The Pentagon is considering new steps to retain uniformed service members, including the potential revival of the military’s controversial “stop-loss” policy, as the coronavirus crisis limits the arrival of new troops and disrupts its personnel pipeline.

Officials said that implementing the stop-loss policy, employed during the George W. Bush administration as years of grueling combat in Iraq and Afghanistan strained the force, was among the measures being considered but was not the preferred option.

Defense Department spokeswoman Lisa Lawrence said a range of options are under consideration but no formal recommendation or decision had been made.

Lawrence said that stop-loss—which can retain enlisted troops beyond their planned departure date, delay officers’ retirement and lengthen reserve troops’ active-duty service—would “only be considered if absolutely necessary and is an alternative that we will work diligently to avoid.”

Officials said the department’s top official for personnel issues, Undersecretary for Personnel and Readiness Matthew Donovan, is developing draft guidance that if approved would allow the services to suspend planned promotions, retirements and other exits, and potentially to implement the stop-loss policy.

It was not immediately clear what other steps might be taken first, but current and former officials and outside experts said they could include allowing service members who already have put in their retirement papers to delay their exits, withdrawing approval for planned exits from the military or offering troops financial incentives to stay longer.

DOD mulls revival of ‘stop-loss’ amid crisis

BY MISSY RYAN
The Washington Post

Modly resigns

Acting navy secretary steps down amid carrier captain controversy

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Modly resigns

Acting navy secretary steps down amid carrier captain controversy

Get the latest news on the virus outbreak at stripes.com/coronavirus
Consumers get breaks, but layoffs keep coming

Associated Press

The pandemic is sapping trillions from the economy and the ramifications for businesses, from banks to restaurants, is severe. Few industries have been spared from mass layoffs.

Recent personnel actions reported by businesses include moves by BJ’s Restaurants, which is laying off about 16,000 workers.

Nissan is furloughing about 10,000 workers as it extends a production suspension until at least April 27.

Honda will stop paying its roughly 14,400 production workers in Ohio, Indiana, Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina as it extends a production shutdown through May 1. Workers are getting health insurance and other benefits.

Thousands of Spirit AeroSystems employees are being furloughed for three weeks without pay. Most employees at Spirit, the largest employer in Wichita, Kan., will be placed on unpaid leave Wednesday.

Some companies have also recognized that their customers are suffering and extended a hand.

Allstate is sending shelter-in-place paybacks to customers, with most getting checks for 15% of their monthly premium in April and May. The insurer is sending out $600 million to customers, according to a regulatory filing.

JPMorgan Chase has eliminated minimum payment requirements on credit cards and is waiving late fees.

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Marines to get lighter, better-fitting body armor

Stars and Stripes

The Marine Corps has begun issuing better-fitting protective vests that are more streamlined and significantly lighter than the current model.

The Plate Carrier Generation III vest can be easily adapted for different missions, and removed to fit into the new body armor, which is available in more sizes to fit into the new body armor, according to the Marine Corps Systems Command.

Nearly 15,000 more Marines, both male and female, will be able to fit into the new body armor, which is available in more sizes than the legacy system, the statement said.

Tests of a prototype of the new vest, which is around 25% lighter than the legacy system, showed that it also significantly reduces fatigue in the field, the statement said.

“When you lighten the load, Marines can get to their destinations faster and they’re going to have more endurance, which increases their lethality,” said Lt. Col. Andrew Konicki, program manager for infantry combat equipment at MCSC.

By eliminating excess bulk and cutting out the shoulders to allow for a better fit for rifle stock, the new system also improves Marines’ ability to shoot and move, said Lt. Col. Bryan Leahy, of the individual armor team at MESC.

The Roosevelt has 230 positive cases of the coronavirus as of Tuesday, according to the Navy.

Modly traveled to the Roosevelt — now in port in Guam — where he disregarded the fired captain in a speech to the crew of nearly 5,000 sailors, according to a recording of his remarks leaked Monday.

Modly initially defended his words Monday, but hours later issued an apology saying he did not think Crozier is naive or stupid.

“I believe, precisely because he is not naive or stupid, that he sent his alarming email with the intention of getting it into the public domain in an effort to draw public attention to the situation on his ship. I apologize for any confusion this choice of words may have caused,” he said in his apology statement.

Sen. Jack Reed, D-R.I., ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, supported Modly’s resignation.

“It is my understanding that acting Secretary Modly removed Capt. Crozier against the advice of senior Navy uniformed leadership and without completion of a proper investigation,” he said Tuesday in a prepared statement.

Also troubling was the manner in which [he] addressed the crew of the USS Theodore Roosevelt and made disparaging comments about their former commander, Capt. Crozier,” McPherson, a retired admiral who served for 26 years, is a “smart, capable, and professional leader who will restore confidence and stability in the Navy during these challenging times,” Esper said in his statement.

Modly had been the acting Navy secretary since November when former Navy Secretary Richard Spencer was fired by Esper for loss of confidence due to his handling of the case of Navy SEAL Chief Petty Officer Edward Gallagher, who was accused of committing war crimes. Gallagher was acquitted of murder but found guilty of posing in a photo with the dead body of an Islamic State fighter.

In March, President Donald Trump nominated U.S. ambassador to Norway, Kenneth Braithwaite, to be the 77th Navy secretary. Braithwaite is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, serving in the Navy and then the Navy Reserve for 27 years before retiring in 2011.

Correction

An April 8 story on social distancing standards showed an error that the SARS virus sickened more than 8,000 people and killed at least 774 from 2002-03, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website.

Afghan government releases 100 Taliban prisoners

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghanistan released 100 Taliban prisoners Wednesday, claiming they were among 5,000 detainees to be freed under a deal between insurgents and the U.S. The Taliban said, however, they have yet to verify those released were on the list they handed over to Washington during negotiations.

The prisoner release is a critical first step to intra-Afghan negotiations aimed at bringing an end to decades of war in Afghanistan.

The U.S.-Taliban deal signed in February also calls for the Taliban to free 1,000 government personnel they hold hostage.

Javed Faisal, spokesman for Afghanistan’s National Security adviser, said the 100 were released from the base in Bagram, near Kabul, on Wednesday.

Taliban political spokesman Suhail Shaheen said the insurgent group doesn’t know who the government is releasing without verification. He said the Taliban withdrew a technical team to oversee the releases because of delays by the government.

In a tweet, Shaheen admonished the government for refusing to release the first 15 Taliban they requested who were on the list.
Lawmaker says White House should seek DOD help with kits

By Corey Dickstein
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The White House should enlist more help from the Pentagon as it battles the spreading coronavirus pandemic that has left Americans largely homebound, the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee said Tuesday.

Rep. Adam Smith, D-Wash., said that the Pentagon should be involved in mass-producing components of testing kits, especially the critical swabs which are in short supply. He blasted President Donald Trump’s handling of the pandemic, which has killed more than 12,000 people in the United States, calling his response to the crisis “pathetically slow.”

“If you look at what’s happened and where we are today, it’s going to require a massive amount of testing before we can safely allow people to get back to work,” Smith said in a telephone news briefing.

“The truly pathetic part of this is on testing. We are testing fewer people today than we were a week ago … because we are running out of swabs.”

The Defense Department with its existing relationships with industrial partners and its expertise in logistics is uniquely positioned to oversee the mass production of such swabs and other components of testing kits, Smith said. But, so far, Trump has not ordered the Pentagon’s involvement in producing such supplies.

Smith blamed the Pentagon for not being “forward leaning” on leading efforts to build more kits, but he said blame squarely on Trump’s shoulders, saying that if the president had no interest in asking for the military’s expertise.

Neither Pentagon or White House officials responded to requests Tuesday for responses to Smith’s comments.

The House committee chairman did levy praise on Defense Department leadership for what they have been asked to do. That includes sending thousands of uniformed medical personnel to hot spots throughout the nation to support civilian health workers.

Nearly 27,000 National Guard members have been activated in their home states to aid in response efforts, as well. The order is currently set to expire March 16. Overseas travel was included in that restriction March 25.

The order is currently set to expire May 1, but defense officials are considering enacting a 60-day extension as the world battles the coronavirus pandemic, the Air Force’s top officer said in the town hall.

“We are probably going to see an extension to the stop movement for some period of time,” Goldfein said.

Smith blamed the Pentagon for its existing relationships with in-

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Pandemic could end up delaying Pentagon spending and policy bill

By Corey Dickstein
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The coronavirus pandemic could delay federal funding bills, including the annual Pentagon spending and policy law, if the outbreak continues to paralyze American life into the summer months, a top House lawmaker on defense issues said Tuesday.

Rep. Adam Smith, D-Wash., told reporters that House Armed Services Committee members and staff were moving forward in an effort to ready drafts of the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act by May 1. But with no end in sight to the pandemic and most lawmakers at their homes across the nation, he is worried about the Sept. 30 deadline for an on-time bill.

“The likelihood that it slips past Oct. 1 is obviously increasing by the day,” Smith, chairman of the House committee, said in a telephone news briefing from his home state. “I think you’re going to see a lot of the congressional action that was planned for this year” delayed.”

The pandemic has already forced Smith to indefinitely postpone the NDAA markup session originally scheduled for April 30. That critical session sees all 57 members of the committee and their staffers spend hours together crammed into a room on Capitol Hill shaping their version of the bill.

More than a week after canceling the session, Smith said Tuesday that he still did not know when it might occur.

For now, Smith said that he has no plans to scale back the size or scope of the bill. The 2020 NDAA has not passed until December as lawmakers wrangled over the inclusion of money for President Donald Trump’s promised U.S.-Mexico border wall.

Pentagon leaders have often been critical of late NDAA and other budget bills, which force them to operate under a continu-

HALF ON PCS TRAVEL COULD BE EXTENDED THROUGH MID-JULY

By Caitlin Doornbos
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon stand-down on all travel — including for military members deployed overseas through mid-July, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein said in a virtual town hall meeting on the official Air Force Facebook page Monday.

Service members and their families have been barred from domestic travel, including permanent change of station moves, since a Defense Department memorandum order went into effect March 16. Overseas travel was included in that restriction March 25.

The order is currently set to expire May 11, but defense officials are considering enacting a 60-day extension as the world battles the coronavirus pandemic, the Air Force’s top officer said in the town hall.

“We are probably going to see an extension to the stop movement for some period of time,” Goldfein said.

On Monday, Defense Secretary Mark Esper tasked his undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness with determining whether to extend the department-wide travel restriction or “turn that determination over to services May 12,” Goldfein said during the town hall.

“Frequently throughout our history … we’ve had conflict come up where we suddenly needed something we didn’t know we needed,” Esper said.

The pandemic is no different, he argued.

If the Pentagon was able to produce enough testing material for its own personnel, it would free up other testing kits for civilians.

Smith said that it could be critical as the government attempts to slow the virus primarily by conti-

Goldfein blamed the Pentagon for its ongoing relationship with in-

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“I could be totally off, but that’s what we’re planning for right now,” he added.

Decision makers are also taking school schedules into con-

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Resolution. Without the yearly bill’s on-time implementation, new programs cannot move forward, as the Pentagon must operate under the previous year’s spending guidelines, Pentagon officials have said.

In February, the Defense Department submitted a budget request of $740 billion to Congress for fiscal year 2021, which begins Oct. 1.

It remains unclear how long Congress will halt regular business outside of the pandemic response.

Smith did not provide specific examples of his priorities for next year’s NDAA. He said that writing the law is more compli-

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Here’s how the six services are carrying out guidelines for military face masks

**By Chad Garland**
Stars and Stripes

Balaclavas may be OK, but ski masks may not be, depending on which uniform a service member wears, under service-specific guidance on the Pentagon’s new facial covering requirements.

On Sunday, the Defense Department began requiring everyone on DOD property to wear face coverings in public or work settings, “to the extent practical,” when six feet of physical distance cannot be maintained. In command-level guidance, U.S. European Command has noted that includes inside government vehicles, and U.S. Central Command said it includes hallways inside buildings.

The Army, Air Force and Navy all indicated that they would be providing official uniform masks. Until then, they and the other services have outlined options that meet some basic requirements.

Here’s how the guidance breaks down:

**CDC compliance**

All the services agree that the face coverings should comply with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance — that they fit snugly and comfortably against the side of the face, be secured with ties or ear loops, allow unrestricted breathing, include more than one layer of cloth and be machine washable without being damaged or losing shape.

**Use bandanas, T-shirts**

Most services prefer masks fashioned from bandanas or T-shirts to the use of surgical masks or N95 respirators, except for those working in medical environments. In an apparent exception, the Navy allows “medical or fashion” bandanas without caveat in its formal guidance.

The Marine Corps, which relies on Navy medical workers, forbids the purchase or use of N95 or surgical masks to meet the new DOD requirement. The Coast Guard guidance states that surgical masks should be used only as a “last resort and only with command concurrence” when local supplies are adequate, but N95 respirators are forbidden for broader use.

**Interim options**

All the services mentioned use items such as scarves and bandanas or, in the case of the Army, Air Force and Marine Corps, government-issued neck gaiters or balaclavas. The Marine Corps forbids the use of full masks, such as field protective masks and ski masks.

“Homemade masks should present a neat and professional military appearance,” the Marine Corps states, and cannot include “dehumanizing or derogatory logos, profanity, racism, sexism, printed wording, eccentric design, offensive script, wrongful drug abuse, dissident or protest activity, or imagery.”

Similarly, the Navy and Air Force state that masks should be “conservative” in appearance, professional and unoffensive. The Coast Guard prefers solid colors such as navy blue, black, grey or white.

Though it did not specifically bar any colors or patterns, Army guidance warned Monday that soldiers should not make homemade face coverings out of Army Combat Uniforms or other materials that have been chemically treated. No “skull and crossbones,” but maybe brown or something “somewhat professional,” said Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston in a Facebook live event Tuesday.

**Additional warnings**

While not required to wear the masks in their residences, Marines and their families were encouraged to do so, but children under age 2 and others who can’t remove the mask without assistance should not wear it. Army leaders at the Pentagon said the service was considering allowing children to wear masks.

“Members should not assume that face covering is an effective, stand-alone method of protection,” said the memo signed by Rear Adm. Dana Thomas, the service’s chief medical officer. “Be vigilant and work to avoid large groups, maintain social distancing and don’t let your guard down.”

**Stuttgart cases top 100, but rate may finally be slowing**

**BY JOHN VANDIVER**
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — More than 100 members of the military community in Stuttgart tested positive for the coronavirus, but Army leaders at the hard-hit garrison said there are signs that the rate of new infections is slowing.

To date, 103 people have tested positive for the virus, Stuttgart station commander Maj. Gen. Jason Condney said during an online town hall meeting Tuesday. But roughly half of those people have recovered, and the number of people in self-quarantine or isolation also has declined, Condney said.

“With that news comes a threat … and that’s complacency,” said Condney, who urged community members to remain vigilant when it comes to practicing social distancing and maintaining good hygiene.

The military’s first coronavirus infection in Stuttgart surged quickly after the first case was confirmed on March 14. Stuttgart, a major metropolitan area in Germany, has had more coronavirus infections among its personnel than all bases in Japan and South Korea combined.

It is unclear what the current number of COVID-19 infections is within the entire military in Europe. On March 30, the Department of Defense issued a new guidance that said installations worldwide must stop announcing coronavirus case figures among their personnel.

Since then, commands in Europe have updated their policies so as not to release any detailed information, citing operational security concerns. Before the policy change, there were roughly 130 cases in Germany alone, according to a Stars and Stripes tally.

U.S. Army Europe on Wednesday said that it believed Stuttgart was still in compliance with the Pentagon directive, since the positive test figure was offset by information about those who have recovered.

“In the case of the Stuttgart Town Hall, the commander stated the number of those who tested positive in the past, and highlighted that more than 50% had recovered,” USEUR said in a statement. “The number of current positive cases on the installation was not released, thus providing false information to the public while maintaining operational security.”

The latest numbers in Stuttgart are a signal that conditions could be improving locally, Condney said.

A concern, however, is that there remain cases in which those who are infected could unwittingly spread the virus around, he said.

Last month, the Army in Stuttgart tested approximately 250 military community members who did not display any symptoms. While it hasn’t been disclosed how many of those people tested positive, Condney said one of those people “to this day” has shown no symptoms even though they had the virus.

On Sunday, the Pentagon issued another new policy to deal with such growing concerns, calling for personnel to wear masks if they cannot maintain proper social distancing standards. Condney said that when he ventures out around the base, he will be among the troops wearing a mask, even while practicing social distancing.

“I’m going to wear something over my nose,” he said. “It may not be the most ergonomic, but maybe brown or something. No ‘skull and crossbones,’ but maybe brown or something somewhat professional.”

DAVID ESPARZA/U.S. Marine Corps
Marine Lance Cpl. Michael Ottinger wears a homemade face covering while posing for a photo Tuesday on Camp Foster, Okinawa, Japan.
Air Force bases in Japan tighten restrictions

By Seth Robson
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — The Air Force has tightened restrictions at its bases in Tokyo and Okinawa but is holding off on tougher measures in northeast Japan as the military battles the coronavirus pandemic.


At Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo, home of U.S. Forces Japan and 5th Air Force, 374th Air Wing commander Col. Otis Jones on Tuesday widened restrictions imposed on active-duty troops late last month. Those restrictions on travel and activity now include U.S. and Japanese civilian workers, contractors, military retirees and family members.

Those with access to the base are now restricted to a local area that includes Yokota or, if they live off base, their homes, wing spokeswoman Capt. Alicia Premo said in an email Tuesday.

“For all personnel that live on Yokota Air Base, they are required to stay on the installation unless traveling within the immediate vicinity of the installation for the purpose of obtaining essential services,” she said.

Those who live off base may travel to and from the installation and within its immediate vicinity or their home for essential services, Premo said.

Essential services include take-out food, grocery shopping, postal services, medical supplies, veterinary services, household cleaning supplies and shopping for personal care necessities such as toiletries.

“All travel for non-essential services is prohibited,” she said.

Non-essential services include but are not limited to sit-down restaurants, bars, night clubs, onsens (hot springs) and public baths, off-base fitness facilities, shopping malls, leisure shopping, movie theaters, arcades, indoor game centers and Pachinko (gambling) halls.

Personnel can participate in outdoor activities on the installation where social distancing can be maintained including, but not limited to, hiking, cycling, fishing and walking.

“Before the Public Health Emergency, personnel were allowed to participate in outdoor activities off the installation, but now they are required to participate in outdoor activities on the base,” she said.

The military’s Tama Hills recreation area — about 15 miles from Yokota — was shuttered Wednesday afternoon, according to a post on the official base Facebook page. It did not say when the facility, which includes a golf course and horse-riding trails, would reopen.

On Okinawa, 18th Wing officials at Kadena Air Base — the only Air Force installation in Japan to have airmen test positive for the virus — noted a jump in new cases on the southern island prefecture, including 12 on Tuesday.

“In response to these changes in the local [coronavirus] threat, 18th Wing is increasing off-base travel restrictions to better protect our #TeamKadena family and our mission,” officials said in a Facebook post Tuesday.

The new rules restrict personnel who live on Kadena to base and require those who live on another installation or off base to travel only between their home and work.

However, off-base activities are authorized, including taking kids to and from child care or school; housing and financial activities such as paying rent, utility bills or banking; grocery shopping and buying other essential household items; paying road tax; medical and veterinary care; vehicle repair and gas fill-up; takeout from restaurants and convenience stores; command-authorized health and wellness checks and outdoor exercise such as walking, running and biking, according to the post.

Civilian employees and family members of the 18th Wing and other personnel not associated with the wing are strongly encouraged to follow the above restrictions, the post states.

“Personnel with access to Kadena AB who engage in activities that pose a serious risk of [coronavirus] transmission or threaten the health, safety and welfare of our force could face loss of access to the base,” the posts states. “Additionally, for dependents, this could result in loss of command sponsorship and an early return of dependents.”

At Misawa Air Base in northeastern Japan, prohibited off-base activities include those banned at other bases, including hotel stays, dining in sit-down restaurants and going to malls, bars or movie theaters, according to the base’s official Facebook page.

Misawa commander Col. Kristopher Struve has not yet declared a public health emergency. The base’s prefecture, Aomori, is low risk for the virus, the 35th Medical Group said in a public health alert published Wednesday. Only 12 people in Aomori have tested positive and there have been no deaths.

“I don’t want to go there when we don’t have to,” Struve said during a virtual town hall on Tuesday. “But cause once we go there, we will probably be there for a little while.”

US Forces Korea reports first virus case at Camp Casey

By Kim Gamel
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — The wife of a civilian employee at Camp Casey, the American base on the divided peninsula, has tested positive for coronavirus Wednesday, U.S. Forces Korea said in a press release. “The USFK employee has joined his spouse in self-quarantine … due to his spouse testing positive,” it said without giving their nationalities.

The military has sharply curtailed access to its installations and banned troops from nonessential movement and social activities off-post in a bid to contain the virus, which first appeared in China late last year.

Only two soldiers have tested positive since USFK reported its first case on Feb. 24. However, the overall number of cases has risen over the past two weeks as several American contractors and other civilians were infected at Camp Humphreys and Osan Air Base, prompting officials to further tighten restrictions on those installations.

Before that, most coronavirus infections were at U.S. Army Garrison Daegu in the eponymous southeastern city and surrounding areas at the heart of South Korea’s outbreak. No cases have been reported on Yongsan Garrison in Seoul, which is in the process of closing as USFK consolidates forces in the south.

USFK insisted it could fight on both fronts despite the limitations imposed on training and other activities.

“While USFK had a confirmed [corona-virus] case today, we remain at two active duty service members confirmed, so we’re maintaining a high level of readiness,” spokesman Col. Lee Peters said Wednesday in an email. “We continue to maintain a robust combined defense posture to protect [South Korea] against any threat or adversary while maintaining prudent preventive measures to protect the force.”

South Korea, meanwhile, reported 53 new cases for a total of 10,384 amid cautious optimism that its aggressive testing and tracking efforts may be working. The number of new cases has hovered around 50 for three consecutive days, down from a high of 909 on Feb. 29, although 200 people have died from the respiratory disease.
Trump grants National Guard access to federal health coverage

By Rose L. Thayer
Stars and Stripes

National Guard troops deployed in federal orders in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic can now access military health coverage, according to an executive order signed by President Donald Trump on Tuesday night.

The directive followed weeks of anxiety for thousands of troops exposing themselves to the highly contagious virus, unable to enroll in Tricare health insurance. The coverage is only available to Guard members on federal orders for more than 30 days and Trump's new order authorized troops to deploy for up to 31 days.

"Under those orders, Guard soldiers and airmen could go to military treatment facilities if they are hurt or fear they are infected with the coronavirus, but most are not serving near such a facility," retired Brig. Gen. J. Roy Robinson, president of the National Guard Association, said in a statement. "Only Tricare enables them to go to local doctors and hospitals without using their private insurance or digging into their pockets."

More than 28,400 National Guard troops are deployed across all states, territories and Washington providing support to their local communities. Missions include cleaning nursing home facilities and testing staff and residents for the virus, staffing test and screening sites, expanding hospital bed capacity and building field hospitals, and screening passengers at airports for coronavirus symptoms.

However, the medical coverage — and the other federal benefits afforded National Guard members working in a federal capacity — are not available to all Guard members activated in response to coronavirus. Only troops in states and on missions approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency are on the federal status, known as Title 32, which provides federal money to states for those service members, but allows the state's governor to maintain control over them.

Trump's directive Tuesday also approved Arizona, Colorado, Kentucky, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Virginia, Wisconsin and West Virginia for Title 32 status. Those states join 21 others, three territories and Washington.

Along with a handful of senators, Robinson and the Guard association had pushed first for the federal status and then for health coverage.

"We applaud President Trump's action last night that will provide many Guard soldiers and airmen with the medical coverage they need to fight the nation's greatest public health crisis in more than a century," Robinson said.

rose.l.thayer@stripes.com
Twitter: @Rose_Lori

Pentagon reports 8th DOD-linked coronavirus death

By Corey Dickstein
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Eight people tied to the Defense Department have died of complications related to the coronavirus, the Pentagon announced Wednesday in data that also showed more than 2,000 troops had tested positive for the disease.

The latest death included in the Defense Department's daily tally of coronavirus cases was that of a defense contractor who worked at Robins Air Force Base in Georgia. That person was the second defense contractor to die after contracting the virus. Five DOD civilian workers and one New Jersey Army National Guardsman have also died.

Air Force officials declined to provide additional information about the contractor, including the person's age, citing federal medical privacy law.

Pentagon officials have taken precautions in an effort to protect troops, including this week ordering people who cannot maintain six feet of space from others to don protective face coverings. But they have also repeatedly said the force is largely young and fit, making them likely to recover if they contract the virus.

The Pentagon's latest data also showed at least 2,120 military troops had tested positive for the virus by Wednesday. Among them, 144 had recovered from the disease and 61 were hospitalized. DOD reported a total of 1,641 coronavirus cases among its troops on Tuesday.

The Navy remains the hardest hit service with 513 active cases of the virus — including 286 among the crew of the stricken aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt, according to CNN. The Army on Wednesday reported 470 active cases, the Air Force reported 351 and the Marines reported 140. The data also showed 249 cases among National Guard troops.

Pentagon officials acknowledged a discrepancy of 252 cases between the Pentagon's data and information compiled by the services, but they did not offer an explanation for the difference.

Another 1,040 military-linked civilians had tested positive for the virus as of Wednesday, according to the Pentagon. They included 641 DOD civilian workers, 382 military dependents and 197 defense contractors.

dickstein.corey@stripes.com
Twitter: @CDicksteinDC

AMVETS cancels Memorial Day motorcycle ride in Washington

By Nikki Wentling
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A motorcycle rally in the nation's capital, designed to replace the popular Rolling Thunder event, won't happen on Memorial Day weekend because of the coronavirus pandemic, organizers announced Tuesday night.

AMVETS took over plans for a motorcycle ride through Washington after Rolling Thunder organizers announced that 2019 would be their last event. Rolling Thunder, a 32-year tradition, attracted hundreds of thousands of participants every Memorial Day weekend.

AMVETS planned a similar event, Rolling to Remember, for the weekend of May 23.

The goal of the three-day event was to raise awareness for prisoners of war and troops still missing in action, as well as the issue of veterans suicide.

AMVETS canceled their ride and rally, AMVETS asked motorcyclists to ride 22 miles on May 24 in their local communities, while following social distancing guidelines. The 22 miles recognizes an often-cited statistic that 22 veterans die by suicide every day. Participants can download a phone app titled “REVER” to track and share their ride.

wentling.nikki@stripes.com
Twitter: @NikkiWentling
businesses, but want $125 billion in assistance to small-businesses payroll pro-
gram and is looking to secure that channeled through community-based financial institutions that serve farmers, families, women, minorities and veterans.

They're also calling for an additional $100 billion for hospitals and community health centers to provide testing supplies and protective equipment like masks and gowns. They're seeking another $130 billion for state and local governments to manage the coronavirus crisis.

They also want a 15% increase to the maximum Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program food stamp benefits, a proposal that could draw GOP opposition.

“The heartbreaking acceleration of the coronavirus cri-
sis demands bold, urgent and ongoing action from Congress to protect Americans’ lives and livelihoods,” the leaders said in a joint statement. “The American people need to know that their government is there for them in their time of great need.”

In March, Congress passed a sweeping $2.2 trillion economic rescue package that’s now law. But one of the programs in that package — the $350 billion Paycheck Protection Program — has been swamped as businesses rush to apply for up to $1 million in forgivable loans to keep paychecks flowing amid the stay-home shutdown.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin requested the addition-
al $250 billion in a private calls to Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, which largely support it as a component of a broader new aid package.

McConnell wants to swiftly pass it through Congress this week. The House and Senate are all but shuttered, and it’s unclear how the Democrats’ new request will affect the prospect of holding a vote with just 48 hours’ notice. Congress is also racing to craft the next coronavirus rescue package.

Democrats want additions to Trump $250B emergency aid

WASHINGTON — Congression-
al Democratic leaders proposed Wednesday adding hundreds of billions of dollars for health care, state and local governments, and food stamps to $250 billion in fresh emergency aid President Donald Trump wants to help small businesses weather the coronavirus pandemic.

Trump requested an additional $250 billion for just small businesses payroll program and is looking to secure congressional passage this week. For now the will need Democratic support.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer outlined their priorities in a Wednesday statement.

They say they will approve the $250 billion in assistance to small businesses, but want $125 billion of that channeled through community-based financial institutions that serve farmers, families, women, minorities and veterans.

They’re also calling for an additional $100 billion for hospitals and community health centers to provide testing supplies and protective equipment like masks and gowns. They are seeking another $130 billion for state and local governments to manage the coronavirus crisis.

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Trump blasts world health group, defends early steps

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Tuesday threatened to freeze U.S. funding to the World Health Organization, saying the international group had “missed the call” on the coronavirus pandemic.

Trump also played down the release of January memos from a senior adviser that represented an early warning of a possible coronavirus pandemic, saying he had not seen them at the time. But he turned his anger on the WHO, first declaring that he would cut off U.S. funding for the organization, then backtracking and saying he would “strongly consider” such a move.

Trump said the international group had “called it wrong” on the virus and that the organization was “very China-centric” in its approach, suggesting that the WHO had gone along with Beijing’s efforts months ago to minimize the severity of the out-
break. The WHO has praised China for its transparency on the virus, even though there has been reason to believe that more people died of COVID-19 than the country’s official tally.

“They should have known and they probably did know,” Trump said of WHO officials.

Throughout his presidency, Trump has voiced skepticism toward many international orga-

nizations and has heaped scorn on the WHO. In its most recent budget proposal, in February, the administration called for slashing the U.S. contribution to the WHO from an estimated $122.6 million to $57.9 million.

Trump continued on Tuesday to defend his actions in the early days of the crisis. He played down memos written by Peter Navarro, a senior White House adviser, that were made public this week. In the late January memos, the most direct warning as yet uncovered in the upper levels of the Trump administration, Navarro warned that the coronavirus crisis could cost the United States trillions of dollars and put millions of Ameri-
cans at risk of illness or death.
VIRUS OUTBREAK

Chinese city at heart of virus ends lockdown

Elsewhere, effects of fighting pandemic take a heavy economic, psychological toll

Associated Press

LONDON — After 76 days in lockdown, the Chinese city at the heart of the global pandemic re-opened Wednesday, and tens of thousands immediately hopped on trains and planes to leave. Elsewhere, the economic, political and psychological toll of fighting the virus grew increasingly clear and more difficult to bear.

President Donald Trump routinely mocks the science of climate change, and his administration is facing a deep recession. Experts said its economy will shrink 4.2% this year.

European governments have been scrambling to put together hundreds of billions of euros to save lives and prevent bankruptcies. The countries worst hit by the virus are among those that can least afford the costs, like Italy and Spain. But they disagree over how to tackle the challenge.

The finance ministers of countries using the euro failed Wednesday to agree on how to help their nations through the crisis, after marathon all-night talks. They will resume on Thursday.

With European health workers tolling round the clock in a desperate bid to save lives, the psychological toll is becoming unbearable.

Weeks into Italy’s outbreak, two nurses have killed themselves and more than 70 doctors and 20 nurses have died from the virus. Hospitals are making therapists available to help staff cope with the effects of seeing so much death. Italy is the hardest-hit country overall, with over 17,000 deaths.

In Spain, nurse Diego Alonso said he and colleagues have been using tranquilizers to cope.

“The psychological stress from this time is going to be difficult to forget. It has just been too much,” he said.

Spain’s Health Ministry on Wednesday reported 757 new deaths, bringing the total to more than 14,500, and 6,180 new infections. Both figures were slightly higher than Tuesday’s, when the first increase in five days was explained by a backlog of test results and unreported weekend fatalities.

Spanish authorities have acknowledged that laboratory bottlenecks and a shortage of testing kits are giving an incomplete picture of the disaster.

In Wuhan, the Chinese city of 11 million where the pandemic began, residents waved flags and the city staged a light show with skyscrapers and bridges radiating images of health workers helping patients.

Restrictions in the city where most of China’s more than 82,000 virus cases and over 3,300 deaths were reported have been gradually eased in recent weeks as new cases declined.

“I haven’t been outside for more than 70 days,” said Tong Zhengkun. “Being indoors for so long drove me crazy.”

In Europe, Britain and France appeared to be at different stages of the crisis than Italy, where new infections and virus deaths were declining daily. Deaths in Britain reached nearly 6,200 after a one-day increase Tuesday of 786, its highest figure yet, while in France, the number of dead climbed to more than 10,300.

Worldwide, more than 1.4 million people have been confirmed infected and over 80,000 have died, according to Johns Hopkins University. The true numbers are almost certainly much higher, because of limited testing, different rules for counting the dead and deliberate underreporting by some governments.

For most, the virus causes mild to moderate symptoms such as fever and cough. But for some older adults and the infirm, it can cause pneumonia and death. Over 300,000 people have recovered.

In Japan, Albert Camus’ novel “The Plague” has gone into seven extra printings since February and was so popular that one chain limited customers to one book each to curb literary hoarding.

The novel, first published in French in 1947, portrays the dilemma of human existence as a North African city gets overtaken by the plague.

Report says outbreak triggers drop in climate-changing emissions

WASHINGTON — Despite mocking the idea of climate change, President Donald Trump will preside over one of the country’s sharpest drops in climate-damaging emissions on record, as the economic paralysis from the coronavirus tamps down energy use, according to an Energy Department projection Tuesday.

The agency’s Energy Information Administration projects a 7.5% drop in fossil fuel emissions for 2020. That would be the biggest cut in U.S. energy emissions since at least 1990, EIA records show. The year after the start of the 2008 recession saw a 7.3% decline.

Trump routinely mocks the science of climate change, and his administration has moved to roll back tougher mileage and emissions standards and other climate efforts from the Obama administration.

Emissions will fall markedly this year anyway, owing to the slowing economy and restrictions on business and travel related to the coronavirus, the EIA said.

Burning of fossil fuels, and the rate of climate damage, typically rebounds as an economy does, after economic downturns. Globally, “we’re seeing radical declines in transportation emissions and drops in other sectors of the economy,” said Stanford University’s Rob Jackson, who heads a group of independent scientists who monitor global carbon pollution. “We haven’t seen anything like this since the Great Depression.”

The energy agency projects Americans will burn 9% less gasoline and diesel and 10% less jet fuel, and that the electricity sector will generate 3% less power overall, among other declines. Solar and wind power — which get scant attention from Trump, other than his statements of loathing for wind turbines — will account for the majority of the country’s new electricity generation, the report says.

As marketplace competition reshapes how Americans get their energy, power plants will use 11% more renewables and 20% less coal this year.
Ark. governor says no stay-at-home orders for cities

Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Arkansas’ governor, who has resisted issuing a broad stay-at-home order for his state to combat the coronavirus, on Tuesday opposed even allowing such restrictions at the local level.

Gov. Asa Hutchinson, who is among a handful of governors who haven’t issued stay-at-home orders, said those restrictions need to be dealt with on a statewide basis. Hutchinson said a number of mayors have talked with him about the issue.

“I think it points it up that the need to have a statewide policy because if you have a business in one community, it impacts others,” Hutchinson said.

Little Rock Mayor Frank Scott said he has asked the governor for a stay-at-home order for his city, which has already implemented a nighttime curfew.

Scott said Monday expanded the city’s restrictions to include a ban on vehicle caravans after large crowds gathered over the weekend at an intersection and nearby parking lots.

Hutchinson argues that a broader stay-at-home order would put many people out of work and that the state is keeping the number of infections below projections with targeted restrictions such as bans on large gatherings and closing certain types of businesses.

The Health Department on Tuesday said the number of cases in Arkansas had risen to at least 997 from 927 the night before. More than 14 million Californians are required to stay home due to the coronavirus, the illness caused by the virus, the governor, according to the latest data Tuesday from the Georgia Department of Public Health.

PHOENIX — Advocates for inmates have asked Arizona’s top public health official to order state prisons to help guard against the coronavirus, saying corrections officials aren’t consistently following COVID-19 prevention guidelines and have done an inadequate job of keeping the public informed on the worst parts of the state.

A coalition of advocacy groups said in a letter Tuesday to Department of Health Services Director Dr. Cara Christ that corrections officials have called for weekly good hygiene and whether health care checks of employees were being consistently conducted at all prisons.

Christ’s office didn’t have an immediate comment on the letter.

California

SACRAMENTO — Gov. Gavin Newsom said Tuesday he is working with the Legislature on an economic stimulus package for immigrants in the country illegally and others not covered by the federal stimulus package approved by Congress.

The federal government is divvying up about $30 billion to 44,000 residents have tested positive and another 1,200 have died.

About 2 million people in California are suspected of being in the country illegally, according to the California Latino Legislative Caucus. The group has asked Newsom to create a “Disaster Relief Fund” for cash payments to those immigrants until the state’s emergency proclamation is lifted or they are able to return to work.

Florida

TALLAHASSEE — Pressure mounted on Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis on Tuesday to make jobless benefits retroactive as the state’s unemployment rate continued to be mined in an unemployment system riddled with glitches and uncertainty amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Amid rampant filing troubles, it remained unclear how quickly the state could begin issuing checks to hundreds of thousands of Floridians left without income because of stay-at-home orders and the economic downturn.

Meanwhile, congressional Democrats called on Gov. Ron DeSantis, a Republican, to extend unemployment benefits beyond the current 12-week limit and raise the $275 a week cap, among the lowest in the country.

On Monday, the Department of Economic Opportunity, which processes Florida’s unemployment claims, said it installed 72 new servers to handle the load and said a backup system was functioning after officials discovered it was not online.

Georgia

ATLANTA — An Atlanta hospital Tuesday announced the early opening of part of an expansion to provide more intensive care beds during the coronavirus pandemic as the state’s death toll neared 350.

Three floors of the newMarcus Tower at Piedmont Atlanta Hospital will now open on April 13 instead of Aug. 1, Piedmont Healthcare said in a statement.

The new space will provide 132 additional beds, including 64 ICU beds, the statement said.

News outlets report that state officials are also exploring the possibility of using other locations, including the Georgia World Congress Center — a sprawling convention center in downtown Atlanta — to house patients.

Nearly 1,900 people in the state have been hospitalized and at least 348 have died because of the virus, according to the latest data Tuesday from the Georgia Department of Public Health.

Montana

HELENA — Gov. Steve Bullock extended the state’s stay-at-home, school closures and business restrictions through April 24 in a continuing effort to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, while the Department of Justice confirmed Tuesday what is believed to be the first positive COVID-19 case in a jail inmate.

Bullock also extended his other directives Tuesday, including restrictions for on-premises food and beverage businesses; a prohibition of gatherings larger than 10 people; consumer protections against evictions and the cancelation of utilities; and a continuing of a mandatory 14-day quarantine for people entering the state on non-work-related travel.

He also recommended residents wear a cloth face mask consistent with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines in settings where social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, such as at a grocery store or pharmacy.

Nevada

LAS VEGAS — Gov. Steve Sisolak says Nevada has received some parts from the federal government to make more test kits for the coronavirus but the state does not have anywhere near the supplies needed to test widely.

The U.S. government has told Nevada it will not be able to send pending requests for more kits on an “indefinite backlog,” according to state officials.

Sisolak said that the state received 3,000 kits of the chemicals needed and 4,000 swabs from the U.S. government, which state health labs are using with other supplies to assemble test kits as fast as they can, but it’s not enough.

“While we appreciate whatever testing components we get from the federal government, at this time,” the Democratic governor said, the supplies so far “are not nearly the volume necessary for us to perform the desired amount of testing that we want and our citizens want.”

So far, more than 2,000 people have tested positive for COVID-19 in Nevada and 58 people have died.

New Jersey

TRENTON — New Jersey is set to open its second and largest field hospital as part of the effort to confront the COVID-19 outbreak.

Gov. Phil Murphy and other state and military officials were set to tour the 500-bed facility in Edison at the New Jersey Convention and Exposition Center.

Another field hospital opened recently in Secaucus and has 250 beds.

The field hospitals are expected to serve only non-coronavirus patients, taking pressure off other facilities so they can address those with COVID-19, according to the governor.

New Jersey is among the hardest-hit states in the country. More than 1,200 have died so far and 44,000 residents have tested positive, according to state health officials.

Oregon

PORTLAND — Oregon Gov. Kate Brown expanded an order Tuesday prohibiting dine-in service at restaurants and bars as state officials reported four more deaths from the coronavirus.

Oregon’s State Emergency Coordinating Center said a total of 33 deaths had reached 33 as of Tuesday while confirmed cases increased to over 1,180 statewide.

Brown’s original order banning dine-in service was set to expire next week but now aligned with her Stay Home, Save Lives order. Both will remain in effect until lifted by Brown. Businesses can continue take-out or delivery service.

Pennsylvania

HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania smashed its single-day high for reported coronavirus-related deaths, recording 78 more fatalities and nearly 1,600 more cases of COVID-19, as the state Department of Health said Tuesday that every county now has an infected resident.

The count more than doubled the previous single-day high of 34 deaths, and boosted the statewide death toll to 240, although the state health secretary, Dr. Rachel Levine, said some of the deaths occurred over the weekend and were delayed in being reported.

New cases — confirmed Monday through midnight — raised the statewide total to more than 14,550, according to the department.

Levine maintained Tuesday that the best way for people to protect themselves, their families and their communities is to stay home.

Not every state agency is urging people to stay home: The Pennsylva- nia Fish and Boat Commission opened trout season Tuesday, two weeks ahead of schedule, to preempt big gatherings of anglers and travel that typically occur on April’s traditional opening day.

Thursday, April 9, 2020
It is the best!

By Clara-Isabel,
Aukamm Elementary School

Packing bags again! Whew! Italy to Kansas to Arizona to Virginia to Germany.

Even worse than moving are the deployments!

My mom went on a deployment to Afghanistan. I was about 2 years old. Anyway, my mom was gone for a really long time.

My brother was just a baby then and didn’t remember my mom so he wouldn’t go to her when she first came back.

When you are the oldest of four (I’m 9. I have a brother who is 8, a sister who is 6, and another sister who is 1), it is hard.

Siblings throwing up while on long trips. Packing their toys and books, too. But it is fun to have siblings when you’re in a new place because you at least have some friends. And both of my parents are in Army!

I was born in Italy, moved to Kansas when I was 1 year old, moved to Arizona when I was almost 2, then moved to Virginia when I was 4, and lastly moved to Germany when I was 9.

I am currently living in Wiesbaden, Germany. I will move again when I am 11.

By the way, my name is Clara-Isabel. My brother is Patrick. My 6 year old sister is Rosalind and my youngest sister is Gloria.

My mom and me travel each other at West Point where they both went to college.

My mom was on the West Point downhill skiing team.

One time, right after I was born, my dad had come to Vicenza, Italy in the middle of a deployment to be there when I was born, (Yep, I was born in Italy). Before he was about to leave, a volcano erupted in Iceland.

That’s right, a volcano erupted. Anyway, my dad got to stay an extra week. Yay! Well, that is what it is like to be a military child. It is the best!

P.S. You get to travel a lot, too.

P.P.S. I said this like 2 or 3 times, but in case you missed it, I was born in Italy.

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Consider yourself special

By Samantha, Aukamm Elementary School

Being a military child is fun, hard, and scary.

When I was 2 or 3 my dad went on deployment to Afghanistan and Iraq. I didn’t realize it then, but now I realize that he could have died. But now, 7 or 8 years later, I’m 10 and he’s still here.

We are currently stationed in Wiesbaden, Germany. I’m scared because when we move I’ll have to leave all my friends.

I remember in Colorado how I cried on the last day of school, because that meant losing my best friend Allison, and how I cried on the last day we stayed in Colorado because I would never see my friends again. But they are still with my heart.

We move all the time! In 10 years I’ve lived in Washington, Maryland, Kansas, Colorado, and now Germany.

We will move again after I finish 5th Grade and my brother finishes 2nd grade.

We don’t know where to yet though. A nice thing about living in Germany is that we take trips everywhere.

I’ve been to Scotland, Strasbourg, Paris, Legoland (a theme park), Disney Land Paris, Barcelona, and um... many more!

I love all these trips, because in Barcelona (a city in Spain) I found out that I wanted to become an animator when I grow up, and I learned so many new things.

I don’t want to leave Germany because that means no more castles, festivals, and a lot of other stuff.

If you are also a military child, then consider yourself special, because you are.
Celebrating Month of the Military Child

Spangdahlem Elementary School

1st Grade

Being a military child means you have to move and you have to say bye. But you can make new friends. I had to say bye to Oscar and I made a new friend named Hannah.

—Hannah

Being a military child means to make new friends and to miss old friends. But I am also with my new friend Juliana.

—Riley

Being a military child means exploring new places because you have to move to another country. Back at my old school, we were just learning about the United States, but now in Germany we are learning a lot about the United States and France.

—Julia

Being a military child means new friends because you have to move to a new place. In England I met a lot of people, and I wish I could go back.

—Caden

During a military move, I had to leave all of my old friends behind. Now I have new friends who are going to be my new family.

—Cailyn

Being a military child means that you have to make friends with people from different countries. In Germany, I have made friends with people from many different countries.

—Rylee

Being a military child means you have to move away from your friends. Roman, Oliver, and Lincoln also went to another country, and they got new friends.

—Noris

Being a military child means having to leave your old friends behind. You have to make friends with new people and learn about new places.

—Piper

Being a military child means we get to explore new places, like London and the United States. We also get to make new friends and learn about new things.

—Sophie

I always worried about moving away when I had to. It was hard because I didn’t want to move. I was sad but I was happy to have new friends. My new best friends are Eyshad and Kaelin.

—Kaelin

I always worry about moving away, but it’s not so bad. It’s nice to have new friends and learn new things.

—Elysha

Check out more military children stories at: militarychild.stripes.com
Proud to be an American

My life as a military child began in full force. I was born while my dad was on a 15-month deployment to Iraq. I finally met him while he was home on leave, but then he had to head back to the Middle East. Many of us that are military children have had the same experience with parents being deployed and missing major events in our lives. Before our parents go on deployment, we spend a lot of time with family. This is how we become resilient, which is an important trait in being a military child.

In the military, moving is a way of life. Most military bases have moved several times, some even to foreign countries. While some people dislike moving, I enjoy it. The reason for that is because I get to experience different cultures and meet new friends. If I would have never moved, I wouldn’t be as culturally experienced as I am now.

One hard thing about being a military kid is adjusting. Adjusting can be hard because you may be used to your old life and your old friends. Sometimes making friends can be hard, and friends make the difference in adjusting because it is always good to have someone you can play with and talk to. Adjusting can be good because you get used to it. When you’re an adult, and you have to move away from home, it won’t be as difficult because you’ve already done it. If you’re used to adjusting, you can be able to focus more on what made you move, for example your job, or going to college.

I am proud to be a “military brat” because I am part of a sacrifice for America. Instead of getting to grow up in one place with the same people, I moved around because my dad works for the military and serves our country which is a huge sacrifice. Military kids are also appreciated by others because of what they go through for others’ safety. I know I am serving my country, and that makes me proud of my citizenship.

Being a military child teaches me how to be a proud American. I notice luxuries in America that aren’t in other countries. These luxuries make me grateful that in America we have so many options to choose. It makes me proud when I see America win at the Olympics and make great new accomplishments. Seeing the American flag raised on a world stage gives me a feeling of pride, knowing that those representing our country are giving us a sense of unity. Some countries dislike America and burn our flag for reasons we don’t understand, but they have probably never met those of us Americans who are good people.

In conclusion, I think being a military child will affect the type of adult I will be. I am accustomed to change. I am familiar with independence. Moving around has broadened my outlook on the world. Living in other countries has taught me to be respectful of other people’s culture and ways of life. When I get to college I will know how to interact with different types of people. I am proud of being a military child and of the way it has molded me into the person I am today.

— Gabrielle McKinley, 6th grade, Humphreys Middle School

Each new community a teen arrives at, presents a new set of doors for a teen to walk through, and they never really know what is going to be on the other side of that door to a new school, a new house, a new locker room or a new auditorium.

We want parents and teens to know that upon arriving at an installation with Club Beyond, they are going to walk through a door that welcomes them, cheers them on, provides friendship, fun and faith.
Celebrating Month of the Military Child

1st Grade

Spangdahlem Elementary School

A life of a Military Child

by James

Every time I move, it’s like moving to a new place. My dad has to leave. He is in the Air Force, and we have to move in order to where he needs to go.

Christian

We took a break sometimes here we met new friends in our new neighborhood.

Norra

This is me at the mall with my dog.

Nora

As a military child, I will help people in need. It’s important to help others.

Emma

What is your life like as a military child now? Write about it.

Being a military child is a little sad because Dad is always gone. But when they come back we are happy.

Adalynn

Adalynn 15

I think if I were a military child, I would have been to Italy and many other places. The people missing would be friends and my home country, but we are happy here.

Kaylen

This picture shows that I move a lot because my dad is in the Army.

- Samuel Kikta

As a military child, we can go on trips. I can see my dad jumping out of a plane.

- Adrian

Something I like about being a military child is moving. Making new friends, learning new languages and eating new foods is why I like to move. I was on a plane to come to Italy and relaxed. And when I moved to Italy I made new friends and I lived happily ever after.

- Mackayla Stradinger

Send your Month of the Military Child submission to MilitaryChild@stripes.com by April 31st!

KIDS, TELL US YOUR STORY!

Check out more military children stories at: militarychild.stripes.com

VICENZA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Wis. voters risk their health to cast ballots

Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — If Wisconsin was a test case for voting in the age of the coronavirus, it did not go well for many voters.

Thousands of voters were forced to congregate for hours in lines on Tuesday with no protective gear. Portraits more stayed home, unwilling to risk their health and unable to be counted because requested absentee ballots never arrived.

Voters reported being afraid, angry and embarrassed by the state’s unwillingness to postpone their presidential primary elections as more than a dozen other states have already done.

A winner will not be declared at least until next Monday, in accordance with one of several court orders that shaped the contest. But Wednesday, Bernie Sanders dropped his presidential campaign bid, virtually helping to pave the road to a Democratic nomination for former Vice President Joe Biden.

And there was evidence that majority voters were disproportionally impacted by widespread poll closures in their communities.

Michael Claus, 66, wore a protective mask and a Tuskegee Airmen cap as he waited to vote. The African American man said he tried to vote absentee and requested a ballot in March but it never showed up. His only option was to vote in person. He blamed the Republican-controlled state legislature.

“arly could have delayed the election with no problem,” Claus said. “They decided if they can suppress the vote in Milwaukee and Madison, where you have a large minority presence, you can get people elected you want elected. And that’s sad.”

The chaos in Wisconsin, a premier general election battleground, was expected to reverberate across states that have primaries ahead. Alaska, Wyoming and Ohio are conducting contests by mail this month, and other states, including Georgia, are slated to hold in-person voting in May.

Election experts warned that Wisconsin was an example of what not to do. And the experience added to debate over the broader debate about postponing voting rights this November.

“We have moved forward with an election, but we have not moved forward with democracy in the state of Wisconsin,” electoral director of Milwaukee’s election commission.

Democrats in and out of Wisconsin had pushed for the contest to be postponed, yet Republicans — and the conservative-majority state Supreme Court — would not give in. The fight over whether to postpone the election was influenced by a state Supreme Court election also being held Tuesday. A lower turnout was thought to benefit the conservative candidate.

Lest there be any doubt about the GOP’s motivation, President Donald Trump on Tuesday broke from health experts who have encouraged all Americans to stay home by calling on his supporters to “get out and vote NOW” for the conservative judicial candidate.

The election was unlike virtually any other in recent memory. Milwaukee, the state’s largest city, opened just five of its 180 traditional polling places, forced to downsize after hundreds of poll workers stepped down because of health risks. The ensuing logjam forced voters to wait together in lines spanning several blocks in some cases. Many did not have face coverings.

As of Tuesday night, Wisconsin reported more than 2,500 coronavirus infections and 82 deaths — 49 of them in Milwaukee County, where the voting lines were longest.

NM border wall workers spark virus anxiety

Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — Some residents of a southern New Mexico village, immigrant advocates and others are raising concerns about an influx of workers in the area as the effort to build the U.S.-Mexico border wall during the coronavirus outbreak.

They’re among the state’s top elected officials to step in after the federal contractor working on the project began erecting portable housing.

The request reflects growing worries on both the northern and southern U.S. borders over construction workers bringing the virus to areas with sparse health care services.

Opponents of the work argued in a letter that public health orders issued by Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham are aimed at limiting groups of people and contact to keep the coronavirus pandemic from worsening.

“We respectfully ask that you do everything within your power to halt the influx of out-of-state workers into our border communities to protect the safety and health of rural New Mexicans and border communities,” their letter reads. “The lives of New Mexicans are depending on it.”

In remote northern Montana, work began over the weekend on the Keystone XL pipeline.

Democratic Gov. Steve Bullock says concerns about planned worker camps that could house as many as 1,000 people each need to be resolved before sponsor TC Energy finalizes its construction plans.

Despite a clampdown on people’s movements across much of the U.S., the border wall and pipeline work are exempt from stay-at-home restrictions. Even in New Mexico, the public health orders carve out exemptions for infrastructure projects such as public works construction and the repair and construction of roads.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which oversees contractors working on the border, told The Associated Press last week when concerns were first raised that the agency follows federal guidelines but declined to share specifics on how it’s protecting public health during construction.

Lujan Grisham, a Democrat, has long been a critic of President Donald Trump’s immigration policies and the plan to build more sections of the border wall. Her administration was unsuccessful in its efforts last year to sue federal immigration authorities over their handling of the surge of asylum seekers.

L.J. Gov. Howie Morales said Monday that the workers posed an additional risk. The work is happening near Columbus, a village of less than 1,500 people about 80 miles west of El Paso, Texas.

Ray Trejo, coordinator with the National Wildlife Federation, was in Columbus on Monday and saw the rows of portable housing. His group is among those that signed the letter with the ACLU of New Mexico, the New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty and others.

“We all do our best to stay at home and adhere to the governor’s guidance, these individuals pose an uncontrollable threat to our community as they work side-by-side in close quarters and travel in and out of our city and patronize local businesses. They should be gone tomorrow,” Trejo said.

The federal contractor, Texas-based SLS, was awarded nearly $790 million last year to install steel bollards in southern New Mexico.

Sanders drops out

WASHINGTON — Sen. Bernie Sanders, who saw his once strong lead in the Democratic primary evaporate as the party’s establishment lined swiftly up behind rival Joe Biden, ended his presidential bid on Wednesday, an acknowledgment that the former vice president is too far ahead for him to have any reasonable hope of catching up.

The Vermont senator’s announcement makes Biden the presumptive Democratic nominee to challenge President Donald Trump in November.

Sanders initially exceeded sky-high expectations about his ability to recreate the magic of his 2016 presidential bid, and even overcame a heart attack last October on the campaign trail. But he found himself unable to convert unwavering support from progressives into a viable path to the nomination amid “electability” fears fueled by questions about whether his democratic socialist ideology would be palatable to general election voters.

Sanders, 78, used strong polling and solid fundraising — collected almost entirely from small donations made online — to more than quiet early doubters. Like the first time, he attracted widespread support from young voters and was able to make new inroads within the Hispanic community, even as his appeal with African Americans remained small.
Kids eat THC candy from donated food bag

UT SALT LAKE CITY — Two Utah children were released from the hospital after ingesting THC-infused candy that was in donated bags of food, police said.

Dozens of families picked up the bags filled with several items at a Baptist church in Roy, about 30 miles north of Salt Lake City, KUTV reported.

The candy containing the main psychoactive component in marijuana was packaged like Nerds ropes, distinguishable only by the word “medicated” above the candy logo, authorities said. The children who were hospitalized after eating it are expected to make a full recovery.

Soldier charged after trying to visit family

GA NEWNAN — A Georgia soldier was arrested and accused of violating stay-at-home orders, fleeing from state troopers and driving drunk while attempting to visit his family in Alabama, authorities said.

Christian Lee Robinson, 20, was charged with reckless conduct for violating a statewide stay-at-home order issued by Gov. Brian Kemp.

Robinson also was charged with DUI, obstruction of officers, possession of alcohol by a minor and fleeing or attempting to elude a police officer, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported.

Robinson told authorities he was a soldier and was absent without leave from Fort Gordon in Augusta, Coweta County Sheriff’s Cpl. Scott Tarpley said.

Man shot in dispute over unleashed dog

FL GAINESVILLE — A dispute over an unleashed dog prompted two Florida men to pull out their weapons and exchange gunfire. One man ended up hospitalized, and both were arrested on charges of gun possession by a convicted felon.

Joseph Tyrone Scott, 39, and Dewayne Mavins, 35, were jailed last week, The Gainesville Sun reported. Mavins was also charged with aggravated battery.

Alachua Sheriff’s Sgt. Frank Kinsey said the argument began over Mavins walking his large dog while unleashed. The dog did not approach Scott, nor act aggressively toward him, authorities said, but the county has a law requiring that all dogs be leashed while off the owner’s property.

Cardboard cutouts pose as guests for wedding

MI DOWAGIAC — Cardboard cutout wedding guests made for a not-so-cookie-cutter wedding as a Michigan couple tied the knot during the coronavirus pandemic.

After Amy Simpson and Dan Stuglik’s wedding plans were disrupted amid the outbreak, a packaging company donated more than 100 cardboard cutouts to pose as stand-ins for the family and friends who couldn’t attend the April 4 wedding because of Michigan’s stay-at-home order.

The couple tied the knot during the COVID-19 pandemic as a Michigan couple who couldn’t have a normal wedding because of the coronavirus pandemic.

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Hoping to hook one

Randy Yorski, left, tries to set the hook on a fish as his granddaughter, Elise Finch, both of Cumbola, Pa., looks on during the first day of fishing along Pine Creek in West Brunswick Township, Pa. The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission surprised anglers Tuesday by opening trout season early statewide.

The value of crab legs two women are accused of stealing from a southern Michigan store. The two women were in a Battle Creek store and placed the crab legs into a cart, the Battle Creek Enquirer reported.

 Authorities: Officer run over to stop car

MS MARSHALL COUNTY — Mississippi authorities say an officer was hospitalized after being run over by two suspects in a stolen car.

It happened when the K-9 officer was attempting to lay spike stripes on a road to stop a vehicle that was being pursued by a deputy, Marshall County Sheriff Kenny Dickerson told The Clarion-Ledger.

Dickerson said the officer partially went under the car and got hit around the waist and back.

The suspect, Robert Darrell Watkins, was arrested and charged with attempted murder, WMCTV reported. The passenger riding with Watkins, 36, has not been charged with a crime.

Confederate flag draws criticism

KY BENTON — A Confederate flag recently put up outside a Kentucky courtroom is drawing criticism amid calls for its permanent removal, echoing national debate over the divisive Civil War-era symbol.

Members of the local chapter of the Sons of Confederate Veterans paid for the flag and raised it in front of the government building in Benton, the seat of that western Kentucky county, Marshall County Commissioner Justin Lamb told news outlets.

He said it was being flown solo to recognize April as Confederate History Month, but it could eventually become part of a permanent Civil War monument that may also include a Union flag, The Paducah Sun reported.

Forest owners receive their biggest donation

ME NEW GLOUCESTER — An organization of small woodland owners in Maine said it received the largest land donation in its 45-year history.

Maine Woodland Owners said it received more than 2,000 forest acres in New Gloucester from a family. The donation pushed the group’s total conserved acres in the state to more than 10,000, the group said.

Maine Woodland Owners is a group that provides support to small woodland owners in the state, which is the most forested in the U.S. It said it received the 2,000-acre donation from the Chandler family, which has owned and managed forested land in New Gloucester since the 1700s.

Officials: Christian College closing in spring

NE PAPILLION — Nebraska Christian College has too few students to sustain operations so it must close at the end of this semester, officials said.

The college moved to the Omaha suburb of Papillion in 2006 after opening in 1944 in the northeast Nebraska city of Norfolk. The college merged in 2016 with Hope International University in Fullerton, Calif.

Students enrolled at the Nebraska school already are Hope International students by virtue of the merger. Hope International President Paul Alexander said in a news release.

Students may choose to transition to Hope International’s California campus or complete their degrees online. Ministry students participating in residencies can continue at their host churches.

It’s officially ‘ice-out’ at Lake Winnipesaukee

NH LACONIA — New Hampshire’s Lake Winnipesaukee is ice-free.

Dave Emerson of Emerson Aviation made the declaration this week after flying a plane over the area. Emerson’s family has been tasked with declaring “ice-out” since 1979.

Ice-Out is declared when the 230-foot MS Mount Washington, a cruise boat, can make it to every one of its ports: Center Harbor, Wolfeboro, Alton, Weirs Beach and Meredith.

Emerson made his declaration at 8:59 a.m. Monday.

Last year, he did it on April 24.

From wire reports
Prine signed with Atlantic Records and re-popular folk, rock and country singers, time, heard them sing one night in Chicago. When Kris Kristofferson, a rising star at the Steve Goodman, were still polishing their wood, Ill. He and his friend, folk singer veteran who invented songs to fight bore-softened voice. He liked it more because Prine released his first album in 1971. “I was really into writing about charac- ters, givin’ ’em names,” Prine said, remi-niscing about his long career in a January 2016 public television interview that was posted on his website. “You just sit and look around you. You don’t have to make up stuff. If you just try to take down the bare description of what’s going on, and not try to over-describe some- thing, then it leaves space for the reader or the listener to fill in their experience with it, and they become part of it.” His characters were common people and confirmed eccentrics, facing the frustra-tions and pleasures anyone could relate to. “Sam Stone” traces the decline of a drug-addicted Vietnam veteran through the eyes of his little girl. “Donald and Lydia” tells of a tryst between a shy Army private and small-town girl, both vainly searching for love in their dreams. “Donald and Lydia” tells mostly raised in Maywood, he spent sum-summers in Paradise, Ky., and felt so great an affinity to his family’s roots there he would call himself “pure Kentuckian.” Prine didn’t let illness stop him from performing or recording. In 2013, long after surviving throat cancer, he was diag-nosed with an unrelated and operable form of lung cancer, but he bounced back from that, too, often sharing the stage with Iris DeMent and other younger artists. On the playful talking blues “When I Get to Heaven,” from the 2018 album “The Tree of Forgiveness,” he vowed to have the last laugh for all eternity. 

When I get to heaven, I’m gonna shake God’s hand
Thank him for more blessings than one man can stand
Then I’m gonna get a guitar and start a rock-n-roll band
Check into a swell hotel, ain’t the after-life grand? 

7 essential tracks

Some people, the songs just come out of them. For more than half a century, they tumbled out of John Prine. His songs — compassionate, funny, sage — make up an Ameri-can songbook that would be stag-geringly intimidating if it weren’t so warm and welcoming. Picking only a handful of songs by Prine is an errand that even a fool wouldn’t dare. But here’s trying.

“Angel from Montgomery”: A masterpiece that will be sung for as long as songs are sung. Recorded on Prine’s absurdly packed self-titled 1971 debut album, it gained far greater renown when Bonnie Raitt covered it. It has one of the great opening lines: “I am an old woman, named after my mother / My old man is another child that’s grown old.” Songs this good don’t belong to anyone. They belong to everyone.

“Spanish Pipedream”: In this bouncy anthem about dreaming of a more pastoral life, the advice of a “level-headed dancer” rings as true today as it did in the early ’70s: “Blow up your TV / Throw away your paper / Go to the country / Build you a home.”

“The Late John Garfield Blues”: A lot of Prine’s songs are so vividly told that they can seem like little movies. In this one off 1972’s “Di- amonds in the Rough,” Prine uses the 1940s matinee star — a brooding, working-class actor who died young but was a forerunner to Marlon Brando — as a symbol of a sadness that “leaks through tear-stained cheeks.”

“Summer’s End”: Prine sang “I hate graveyards and old pawn shops / For they always bring tears / I can’t forgive the way they rob me / Of my childhood souvenirs.”

“Souvenirs”: Prine released this album of original material in 13 years in 2018, “The Tree of Forgiveness.” By then, surgeries had changed his throat, leaving Prine with a more gravelly, weath-ered voice. He liked it more because he thought it made him sound friendlier. In the achingly tender “Summer’s End,” a kind of book- end to “Sam Stone” — Prine sings about a parent’s opioid addiction from the perspective of a child.

“Lake Marie”: This song, off 1995’s “Lost Dogs and Mixed Bless-ings,” was often the rousing finale to Prine’s live shows. In disparate tales that span decades, through love and death, it builds into a stirring, even cleansing, freeform: “Awed baby! / We gotta go now.”

— Jake Coyle, Associated Press

A virtuoso of the soul
Celebrated singer-songwriter John Prine has died at 73


Johivalent, the ingenious singer-songwriter who explored the heart-breaks, indignities and absurdities of daily life in “Angel from Montgomery,” “Sam Stone,” “Hello in There” and scores of other indelible tunes, died Tuesday at the age of 73. His family announced his death from cancer left him with a disfigured jaw.

By Michael Warren Associated Press

John Prine, the ingenious singer-songwriter who explored the heart-breaks, indignities and absurdities of everyday life in “Angel from Montgomery,” “Sam Stone,” “Hello in There” and scores of other indelible tunes, died Tuesday at the age of 73. His family announced his death from cancer left him with a disfigured jaw.

Prine’s mischief shined in songs like “Illegal Smile,” which he swore wasn’t about marijuana; “Spanish Pipedream,” about a toless waitress with “something up her sleeve;” and “Dear Abby,” in which Prine imagines the advice columnist getting fed up with whiners and hypochondriacs.

“You have no complaint,” his Abby writes back: “You are what you are and you ain’t what you ain’t so listen up Buster, and listen up good stop wishin’ for bad luck and knocking on wood.”

Prine was never a major commercial success, but performed for more than four decades, often selling his records at club appearances where he mentored rising country and bluegrass musicians.

Prine himself regarded Dylan and Johnny Cash as key influences, bridges between folk and country whose duet on Dylan’s country rock album “Nashville Skyline” made Prine feel there was a place for him in contemporary music. Though mostly raised in Maywood, he spent sum-summers in Paradise, Ky., and felt so great an affinity to his family’s roots there he would call himself “pure Kentuckian.”

But when they were finished, there was nothing to say.

“cause mostly they made love from ten miles away.

He writes beautiful songs,” Dylan once told MTV producer Bill Flanagan. “I re-member when Kris Kristofferson first brought him on the scene. All that stuff about Sam Stone the soldier-junkie-daddy, and Donald and Lydia, where people make love from ten miles away — nobody but Prine could write like that.”

Prine’s mission in songs like “Il-legal Smile,” which he swore wasn’t about marijuana; “Spanish Pipedream,” about a toless waitress with “something up her sleeve;” and “Dear Abby,” in which Prine imagines the advice columnist getting fed up with whiners and hypochondriacs.

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“Souvenirs”: Prine said he wrote this on the way to an early gig on a Thursday night after a day of deliver-ing mail. For a song that sprung from such a soul, as it did in the early ’70s: “Blow up your TV / Throw away your paper / Go to the country / Build you a home.”

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— Jake Coyle, Associated Press
Some disabled vets may be left out of stimulus funds

Lawmakers raise concerns about those who don’t file tax returns

By Nikki Wentling
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Dozens of lawmakers and advocates are concerned that a “significant” number of disabled veterans and surviving family members will never receive the direct payments Congress approved as part of a sweeping bill to support Americans during the coronavirus pandemic.

Their concern is for disabled or low-income veterans and surviving family members who receive monthly compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs but don’t normally file tax returns or benefit from Social Security.

The Internal Revenue Service is using the addresses or direct deposit information on file from Americans’ 2018 or 2019 tax returns to send the stimulus checks. For some, the VA payments are their only income. These payments are not taxable, so the IRS lacks payment information for many veterans and families — potentially millions, advocates said.

Congress approved a $2 trillion stimulus package March 27. The bill, intended to jolt the economy, includes direct payments to Americans, expanded unemployment benefits, loans to small businesses and a lending program for companies hurt by the pandemic.

The legislation provides direct payments of $1,200 to many Americans. The payments will decrease for Americans earning more than $75,000, and payments end for individuals making more than $99,000. Married couples that collectively earn up to $150,000 will receive payments of $2,400. Families will receive an additional $500 per child.

In an attempt to ensure disabled veterans and family members get their checks, 41 senators and three congressmen sent letters, urging the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Treasury Department and the IRS to collaborate. The letters went to VA Secretary Robert Wilkie; Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin; Andrew Saul, commissioner of the Social Security Administration; and Charles Rettig, commissioner of the IRS.

The senators said they want the payments to go to veterans automatically, without requiring them to file tax returns.

Government and elected officials already found a solution for Social Security recipients who don’t normally file tax returns. Social Security Commissioner Andrew Saul said the IRS would use direct deposit information from his agency to send those Americans their checks.

They want the VA to provide the IRS with a list of VA beneficiaries who don’t work and don’t receive Social Security, along with their direct deposit information.

One of the names on that list would be Mark Gomez, a Marine Corps veteran in Fresno, Calif., whose only income is his monthly VA disability payment. Gomez, 46, has kidney disease and is unable to work. He’s been self-isolating during the pandemic, leaving the house only for dialysis treatment, he said.

“I want to be included, if everyone else is,” Gomez said. “I figured they rushed it — they didn’t dot the i’s and cross the t’s, but it’s kind of ridiculous if they’re not going to fix it now.”

For Gomez, the $1,200 check would be a needed boost.

“Just the Two of Us,” will posthumously receive the Lone Sailor Award, according to a recent statement from the U.S. Navy Memorial.

Withers, a Navy veteran, died March 30 from heart complications. He was 81.

The award is given to sea service veterans who have excelled in their respective careers during or after service.
OPINION

It’s anchors aweigh for tomorrow’s Marines

BY GEORGE F. WILL
Washington Post Writers Group

WASHINGTON

Whatever the origins of the World War I Army captain’s amusingly pithy description of the United States Marine Corps, his hostility was unimportant until he became commander in chief. In 1918, President Woodrow Wilson wanted to abolish the corps, which he dismissed as “the Navy’s police force.” This was a few years after the Marine Corps had distinguished themselves in World War II’s Pacific theater, from Guadalcanal to Okinawa. And shortly before Marines landed at Inchon in Korea in 1950, reversing the tide of the Korean War.

Feb. 23 was the 75th anniversary of World War II’s D-Day, the most famous photograph, of Marines planting the Stars and Stripes on Iwo Jima’s Mount Suribachi. It is, in a sense, a picture of the corps’ future, as the current commandant envisions it.

When nature designed David H. Berger, it had a Marine in mind. From his shaved head to his shined shoes, he looks like the business end of a battering ram, which he is. The corps’ 38th commandant aims to demolish decades of thinking about the corps’ function. He wants it configured not for lengthy ground wars (Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan), but for smaller-scale missions and capabilities in the Pacific region in support of the fleet. This, an echo of the corps’ island-hopping fighting in World War II, prefigures the “Fleet Marine Force” idea that was adopted in 1933, after the corps abandoned its naval roots and went to war in France.

Berger’s vision implies fewer land-based operations with aircraft delivering Marines to distant missions.

For the past 30 years — since the end of the Cold War — the corps has, he says, critics might dismiss as a peer competitor. Now, however, in planning for “the next fight,” he has an increases in global hot spots driven by China, Russia, North Korea and Iran. He wants “our highest quality” Marines trained for “duty in the Pacific.”

Berger’s vision implies that the Marine Corps is the American military’s leading edge. There is — and is being a Marine.” But given China’s anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) missiles and other capabilities, Berger says: “Our adversaries have initiated a new paradigm, based on long-range precision weapons and information-related capabilities.”

This new era of “high-volume, extended-range missile warfare” overturns “the primary assumptions on which the legacy U.S. joint force has been built — future sea and air control and assured access.”

Therefore, Berger says, “Visions of a massed naval armada nautical miles off-shore in the Pacific, a mere platform to launch the landing force ... are impractical and unreasonable.” So, the corps needs to respond to the 21st-century challenge, Berger says, which is to “train, operate and fight.”

Then Berger says, “When we discuss broader roles and missions, we must have Marine Corps Reserve elements that can support national objectives.”

Berger says that the Marine Corps’ “number one priority is the fleet.” He says, “We must evolve into the nation’s ‘stand-in’ force.”

Cap. Austin Dahmer of the Marine Corps Reserve, writing in the Naval Institute, criticized the Marine Corps’ emphasis on the fleet. “Given the threats we face,” he wrote, “the Marine Corps cannot become just a marine corps.”

President Donald Trump’s actions have threatened the autonomy of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. He has withheld funding from the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. Trump’s pardon of Special Counsel Robert Mueller, who is under investigation by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, could be seen as a threat to its independence and effectiveness.

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) is an agency within the Intelligence Community (IC) that serves as the principal advisor to the President on intelligence matters. The ODNI oversees the intelligence community’s intelligence activities, including collection, processing, analysis, and dissemination of intelligence information.

The ODNI plays a critical role in ensuring the nation’s security by providing the President and other policymakers with timely and accurate intelligence assessments. The ODNI’s mission is to provide the President and his national security teams with the best, most timely, and most accurate intelligence information.

In an OLC opinion last September that astonished many Justice Department veterans, Engel opined that the complaint wasn’t an “urgent concern” that demanded an immediate response. Instead, Engel advised the chairman to convene a hearing to discuss the complaint.

In a sharp rebuke, Attorney General William Barr said that Engel’s advice was “absurd.”

Engel’s other controversial OLC opinion was about the Trump administration’s handling of the Russia investigation. Engel opined that the Trump administration’s handling of the Russia investigation was not an “urgent concern” that required an immediate response. Instead, Engel advised the chairman to convene a hearing to discuss the investigation.

In a sharp rebuke, Attorney General William Barr said that Engel’s advice was “absurd.”

Engel’s advice was “absurd” in both cases. In the Trump administration’s handling of the Russia investigation, Engel’s advice was “absurd” in both cases. In the Trump administration’s handling of the Russia investigation, Engel’s advice was “absurd” in both cases. In the Trump administration’s handling of the Russia investigation, Engel’s advice was “absurd” in both cases. In the Trump administration’s handling of the Russia investigation, Engel’s advice was “absurd” in both cases. In the Trump administration’s handling of the Russia investigation, Engel’s advice was “absurd” in both cases. In the Trump administration’s handling of the Russia investigation, Engel’s advice was “absurd” in both cases. In the Trump administration’s handling of the Russia investigation, Engel’s advice was “absurd” in both cases.
Eugene Sheffer Crossword

ACROSS
1. Test version
2. Band boosters
5. LPs’ successors
8. 12 Former Yankee slugger, to fans
13. Picnic crasher
15. Miami meal
16. Actor Schreiber
17. I ordered them online.
20. The US government just declared this strip to be an essential service, so they’re shipping me everything I want. Of course, I will save you one pun at a time!
22. But X6 didn’t know this world changed since we left.
24. What was the face-time open, but I don’t see you. Why don’t I see you?
29. You have to connect to me first. JUST select my name and click.
32. This was always a delicate moment in medieval warfare.
33. Adjust the knot to air burst.
34. “Okay, men, pack up! It’s time to go back to camp!”
36. “Aww, let’s stay here!”
37. “Yeah, we can fish, swim and lie in the sun.
38. “I knew I shouldn’t pick such a nice campsite”
39. “I thought you were vegan.”
41. “I am. These are poppy seeds.”
42. “What were you doing this weekend?”
43. “We had a picnic!”
44. “I’m happy you have a picnic!”
45. “Mommy, you’re not on face-time, you’re on Facebook!”
46. “I don’t know how you send a profile picture.”
47. “You need to have a profile picture.”
48. “You can’t have a profile picture without a profile.”
49. “You need to have a profile picture without a profile?”
50. “I don’t think you should have a profile picture without a profile.”
51. “But I don’t think you should have a profile picture without a profile.”
52. “Mommy, you’re not on face-time, you’re on Facebook!”
53. “I don’t know how you send a profile picture.”
54. “You need to have a profile picture.”
55. “You can’t have a profile picture without a profile.”
56. “You need to have a profile picture without a profile?”
57. “I don’t think you should have a profile picture without a profile.”
58. “But I don’t think you should have a profile picture without a profile.”

DOWN
1. Island near Java
2. Ms. Brockovich
3. Three—slope
4. Counsel
5. Manhattan concert hall
6. Genetic stuff
7. Goblet feature
8. The Last Frontier
9. Boy in Mexico
10. Glazier’s sheet
11. Litigates
12. I see “I see”
20. Somewhat (Suff.)
21. Venomous viper
22. That lady
23. Reggae relative
24. Spliced club
25. Cold Spanish soup
26. Somewhat (Suff.)
27. Hot temper
28. “So there!”
29. Seafood soups
30. Without help
31. Magnon
40. Gratuity
41. 42 Unemotional types
42. Buffoons
43. Web addresses
44. Wax
deeding
45. 50 “Somebody’s gotta do it”
46. Gotta Do It
47. Restaurant
48. “Somebody’s gotta do it”
49. Gotta Do It
50. Spruced up
51. Enterprise letters
52. Grand Isle
53. 49 Web addresses
54. 52 “Somebody’s gotta do it”
55. Gotta Do It
56. 50 “Somebody’s gotta do it”
57. Gotta Do It
58. 49 Web addresses

Answer to Previous Puzzle

CRYPTOQUIP

BJXKHIN AIEFU ZYIZ JXFJNX
IUX BYFRV HAZYXP YIEX
DXKFOX EXP OMBKMIU:
DUIRVP JFHVZB.

Yesterday’s Cryptoquip: SOME MINERS ARE PROBING A BIG ORE DEPOSIT THEY DISCOVERED. MAYBE THEY’RE SEARCHING IN VEIN.

Today’s Cryptoquip Clue: N equals L
Dayton's Toppin wins Wooden Award

Associated Press

BRISTOL, Conn. — Obi Toppin of Dayton won the John R. Wooden Award as the nation's outstanding college basketball player.

Toppin, along with Saddiq Bey of Villanova, Luka Garza of Iowa, Myles Powell of Seton Hall and Peyton Pritchard of Oregon, also were among 10 finalists who received awards from the Basketball Hall of Fame.

The winners were announced Tuesday during the SportsCenter broadcast. They are usually honored at the College Basketball Awards, which was scheduled for Friday, but got canceled because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Toppin is the first player from Dayton to win the Wooden Award and the first Atlantic-10 Conference player to do so since James Nunn of St. Joseph's in 2004. Toppin averaged 20 points, 7.0 rebounds and 6.0 assists from the field. He led the nation in dunks with a school-record 107 and his 199 career slams also set a school mark.

Wooden Award voting took place from March 16-23.

Toppin also received the Karl Malone Power Forward of the Year.

Bey received the Julius Erving Small Forward of the Year award. He averaged 16.1 points, 4.7 rebounds, 2.4 assists and shot 45% from three-point range.

Garza was named the Kareem Abdul-Jabbar Center of the Year. He averaged 23.9 points, 9.8 rebounds and 1.8 blocks.

Powell earned the Jerry West Shooting Guard of the Year. He averaged 21 points, 4.3 rebounds and 2.9 assists.

The Bob Cousy Point Guard of the Year was Jalen Suggs of Gonzaga. He averaged 20.5 points, 5.5 assists and shot 82% from the free-throw line.

Briefly

Burton, Earnhardt, Edwards lead NASCAR Hall nominees

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Dale Earnhardt Jr., Jeff Burton and Carl Edwards were among the new nominees for NASCAR's next Hall of Fame class announced Tuesday under a revamped voting protocol.

For 11 years elected five members per class first from a list of 25 candidates; it was trimmed to 15 candidates.

The new process starting this year splits the nominees into three ballots; Modern candidates, Pioneer candidates and Landmark candidates.

Burton

Two entries from the 10 Modern candidates will be elected, along with one entry each from the five-candidate Pioneer and Landmark categories.

Pioneer candidates

Janet Guthrie, the first woman to run in the Indianapolis 500.

Landmark candidates

Danny Sullivan, winner of the 1986 Indianapolis 500.

NASCAR Hall of Fame voting will take place in May 2022 and hall inductions are scheduled for Aug. 27-Aug. 29.

World championships moved to July, 2022

MONACO — The track world championships were rescheduled for July 15-24, 2022, on Wednesday, the first major sports event to be postponed in the wake of the 12-month postponement of the Olympics because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The event, which draws around 150 athletes from more than 200 countries, will still be held at Hayward Field in Eugene, Oregon, which was expanded and remodeled for the event that was originally supposed to take place in August 2021.

Instead of simply pushing back the worlds by a year, the new dates were chosen to coordinate with other major events set for 2022. The Commonwealth Games, which draws athletes from more than 70 countries in a wide array of sports, is scheduled for July 27-Aug. 7. The European track championships are set for Aug. 11-21.

Oilers’ Cave remains in coma, out of surgery

The Edmonton Oilers say forward Colby Cave is out of emergency surgery after suffering a brain bleed.

The team posted on Twitter that doctors removed a colloid cyst that was causing pressure on Cave’s brain Tuesday.

He remains in a medically induced coma at Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto.

Cave’s wife, Emily, said earlier on Instagram that doctors were “fighting to keep him alive” after surgery. She called Monday and Tuesday the worst days of her life.

Eagles great Brown dies at 82

PHILADELPHIA — Timmy Brown, a running back and kick returner who won an NFL championship with the Philadelphia Eagles in 1960, has died. He was 82.

The Eagles announced Tuesday that Brown died on Saturday.

Brown is sixth on the franchise’s all-time list for touchdowns (62), seventh in total yards from scrimmage (7,049), eighth in rushing (3,703 yards) and seventh in receptions (327).

English soccer warned of $18b pandemic losses

English soccer faced warnings on Tuesday that losses caused by the coronavirus pandemic could exceed $1 billion and clubs could go out of business.

The financial alarm was sounded by the heads of the English Football Association and Premier League as well-paid players in the top flight resist calls to cut their salaries because they believe the move would only benefit wealthy owners.

FA chairman Greg Clarke and Premier League CEO Richard Masters said the pandemic has taken its toll on clubs financially, with the 2019-20 accounts showing losses of about $200 million.

The chairman of the Premier League, Richard Masters, said the club’s losses amounted to $700 million, with 2020-21 expected to be worse if fans are not allowed back into stadiums.

Dayton's Obi Toppin, left, won the John R. Wooden Award given to the nation's outstanding college basketball player.
Players, managers intrigued by MLB’s all-Arizona option

By David Brandt
Associated Press

Boston’s Chris Sale, out for the season following Tommy John surgery, is one of the high points of the Opening Day roster. The prospect of his teammates sequenced in the Phoenix area for an extended period if Major League Baseball and its players adopt an all-Arizona start to the season.

“I don’t know if I could look at my kids just through a screen for four or five months. Same thing goes with my wife,” the pitcher said Tuesday. “That’s a long time. But people have done it in harsh scenarios, I guess. I think there’s a lot of figuring out to do.”

Putting all 30 teams in the Phoenix area this season and playing in empty ballparks was among the ideas discussed Monday during a call among five top officials from MLB and the players’ association that was led by Commissioner Rob Manfred, people familiar with the discussion told The Associated Press.

With its season delayed due to the novel coronavirus, both sides are searching for ways to get under way that they can get into baseball. They want to give their daughters know that there’s some sort of television watching baseball now or their kids could be every day, pretty much 15 hours a day.

Kansas City manager Mike Matheny said he would feel privileged to help the country return to a semblance of normalcy and provide an escape for fans.

“Just jump in and trust that we may not know when we’ll reconnect with our families, and trust that when health officials say it’s OK we’ll be able to do that,” Matheny said. “But in the meantime, do something that would really help the healing.”

Arizona has 10 spring training ballparks plus the Arizona Diamondbacks’ Chase Field. Nearly within about 30 miles, Phoenix Municipal Stadium — Oakland’s old spring training base and now Arizona State’s stadium — is an option along with Grand Canyon’s Brazell Field.

Chase Field could host several games each day following its switch to an artificial surface ahead of the 2019 season.

“Would not have been able to do it with grass, but now with the synthetic grass, absolutely,” Diamondbacks President Derrick Hall said.

Baseball’s look would be different in empty ballparks. Players from the Orioles and Chicago White Sox still recall playing in a deserted Camden Yards in 2015 when a civil unrest caused a closed-door game. The game spread along in 2 hours, 3 minutes.

“I had a weird feeling having nobody in the stands,” said Sale, a member of those White Sox. “But sometimes you got to adapt. Sometimes you got to do some things for the greater good of what’s going on around you.”

That was a one-off. This would be every day, nearly 15 games a day.

“Dip at 5 p.m., when presumably the thermometer would just start to dip at 5 p.m., when presumably many games would start in order to be in prime time on the East Coast. Chase Field’s retractable roof and air conditioning could make it a site of doubleheaders and even tripleheaders.”

Players, managers intrigued by MLB’s all-Arizona option

By Jay Cohen
Associated Press

MESA, Ariz. — Rachel Folden figured something out early during her first spring training with the Chicago Cubs.

None of the players care all that much that one of their coaches is a woman. As for the girls she encounters, they care very much that one of the coaches is a woman.

“I’ve had quite a few people reach out that their daughters are like glued to the television watching baseball now or their daughters know that there’s some sort of way that they can get into baseball. They don’t have to pick softball,” Folden said.

“I’ve heard that from quite a few people, actually.”

Major League Baseball is pushing the same message. Recognizing the importance of representation when it comes to growing the game, the commissioner’s office continues to look at ways to bring more women and minorities into the sport.

The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport (TIDES) at Central Florida gave baseball a C for gender hiring in its most recent diversity report, which was issued last April, down one point from the previous year to 70. But MLB is hoping a hiring spree over the winter is a sign that its Diversity Pipeline Program is working.

Alyssa Nakken became the first female coach on a major league staff when she was named an assistant under new San Francisco Giants manager Gabe Kapler. Folden got a job with the Cubs as their lead hitting lab tech and fourth coach for rookie-level Mesa. Rachel Balkovec was hired as a minor league hitting coach with the New York Yankees.

Veronica Alvarez worked with the Oakland Athletics during spring training for the second straight year, and Christina Whitlock was hired as a minor league coach with the St. Louis Cardinals.

“I’m here for a reason,” Nakken said. “I’m here to make an impact. People are free to think what they want to think, but it goes back to that sense of responsibility. I’m going to come in and grind and hustle and work extremely hard.”

Nakken, Folden, Balkovec, Alvarez and Whitlock have connections to Take The Field, a development program at the win- ning that is designed to incorporate women into the baseball operations pipeline.

“At Take The Field, we have the opportunity to really put some of the strongest female candidates who are out there in front of staff from the clubs,” said Liz Been, senior coordinator of labor relations and player programs for MLB.

Major League Baseball also is investing more in women’s baseball and softball events and programs, looking to identify and establish contact with women interested in working in the game. Baseball’s increasing reliance on technology also is creating more opportunities for women.

“It’s now become, it’s really not as much about your playing background,” said Ty- rone Brooks, senior director of MLB’s on-field and managerial diversity pipeline program.

“It’s more about are you having a skill set that can be applied in how a team is going about trying to develop players. Obviously, technology is now play- ing a bigger and bigger role within player development.”

Folden, 33, is the founder of Folden Fast- pitch, a northwest Indiana company that provides baseball and softball instruction based on biomechanics, technology and data. Folden was a star slugger for Marshall University’s softball team.

Folden also is sharing her experiences with other women around the game. She texts with Balkovec, and she is in regular contact with Jessica Mendoza after they played against each other in pro softball.

When Balkovec started a fund for COVID-19 relief, Folden contributed and encouraged others to join in the effort.

“A sisterhood if you will, I guess, that sounds so cheesy, but that’s kind of what it is,” Folden said. “Where we can get put in touch with each other and it’s like we’ve got this common ground. We can talk to each other as if we already know each other, so it’s been super helpful to just have that interaction with these women for sure.”

Tech boom, MLB programs help women find baseball jobs

By Ross D. Franklin
Associated Press

Two spring training weekends at American Family Fields of Phoenix, Chase Field and Salt River Fields at Talking Stick are being used to help the country return to a semblance of normalcy.

Playing in empty ballparks would keep the money flowing from regional sports networks and the national television contracts with Fox, ESPN and Turner. There might even be expanded national broadcasts.

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Playing in empty ballparks would keep the money flowing from regional sports networks and the national television contracts with Fox, ESPN and Turner. There might even be expanded national broadcasts.
Navy head coach Ken Numitafalo is sheltering with his family in Hawaii during the coronavirus outbreak, keeping in contact with his team via his computer.

**Adapting:** Routine remains normal; method has changed

Monken said the team meets remotely a couple of times a week, mostly to just interact so the staff can check on their emotional, mental and physical well-being as well as go over a few Xs and Os.

“We love football and we’re still spending some time with them talking about some football. I think they look forward to that,” Monken said. “We’re meeting virtually a lot, it’s difficult to do that. That maintains that sense of team and camaraderie amongst our coaches and our staff, which is important. As much as possibly we’re doing the normal things, just not doing them in a very normal way. That’s kind of start managing.”

One of the biggest challenges at the academy isn’t physical. A typical academic schedule is part of the daily routine, and now that’s also in a completely different place.

“We’re having to experience education at West Point remotely,” Monken said. “You think it’s challenging for me, what that maintains that sense of team and camaraderie amongst our coaches and our staff, which is important. As much as possible we’re doing the normal things, just not doing them in a very normal way. That’s kind of start managing.”

The Black Knights were getting ready to start spring ball when the NCAA called off all athletic competition in March, cutting short 15 days of practice and meetings.

Monken said the goal is to get everybody “as up to speed as possible” into the starting lineup on both sides of the ball — the offense, defense and special teams — and ready for the upcoming season.

The 16-team playoffs were scheduled to open Wednesday, though they likely won’t begin until late June — at the earliest. Bettman had not previously raised the possibility Tuesday of not playing four weeks ago, NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman said during the interview broad-casting’s been ruled out,” Bettman said.

Nothing’s been ruled in. Nothing has been ruled out. We’re looking at all options.

“We understand that may not be what we typically be at West Point, even with football,” he said. “Trying to keep those guys motivated to have a positive attitude and tremendously work ethic all is that we’re concentrating on.”

The Associated Press
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.

TO OUR READERS

**Adapting**

Army coach, players overcome disruption

*By John Kekis*
*Associated Press*

Army football coach Jeff Monken sees a teaching point in all the disruption caused by the novel coronavirus.

“I think this is great training for Army officers, for our players, for all of our students,” he said on a teleconference Tuesday.

“When our Army officers train themselves and they train their units and soldiers, they don’t often know what the kickoff time is, what the date that kickoff is going to be, who the opponent will be. We have that in sports. We can prepare for that. When our guys join the Army, they’re not going to know,” he said.

One thing never changes at West Point no matter what’s going on in the world.

The password for the teleconference was “beat-navy.” In the midst of the pandemic, that had to suffice for the norm.

“Nothing’s normal right now. People call it a new normal. This will never be the normal,” Monken said. “Hopefully, that normal is coming back at some point, but right now we’re making the best of the situation we’re in.”

SEE ADAPTING ON PAGE 23

*Inside:*

- Navy using virtual coaching to focus on bonding as a team, Page 23

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**COLLEGE FOOTBALL**

Intriguing possibility

Players, managers consider all-Arizona option » MLB, Page 22