.

The family told WTVF-TV earlier this month that they plan to rebuild their house in the same place the tornado tore it apart last month. “We’re not going to let fear run us out of our property and our home,” Faith Johnson said.
Trump keeps focus on base amid pandemic

WASHINGTON — During times of war and strife, national leaders often aim to unite a broken country and, in the process, broaden their appeal beyond their most loyal supporters. Not President Donald Trump.

Confronting a pandemic that has upended his presidency and threatened his reelection prospects, Trump has focused almost exclusively on tending to his base. While the coronavirus has claimed the lives of more than 56,000 Americans, eliminated more than 20 million jobs and dashed the routines of daily life for nearly everyone, Trump has leveled attacks on Democrats. He's blamed former President Barack Obama's team for his own administration's failures, picked fights with reporters and thrown rhetorical bombs meant to thrill his hardcore supporters.

During a particularly rough stretch last week, Trump pledged to bar foreign visitors from entering the country. The executive order Trump ultimately signed was less severe than he suggested, but it still gave him a chance to highlight action on an issue more than he suggested, but it still gave him a chance to highlight action on an issue, or at least make a show of it.

Trump's approval rating has remained remarkably steady over the course of his presidency, with about 42% of poll respondents saying they approve of the job he's doing as president, according to a new The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. That's even as many Republicans, however, believe Trump is playing it right. Stephen Bannon, the president's former chief strategist, believes 2020 is a “base election” year and thinks Trump can broaden his support because of a “new nationalism” born in the wake of a pandemic that began in China. He predicted Americans would rally around their president during a period of crisis. That includes Arizona, which has a vast suburban population uneasy with the constant Trump drama, tweets and base plays.

“People are going to look for stability,” said Doug Cole, a veteran Republican operative in Arizona who worked on John McCain's 2008 presidential campaign. “Biden can capitalize on that.”

Trump campaign officials who request anonymity to describe campaign strategy stressed that the election is still six months away, an eternity in politics.
Germany hopes to avoid 3rd summer drought

Associated Press

BERLIN — Germany’s farmers, foresters and firefighters are eagerly awaiting widespread rain forecast for later this week, as a warm, dry spring has raised fears of a third summer drought in as many years. Ahead of a virtual climate meeting Tuesday for officials from 30 countries, German Environment Minister Svenja Schulze said that the previous two years of dry weather, combined with overall higher temperatures, show the need for action.

“We can see that the last two summers have been extremely dry, that this is already causing enormous problems for our agriculture and forestry,” she said. “That is why we have to adapt to the changes we can no longer avert, and we must ensure that it does not get any worse … We really must push ahead with climate protection measures now.”

Reservoirs are already low, and if there is no heavy rain in the next two to three weeks, widespread crop failures could ensue, said Mojib Latif, a meteorologist with the Helmholtz Center for Ocean Research in Kiel.

“The last two years were extraordinarily dry,” he told the Rhein-Neckar Zeitung newspaper. “The ground needs rain.”

The 2018 drought caused severe crop damage, resulting in such a poor harvest that the German government had to come up with an aid package for farmers worth hundreds of millions of euros. At the same time, rivers and lakes hit record low levels, causing environmental disruption and hitting the freshwater shipping industry.

Last year was also exceptionally dry, causing widespread damage to the country’s forests. Wildfire warnings are already at their second-highest level this year, Ulrike Hoeftken, minister for the environment and forests in the state of Rheinland-Pfalz, told the news agency dapd.

“A third summer drought in a row would be catastrophic,” she said.

There has been almost no rain since March 14, said German Weather Service meteorologist Andreas Friedrich, and it’s too early to tell whether the precipitation expected later this week will be enough to alleviate the situation.

“If May were to be wet again, then we would have an easing of the situation, then there would be long-time drought,” he said. “Of course, May were to be as dry as April, then we would have to fear a serious drought situation, but no meteorologist in the world knows that at the moment.”

Libya: Turkish drone hit food truck convoy

Associated Press

CAIRO — Eastern Libyan forces laying siege on the country’s capital, Tripoli, accused their rivals on Tuesday of staging an attack in which a Turkish drone hit a food truck convoy in the country’s west, killing at least five civilians.

The militia groups loosely allied with a U.N.-supported but weak government in Tripoli denied attacking civilians, saying instead that they targeted trucks carrying equipment and ammunition for eastern forces trying to take over Tripoli.

The fighting over Tripoli erupted last April, when east-based forces under commander Khalifa Hifter launched an offensive to capture the city. In recent weeks, violence has escalated with both sides accusing each other of shelling civilian neighborhoods. The U.N. has said that the violence has resulted in a humanitarian crisis in Libya that could amount to war crimes.

Ahmed al-Mosmari, a spokesman for Hifter forces, said that the drone strike took place late Monday near the district Mizda, 114 miles south of Tripoli.

Hifter’s forces control most of eastern and southern Libya, while the besieged Tripoli administration rules just a corner of the country’s west. Both sides are supported by a network of foreign weapons suppliers.

On Monday, Hifter, in an attempted show of strength, declared a 2015 U.N.-brokered political deal to unite the oil-rich country “a thing of the past.”

The fighting over Tripoli erupted last April, when eastern-based forces under Khalifa Hifter launched an offensive to capture the city.

The Tripoli-based government said that it wasn’t surprised by Hifter’s announcement, and urged Libyans to join “a comprehensive dialogue and continue in the democratic path to reach a comprehensive and permanent solution based on ballot boxes.”

While the 2015 agreement has so far failed to bring unity or stability to the divided country, Hifter’s announcement threatens to further complicate U.N. efforts to broker a political settlement to the civil war.

Libya has been in turmoil since 2011, when a civil war toppled longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi, who was later killed. The chaos has worsened in the recent round of fighting as foreign-backed Libyan militias and governments increasingly intervene, despite their pledges to the contrary at a high-profile peace summit in Berlin earlier this year.

Turkey has sent armored drones, air defenses and more recently, Syrian militias with missiles into Libya to prop up the embattled Tripoli government. Meanwhile, Russia has deployed hundreds of mercenaries to boost Hifter’s assault. The United Arab Emirates and Egypt also back Hifter.

Slice of normal: Naples’ beloved pizza is back

Associated Press

NAPLES, Italy — Wood is burning again in Naples’ pizza ovens, giving a symbolic and savory boost to Neapolitans after two months of lockdown meant an end to their most iconic and favorite food.

Pizzerias reopened Monday night in the birthplace of pizza, albeit under restrictions and for home delivery only.

Whereas pizzerias in Rome and other cities were banned in Naples, they were banned in Naples to make room for take out and delivery services, albeit under restrictions and for home delivery only.

“People enjoy the sunny weather Monday on the riverbank of Germany’s most important river, the Rhine, in Cologne, Germany. Reservoirs in Germany are low after droughts the past two summers.”

Olive oil is put on a pizza set for delivery Monday at the Caputo pizzeria in Naples, Italy.

The fighting over Tripoli erupted last April, when east-based forces under Khalifa Hifter launched an offensive to capture the city.

“The last two years were extraordinarily dry,” he told the Rhein-Neckar Zeitung newspaper. “The ground needs rain.”

The 2018 drought caused severe crop damage, resulting in such a poor harvest that the German government had to come up with an aid package for farmers worth hundreds of millions of euros. At the same time, rivers and lakes hit record low levels, causing environmental disruption and hitting the freshwater shipping industry.

Last year was also exceptionally dry, causing widespread damage to the country’s forests. Wildfire warnings are already at their second-highest level this year, Ulrike Hoeftken, minister for the environment and forests in the state of Rheinland-Pfalz, told the news agency dapd.

“A third summer drought in a row would be catastrophic,” she said.

There has been almost no rain since March 14, said German Weather Service meteorologist Andreas Friedrich, and it’s too early to tell whether the precipitation expected later this week will be enough to alleviate the situation.

“If May were to be wet again, then we would have an easing of the situation, then there would be long-time drought,” he said. “Of course, May were to be as dry as April, then we would have to fear a serious drought situation, but no meteorologist in the world knows that at the moment.”

“People enjoy the sunny weather Monday on the riverbank of Germany’s most important river, the Rhine, in Cologne, Germany. Reservoirs in Germany are low after droughts the past two summers.”

“People enjoy the sunny weather Monday on the riverbank of Germany’s most important river, the Rhine, in Cologne, Germany. Reservoirs in Germany are low after droughts the past two summers.”

“A third summer drought in a row would be catastrophic,” she said.

There has been almost no rain since March 14, said German Weather Service meteorologist Andreas Friedrich, and it’s too early to tell whether the precipitation expected later this week will be enough to alleviate the situation.

“If May were to be wet again, then we would have an easing of the situation, then there would be long-time drought,” he said. “Of course, May were to be as dry as April, then we would have to fear a serious drought situation, but no meteorologist in the world knows that at the moment.”
Large seabird colony gets new habitat

VA NORFOLK — Workers are wrapping up a project to transform a fortied island into a new habitat for Virginia’s largest seabird colony.

Contractors have been clearing out the island’s trees, sealing up entrances to the buildings and laying sand and gravel for the birds to nest. The director of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries expected that work would be done this week, The Virginian-Pilot reported.

Fort Wool, which was built as a barrier against British ships after the War of 1812, is next to where transportation officials paved over the nesting site for the seabird colony as part of a $4 billion project to expand the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel. Since February, trained dogs have been keeping seabirds from landing near the construction zone.

The expansion project is scheduled to be completed in November 2025.

High-speed car chase ends in crash, arrest

NE LINCOLN — One driver was arrested after a pursuit at speeds up to 130 miles per hour in a crash outside of Lincoln.

The Nebraska State Patrol said that the chase began in eastern Lincoln around 11:15 p.m. Saturday when a trooper saw three cars racing down O Street at speeds up to 90 mph.

The trooper tried to stop one of the three vehicles, a Hyundai Genesis, but the driver fled north on 84th Street before turning east on Highway 6 toward Interstate 80.

The Hyundai started driving west in the eastbound lanes before trying to cross the median into the westbound lanes. The driver lost control of the vehicle and crashed.

The 19-year-old driver, Faud Al Dhary, was arrested on suspicion of fleeing arrest, reckless driving and engaging in racing and several other charges.

Instagram squirrel with 1 eye back in nature

LA LAFAYETTE — A one-eyed squirrel that gained a social media following is being returned to nature.

The Louisian Department of Wildlife & Fisheries took Willamina the squirrel from Emily Istre of Lafayette on Thursday, the Acadiana Advocate reported.

Istre created an Instagram account for the squirrel, @one_eyed_willa, and posted images of it eating off a plate, snuggling with her or hanging out in an elaborate indoor treehouse. In videos, she sings a lullaby to it and does yoga while the squirrel scampers underneath.

The account gained more than 1,600 followers, but she found that caring for a baby squirrel is exhausting: “It’s like having a toddler on meth,” Istre told the newspaper.

In a class by herself

A woman wearing graduation attire is photographed in the middle of an empty street on the University of Kansas campus Sunday in Lawrence, Kan. The campus has canceled in-person classes and is instead offering remote learning as part of an attempt to stem the spread of the coronavirus.

Hundreds of gallons of oil spills into river

NH HANOVER — About 350 gallons of heating oil leaked into the Connecticut River from a New Hampshire facility, authorities said.

The Hanover Fire Department was dispatched to the U.S. Army Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory at about 4 p.m. Saturday after a security officer discovered a leak, according to a statement from the fire department.

It was determined that the leak was coming from a newly installed boiler in the main lab. The boiler and leak were quickly isolated and shut down. But some oil made its way into a floor drain and into the river.

The spill was contained with 550 feet of a rigid boom across the river. The boom will be in place while Clean Harbors cleans up the spill.

Virtual program tackles people’s grief responses

MI DETROIT — Members of the global Science Gallery Network in Detroit, Atlanta and Dublin, Ireland, are collaborating on a program that will feature discussions on grief.

The free international online event called Science of Grief is scheduled for Wednesday on Science Gallery Dublin’s YouTube page and will be followed by a virtual after-party on Science Gallery Detroit’s Instagram Live.

Academics, researchers, scientists, health care workers, artists, storytellers and musicians will provide content on responding to many forms of grief.

Dublin will showcase a variety of Irish speakers and performers. Atlanta’s program will illustrate a lineup of academics and health care workers speaking to the coronavirus pandemic. Detroit poet and storyteller Omari Banksdale will speak about loss associated with the COVID-19 virus. Neuroscientist Dr. Yewande Pearse will address grief’s impact on the brain.

Man arrested after shooting inside Walmart

IN KOKOMO — A 30-year-old Chicago man has been arrested for a shooting inside a central Indiana Walmart that left another man injured, authorities said.

Kokomo police said that officers were sent to a Walmart around 3 p.m. Saturday and found a 29-year-old male with several gunshot wounds following a fight inside the store.

The victim required surgery and was being hospitalized.

Keith N. Terrell was arrested and charged with aggravated battery.

Police warn drivers about reptile road rage

FL BRADENTON — Around this time of year, Floridians don’t just have to worry about aggressive drivers on the road — they should be on the lookout for aggressive alligators, too, according to officials who, on Friday, had to remove a 9-foot gator from a county road.

The Manatee County Sheriff’s Office warned motorists that it’s that time of year when alligators fall in love, but might not always be so affectionate.

“It’s alligator mating season,” the sheriff’s office wrote in a Facebook post: “This means they could be more mobile and aggressive than usual.”

A male gator measuring 9 feet, 2 inches had to be removed from a roadway after it was spotted “being aggressive with traffic.” Sheriff’s deputies captured the reptile and relocated it to an alligator farm.

People attending the Saturday gathering in Springfield stayed in their cars for the most part. Springfield police spokesman Ryan Walsh said in a statement:

But officers, acting on a tip, stopped one car and recovered what they described as an AK-47 loaded with a 30-round magazine, Walsh said.

Driver Keonn Gibson and passenger Jamal Clark, both 18, of Springfield, face firearms charges. Gibson also faces motor vehicle charges.

From wire reports
**New this week: Chesney, JoJo, teen romances**

Associated Press

Here's a collection curated by The Associated Press entertainment journalists of what's arriving this week on streaming services and music platforms this week.

**Music**

JoJo, “good to know”: JoJo has been a top-notch vocalist since she blazed the charts at 13 with her boy-bye hit “Leave (Get Out)” in 2004. Since then, she’s released other great songs that showcased her powerhouse vocal abilities, but she’s showing the best version of herself on “good to know,” her fourth studio album, which comes out Friday. It comes a year after the singer re-recorded and re-released her first two albums on her own label after legal battles with her former label. You can hear the resilience and fight in her voice — “good to know” is a more than good. It’s grand.

“Offset and Friends”: Migos rapper Offset is giving back to the city that raised him by putting on a virtual music experience to benefit the Atlanta Community Food Bank. “Offset and Friends” will livestream Wednesday from 7 to 9 p.m. EDT and include performances by the Grammy-nominated rapper married to Cardi B as well as Young Thug, Rich the Kid and SAINt JHN. The event will be available on Offset’s Facebook page and on the Oculus headset VR program’s official Venues.

Kenny Chesney, “Here and Now”: The entire music industry has basically requested Ed Sheeran’s writing services for success, including One Direction, Justin Bieber, Tim McGraw, Alicia Keys, BTS, Hootie & the Blowfish, Halsey and Kelsea Ballerini, among others. Country giant Kenny Chesney has joined that long list with “Tip of My Tongue,” a song he co-wrote with Sheeran for his new album “Here and Now,” out Friday. Chesney spent 18 months writing and recording the project, which is his 19th release. He says the album will have a “high fun factor.”

— Music Editor Mesfin Fekadu

**Television**

“Never Have I Ever”: A coming-of-age story from Mindy Kaling of “The Office” and “The Mindy Project” — which means comedy rubs shoulders with vividly drawn characters and empathetic storytelling. Newcomer Mahtyfi Ramakrishnan stars as Devi, a type-A high school sophomore rebonding from a family tragedy in the 10-episode series premiering Wednesday on Netflix. She’s retained her Ivy League ambitions but, more immediately, she’s got a boyfriend and popularity. Devi, a first-generation Indian American, is odd at odds with her mother (Poorna Jagannathan) and leans on her loyal pals Eleanor and Fabiola, (Ramona Young, Lee Rodriguez). The series, co-created by Kaling and Lang Fisher, features tennis great John McEnroe as its unlikely narrator. We won’t spoil the explanation.

“Normal People”: The concept of “normal” is at odds with current events, but it can be just as deceptive in other circumstances. That’s the case with “Normal People,” a 12-episode series out Wednesday on Hulu and based on Sally Rooney’s best-selling novel of the same name. Marianne and Connell (Daisy Edgar-Jones of “War of the Worlds,” Paul Mescal) are small-town Irish schoolmates whose attraction is complicated by bed-rock differences. Their lives are destined to change when they head to college in Dublin, along with his high school crush, Marianne. Their relationship. Note: It’s not a chaste romance in the book or on screen, so judge it as a family viewing option accordingly.

“Gold Digger”: Juliana Ormond (“Mad Men,” “Legends of the Fall”) stars in this contemporary thriller, which debuted May 4 on Acorn TV and unspools in two-episode weekly blocks. Ormond plays newly divorced Julia who, after making her husband’s (Alex Jennings) and their children’s priority, feels liberated by a relationship with Benjamin (Ben Barnes, “Westworld”). But is it love or money that the much younger man has in mind? Julia’s family believes it’s the latter and doesn’t remain silent. There’s also a “dark family secret” to be revealed and, for bonus points, a supporting turn by the cliffs of Dover, England, where the six-part drama was largely filmed.

— Television Writer Lynn Elber

**Movies**

“California Dreamin’”: The Criterion Channel has programmed an irresistible hallucinatory Friday evening, offering performances and conversations about overcoming the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic. Organizers hope participants can help inspire people to “emerge from this crisis better than when it began.”

— Film Writer Lindsey Bahr

**New this week: Chesney, JoJo, teen romances**

Associated Press

**Apatow film starring ‘SNL’s’ Davidson to open on demand**

Judd Apatow’s “The King of Staten Island,” starring Pete Davidson, will release straight to home-on-demand video after having its theatrical release canceled. Universal Pictures said Monday that “The King of Staten Island” will debut as a $20 rental on digital platforms June 12. It is Apatow’s first film as a director since 2015’s “Trainwreck” and Davidson’s biggest movie project yet, and had been slated for theatrical release on June 19.

Davidson co-wrote the semi-autobiographical “The King of Staten Island,” a comedy about a young man living with his mother (Marisa Tomei) on New York’s Staten Island. During the pandemic, Davidson spent 18 months writing and recording the project, which is his 19th release. He says the album will have a “high fun factor.”

Prince Harry records message for Thomas the Tank Engine

Prince Harry recorded a special message to celebrate the 75th anniversary of children’s favorite Thomas the Tank Engine.

The Duke of Sussex introduced a new program called “Thomas and Friends: The King of Staten Island,” a family-friendly animated series tailored to celebrate the 75th anniversary of children’s favorite Thomas the Tank Engine. The concept was introduced with a special message from Prince Harry, whose work on the Youth for Christ’s 1999 documentary portrait of young people includes Harry’s father and grandmother, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex. The Duke of Lagos Live and the Duke of London will be livestreamed at 9 a.m. EDT Friday for a free screening of “The King of Staten Island,” a family-friendly animated series.

— Film Writer Lindsey Bahr

**Oprah, Julia Roberts part of star-studded COVID-19 livestream**

Oprah Winfrey, Julia Roberts and President George W. Bush will among 200 participants in a star-studded 24-hour global livestream.

The Call to Unite will kick off Friday evening, offering performances and conversations about overcoming the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic. Organizers hope participants can help inspire people to “emerge from this crisis better than when it began.”

— Film Writer Lindsey Bahr

From The Associated Press

**From The Associated Press**

Oprah Winfrey, Julia Roberts and President George W. Bush will among 200 participants in a star-studded 24-hour global livestream.

The Call to Unite will kick off Friday evening, offering performances and conversations about overcoming the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic. Organizers hope participants can help inspire people to “emerge from this crisis better than when it began.”

— Film Writer Lindsey Bahr

**From The Associated Press**

Quincy Jones, Jennifer Garner, Cristiano Ronaldo, Shriver, Questlove, Yo-Yo Ma, Eva Longoria, Naomi Campbell and Alanna Morissette are expected to participate. Each participant will answer calls in their own way, whether through sharing a story or offering a prayer.

The event will be livestreamed at unite.us and on Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Twitch, LinkedIn and SiriusXM Stars.
OPINION

Justices rightly sided with health insurers

BY JON HEALY
Los Angeles Times

L
ooks like health insurers will get their “bailout” after all. The Supreme Court ruled Mon-
day that Congress, in 2015, had authorized the Depart-
ment of Health and Human Services to put up $4.7 billion in unex-
pected funding to offset unexpected losses insurers suffered from the Affordable Care Act.

One might think after four years of court battles, a court dozen years of experience in the ex-
changes, insurers whose customers for out-of-pocket costs. That’s one reason why the

one, regardless of the person’s prior condi-
tions, and couldn’t charge sick people more
than they charged healthy ones.

Under the ACA, insurers had to offer a policy to anyone who wanted to buy insurance, regardless of pre-existing conditions.

The court ruled in favor of the four in-
surers that brought claims against the
United States not because what Congress had done was unfair or wrong, but because it hadn’t stopped the risk-corridor payments the right way. And that’s not surprising; Republicans didn’t have the votes to change the Affordable Care Act (or “fund Obamcare” broadly, as Texas Sen. Ted Cruz demonstrated in 2013), so they used the leverage they had in the appropriations process to wring out various pieces of it through the back door.

The risk-corridor programs is one ex-
ample of that; another is the failure to reim-
burse insurers for the discounts they were required to give very low income customers for out-of-pocket costs. That hasn’t ended, either. The Department of Justice’s Office of Federal Claims has ruled in favor of mul-
tiple insurers’ claims that Congress could not negate the government’s obligation to pay them the reimbursements required by law simply by failing to appropriate money for them.

Jon Healey is the Los Angeles Times’ deputy editor.

CONTACT US

Washington
tel: +1(202) 886-0003
633 3rd St. NW, Suite 116, Washington, DC 20001-3050
Reader letters
letters@stripes.com
Additional contacts

OMBUDSMAN
Enrie Gates

The Stars and Stripes ombudsman protects the free flow of news and information, reporting any attempts by the military or other authorities to undermine the newspaper’s independence. The ombudsman also responds to concerns and questions from readers, and monitors coverage for fairness, accuracy, timeliness and balance. The ombudsman welcomes comments or suggestions for improvements by email at ombudsman@stripes.com, or by phone at 202 886-0003.

© Stars and Stripes 2020

Fewer public experiences and fewer public venues may leave us feeling as if we have permanently lost a year (or more) of our lives.

BY JENNIFER RUBIN
The Washington Post

hen I wrote more than a month ago that COVID-19 would funda-
mentally change the way we live and interact with virtually all aspects of our lives from sports to politics to schooling, I worried that perhaps I was overstating the prospect of such sweeping transformation. I was wrong, and now I realize that I underestimated the duration — and potentially the permanence — of many changes.

Put aside the happy talk (and danger-
ously toxic advice) from President Don-
ald Trump. Dr. Deborah Birx, the White House coronavirus response coordinator, warns that social distancing will be in place for weeks to months, to ramp up, subject to any setbacks (and business going first). Sporting events? A vaccine, you might not go to a gym, the beach or a mall — no matter what the social distancing. If you are working from home now, you may very well still be work-
ing from home six months or a year from now. Moreover, your employer may even-
tually decide the business can lease half the space it currently does and have you work from home permanently.

Students at K-12 schools and at colleges may go through a full year in which they never physically meet a teacher or attend a school play or an athletic event in person. Instead of live theater, concerts and sporting events, we will all watch programs in a pay-per-view format. Movie theaters were dying off anyway with streaming, so they may just become part of the past. The rest may vanish as well. Don’t bank on watching a summer blockbuster movie in a theater. How many of these entertain-
ing experiences we are going to lose is unknowable.

While Trump and the Republicans insist they are going forward with a live presi-
dential convention in August, Birx says so far the plan looks like a virtual convention with virtual reality. Just like the tele-rallies, the realness of our communal experiences. Neverthe-
less, we simply cannot be confident when and how we will resume our lives as they were before the pandemic. To reduce anxiety and stress about the unknown, it’s best to focus on making our lives, however pres-
ently constrained, as rewarding and happy. What other choice do we have?

Jennifer Rubin writes reported opinion for The Washington Post.

How much of our lives will virus change forever?

The appearance of advertising in this publication does not
endorse by, the U.S. government. As a DOD newspaper,
the New York City Public Library, 425 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10018.~F3HIJKLM
© Stars and Stripes 2020

.publish, use or patronage without regard to race, color,
human lives will not change to something approxi-
ating “normal” before we get a vaccine. You will likely not enter a store without a mask, sit in a crowded movie theater or restaurant, or fly on a plane. Before there was a vaccine, you might not go to a gym, sit in a crowded movie theater or restaurant, or fly on a plane. Before there was a vaccine, you might not go to a gym, sit in a crowded movie theater or restaurant, or fly on a plane.

Would being able to vote by mail stop us from going to the polls? Probably not. The Supreme Court ruled last year that state election laws can’t require voters to try to vote in person on Election Day 2020, meaning that states will be able to offer mail-in voting and perhaps a few other efforts at freebasing. There is no telling how that will work, but it is likely that the virus will continue to play in empty stadiums and arenas forTV audiences only.

During the pandemic, the appearance of advertising in this publication will not
endorse by, the U.S. government. As a DOD newspaper, the New York City Public Library, 425 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10018.

The appearance of advertising in this publication does not
endorse by, the U.S. government. As a DOD newspaper, the New York City Public Library, 425 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10018.

This newspaper is authorized by the Department of
Defense for distribution to members of the military services overseas. However, the contents of Stars and Stripes are unofficial, and are not to be considered official policies or, endorsed by, the U.S. government. As a DOD newspaper, Stars and Stripes may be distributed through official channels and use appropriated funds for distribution to remote locations overseas. DOD personnel are located.

The appearance of advertising in this publication does not
endorse by, the U.S. government. As a DOD newspaper, the New York City Public Library, 425 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10018.

This newspaper is authorized by the Department of Defense for distribution to members of the military services overseas. However, the contents of Stars and Stripes are unofficial, and are not to be considered official policies or, endorsed by, the U.S. government. As a DOD newspaper, Stars and Stripes may be distributed through official channels and use appropriated funds for distribution to remote locations overseas. DOD personnel are located.

The appearance of advertising in this publication does not
endorse by, the U.S. government. As a DOD newspaper, the New York City Public Library, 425 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10018.

This newspaper is authorized by the Department of Defense for distribution to members of the military services overseas. However, the contents of Stars and Stripes are unofficial, and are not to be considered official policies or, endorsed by, the U.S. government. As a DOD newspaper, Stars and Stripes may be distributed through official channels and use appropriated funds for distribution to remote locations overseas. DOD personnel are located.
COVID-19 outbreak threatens to starve Africa

By JESSICA FANZO
Bloomberg Opinion

It is easy to see the beginnings of things and harder to see the ends,” Joan Didion wrote in “Goodbye to All That.” Her words resonate in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, when no one has a clue whether we’re at the beginning, in the middle or near the end. In sub-Saharan Africa the at not knowing is especially worrisome, because it’s difficult to tell whether the continent’s fragile food supply systems will weather the strain.

While the continent has made great strides toward economic security over the past several decades, COVID-19 could stymie that progress. Conditions vary greatly from country to country, but many struggle to ensure that their citizens have access to basic essentials: soap to clean hands, potable water and nutritious food to keep immune systems strong. Hunger and food insecurity have not gone away; 23% of people in sub-Saharan Africa are undernourished. Because of the global economic fallout from COVID-19, the number of people worldwide who are food insecure could nearly double this year to 265 million, the United Nations World Food Programme estimates, and much of that increase will be felt in Africa.

At the same time, obesity and noncommunicable diseases (heart disease and diabetes, for example) are rising in many low-income countries, Africa included, and both are proving to be serious complications for people infected with COVID-19. Much of the continent is also still dealing with other complex infectious diseases — HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other neglected tropical illnesses — that will make it more difficult to treat COVID-19 infections.

As it expands on the continent, COVID-19 will put further stress on already strained health systems.

At the same time, food supply chains are starting to falter. Lockdowns in 30 African countries have made it very challenging for farmers to sell their goods in markets or for workers to get to fields. Food assistance is not always making it to those most in need.

Many informal markets — the infamous wet or open-air markets, where most Africans shop for food — are closed, further imperiling food insecurity and threatening malnutrition. Reports from the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition’s offices in Nigeria and Mozambique note that prices of food, particularly fruits and vegetables, have increased significantly.

In many African cities, social distancing and self-isolation are a recipe for disaster. Slums and informal settlements are overpopulated and lack basic services. And even if people infected with the coronavirus had safe places to isolate, some feel they must work to keep their families fed.

With global unemployment rising, remittances worldwide are also expected to fall by 20%, or nearly $110 billion, according to the World Bank. In sub-Saharan Africa, they may drop by 23%. This will push more people to go to work, increasing their exposure.

To be sure, African countries have a few things working in their favor. For one, they have experience with massive infectious diseases, and public health systems have been strengthened over the past decade. In the past crisis, African governments can take some early lessons from the rest of the world that has been grappling with the pandemic a month or two longer, and we hope they will not be left behind.

The continent is still 60% rural, and many urban Africans have close ties to the countryside. With luck, lower population density in rural areas may slow the spread of COVID-19, allowing countries to continue growing food — that is, if they can get access to seeds and the technologies needed to plant and harvest. Support to food producers is an absolute necessity.

Sub-Saharan Africa is also fortunate to have a relatively young population, which may make it better able to weather outbreaks of COVID-19 with less hospitalization and death.

Still, it is hard to see the end.

To ensure that Africa doesn’t starve, and that it can weather the COVID-19 storm, it is essential to make sure people are guaranteed access to food, water, soap, masks, and cash transfers to support their families.

The poorest and most vulnerable should be the priority. World governments with their donor partners, including the World Bank and the World Food Programme, will be counting on the continent for the next four months. Businesses that make food products need support as well. We all must help to make sure food chains remain intact.

A woman pushes a cart of jerry cans of water, as people often have to walk half an hour several times a day and wait in line in order to get enough water to wash hands, bathe and cook, on the outskirts of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, last month.

The pandemic makes the world more dangerous

By DOYLE McMANUS
Los Angeles Times

T he COVID-19 pandemic has claimed more than 200,000 lives, thrown the global economy into chaos.

It’s making the world more dangerous, too.

In the Middle East, Iranian gunboats have harassed U.S. warships in the Persian Gulf, and Iranian-backed militias have attacked U.S. bases in Iraq.

In Asia, China has continued its drive to take control of the South China Sea, sinking a Vietnamese fishing boat and sending an oil survey ship into Malaysian waters.

North Korea, which has to be overthrown, has fired off missiles and remained strangely silent about rumors that its leader, Kim Jong Un, is dead or dying.

Even Russia, with its own surge of coronavirus cases, has resumed buzzing U.S. and NATO aircraft over the Baltic and Mediterranean seas.

It’s never easy to see a time when these countries see an opening to do things that we would normally combat — but that they are quietly doing — when we’re off-balance,” said John McLaughlin, a former acting director of the CIA.

“I’m sure they all consider us not only distracted, but militarily less adroit right now than we normally would be,” he said in a recent podcast.

Not surprisingly, Trump administration officials insist they’re not distracted, although the nation’s medical and economic catastrophes have understandably taken most of their attention.

President Donald Trump responded to Iran’s recent actions with a bellicose tweet, saying he had instructed the Navy “to shoot down any and all Iranian gunboats if they harass our ships at sea.”

Pentagon officials said a tweet is not an order, and they have not changed their rules of engagement, which allow U.S. ships to fire in self-defense.

The Navy said it sent three warships into the South China Sea to reinforce rules of navigation, a long-standing Pentagon mission in the resource-rich, strategically crucial region.

But only one country has an aircraft carrier operating in the western Pacific now, and it’s China. The two U.S. carriers in the region were confined to port after crew members were stricken with COVID-19: the Theodore Roosevelt in Guam and the Ronald Reagan in Japan.

With the contagion spreading on land and sea, the economy in free fall and unrelenting chaos in the White House, why would anyone be distracted?

The long-term effects of the pandemic look even more alarming: a global depression that could persist for years, more failed states and unmitigating big-power competition.

China has been trying to win friends and escape blame for the new coronavirus’ orig in by doling out aid and medical supplies in an effort so heavy-handed it has created a backlash in some countries.

But don’t take any comfort in that. America’s shambling response to the crisis has helped turn the U.S. into a global image as a competent cutting-edge nation.

The United States and China “are two extremely different places,” said a former U.S. official that an American democracy looks no better than Chinese authoritarianism.

Now add one more problem: a global leadership vacuum. Unlike during most major international crises of the postwar world, this time the U.S. president has gone missing.

“This is the first post-American crisis of our time. There’s no U.S. leadership,” Thomas C. Wright, a foreign policy expert at the Brookings Institution, told me. “The administration isn’t engaging with its allies except to worry about whether China is gaining gains.”

Normally the Group of 7 industrial democracies would coordinate solutions to economic efforts to speed an economic recovery.

But under this year’s G-7 chairman, one Donald J. Trump, that’s not happening.

The president has held two video meetings with his G-7 colleagues — but he’s been the odd man out, asking the others to join him in calling COVID-19 the “Chinese virus” and saying he would halt U.S. funding for the World Health Organization.

If our battle with COVID-19 lasts much longer, our economy will likely recover sooner than those of South Korea, Japan or Germany, all of which have managed the pandemic more successfully.

And in a global recession compounded by mounting disorder, everyone loses.

“...the longer the pandemic goes on, the more the world will change,” Wright warned. “The real risk is that a long crisis will exacerbate international cooperation... and leave a more anarchic world.”

It’s hard to get foreign-policy scholars compare this moment to two critical periods in the last century. After World War II ended in 1945, the United States, the only major power with its economy intact, led a massive recovery effort, fired up to make sure of relative peace and prosperity not only for itself and its European allies, but for its defeated enemies, Germany and Japan.

After World War I ended in 1918, with an influenza pandemic similar to the coronavirus, no joint recovery effort was launched. Nations went their own way, embracing nationalist policies and protectionist economics, and the next global cataclysm soon followed.

This moment, alas, looks more like 1918, a time when the United States withdrew from the world and international order increased. And we know how well that turned out.

Doyle McManus is a Washington columnist for the Los Angeles Times and director of the journalism program at Georgetown University.
Military Matters

A Stars and Stripes Podcast

Every controversial topic has two sides. We look into the ones that matter to you.

New episodes available now

Available on

at Stripes.com/podcasts

Sponsored by
Government calls end to French soccer season

PARIS — The French government called off the seasons for soccer and rugby leagues on Tuesday because of the coronavirus pandemic.

France is set to come out of lockdown on May 11, but the government banned all major sporting events until September.

"The 2019-20 season of professional sports, notably soccer, won't be able to resume," Prime Minister Edouard Philippe said. "It's certainly how those performances on tape, you get even more comfortable with the looks the Chiefs did manage to get on keeping the star defensive end.

"When you see their performances on tape, you get even more comfortable with the looks the Chiefs did manage to get on keeping the star defensive end.

missed the final 14 games of last year contract options Monday, 2012.

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The Kansas City Chiefs won their first Super Bowl in 50 years thanks in large part to their blazing speed on defense.

They spent the past weekend getting their defense up to speed, too.

The Chiefs only had five scheduled plays — they traded back into the draft to pick up a sixth round pick and made a point of using their choices to prioritize speed and athleticism. Second-round pick Williams, third-round pick Gay Jr. ran the second-fastest 40-yard dash among linebackers at the NFL scouting combine, and fourth-round pick L'Jarius Sneed not only had the fastest time among safeties at 4.37 seconds but the fourth-fastest of any player that ran during the week in Indianapolis.

The run on speed even continued after the draft. The Chiefs signed five defensive backs and two linebackers as undrafted free agents, and one of them — burner's second-fastest 40-yard dash on game film.

That was certainly the case with Gay, Sneed and seventh-round pick Thakarius Keyes, both Jackson State players. They only played a handful of games last season because of off-the-field issues. Along with Sneed (Louisiana Tech’s L’Jarius Sneed) and (Tulane) mostly played against lesser competition, leaving all that and adding to a dearth of quality game film.

The speed they showed during the combine scouting combine wound up validating the looks the Chiefs did manage to get.

"When you see their performances on tape, you get even more comfortable with the looks the Chiefs did manage to get on keeping the star defensive end.

"We like guys, certainly in our situation, with a dearth of speed and can run," Veach said. "If we had the first pick in Round 4 it would have been Sneed, so we were certainly holding our breath there. Our guys did a good job of helping me be patient and work through the tape, looking at the浓缩版 play itself out and getting the sort of things they not only addressed those roster shortcomings, they managed to do it through the draft and with rookie free agents while acquiring the kind of speed they have been so sorely lacking.

The Chargers added Virginia’s Joe Reid, another wide receiver with a sub-4.40, 40-yard dash, while the Broncos used their first-round pick on Alabama wide receiver Jerry Jeudy (4.45) and their fourth-round selection on Missouri’s Albert Okwuegbunam, who had the combine’s fastest 40 among tight ends at 4.49 seconds.

"We like guys, certainly in our situation, with a dearth of speed and can run," Veach said. "If we had the first pick in Round 4 it would have been Sneed, so we were certainly holding our breath there. Our guys did a good job of helping me be patient and work through the tape, looking at the浓缩版 play itself out and getting the sort of things they not only addressed those roster shortcomings, they managed to do it through the draft and with rookie free agents while acquiring the kind of speed they have been so sorely lacking.

"We like guys, certainly in our situation, with a dearth of speed and can run," Veach said. "If we had the first pick in Round 4 it would have been Sneed, so we were certainly holding our breath there. Our guys did a good job of helping me be patient and work through the tape, looking at the浓缩版 play itself out and getting the sort of things they not only addressed those roster shortcomings, they managed to do it through the draft and with rookie free agents while acquiring the kind of speed they have been so sorely lacking.

"We like guys, certainly in our situation, with a dearth of speed and can run," Veach said. "If we had the first pick in Round 4 it would have been Sneed, so we were certainly holding our breath there. Our guys did a good job of helping me be patient and work through the tape, looking at the浓缩版 play itself out and getting the sort of things they not only addressed those roster shortcomings, they managed to do it through the draft and with rookie free agents while acquiring the kind of speed they have been so sorely lacking.

"We like guys, certainly in our situation, with a dearth of speed and can run," Veach said. "If we had the first pick in Round 4 it would have been Sneed, so we were certainly holding our breath there. Our guys did a good job of helping me be patient and work through the tape, looking at the浓缩版 play itself out and getting the sort of things they not only addressed those roster shortcomings, they managed to do it through the draft and with rookie free agents while acquiring the kind of speed they have been so sorely lacking.

"We like guys, certainly in our situation, with a dearth of speed and can run," Veach said. "If we had the first pick in Round 4 it would have been Sneed, so we were certainly holding our breath there. Our guys did a good job of helping me be patient and work through the tape, looking at the浓缩版 play itself out and getting the sort of things they not only addressed those roster shortcomings, they managed to do it through the draft and with rookie free agents while acquiring the kind of speed they have been so sorely lacking.

"We like guys, certainly in our situation, with a dearth of speed and can run," Veach said. "If we had the first pick in Round 4 it would have been Sneed, so we were certainly holding our breath there. Our guys did a good job of helping me be patient and work through the tape, looking at the浓缩版 play itself out and getting the sort of things they not only addressed those roster shortcomings, they managed to do it through the draft and with rookie free agents while acquiring the kind of speed they have been so sorely lacking.

"We like guys, certainly in our situation, with a dearth of speed and can run," Veach said. "If we had the first pick in Round 4 it would have been Sneed, so we were certainly holding our breath there. Our guys did a good job of helping me be patient and work through the tape, looking at the浓缩版 play itself out and getting the sort of things they not only addressed those roster shortcomings, they managed to do it through the draft and with rookie free agents while acquiring the kind of speed they have been so sorely lacking.

"We like guys, certainly in our situation, with a dearth of speed and can run," Veach said. "If we had the first pick in Round 4 it would have been Sneed, so we were certainly holding our breath there. Our guys did a good job of helping me be patient and work through the tape, looking at the浓缩版 play itself out and getting the sort of things they not only addressed those roster shortcomings, they managed to do it through the draft and with rookie free agents while acquiring the kind of speed they have been so sorely lacking.
Medical group: Olympics difficult without vaccines

By Stephen Wade
Associated Press

TOKYO — The medical community in Japan is moving toward a consensus that holding next year’s Tokyo Olympics may hinge on finding a coronavirus vaccine.

Japan Medical Association President Yoshitake Yokokura said on Tuesday that the Olympics were possible only if the infections were under control, not only in Japan, but globally.

“In my view, it would be difficult to hold the Olympics unless effective vaccines are developed,” Yokokura said.

He did not say whether he opposes the Olympics without vaccines.

Japan has reported 13,576 COVID-19 cases, and 712 others from people who arrived on cruise ship and were ashore near Tokyo earlier this year. On Tuesday, the health ministry reported 31 deaths and 64 new cases.

Japan and the International Olympic Committee agreed to postpone the Tokyo Games until July 23, 2021, because of the coronavirus pandemic. Japan is under a monthlong state of emergency amid a rapid increase of infections across the country.

A Japanese professor of infectious disease said last week he was also skeptical the Olympics could open in 15 months.

“I am very pessimistic about holding the Olympic Games next summer unless you hold the Olympic Games in a totally different structure, with no audience, or a very limited participation,” said Kentaro Iwata, professor of infectious disease at Keio University.

Yoshiro Mori, a former prime minister and now president of the organizing committee, told the newspaper Nikkan Sports there would be no more delays if the games can’t be held in 2021.

“No, in that situation, it will be canceled,” he said. “In the past, when there were such problems, like wartime, it has been canceled. This time, we are fighting an invisible enemy.”

Mori said: “This is a gamble for mankind. If the world triumphs over the virus and we can hold the Olympics, then our games will be so many times more valuable than any past Olympics.”

Devi Sridhar, a professor of Global Health at the University of Edinburgh, also said holding the Olympics may depend on finding a coronavirus vaccine. This could also apply to the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics.

She said a vaccine was “optimistically 12 to 18 months away.”

“Science is just half the battle,” Sridhar said in an email to The Associated Press. “The other half is convincing the vaccine first, health workers, those working with the vulnerable or the elderly, or the elderly themselves to use it.”

Yokokura said it was unclear how young, strong, Olympic athletes would “fit” into the “priority process.”

“The virus is spreading so fast that you can’t be too sure about the plan,” he said.

Masa Takaya, a spokesman for the Tokyo Olympics, said he was aware of the comments from the head of the Japan Medical Association.

“Understand there are a variety of opinions around the possibility of holding the games next year,” Takaya said. “Some medical experts are also expressing that it is too early to make a judgment.”

Lawrence said it would be reasonable to assume the quarter-backing of separate deals with 10 local businesses and post a total of 60 to 120 sponsored content messages a year on one of his social media accounts.

“So quickly it’s $60,000 to $120,000 a year,” Lawrence said. “You can see how the math adds up pretty quick in terms of opportunities for high-level student-athletes to earn a significant sum of money from activating their social and digital media presence on behalf of sponsors in the local community.”

While autograph signing and public appearances have been traditional ways for professional athletes to make extra money, most opportunities now are tied to social media.

The bridge between athlete and sponsor will likely be content delivery platforms — a cottage industry of sorts eager to link the two and cash in. And having those platform relationships in place will almost surely be a recruiting tool for schools.

There’s going to be a whole industry springing up around NIL — or, name, image and likeness, Lawrence said. “There is an ecosystem forming, and the initiants are jostling and developing different types of tools and technology, and it’s going to be wild.”

Opendorse and INFLCR (proounced “Influencer”) will be major players to start, and another company, Greenfly, plans to establish more of a presence in the college market.

All three have contracts with pro teams and leagues as well as college athletic departments. They store and manage content for the company to maintain the personal message with an agreed-upon delivery company. They could also allow those platform relationships in place will almost surely be a recruiting tool for schools.

The bridge between athlete and sponsor will likely be content delivery platforms — a cottage industry of sorts eager to link the two and cash in. And having those platform relationships in place will almost surely be a recruiting tool for schools.

The bridge between athlete and sponsor will likely be content delivery platforms — a cottage industry of sorts eager to link the two and cash in. And having those platform relationships in place will almost surely be a recruiting tool for schools.

The bridge between athlete and sponsor will likely be content delivery platforms — a cottage industry of sorts eager to link the two and cash in. And having those platform relationships in place will almost surely be a recruiting tool for schools.

The bridge between athlete and sponsor will likely be content delivery platforms — a cottage industry of sorts eager to link the two and cash in. And having those platform relationships in place will almost surely be a recruiting tool for schools.

The bridge between athlete and sponsor will likely be content delivery platforms — a cottage industry of sorts eager to link the two and cash in. And having those platform relationships in place will almost surely be a recruiting tool for schools.
**New Rangers park among MLB’s options**

**By Stephen Hawkins**

Associated Press

North Texas has more to offer than just the new Rangers ballpark should MLB decide to start the pandemic-delayed 2020 baseball season with teams grouped together in different regions.

Among the different plans looked at by Major League Baseball is to use Texas as a mid-American hub.

“Depending upon a variety of the other factors, it makes a lot of sense,” Rangers general Jon Daniels said Monday, when asked about the possibility of Texas being part of such a plan. “Just given the nature of the market, the proximity of a lot of the facilities, the quality of the facilities, the ability to not have baseball facilities, but the hotels in the area and other things that you’d need,”

While the Rangers have had “some involvement, just from a due-diligence standpoint” to help Major League Baseball gather information, Daniels stressed during a conference call with beat writers that its just among several options being looked at by league officials.

MLB and the players’ association have had preliminary discussions about potential ways for the season to start when given the go-ahead by federal, state and local governments and health officials amid the coronavirus. Having all the teams in the Texas area has been examined, and there has also been talk of having groups of teams in Texas regions, depending on health conditions.

The season was supposed to start March 26, two weeks after spring training was suspended because of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey has said that his state is willing to host all 30 major league teams at public health venues allow. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis both have indicated their willingness to allow NASCAR races without fans in their states, which could indicate the opportunity for other sports under similar conditions.

The Rangers still haven’t opened their brand-new $1.2 billion stadium with a retractable roof in Arlington, just off Interstate 30, halfway between Dallas and Fort Worth. Some players who live in the area have started working out at the recently completed ballpark. There are also several other stadiums nearby, including the Rangers’ Double-A franchise’s home in Frisco, and several top-notch college facilities, including TCU.

Houston’s Minute Maid Park, which also has a retractable roof, is about a four-hour drive from the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex.

In the Phoenix area, there are 10 spring training parks plus the Diamondbacks’ Chase Field, which has a retractable roof, and several college facilities. Florida has the domed Tropicana Field in St. Petersburg, the home of the Tampa Bay Rays, and other ballparks in the Tampa area.

**NBA practice facilities won’t open until May 8**

**By Tim Reynolds**

Associated Press

MIAMI — The NBA has pushed back the possible reopening date of some team practice facilities for at least a week until May 8 at the earliest, saying Monday the extra time was needed in part to make sure player training options would be safe and controlled in an effort to try to mitigate the threats caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

And when those facilities open, the rules will be strict.

The May 8 date is far from firm, the NBA said, warning teams that it “may push this timing back if developments warrant.”

The league planned on giving teams the option of reopening facilities as early as Friday, though ultimately decided more time was needed across the league for many reasons.

But whenever those practice courts open — local government clearance would be needed first in all cases — they won’t get by an immediate return to normal.

A person with knowledge of the league’s plans said players would have to wear face masks inside facilities except when working out, that any staff members present would have to wear face masks and gloves, and that a minimum distance of 12 feet would be required as a buffer between players and staff members.

The exception in that 12-foot case would be when medical or athletic training personnel are in contact with a player. Daniels pointed to the coronavirus crisis on condition of anonymity because the details were not public.

There are numerous other details of the league’s facility-reopening protocols, the person said, including:

- **Players who return to their home-team markets from out of the country or other regions must quarantine for 14 days before being allowed back in the facility.**

- **All equipment used by players in their voluntary workouts, including basketballs, will have to be disinfected before being used again. Players will not be allowed to share towels, and teams will not be permitted to make steam rooms, saunas, cold tubs, oxygen chambers or cryotherapy chambers at the facilities available.**

- **There will have to be designating a staff member as a “Facility Hygiene Officer” to oversee all new policies. Players will have to enter the facility alone, without family members, friends or personal security.**

- **All cell phones, keys and other often-touched items must be cleaned and disinfected upon entry to the facility.**

When teams can reopen, other rules will include a limit of four players at a facility at any one time, no practices or scrimmages will be allowed, and no head coaches or assistant coaches can be part of the voluntary workouts.

NBA players are also still prohibited from working out at public health clubs, fitness centers, or gyms.

**Blackhawks fire team president McDonough**

**By Jay Cohen**

Associated Press

CHICAGO — The Chicago Blackhawks fired team president John McDonough on Monday, cutting ties with a key figure in the most successful de- cades in team and will focus on reset- ting the organization to win both on and off the ice.”

The season was supposed to start March 26, two weeks after spring training was suspended because of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey has said that his state is willing to host all 30 major league teams at public health venues allow. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis both have indicated their willingness to allow NASCAR races without fans in their states, which could indicate the opportunity for other sports under similar conditions.

The Rangers still haven’t opened their brand-new $1.2 billion stadium with a retractable roof in Arlington, just off Interstate 30, halfway between Dallas and Fort Worth. Some players who live in the area have started working out at the recently completed ballpark. There are also several other stadiums nearby, including the Rangers’ Double-A franchise’s home in Frisco, and several top-notch college facilities, including TCU.

Houston’s Minute Maid Park, which also has a retractable roof, is about a four-hour drive from the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex.

In the Phoenix area, there are 10 spring training parks plus the Diamondbacks’ Chase Field, which has a retractable roof, and several college facilities. Florida has the domed Tropicana Field in St. Petersburg, the home of the Tampa Bay Rays, and other ballparks in the Tampa area.

**Blackhawks fire team president McDonough**

**By Jay Cohen**

Associated Press

CHICAGO — The Chicago Blackhawks fired team president John McDonough on Monday, cutting ties with a key figure in the most successful de-

"While we can reassure our fans there will be hockey again, no one knows what that will look like," Wirtz said in the statement. "What we do know is that we will take a new mindset to essentially transition the organization to win both on and off the ice."

Danny Wirtz, Rocky’s 43-year-old son and a vice president with the team, is replacing McDonough on an interim basis.

“I take this interim role with the utmost responsibility to the team and will focus on resetting the framework for the next generation of the Chicago Blackhawks,” Danny Wirtz said in the release. “I look forward to working with Rocky to identify our next leader.”

The 66-year-old McDonough is one of the most respected figures in sports business. He was presi-
dent of baseball’s Chicago Cubs before he was hired by Rocky Wirtz in 2007 to take over the Blackhawks.

McDonough was a big factor in Chicago’s rise to the top tier of the NHL on and off the ice. The team has an active sellout streak of 531 games. The organization is well known for its fan experi-
ence and marketing abilities, one reason why it has been a regular participant in the NHL’s outdoor games.
Ready to cash in
College athletes aren’t the only ones excited by earning potential under new rules

BY ERIC OLSON
Associated Press

Imagine a major-college quarterback with a sizable social media following who posts entertaining and informative updates about his life on and off the field.

Now imagine a restaurant hiring him as its pitchman and paying him $500 or $1,000 each time he posts content with its messaging.

That scenario could become reality as soon as 2021 as the NCAA figures out the details of how college athletes can be compensated for the use of their name, image or likeness.

Blake Lawrence crunched the numbers on earning potential for that imaginary quarterback based on the QB having 40,000 followers on Twitter and 50,000 on Instagram. The co-founder and CEO of athlete marketing platform Opendorse based his projection on a popular college athlete having a market value approximate to that of a retired, well-known pro athlete; active pros command higher fees.

SEE CASH ON PAGE 22

TO OUR READERS As the sports world pauses to join the rest of the world in fighting the coronavirus pandemic, you will see fewer sports stories in Stars and Stripes. We look forward to resuming our normal coverage when the leagues and governing bodies determine it is safe for athletes and fans to return to competition.