How outbreak on USS Roosevelt became a defining moment for US military

By Dan Lamothe, Shawn Boburg and Paul Sonne
The Washington Post

As a coronavirus outbreak swept through a U.S. aircraft carrier crippled off the coast of Guam, the ship’s commander tapped out an email urging senior Navy leaders to evacuate most of the 4,800 sailors onboard.

Capt. Brett Crozier opened his March 30 message to three admirals by saying he would “gladly” follow them “into battle whenever needed.” But he shifted to his concern that the Navy was not doing enough to stop the spread of the virus, and acknowledged being a part of the sluggish response.

“I fully realize that I bear responsibility for not demanding more decisive action the moment we pulled in, but at this point my only priority is the well-being of the crew and embarked staff,” Crozier wrote in previously unreported comments obtained by The Washington Post. “... I believe if there is ever a time to ask for help it is now regardless of the impact on my career.”

The email, copied to a handful of Navy captains, is at the heart of a crisis that erupted into public view after a four-page memo attached to it was published in the news media.

The note set off a chain reaction that included acting Navy secretary Thomas Modly’s decision to relieve Crozier from command and Modly’s resignation amid an outcry after audio emerged of him insulting the captain in an address to Theodore Roosevelt sailors.

But while the attachment circulated widely, Crozier’s email did not. The email shows that Modly mischaracterized the message, accusing Crozier of sending it to 20 or 30 people, as he cited it as justification for removing him from command.

The crisis has become a defining story for the U.S. military during the coronavirus pandemic. It also has underscored thorny

SEE OUTBREAK ON PAGE 6
Senators: Airlines withholding money

Bloomberg

Airlines in the U.S. that have halted flights are holding more than $10 billion in customer money while offering credits for future travel instead of cash refunds, a group of senators charged Friday.

The lawmakers chided carriers for inconsistent policies on which customers can receive refunds and the length of time they can claim lost airfares, and for “obfuscating” the rules to minimize how much they must pay. Airlines should be repaying people to help the economy, they said.


“In light of this pressing need, and the unprecedented multibillion-dollar bailout that the airline industry just received from Congress, we are absolutely outraged that so few airlines are willing to offer real cash refunds to consumers who must cancel their tickets,” they said.

The spread of covid-19 has prompted a near-total loss of demand for travel, prompting an unprecedented downturn that could continue for months. Airlines are burning $10 billion to $12 billion a month in cash, according to the trade group for large carriers, the trade group for large carriers.

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Keep safe and ready

U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Ashton Wilson of 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, advances through an obstacle course during a squad competition on Marine Corps Base Hawaii, on Thursday. The battalion conducted the competition in order to train and remain tactically proficient while mitigating risks of the COVID-19 environment.

Marines drop charges and dismiss recruit who struck drill instructor

By Andrew Dyer
The San Diego Union-Tribune

SAN DIEGO — A Marine recruit who spent the last 27 months confined without trial after striking a San Diego drill instructor has been administratively discharged from the service with all charges dismissed, the Marines said Wednesday.

The recruit, former Pvt. Jay-Ar Ruiz, 28, remains in federal custody at a Missouri prison hospital. Since he is no longer in the military, he now is in the custody of the U.S. Attorney General, his attorney said.

Capt. Martin Harris, a spokesman for the Corps’ San Diego boot camp, declined to comment on the specifics of Ruiz’s case but confirmed he is no longer a Marine.

Bethany Payton-O’Brien, Ruiz’s civilian lawyer, says his ordeal exposes flaws in how the military justice system handles mental health issues and flaws in the screening process recruits go through before shipping off to boot camp.

“Mental health conditions are serious matters for consideration,” said Payton-O’Brien, Ruiz’s civilian lawyer. “You have an individual who demonstrated — prior to entering the military — that he suffers from a serious mental condition.

“Our recruiting process appears to have failed in this case,” Payton-O’Brien said.

Ruiz enlisted in the Marines in Los Angeles and reported to the San Diego Marine Corps Recruit Depot in November 2017. By January 2018, two months later, he was locked in the brig at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar.

He has been incarcerated since, bouncing between the Miramar brig and the Medical Center for Federal Prisoners in Springfield, Mo.

Republican urges $6B initiative to limit Chinese influence in Pacific

By Corey Dickstein
Stars And Stripes

WASHINGTON — The top Republican on the House Armed Services Committee wants the Pentagon to launch a new program aimed at deterring Chinese military expansion and influence throughout the Pacific, an effort modeled after the Defense Department’s program aimed at discouraging Russian aggression in Europe.

Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, proposed in draft legislation released Thursday that Congress include more than $6 billion in its 2021 National Defense Authorization Act, forcing the Pentagon to begin an Indo-Pacific Deterrence Initiative to check Chinese influence campaigns and militarization throughout that region.

The proposal would bolster activities that the United States is already conducting in the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Area of responsibility, which was identified in the 2018 National Defense Strategy as the most critical area of concern for the American military.

“Senior officials from both [political] parties, military commanders, and international security experts have told us for years that the Indo-Pacific must be this country’s priority theater,” Thornberry said in a statement accompanying the proposal. “They are absolutely correct, and it is time to put our money where our mouth is.”

In Thornberry’s $6.09 billion proposal, the congressman seeks to add to the region more American troops, prepositioned equipment stockpiles, increased missile defense capabilities and new intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets. He also wants to expand training with allies and partner nations there, stressing the need for certainty that the weapons and personnel forces can work interchangeably should they need to fight together.

Thornberry is realistic that his full proposal is unlikely to be included in the final 2021 NDAA, which lawmakers hope to pass before the start of the new fiscal year on Oct. 1. But the congressman, who chose not to seek re-election to the seat that he has held since 2005 and will retire from Congress in January, wants to ensure top Pentagon officials are truly focused on China as he nears his exit from office.

“Obviously, defense resources are limited, and we cannot do everything in one year. There also may be other needs I have not identified,” Thornberry wrote Thursday in an editorial penned for the Breaking Defense news organization. “But the important thing is to get started.”

The Pentagon, he eyed increases in spending and operations in the INDO-PACOM region dating back to former President Barack Obama’s administration. But despite those plans, other — often unforeseen — needs have vacumed up resources before they could be shifted to the Pacific. Among them were Russia’s 2014 invasion and annexation of Ukraine’s Crimea region.

Senior officials said last week that the department was working on the issue, but it had not been addressed officially until Thursday.

In his memo, Donovan wrote that senior defense officials should continue to try to take vacations, once restrictions are lifted.

“Commanders will continue to encourage and to provide members with the opportunity to use their leave in the year in which it is earned,” he wrote.

By Corey Dickstein
Stars And Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon will allow active-duty troops to keep up to 120 days of personal leave at the end of September as travel restrictions in place amid the coronavirus pandemic have largely kept service members from using vacation days.

“The department’s actions to stem the spread of [the] coronavirus disease — to include restricting travel, has significantly limited the ability of service members to take leave during this national emergency,” said Denis Donovan, the undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness.

“Leave is vital to the continued health and welfare of our service members and civilian workforce and is key to the secretary of defense’s first priority in responding to the coronavirus — ensuring our service members, [Defense Department] civilians and their families.”

Typically, service members can accrue up to 60 days of leave through the end of the fiscal year and they lose any additional leave that they had not used. The new order covers all service members and is retroactive between March 11 and Sept. 30, the last day of the fiscal year. Troops will have until Sept. 23, 2023, to use the excess leave before it expires, Donovan wrote.

Troops have been largely locked in place since Defense Secretary Mark Esper issued his first stopmovement order March 16 for the United States, which barred including permanent-change-of-station moves. On March 25, the defense secretary extended those restrictions to all overseas personnel.

Esper on Tuesday said those restrictions would be extended past their initial May 11 expiration date, but he has yet to announce a new date to end the stop-movement orders aimed at stemming the spread of the virus.

Several senior defense officials have indicated the outbreak could keep U.S. forces out of the United States well into the summer.

The use of leave has been a hot-button issue for troops and their family members in online town hall meetings conducted at the Pentagon and local installations.

Many service members expressed concerns they would be forced to abandon even more vacation plans if travel restrictions stretch into the summer.

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dickstein.corey@stripes.com
Twitter: @CDicksteinDC

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dickstein.corey@stripes.com
Twitter: @CDicksteinDC
Afghan workers killed outside of Bagram Airfield

By Phillip Walter Wellman
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — Six Afghans who worked at Bagram Airfield were shot dead Thursday just outside the base, an Afghan official said.

The workers were driving home in a motorized rickshaw and were about 500 yards from the base when an unidentified gunman began shooting at about 10 p.m., said Wahida Shakhar, a spokeswoman for the governor of Parwan province, where Bagram is located.

“These people were ordinary workers at Bagram, like cleaners and others,” Shakhar said, adding that three others were injured in the attack.

The gunman fled the scene by motorcycle, Shakhar said.

The Taliban denied responsibility for the shooting in a statement Friday, though they have long considered Afghan workers on foreign bases and embassies legitimate targets. No other group immediately claimed responsibility.

The killings follow a spate of unsuccessful attacks in recent weeks at Bagram, the largest U.S. base in Afghanistan.

Last week, ISIS claimed responsibility for firing several rockets out of a car nearby at the base. Foreign forces intercepted two of the rockets, while the others landed outside the base and injured no one, local officials said.

The attacks have come as the U.S. works toward a full withdrawal of foreign forces by mid-2021, if the Taliban abide by conditions outlined in a Feb. 29 agreement. The Taliban must help keep terrorists from operating in Afghanistan and hold talks with the Kabul government, among other terms of the agreement.

However, Taliban attacks on Afghan forces, disagreements over prisoner exchanges and political infighting have hampered the peace process.

Earlier this week, the U.S.’s top commander in Afghanistan, Gen. Scott Miller, and U.S. Special Envoy Zalmay Khalilzad visited Pakistan to push efforts with the country’s officials.

Veteran’s discharge appeal by advocates

The strikes have come as the Army’s fight against COVID-19.

The military had said it blocked access to a public database last year after discovering that some of the decisions contained personal information that should have been redacted.

In January, the veterans group sued the Defense Department in a federal court in Alexandria, Va., alleging that federal law was being broken.

The military said in court documents that it had begun to re-post decisions after they were checked for personal information. Decisions that hadn’t been re-posted yet were still available upon request. About 25,000 decisions had been re-posted by early March, the military said.

On April 2, U.S. District Court Judge Rossie Alston Jr. dismissed the veteran group’s lawsuit. Alston wrote that the group failed to show a “specific instance” in which it was unable to fulfill its mission because of a lack of information.

The judge also wrote that the court lacks jurisdiction over a matter that is essentially about improving the military’s performance. He said the group’s main contention is that the military is “not working fast enough” or with enough “fervor.”

The legal battle is playing out at a time of growing recognition that a less-than honorable discharge can stem from behaviors brought on by post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injuries.

Veterans with combat-related mental health conditions and those who were sexually assaulted while in the military are supposed to be given liberal consideration when requesting a discharge upgrade.

Cargo count

Spc. David Velazquez, 1188th Transportation Battalion, keeps tally of field hospital equipment being offloaded from the logistics support vessel USAV SP4 James A. Lux at the Port of Shuwaik, Kuwait, earlier this month. The LSV-6 brought the second shipment of about 25 pieces of cargo, completing the mission of delivering the field hospital destined for the 401st Army Field Support Brigade in support of the Army’s fight against COVID-19.

Veterans group continues legal battle over discharge records

Associated Press

NORFOLK, Va. — A veterans group is continuing to sue the Pentagon over access to military discharge records despite a federal judge’s recent dismissal of the case.

The National Veterans Legal Services Program said Tuesday that it filed its intent to bring the case to the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

The group represents former service members who want to upgrade a less-than-honorable discharge. Such a status can sometimes result in a loss of veteran benefits.

Advocates often prepare a veteran’s discharge appeal by studying past decisions made by military review boards, which grant or deny an upgrade. The legal services group says it lacks access to more than half of about 245,000 decisions going back several years.

2 South Dakota Army National Guard units set for 8-month deployment to Africa

Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. — Two South Dakota Army National Guard units have received a mobilization order for an eight-month deployment to Africa.

More than 190 soldiers with the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade and nearly 40 Soldiers with the 115th Signal Company will deploy to Djibouti beginning in late August and early September.

The units will support U.S. Africa Command with regional security and stability goals.

The 196th will deploy in late August and will command and control units assigned to a designated region. The 115th will deploy in early September and provide operational support and management of communication and information systems.

The units will report to Fort Hood, Texas, to complete several weeks of training prior to deployment.

Iraq says Turkish strikes on Kurdish group kill 2 women

Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Turkish air strikes targeting members of an outlawed Kurdish rebel group struck a refugee camp in northern Iraq and killed two refugee women, Iraqi authorities said Thursday.

The strikes, which took place on Wednesday, were a violation of Iraq’s sovereignty, Iraq’s Foreign Affairs Ministry said.

The strikes on the Makhmour refugee camp were carried out by a Turkish military drone that was detected by Iraq’s air defense, a Turkish official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Turkish military orders for an eight-month deployment to Africa.

Claudia Limenta/U.S. Army
VIRUS OUTBREAK

China acknowledges cases, deaths underreported

Associated Press

BELING — China acknowledged Friday that the coronavirus death toll in the one-time epicenter city of Wuhan was nearly 50% higher than reported, underscoring just how seriously the official numbers of infections and deaths around the world are being understated the dimensions of the disaster.

Such figures can have a huge influence on governments’ actions, as medical staffs struggle to figure out how to cope with surges of sick people and make crucial decisions about where to devote resources and how to ease lockdowns to resuscitate their economies.

As virus deaths mounted — with the U.S. reporting its highest one-day death toll yet at nearly 4,600 — the economic devastation from the restrictions is becoming even more shocking.

The number of people applying for unemployment benefits in the U.S. rose by 5.2 million, bringing the four-week total to a staggering 22 million. China’s economy shrank 6.8% in the quarter ending in March compared with the same period a year ago, its worst contraction since market-style economic reforms began in 1979.

In Europe, car sales tanked 55% last month. Authorities say infections and deaths have jumped more than almost everywhere. Thousands have died with COVID-19 symptoms — many in nursing homes, which have been ravaged by a disease that hits the elderly the hardest — without being tested.

Four months into the outbreak, nations are still struggling to increase their testing capacity, and many are still far from their goal.

Spain on Friday ordered the country’s 17 autonomous regions to adopt uniform criteria on counting the dead. The country has recorded more than 19,000 deaths, but the system leaves out patients who had symptoms but were not tested before they died.

“We are probably only seeing the tip of the iceberg,” said Barcelona University epidemiologist Antoni Trilla, who heads the Spanish government’s expert panel on the epidemic.

Italian officials have acknowledged that the country’s official COVID-19 death toll of more than 22,000 — second only to that of the United States — understates the true number, primarily because it doesn’t include the hundreds of dead in nursing homes who were not tested.

Britain’s official death toll, which is approaching 14,000, has come under increasing scrutiny because it does not include any deaths at home or in nursing homes either.

The country’s statistics agency has indicated the actual number of dead could be around 15% higher. Other experts think it will end up being a lot more than that.

Anthony Costello, a professor at the Institute for Global Health at University College London, said Britain could see 40,000 deaths by the time the first wave of the outbreak is over.

In Russia, authorities reported relatively low numbers of cases until late March. That raised suspicions, given the country’s history of concealing embarrassing truths. Doctors treating coronavirus patients in Moscow said last week that the vast majority of all pneumonia cases in Russia are probably caused by the new virus.

The official death toll soared by more than half in New York City earlier this week when health authorities began including people who probably had COVID-19 but died without being tested. Nearly 3,800 deaths were added to the city’s count.

Worldwide, the outbreak has infected more than 2.1 million people and killed over 145,000, according to a Johns Hopkins University tally based on figures supplied by government health authorities around the globe. The death toll in the U.S. topped 33,000, with more than 670,000 confirmed infections.

China raised its overall death toll Tuesday that the country’s official panel on the epidemic.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said that everyone on the call recognized the importance of continuing to coordinate and collaborate on the science around the pandemic, to work on public health measures and to share information about vaccine development and possible treatments.

There is a need for international coordination, and the WHO is an important part of that collaboration and coordination,” Trudeau said outside his residence in Ottawa. “We recognize that there have been questions as part of an “ambitious and coordinated international response” to the virus crisis.

Macron also stressed the need to bring “massive aid” to the most vulnerable countries, especially in Africa.

Critics argued that cutting the WHO’s funding in the middle of a pandemic made no sense and said there will be plenty of time after the virus is vanquished to review its actions.

The WHO has said its work will continue regardless of any action taken by the United States.

G-7 leaders critique US plan to cut WHO payments

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump faced international resistance Thursday as he defended his plan to cut U.S. payments to the World Health Organization over its handling of the coronavirus pandemic.

Trump said he reiterated his frustration with the WHO during a call with Group of Seven leaders, and he again accused the WHO of mishandling its response and showing too much deference to China, where the new coronavirus first emerged.

Trump’s conversation with the leaders of Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan “centered on the lack of transparency and chronic mismanagement of the pandemic by the WHO,” and the G-7 leaders called for a “thorough review and reform process,” according to the White House.

“I was angry because it should have been told to us,” Trump said. “It should have been told to us early; it should have been told to us a lot sooner. People knew it was happening, and people didn’t want to talk about it.”

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said that everyone on the call recognized the importance of continuing to coordinate and collaborate on the science around the pandemic, to work on public health measures and to share information about vaccine development and possible treatments.

There is a need for international coordination, and the WHO is an important part of that collaboration and coordination,” Trudeau said outside his residence in Ottawa. “We recognize that there have been questions asked but at the same time it is really important that we stay coordinated as we move through this. That’s certainly what Canada is going to do.”

German Chancellor Angela Merkel expressed her “full support” for the WHO and similar international groups, and stressed that it will take a “strong and coordinated international response” to defeat the pandemic, said her spokesman, Steffen Seibert.

French President Emmanuel Macron also said there will be plenty of time after the virus is vanquished to review its actions.

The WHO has said its work will continue regardless of any action taken by the United States.

“NEW YORK, the deadliest hot spot in the U.S., reported more encouraging signs, with a drop in the daily number of deaths statewide and the overall count of people in the hospital.

“We’ve controlled the beast,” Gov. Andrew Cuomo said. Still, New York state has over 40% of all U.S. deaths, and Cuomo extended the state’s lockdown through at least May 15.

In India, the 176 million people who live on under $2 a day are getting more hungry and desperate by the hour as their incomes dry up under the government’s strict nationwide lockdown. Tens of thousands of newborns have walked miles to their ancestral villages in search of food and shelter, only to be shunned by locals who fear they are bringing the virus with them.

“These big leaders take decisions in their big houses!” said Rajesh Dhaikaar, a balloon seller in Prayagraj. “Did anyone ask the poor what they are eating?”

Shoppers queue at a supermarket due to the coronavirus related lockdown in London, Friday. The highly contagious virus has impacted nations around the globe, with many imposing self isolation and exercising social distancing when people leave their homes.
Outbreak: Crozier aware of implications of sending message

FROM FRONT PAGE

challenges for the Navy, including a lack of clarity about how to respond to President Donald Trump’s concerns, disagreements about transparency and questions about whether officers who flag problems should face retribution.

This week’s outbreak of the USS Theodore Roosevelt’s crisis is based on memos, emails and text messages obtained by The Post, as well as interviews with about two dozen people familiar with the case, including senior defense officials, sailors and their families. Many of them spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issues and concerns about retaliation.

The service is still testing sailors from the vessel. As of Thursday, 685 sailors had tested positive among 4,574 examined — more than 14%. One Theodore Roosevelt sailor with covid-19 died on Tuesday, marking the first fatality in the active-duty military during the pandemic.

Sailors who were isolated, including one in intensive care, the Navy said. Thousands of others are quarantined in hotel rooms under guard, with food that is often cold delivered a couple of times per day.

Adm. Michael Gilday, the chief of naval operations, opened an investigation of communication breaches after the email emerged, and is reviewing the results. He is expected to decide Crozier’s future as he responds to the investigation’s findings as soon as this week.

The Theodore Roosevelt’s ship in Vietnam in early March marked the 25th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the countries, and the Theodore Roosevelt was also meant to serve as a symbolic show of U.S. strength and was also meant to serve as a symbol of U.S. strength and stability service projects. One group stayed at the same hotel as two British tourists who were later confirmed to have the virus.

Once back onboard, command officers grew more concerned. They flew in from a team of the Biological Defense Research Directorate at Fort Detrick in Frederick, Md., a group typically focused on protecting service members from biological attacks. They also ordered surfaces to be cleaned daily with bleach, isolated high-risk people and altered their plans.

“There are 39 people in quarantine who stayed in a hotel where two people tested positive,” one sailor texted his mother on March 14, five days after leaving Da Nang.

“Our port calls are getting cancelled too,” another sailor emailed her mother. “It sucks, this was set up to be the coolest deployment and now everything is getting taken away. ... Just an insane abundance of caution.”

As commanders considered where to take the USS Roosevelt, sailors began reporting flu-like symptoms. On March 24, Crozier wrote to family members with alarming news, according to a copy of the letter obtained by The Post.

“Yesterday evening, a few sailors did the right and brave thing, reporting to medical they were experiencing flu-like symptoms,” he wrote. “These sailors were tested ... and this morning the results of the tests indicated positive results for coronavirus.”

Crozier cautioned the families not to talk publicly about the situation on the ship, highlighting the Navy’s delicate balance between keeping the public informed and not revealing vulnerabilities to potential adversaries.

“Operational security regarding both ship movements and our medical readiness is sensitive information and should not be made public,” he wrote.

Crozier also imposed on the crew a communication lockdown commonly known as “River City,” eliminating access to phones and internet for much of the crew. But some sailors managed to send messages to family members that day.

“I had exposure to the original sailor but I feel fine,” one sailor texted his mother “Don’t panic,” he wrote, although he added that he feared the ship was “a breeding ground.”

“People here are either making a joke of it or freaking out,”


VIRUS OUTBREAK

Roosevelt victim was chief petty officer from Arkansas

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A chief petty officer from Arkansas was the USS Theodore Roosevelt sailor who died earlier this week from coronavirus complications, the Navy announced Thursday.

Charles Robert Thacker Jr., 41, was found unresponsive March 9 while in quarantine on Guam after testing positive March 30 aboard the aircraft carrier. He died the same day from the coronavirus. The Roosevelt had diverted to Guam at the end of March due to an outbreak of the virus aboard the ship.

Thacker was an aviation ordnanceman from Fort Smith, Ark., and had been assigned to the Roosevelt since December. His wife, Symantha L. Thacker, is also a sailor and is stationed in San Diego. She arrived in Guam on Saturday and was by his side when he died Monday, the Navy said in a statement.

Thacker enlisted in the Navy in December 1997 and had previously served on the Roosevelt from January to July of 2016, according to career details provided by the Pacific Fleet.

He had served on the USS George Washington, the USS Ronald Reagan, and the USS Constellation.

“Our thoughts and prayers are with the family during this difficult time,” Capt. Carlos Saradido, the Roosevelt’s commanding officer, said in the Navy’s statement. “Our number one priority is the health and well-being of all members of the Theodore Roosevelt Strike Group and we remain steadfast in our resolve to warned the spread of this virus.”

The couple appear to have a young son and daughter in photographs posted on their Facebook pages. Thacker was an off-Roading enthusiast, according to his Facebook page. Numerous photos show his Jeep Rubicon climbing mountain slopes and stone outcroppings in Death Valley and other sites in Southern California and elsewhere.

He was also a shooting buff. In one Facebook photo he is peering through a .300 Winchester magnum rifle. In comments below the photo, Thacker said he was shooting targets about 2,000 feet away and that he’d spent more than $5,000 customizing the sniper rifle.

Thacker was found unresponsive during a medical check at about 8:30 a.m. on April 9 and other sailors started CPR while emergency responders were notified, according to the Navy. Roosevelt sailors who were quarantined received twice daily checks by Navy medical personnel.

Thacker is the second American service member to die from the coronavirus. Army Capt. Douglas Linn Hickok, 57, a physicians assistant with the New Jersey National Guard, died March 28 as he was preparing to volunteer in response to the pandemic.

Another sailor wrote in an email to her mother.

Crozier wrote to Theodore Roosevelt families, Modly announced the ship’s first cases the same day at the Pentagon. He said that three positive cases had been discovered, with the patients flown off the ship and those who had come into contact with them quarantined.

“This is an example of our ability to keep our ships deployed at sea, underway even with active COVID-19 cases,” Modly said.

But in the tight quarters of the ship, where sailors sleep in bunks stacked three high, the virus was spread. Defense officials weighed several options, including sending some sailors to Japan, as the carrier continued to Guam. But they struggled to settle on a plan, said several people familiar with the process.

The carrier arrived at Naval Base Guam on March 26, and sailors slowly began to come ashore. Senior Navy officials said that they were working to secure hotel rooms in Guam but that doing so was a logistical challenge, considering that employees had been laid off.

Crozier spoke with at least one senior officer on Saturday and Modly’s chief of staff, on March 29, said a senior defense official declined to identify the admiral.

Love told Crozier that Modly wasn’t sure about visiting the ship and wanted to know how he could help. Crozier responded that he could host the acting secretary, but that it would be a distraction and come with some risk of exposure to the virus. The secretary’s office decided to wait for a visit, and Love conveyed that Crozier could contact Modly’s office directly, the senior defense official said.

Love reached out to Crozier again on March 30. Modly’s office had not yet received the email, which left off Modly’s and Gilday’s staff.

Crozier transmitted his email in a manner that some Navy officials considered strange and wanted to know how he could help. Crozier responded that he could host the acting secretary, but that it would be a distraction and come with some risk of exposure to the virus. The secretary’s office decided to wait for a visit, and Love conveyed that Crozier could contact Modly’s office directly, the senior defense official said.

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Love reached out to Crozier again on March 30. Modly’s office had not yet received the email, which left off Modly’s and Gilday’s staff.
FOREIGN MINISTER

handful of cadets. “The toughest challenges for them were the unknowns of the past four to five weeks,” Secretary of Defense Mark Esper said.

While the other academy presidents have yet to announce how they will celebrate commencement, the Air Force has chosen to graduate students a month early and commission them as officers on Saturday.

The academy “accelerated finishing cadet requirements, including finals and calculating cadet final grades without sacri-
ficifing academic quality,” said Mike Slater, spokesman for the Air Force Academy.

Modly has announced that cadets will gather 8 feet apart from one another at The Ter-razzo pavilion in Falcon Stadium with no family, no faculty, beyond what’s required under the academy’s traditional celebratory ritual, said Gould, who will become the Corps of Cadets’ next senior administration officials. After spending the last few weeks of the pandemic, the officials said. After spending the last few weeks of the pandemic, the officials said.

One tradition expected to re-

Alyce Shaw/Special to the Chronicle

Cyrulik has chosen to defer this first salute until cadets can gath-
er safely with the person of their choice. “This is one thing we are going to do different,” he said. “We don’t want any of our cadets particularly with aged veterans.”

West Point in New York and the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., are weighing their options. Army leaders are working through a plan “for the safe re-turn of the Cadets to campus for the right time,” according to a state-

"It takes a minute or two," Cyrulik said. “Parents are weeping and everybody gets emotional.”

This year, with cadets studying at home in almost every state, he added, “It’s difficult to replicate this as best we can online.”

In Army tradition, once a new officer has gold bars pinned to his or her shoulders, the next sym-

bolic moment is the first salute. Most students select a noncom-
misioned officer who has had an impact on their life or served as a mentor.

Because that person is often an older veteran who’s a relative, Cyrulik has chosen to defer this first salute until cadets can gath-
er safely with the person of their choice.

“IT TAKES A MINUTE OR TWO,” Cyrulik said. “PARENTS ARE WEEPING AND EVERYBODY GETS EMOTIONAL.”

The Citadel

Army ROTC cadets from The Citadel class of 2019 raise their hands. The college in Charleston, S.C., is adapting its ceremonies for future military officers in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

FROM PAGE 6

officials found inappropriate, and nearly all considered unconventional.

He addressed it to Rear Adm. Stuart Baker, his immediate commanding officer; Adm. John Aquilino, the top commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet; and Vice Adm. DeWolfe Miller, the officer overseeing all naval forces in the Pacific.

Crozier wrote to more than a few senior administration officials at the Pentagon suggesting that he apologize and let the issue blow over.

However, as pressure built following Crozier’s removal, Modly acted out of char-
acter, the officials said. After spending the better part of a day flying from Washington to Guam to visit the Theodore Roosevelt, he delivered a 15-minute speech about a loud-

speaker in which he said without evidence that Crozier either had written the memo to be leaked to the media, or was too naive or too stupid to be a commanding officer of a ship like this.”

Modly resigned a day later, even as other Pentagon officials at the Pen-

don suggested that he apologize and let the issue blow over.

Crozier, meanwhile, is in isolation with the virus, as the number of confirmed cases continues to rise.

The senior defense official said leaders are still considering Crozier’s fate. They could upload his removal, reinstate him as captain, or bring him back and give him another command.

“MY GUT IS THEY’RE NOT GOING TO PUNISH HIM ANY MORE,” the official said.
Governors given direction on how to reopen states

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump and some of his officials are flouting an outlier theory that the new coronavirus was set loose on the world by a Chinese lab that let it escape. Without the weight of evidence, they’re trying to blame a Chinese lab that let it escape. Without the weight of evidence, they’re trying to blame China for sickness and death from COVID-19 in the United States.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo added Wednesday, “The mere fact that we don’t know the answers — that China hasn’t shared the answers — I think is very, very telling.”

A scientific consensus is still evolving. But experts overwhelmingly say analysis of the new coronavirus’ genome rules out infection among humans began at an animal lab in China. Even so, Pompeo and others are pointing fingers at an institute that is run by the Chinese Academy of Sciences and has done groundbreaking research tracing the likely origins of the SARS virus, finding new bat viruses and discovering how they could jump to people.

President Donald Trump speaks about the coronavirus, accompanied by Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, in the James Brady Press Briefing Room of the White House, on Thursday, in Washington.

“They will be able to go literally, almost immediately,” Trump said. “They have 14 days away from the starting line and then you have to have 14 days of declining symptoms and hospital capacity that exists in case you have a rebound,” he said.

Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam, a Democrat, said the guidelines “seem to make sense.”

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Governors of both parties made clear they will move at their own pace.

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“As $2 trillion relief fund starts to flow, oversight of payouts lags

By Calvin Woodward

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump and some of his officials are flouting an outlier theory that the new coronavirus was set loose on the world by a Chinese lab that let it escape. Without the weight of evidence, they’re trying to blame China for sickness and death from COVID-19 in the United States.

Finger pointing at China is a favorite of the Trump administration and Congress. It’s a way to deflect questions about why the response to the pandemic has been so slow and flawed.

But experts overwhelmingly say analysis of the new coronavirus’ genome rules out infection among humans began at an animal lab in China. Even so, Pompeo and others are pointing fingers at an institute that is run by the Chinese Academy of Sciences and has done groundbreaking research tracing the likely origins of the SARS virus, finding new bat viruses and discovering how they could jump to people.

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“Now is it likely that the virus emerged from a neglected laboratory in China, they say: “We could put it on a list of 1,000 different scenarios, said Nathan Grubaugh of Yale University, who studies the epidemiology of viral disease.

Scientists say the virus arose naturally in bats. They say the leading theory is that infection among humans began at an animal market in Wuhan, China, probably from an animal that got the virus from a bat.

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“We know that there is the Wuhan Institute of Virology just a handful of miles away from where the wet market was,” Pompeo said Wednesday on Fox News. The institute has an address 8 miles from the market.

The guidelines recommend that states pass checkpoints that look at new cases, testing and surveillance data over the prior 14 days before advancing from one phase to another. Governors of both parties made clear they will move at their own pace.

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Muslims grapple with limits amid Ramadan

Associated Press

WINTER PARK, Fla. — A new generation of Muslim Americans is looking for a way to celebrate Ramadan this month.

Saturday, April 18, 2020

VIRUS OUTBREAK ROUNDUP

Do nothing in our power to make sure they are taken care of at home and in the workplace,” Newson said.

Georgia

ATLANTA — With Georgia officials still debating the state’s hospitalization peak from COVID-19 in the future, they’re close to opening a 200-bed facility in an Atlanta convention center.

Crews have built rows of gleaming white cubicles, each 10 feet square, atop a bright white plastic floor in an exhibition hall at the sprawling Georgia World Congress Center. The bare rooms — most only have a hospital bed — are meant to host patients sick with coronavirus who don’t need intensive care.

The state is spending $21.5 million on the project, including more than $6 million just to build the facility, which could be scaled up to 600 beds. It’s meant to provide a margin of safety for Georgia officials charting the hospital peak in cases and hospitalizations approaches at the start of May amid the global virus outbreak.

“I have something that happens when we do get to the peak time, and our hospital bed capacity is up and tuck, we’re glad we had a facility like this,” Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp told reporters after his tour.

Hawaii

HONOLULU — More than one-third of Hawaii’s labor force filed unemployment claims according to the latest state data as the islands effectively shut down large sectors of the economy to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

The state Department of Labor and Industrial Relations said Friday that 244,330 claims have been filed since March 1. Hawaii’s labor force numbered about 660,000 for most of the past year.

Judith Ramirez and her husband are both among those dealing with the stress and uncertainty of not knowing when they’ll be able to resume working.

She got her job at the Sheraton Waikiki while her husband is an electrician journeyman. They each filed for unemployment in recent weeks, with some assistance from their union after the hotel temporarily closed.

Ramirez said she’s most concerned about being able to pay for her mortgage and keep her health insurance.

Iowa

JOHNSTON — Gov. Kim Reynolds ordered residents in north-central Iowa to practice stricter social distancing Thursday as she confirmed that workers at a second Tyson Foods plant are infected with the coronavirus.

Reynolds said she was banning nearly all gatherings in the region that includes Cedar Rapids, Waterloo and Dubuque.

She said the state was responding to reports of infections at a Tyson Foods pork processing plant in Waterloo. The state was sending supplies to test hundreds of workers at the facility, which remained open Thursday.

TOPEKA — Two Kansas churches and their pastors filed a federal lawsuit Thursday against Gov. Laura Kelly over an order banning religious gatherings with more than 10 people to help slow the spread of the new coronavirus, arguing that the directive violates their religious and free-speech rights.

The lawsuit comes eight days after the Republican legislative leaders attempted to revoke Kelly’s order themselves, only to be thwarted by the state’s high court, which said they lacked the authority to do so.

“Instead of following the health guidelines from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment or to the people’s own good judgment, Gov. Laura Kelly has unilaterally imposed restrictions on religious organizations’ ability to practice their faith,” said attorney Kenneth Jacobson.

Police officers and pedestrians cheer medical workers Thursday outside NYU Medical Center in New York.

BALTIMORE — The NAACP in Baltimore has started circulating a sound truck blasting requests to “stay-at-home” during the coronavirus pandemic.

The truck, which features messages from local celebrities, politicians and athletes, has started driving around areas where residents have continued to gather despite Gov. Larry Hogan’s stay-at-home order. The Baltimore Sun reported the messages tell people to remain in their homes when possible, practice social-distancing guidelines, wash their hands frequently and wear masks.

Spokesman Joshua Harris said the 40-foot sound truck made its first round on Wednesday and will target low-income and “hard-to-reach” areas of the city for six to eight hours a day in the upcoming weeks.

“It’s clear that the mobile education unit grabs the attention of people who are not at home,” said the Rev. Kobi Little, president of the NAACP’s Baltimore branch.

They’re focused on giving information about the virus outbreak to people who aren’t tuning in for public health updates on the news or social media.

STOP FORT WORTH — More than 100 Texas mayors are urging the state’s Congressional delegation to give all cities the same access to federal coronavirus relief funds, regardless of size.

President Donald Trump signed a coronavirus aid bill into law last month that allocates $150 billion to states and local governments as part of a $2.2 trillion package. The funds are intended to support families, businesses and health care providers during the public health crisis.

But the package limits how cities with populations fewer than 500,000 people receive their money. While larger cities are eligible to apply for money directly from the federal government, the smaller ones must request money from the governor.

“This language leaves out hundreds of Texas cities with millions of residents. We simply do not understand the population cutoff in the CARES Act,” the mayors said in a letter sent Wednesday.

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Global warming cited as a leading factor

BY SETH BORENSTEIN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's former lawyer and longtime fixer Michael Cohen will be released from federal prison on condition of anonymity.

Cohen is currently locked up at FCI Otisville in New York after pleading guilty to numerous charges, including campaign finance fraud and lying to Congress. He will remain under quarantine for 14 days before he is released. Federal statistics show 14 inmates and seven staff members at the prison have tested positive for coronavirus.

After he is released, Cohen will serve the remainder of his sentence at home, according to the person who could not discuss the matter publicly and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Cohen's release comes as prisons on advocates and congressional leaders have been pressing the Justice Department to allow the release of at-risk inmates ahead of a potential outbreak, arguing that the crowded conditions could be deadly. The Bureau of Prisons said it had moved more than 1,000 inmates to home confinement since March 26, when Barr first issued a directive to increase its use in late March. The agency said it is a “tremendous logistical lift that was accomplished through the marshaling of all of BOP's resources.”

New information adds to questions about use of Russia probe dossier

WASHINGTON — Newly released material raises the possibility that Russian disinformation was used in its way to a dossier of opposition research that the FBI relied on when applying for warrants to eavesdrop on a former campaign adviser to President Donald Trump.

The material, contained in Footnotes to a Justice Department watchdog report that the FBI was advised even as it sought the warrants that some of the information included in the dossier was not accurate or was potentially influenced by Russian disinformation.

It may add to accusations that the FBI did not take seriously enough concerns that were raised about the dossier's reliability as it investigated ties between the Trump campaign and Russia. A Justice Department inspector general report from December 2019 concluded in the dossier.

One of the footnotes says the FBI's Office of Congressional Affairs reviewed the information from the dossier during the course of the 2016 presidential campaign by Christopher Steele, a former British spy whose research into ties between Trump and Russia was financed by Democrats.

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The dossier was first released by two Republican senators, Chuck Grassley of Iowa and Ron Johnson of Wisconsin, who said in a joint statement that the information makes clear that the FBI's investigation in targeting Page "was riddled with significant flaws.”

On Thursday, the senators asked FBI Director Christopher Wray to provide all intelligence records received and reviewed by the FBI that conducted the Russia investigation.

The FBI did not rely on the dossier when it applied for a warrant to monitor the communications of former Trump campaign adviser Carter Page.

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The superhero movie formula is simple. Hero appears to be riding high, hero is temporarily humbled by supervillain, hero regains the advantage and saves the day. Now, the real world has delivered a twist: The coronavirus pandemic makes these costumed heroes seem powerless. COVID-19 has forced studios to postpone the release of some of their most lucrative movies and halt production on future installments of these ongoing series. Yet the threat the virus poses to superheroes isn’t limited to the immediate toll on the box office. When theaters reopen, will the fantasy that a few spanned-do-gooders can save us from disaster seem like a salve, or a sick joke?

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

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

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

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

Viruses are very different from supervillains. They lack the ideological motivations that drive antagonists like General Zod, who squares off with Superman over their differences about how to treat humanity, or the charm of Marvel’s anti-heroic trickstergod, Loki. Pathogens have slightly more in common with the cannon fodder in the armies that constantly seem to be invading Earth in superhero movies, in that they are relentless, numerous and basically anonymous.

But even then, viruses can’t be Hulk-smashed into submission. They’re a different kind of enemy, more threatening and frightening than any of the fictional PG-13 threats superhero movies have offered us in recent years. And the skills and values necessary to defeat them, including scientific expertise, widespread community sacrifice and patience, aren’t the stuff of frenetic CGI spectacles.

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

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

In “Watchmen,” Alan Moore’s revisionist superhero comic, the disillusioned crimefighter Rorschach fantasizes about a day when ordinary people will ask him for the help they have refused, and he’ll be able to punish them by rejecting them in turn. Faced with a pandemic, it’s not so much that superheroes will look down on us and whisper “No.” It’s that, sadly, they never had the power to save us in the first place.

By Alyssa Rosenberg
The Washington Post

A SUMMER WITHOUT A SUPERHERO

COVID-19 could take a hammer to highly profitable movie genre
Doom Eternal staves off another demonic attack with more content, crunchily hard difficulty level

By Christopher Byrd
Special to The Washington Post

M ost of the time when playing Doom Eternal, I hover between life and death. During those moments, I am both predator and prey. Dashing around the map, I do my best to avoid the mancubus, an obese demon with cannons for arms that is particularly deadly when encountered in pairs or trios. I’m low on health, I search frantically for a scruffy zombie, soldier or gargoyle that I can decapitate with a few shots for health, or brol with an over-the-shoulder weapon for ammo, cannon for armor, or chainsaw in half for some ammo. Because it demands concentration this lurid routine has provided some measure of escape for me over the past few days.

Doom (2016) ranks among my top three shooters of this generation. (For me, its competition for the top slot is either another game published by Bethesda, Machine-Games’ Wolfenstein 2: The New Colossus or Superhot, for which I’ll cheat and say both those moments, I am both annoying, generic and, frankly, unimpressive.) Whereas Doom shook up the series and resuscitated my fondness for over-the-top, rip-a-demon’s-head-off-with-your-hands FPS violence, this feels like more of the same but with larger levels and more difficulty.

The new frills are nice — such as the Slayer Dungeon where you can go hog wild and sharpen your skills by shooting demons without the threat of dying, or Slayer Gates where you can face off against harder enemies. But they have not yet convinced me that they make for a qualitative improvement.

One aspect of Eternal I’ve found baffling is its platforming sections, which are annoying, generic and, frankly, unimpressive. It was thought that I might enjoy interludes of climbing, double jumping and air dashing to get from place to place when these things have been done much better in other games, I’ll never know. But Doom Eternal feels like a game that was constructed around pillars rather than guided by vision. If the last game seemed shockingly good, this feels like a careful study of what worked before.

This isn’t to say that Eternal’s combat isn’t satisfying. Far from it. If you want to appreciate just how well animated the game is, turn down the music and throw on an album by someone you like. With all respect to Eternal’s wonderful electronic/industrial/metal soundtrack, I find it fantastically violent a wonderful backdrop to the music of, say, Billie Eilish.

Doom Eternal is a challenging, engaging shooter that caters to one’s predatorial impulses. It will keep you on your toes.

Platforms: PC, PlayStation 4, Xbox One
Online: bethesda.net/en/game/doom

New game network to launch during quarantine downtime

Launching a television startup at any time is not easy. Launching one during a pandemic? You might as well attempt a crossbow elimination while searching for the hidden gnome in Fortnite.

Yet that’s what the founders of VENN, a videogame television network that aspires to be MTV for the gamer generation, are attempting. The company’s leaders say they will move up a planned launch of their service from September to July because more Americans are staying home and playing video games while under quarantine.

“In terms of timing, we think our audience needs this now more than ever,” said Ben Kusin, one of VENN’s co-founders. VENN raised $17 million last year from videogame powerbrokers such as executives at Riot and Blizzard Entertainment. Kusin, a former executive at Vivendi Games and the son of GameStop founder Gary Kusin, teamed up with Ariel Horn, who produces televised esports, to form the company.

The network, which stands for Videogame Entertainment & News Network, aims to fill the space between Twitch and other online platforms that largely stream games-play and the mainstream television networks that rarely cover gamer culture — basically, it’s polished TV content for consumers more likely to fire up Call of Duty than “Better Call Saul.”

The VENN executives are terming the launch a “beta.” The July debut, they say, will be scaled down — some 36 hours of programming hours per week compared to the 55 that had been planned for September. And while VENN had been created as a result of the pandemic, founders say they had to lean into the idea of VENN as a programming slate that can be more easily produced at this time.

So, will there be esports shoots? Shelved. A late-night show or content featuring gamers and influencers? More likely.

“We know it’s not easy to do everything we want to do,” Horn said. “But we can be on our heels, or we can be proactive.”

The partners have long felt that gaming, a $15 billion business, is ripe for a full-time television network. The most prominent effort to date, a mid-2000s channel called G4, was not commercially viable.

But VENN executives point to the recent spike in gaming popularity that many Americans are playing more while under lockdown because of COVID-19 — as a particular reason their service will work. “For me, Blizzard’s Call of Duty: Warzone brought in 30 million players in 10 days, according to the company, while Nintendo’s Animal Crossing: New Horizons last month sold nearly 4 million copies in its first three days in Japan as gamers sought to build a perfect oasis — in universe if not in the real world.”

— Steven Zeitchik
The Washington Post
Late-night pandemic illusions

You’re not imagining it: We’re all having intense coronavirus dreams

By Rachel Schnalzer
Los Angeles Times

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

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

“I feel pain in my right shoulder, and see a huge grasshopper-like insect there. It has already chewed through the fabric of my sweater and is now gouging my flesh,” one respondent described in a dream survey currently underway and conducted by Deirdre Leigh Barrett, Ph.D., author of “The Committee of Sleep: How Artists, Scientists, and Athletes Use Their Dreams for Creative Problem Solving — and How You Can Too” and an assistant professor of psychology at Harvard Medical School’s psychiatry department.

Barrett supports the idea that people do not need to “digest” information throughout the day. When we observe something normal, our brains process the experience through dreaming. “Dream recall is very correlated with feelings that are repressed during waking life,” she has noticed some respondents are experiencing more intense dreams while in quarantine. Barrett has noticed a parallel between dreams about the coronavirus pandemic and dreams had by a group of British soldiers imprisoned in a Nazi prisoner-of-war camp during World War II. The soldiers’ dreams included elements of yearning for things they couldn’t have or enjoy while detained. “They had more food content (in their dreams)” than any other sample I’ve ever seen,” Barrett explains. In her current dream survey, she has noticed some respondents are dreaming about foods they aren’t able to have while in quarantine. So, can we learn anything from the dreams we experience during the coronavirus crisis?

“Sometimes you can get a practical, useful idea,” Barrett suggests, while also pointing out that dreams can indicate feelings that are repressed during waking life. For someone who is experiencing more anxious dreams while in quarantine, Barrett posits, “They may be more scared (of the coronavirus pandemic) than they think.”

Many experts recommend journaling as a helpful way to reflect on and learn from our dreams. Barrett, a proponent of dream journaling, explains, “We forget dreams so easily that writing them down helps us continue to relate to them longer. You just see another side to yourself.”

She recommends looking for patterns in dreams and keeping tabs on any themes that come up regularly. Barrett isn’t fussy about how people dream journal, saying that while some people may enjoy keeping old-fashioned logs of their dreams, others may find dictating to a smartphone easier and less time-intensive.

For those who have trouble remembering their dreams, Naiman suggests, “The first step to remembering a dream is to linger in grogginess.” Upon waking, keep your eyes closed and wait for the memories of the dream to resurface. Then write your recollections of the dream down — or draw, if that feels more natural, Naiman says. He encourages dreamers to recognize that the waking world and the dream world are connected, saying, “Bridge whatever memory you have of the dream into the waking world.”
Let your mind wander when your feet can’t

Amid the pandemic, an adventure addict finds solace in his imagination

BY JOHN BRILEY
Special to The Washington Post

O K, I get it: I’m not going anywhere anytime soon. So as an inveterate adventure traveler facing a monthslong adventure deficit, I decided in mid-March that I had to get resourceful. So in the past three weeks, I’ve been kite surfing in Hawaii, heli-skiing in British Columbia, kayaking in Baja California and mountain biking in the Arizona desert. And I’ve done it all without leaving my neighborhood. I’m not talking about virtual travel videos or Oculus Rift or recreational drugs, each of which I’m sure has its virtues. Instead, I’m traveling using only the power of my consciousness, a technique I learned four years ago when a sports injury forced me to cancel a long-awaited adventure trip and my physical therapist, Annie Johnstone, offered this wisdom: “You can still go. Just go there in your mind. Immerse in it. Feel it and be grateful.”

I did as she said, and although I wasn’t delighted about staying home, I found calming sanctuary in the chambers of my brain where travel memories reside. I sat on my couch, took a few meditative breaths, cast out the demons of FOMO and came pretty close to re-experiencing the feeling of carving down a wave face and enjoying — and journaling on past trips. My consciousness journeys are one way to do that because they allow me to kinda-sorta believe I’m engaged in a sport, which in turn triggers at least a minor surge of the pleasure-yielding neurotransmitter dopamine in my brain. Other T-mental activities include reading adventure literature — among my favorites are accounts of early polar explorations and the first forays by foreigners into the Sahara — and journaling on past trips.

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

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

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

So when I’m really starting to go nuts, I recall a quote from the late novelist Philip Roth’s book “The Dying Animal”: “You tasted it. Isn’t that enough? Of what do you ever get more than a taste? That’s all we’re given in life, that’s all we’re given of life. A taste. There is no more.”

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

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

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

BY JOCELYN NOVECK
Associated Press

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

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

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

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

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

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

In current conditions, Park notes, even non-planner types are seeking ways to organize their lives. If you’re hunkered down at home, suddenly Friday doesn’t seem like Friday because the weekend hardly feels different. Monday morning carries little of that back-to-the-kitchen table. “Just something so that at the end of the day, regarding how crappy it was, there’s something that was a win — even taking the dog for a walk,” she says. Most helpful, though, is when she’s able to do something for others — for example, a recent initiative to deliver 500 catered meals to a hospital emergency room for health care workers.

“For many, having schedules and structure and timelines and things they can count on is important,” says Helen Park, a family therapist, social worker and specialist in mindfulness.

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

Michelle Bushee, a real estate broker in Pittsburgh, has always been an avid planner. And she’s old-school: Bushee eschews digital planners for the paper kind — not little black books, but those big spiral volumes with expansive pages that she normally fills up with meetings, house showings, closings and volunteer activities.

“My weeks used to look really scary,” she says, meaning scary busy. Now her planner instills a different kind of fear. The entire month of April is empty — big white pages of miserable nothingness. “Now THIS,” she says, “scares me.”

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

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

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Tony Allen and Hugh Masekela

“Rejoice,” a long-dormant collaboration between legendary Afrobeat drummer Tony Allen and South African horn player Hugh Masekela, is a swirling, restless album that wisely puts their instruments at the center of the action.

Recorded mostly a decade ago in London, it was completed last year at the same studio where it was started under the guidance of producer Nick Gold. Allen is a Paris-based Nigerian native whose reputation was cemented during his long association with the late Fela Kuti but whose long résumé also includes supergroup The Good, the Bad & the Queen with Damon Albarn, Paul Simonon and Simon Tong. He says “Rejoice” is a “kind of South African-Nigerian swing-jazz stew,” a description that is as inviting as it is accurate. The album cover, which emulates the classic style of the Blue Note label, seems to underline the jazz elements.

The 2010 sessions at Livingston Studios took place with Allen laying down his drum patterns and Masekela working out the melodic structure and playing his flugelhorn parts separately. The rest of the instruments, including bass, keyboards, percussion and vibraphone, comprise a subtle and empathetic support group. Notable among them are tenor sax player Steve Williamson on three of the eight tracks and Tom Herbert’s acoustic bass.

The sound of Allen’s drum set is wonderfully crisp and detailed and his playing superb, while Masekela, who died in 2018 and was also known for his anti-apartheid advocacy, performs with his usual high-flying lyricism and technical excellence. Masekela adds vocals to a few tracks, which include a homage to Fela Kuti titled “Never (Lagos Never Gonna Be the Same)” and a scruptious “Slow Bones,” which exudes creative and spiritual freedom.

One of the last tunes, “Obama Shuffle Strut Blues,” is a percussive tour de force and tips its cap to the former U.S. president, who hadn’t been in office too long to the former U.S. president, who

There’s also another full-band version of the song on “Naked Garden,” for those who just can’t get enough. One highlight, the previously unreleased “The Way You Say Goodbye,” features Nelson sounding more like Roy Orbison than his dad, Willie Nelson. Hearing his take on the country waltz song is worth the price of admission alone.

There’s also some fun banter included in between tracks, making it feel like the listener is there with the band in the studio. Not everything’s perfectly presented here, but that’s by design.

— Scott Bauer
Associated Press

Clem Snide

Forever Just Beyond
(Ramseur/Tiger Records)

There have been many iterations of Clem Snide over the years, but by now it’s turned into a personal alias for Eef Barzelay. “Album opener ‘Roger Ebert’ centers on some of the movie critic’s final words — “It’s an elaborate hoax” — and the passage from this life into whatever comes next. The title track, one of the album’s most meticulous, attempts to define the divine as something outside the confines of faith and reason: “God is simply that which lies forever just beyond the limit of what we already seem to know.”

“The True Shape Your Heart” is beautifully but heartbreakingly romantic, and here Barzelay sounds halfway between Roy Orbison and Nick Cave. “Ballad of Eef Barzelay” reinforces the wastefulness and futility of suicide, while “Emily” provides a tough recipe for changing the world — start with yourself and “be more kind and brave in the face of it all.”

Closer “Some Ghost,” one of the Avett co-writes, is another atmospheric musical gem with lyrics trying to make sense of the voices trapped in our head and point to a way out.

At the Israeli-born, Nashville-based Barzelay describes his past decade as a “rollercoaster of deep despair and amazing opportunities,” including divorce, bankruptcy and a fan’s generous donation. With “Forever Just Beyond,” Barzelay shows that he’s made the most of this chance he got.

— Scott Stroud
Associated Press

MUSIC REVIEWS

Luke Nelson & Promise of the Real
Naked Garden (Fantasy Records)

Luke Nelson & Promise of the Real offer 10 Out takes and five alternative versions of songs that appeared on last year’s “Turn Off the News (Build a Garden)” with their latest album, “Naked Garden.”

It’s not just a record for completists. The alternate versions and outtakes offered here stand on their own merits. But for fans of Nelson, it offers a glimpse into his artistic process.

An acoustic version “Civilized Hell,” slowed down here, packs a different kind of punch than the rocked-up version did that was released last year. There’s also another full-band version of the song on “Naked Garden,” for those who just can’t get enough.

One of the last tunes, “Obama Shuffle Strut Blues,” is a percussive tour de force and tips its cap to the former U.S. president, who hadn’t been in office too long when the album was being made.

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Man accused of setting person ablaze arrested

FL — A man accused of setting a person on fire during a dispute over money has been arrested, sheriff’s officials in Florida said.

Brian Terrance Connor, 35, was arrested Wednesday and charged with attempted first-degree murder, arson and burglary for the incident, according to the St. Johns County Sheriff’s Office.

Bond was set at $250,000.

The victim was taken to a hospital unit in Gainesville, and remains in critical condition, The Florida Times-Union reported. Sheriff’s officials have not released the person’s name, age or gender.

The incident happened at an apartment complex, where Connor is accused of entering a residence and starting an argument, investigators said. Investigators said Connor doused the victim with a flammable liquid, which he then set on fire before fleeing in a vehicle. The victim went to another apartment, still on fire, and someone there helped extinguish the flames.

3 men arrested in theft of town’s welcome signs

AL — Three men were arrested after someone stole the welcome signs from a small town in north Alabama, authorities said Wednesday.

Officials awoke Tuesday to discover that two metal “Welcome to Eva” signs, each about 4 feet tall, were missing from roadsides near the city limits. Sheriff’s investigators within hours arrested two men from neighboring cities and recovered both missing signs.

A third person, 23-year-old Eva resident Brandon Ryan Bodkin, surrendered to police Wednesday and was being held with William Lawrence Dudley, 23, of Somerville, and Tyler Dean Hammock, 23, of Huntsville, on theft charges, sheriff’s officials said in a statement posted on Facebook.

Police: Worker attacks 2, cuts his own throat

AZ — Three employees of a Kingdom restaurant were seriously injured when one allegedly attacked the other two, one with hot oil and the other with a knife, before cutting his own throat, police said Tuesday.

Deputy Police Chief Rusty Cooper said they didn’t immediately know what led to the attacks Monday.

No identities were released but Cooper said all three employees were hospitalized and expected to survive their injuries.

Police: Tow truck drivers have gun battle

MO — Two tow truck drivers carried out a rolling gun battle in a western Kansas City neighborhood, seriously wounding one of them, police said.

The shooting happened near the Glen Lake neighborhood, the Kansas City Star reported. Police said the altercation began in Raytown, when one tow truck driver tried to run over the other, and continued into Kansas City.

At some point, one driver opened fire on the other as they drove north on Norfleet Road, police said. The chase and shooting continued as the tow trucks traveled west and ended a short time later.

Police said one of the drivers was shot twice and was taken by an ambulance to a hospital in serious condition. He is expected to survive, police said.

Girl kidnapped by woman with no pants

KY — A 14-year-old teenage girl escaped after she was kidnapped by a woman who was not wearing any pants.

The girl told deputies she was on her way to visit her friend’s house last week when a woman jumped out of the woods and grabbed her, news outlets reported Tuesday. Kimberly Phelps, 50, has since been charged with attempting kidnapping of a minor.

According to the Meade County Sheriff’s Office, Phelps told the girl she had been watching her “for a while” when she kidnapped her. The teen told deputies Phelps tried to take her toward a driveway before she freed herself and fled. Deputies said Phelps gave the girl drinking glasses and other items that she had with her when they found her. She told deputies she only approached the girl to give her a hug and a book.

Sunset beach

People keep their distance as they exercise outside of a closed La Jolla beach Wednesday in San Diego.

The dollar amount awarded to a Kansas man who spent nearly two years behind bars before his 1987 burglary conviction was reversed by the Kansas Supreme Court. Attorney General Derek Schmidt said Tuesday in a news release that it will not appeal a Sedgwick County Court ruling that Bobby Harper is entitled to compensation. Harper also was granted a certificate of innocence, along with education and counseling benefits.

The aide was arrested April 9 and booked on a half-dozen charges including conspiracy and participation in a criminal street gang.

Two inmates, described as participants in a gang, were arrested on the same charges and 11 other inmates were arrested for investigation of violations involving possession of the contraband items.

Judge: Get dressed for Zoom hearings

FL — A Florida judge has one request for attorneys showing up for court hearings via Zoom: Get out of bed and put on some clothes!

Broward Circuit Judge Dennis Bailey made the plea in a letter published by the Weston Bar Association, news outlets reported.

“It is remarkable how many ATTORNEYS appear inappropriately on camera,” Bailey wrote in the letter. “One male lawyer appeared shirtless and one female attorney appeared still in bed, still under the covers.”

Bailey isn’t making any exceptions for lawyers lounging in the Florida sunshine, either.

“Putting on a beach cover-up won’t cover up you’re poolside in a bathing suit,” he wrote.

Since courthouses shut down on March 16 to help slow the coronavirus pandemic, Broward County’s judicial system has held about 1,200 Zoom meetings, WPLG-TV reported.

Bailey, for one, said he won’t hold a complicated trial over the video conferencing site, given the technology’s shortcomings.

“The lawyers are not looking at their screens but down at their files, their outlines and notes, or simply out the window, and cannot see the judge is hollering ‘Stop! Stop!’ because an objection has been made and the audio stays with the witness rather than obeying the judge,” he said.

Multitudes of seashells uncollected amid ban

NC — The ban on tourists in North Carolina’s Outer Banks has created large piles of uncollected seashells during the coronavirus pandemic.

A Facebook video posted Monday by the Cape Lookout National Seashore showed multitudes of colorful shells spread out across the beach as waves splash over them.

While park facilities are closed due to the virus outbreak, the Charlotte Observer reported both Cape Lookout and Cape Hatteras national seashores in the Outer Banks are open to residents. The shells remain uncollected since visitors are the ones that tend to gather them during the springtime.

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BY HOWARD FENDRICH  
Associated Press

A decision on whether to postpone or cancel the U.S. Open because of the coronavirus pandemic is expected by June, the U.S. Tennis Association’s new CEO said Thursday, calling the prospect of holding the Grand Slam tournament without spectators “highly unlikely.”

The U.S. Open is scheduled to begin Aug. 30 in New York. With the men’s and women’s tennis tours being under consideration to hold events at least mid-July, and one tournament in August already has been scrapped, organizers are not making plans to resume in June.

As for holding the U.S. Open with no fans, Dowse said the USTA is “not taking anything off the table, but right now, I’d say that’s a highly unlikely scenario.”

“Things are fluid,” he added. “If the medical experts come back and say, ‘Here is a foolproof way of running a very safe tournament; unfortunately, it has to be without fans,’ we may reconsider and look at it.”

Tennis tournaments, in general, are more dependent on ticket, merchandise and on-site food sales as a percentage of revenue than major professional sports leagues that are largely funded by TV contracts.

Dowse also discussed the USTA’s plan to oversee a commitment of more than $50 million to help tennis deal with the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak at the grassroots level.

He said a said a survey conducted in March found that 85% of tennis facilities and 44% of the United States were closed because of stay-at-home orders, and he estimated that to be more like 90% now.

Dowse said the USTA is shoving more than $15 million from its budget by reducing salaries of its management and eliminating programs in player development and marketing. That includes money saved by temporarily closing the USTA national campus outside Orlando, Fla., last month.

The total future support provided by the USTA and its industry partners — including economic assistance packages and a telephone hotline for those “emotionally impacted” by the pandemic — will be affected by the financial success of the 2020 U.S. Open, if it is even held.

PGA Tour hopes to resume at Colonial

BY DOUG FERGUSON  
Associated Press

The PGA Tour laid out an ambitious plan Thursday to resume its season the second week of June and keep fans away for at least a month, conceding that any return to golf depends on whether it can be played safely amid the coronavirus outbreak.

The Charles Schwab Challenge at Colonial in Fort Worth, Texas, was pushed back to June 11-14. Assuming golf gets the green light from government and health officials, the tour then would have an official tournament every week through Dec. 6 except for a Thanksgiving break.

“Our hope is to play a role — responsibly — in the world’s return to enjoying the things we love,” PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan said. “But as we’ve stressed on several occasions, we will resume competition only when it is considered safe to do so under the guidance of the leadership of public health authorities.”

Golf is the first sport to announce plans for a restart, although its arenas are far different from other sports because it is played over some 400 acres.

The tour said its invitation-based tournaments — Colonial, Hilton Head and the Memorial — would have their fields expanded to 144 players. Memorial, with Jack Nicklaus as the host, takes the July 16-19 week that had belonged to the British Open before it was canceled. The World Golf Championship in Memphis, Tenn., now has the dates July 30-Aug. 2 when the Olympics were to be played.

If all goes according to plan, the season would end on Sept. 7 at the Tour Championship.
2021 Games won’t provide much of a stimulus for Japan

BY STEPHEN WADE
Associated Press

TOKYO — IOC member John Coates, who oversees planning for next year’s Tokyo Olympics, has claimed the postponed games could help “kick start” Japan’s economy.

Japan has been devastated like many countries by the coronavirus pandemic and could be in a recession when the Olympics are to open on July 23, 2021.

“These games are a very positive opportunity for an economic stimulus,” Coates said in a telephone on Thursday with the Tokyo organizing committee.

“These games can help kick start the economy again. These games could be the rebirth of the tourism industry.”

Coates also praised Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, calling him a “very, very smart man.” He said Abe also viewed organizing the Olympics, and some critics have questioned whether the games by a year, are likely to be very disappointed,” Victor Matheson, a sports economist at the College of the Holy Cross, said in an email.

In some previous Olympics, soaring prices and crowding have discouraged tourists instead of attracting them.

“His predictions fly in the face of the research on the financial impacts of hosting the games ‘on a good day’ — and the current global crisis does not qualify as ‘a good day,'” Helen Lenskyj, a professor emerita at the University of Toronto, said in an email.

Lenskyj has written eight books on the Olympics, including the most recent — “The Olympic Games: A Critical Approach.” She suggested Japan would be better off if it did not have to finance next year’s games.

“At this moment in history, ‘a very smart man’ would be wishing his country did not have the added burden of hosting the Olympics,” Lenskyj said.

Japan is officially spending $12.6 billion to organize the Olympics, although a government audit report in December said it was twice that much. All but $5.6 billion is taxpayer money.

IOC and Japanese officials say they don’t know the cost of the one-year delay, but estimates have put it at $2 billion to $6 billion. Nearly all of the added costs fall to Japan under an agreement signed in 2013 when Tokyo was awarded the games.

Coates confirmed the IOC would be spending “several hundred million dollars” because of the postponement. The funds will go to distressed international federations and national Olympic committees, and to Tokyo organizing committee CEO Toshiro Muto has described the added costs as “massive” and Coates acknowledged “there will be some negative impacts.”

“If Tokyo is hoping that a surge of tourism is going to cover the costs of moving the games by a year, they are likely to be very disappointed,” Victor Matheson, a sports economist at the College of the Holy Cross, said in an email.

Matheson and colleague Robert Baumann calculated the impact of foreign tourism on the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics. They discounted local spending since it was simply moving expenditures from one city in the country to another.

They said Rio had 60,000 added arrivals and estimated $5,000 spending by each arrival — an impact of $300 million.

Rio spent about $13 billion to organize the Olympics, and some put the figure at $20 billion.

Olympics/MLB

Zimmerman fundraising to help with coronavirus

By Ryan Zimmerman
For The Associated Press

Hosmer and I were at home, like, ‘We’re just sitting here. What can we do over the next weeks or months — or however long this thing lasts, where people are really battling at the hospital — so we can help out?’

We realized there are a lot of athletes who can give money or use their social media reach to raise money and pump it directly right back into the community, to the hospitals and to the healthcare workers in the D.C.-Virginia-Maryland area.

These people are fans; they come watch us play. Whether it’s the doctors, the nurses or the patients, these are the people that allow us to do what we do. So this is the least we can do to give back.


I plan to talk to Ryan Kerrigan to try to get some of the Redskins involved. I’ve talked to D.C. United head coach Ben Olsen. I’ll reach out to the Mystics.

This started with giving hospital staff and their families food when they get off their shifts. We were told that’s a huge burden off their backs, to be able to bring dinner home, not have to cook.

These people are working around the clock, so to have a nutritive meal for them and their family is huge, as is the stress relief. It’s already made, there’s no dishes to wash afterward.

Now we have the ability to do the meals and also get into donating medical supplies, whether it’s masks or gowns or protective equipment for people helping patients with the disease, so they don’t get infected.

As this thing really grows, we can really make a difference, which is great to see and shows you the power of athletes if they work together. We started Pros for Heroes this week, and by Tuesday night, after the Zoom call on Facebook with my teammates (during a TV re-airing of Game 7 of the World Series, we already had raised over $200,000.

It was cool for us to relive it, because when you’re playing in the game, you don’t see a lot of the things that you notice when you re-watch it.

I didn’t realize how long Patrick (Corbin) pitched. He was one of the most underrated players for our whole playoff run. This guy’s a top-20 starting pitcher in the entire league and just signed a $140 million contract and was literally doing whatever we needed him to do all postseason: Throwing out the ‘pen, coming in on what’s supposed to be his side day.

A lot of guys would just say, ‘Nah, I’m a starting pitcher. I don’t want to do that.’ He pitched three innings out of the bullpen in Game 7. I mean, what? I knew he pitched for a while, but when you’re in a game, and you’re worrying about what you need to do at first base or in your at-bat in the next inning, you kind of get lost in it all.

So to re-watch it and see how many outs he got was unbelievable. (Astros starter) Zack Greinke was really good that night. Zack’s been a really good pitcher for a long time, but the last couple of years, he hasn’t been what he was for four or five years ago. That was one of the best games I’ve ever seen him throw. Re-watching it, I was happy to see him leave the game.

I hope it was fun for the fans to hear our perspective and see the group of guys that we had. That’s why we won the World Series last year: The group that we had, the personalities, how much fun we had together.
Former Super Bowl MVP tests positive for virus

Broncos LB Miller in good spirits despite diagnosis

BY ARNIE STAPLETON
Associated Press

AURORA, Colo. — Von Miller has the coronavirus and the NFL star wanted to come forward with his diagnosis to show people how serious the disease is.

“I’m going to do whatever I have to do to get thru this!” Miller wrote in an Instagram post Thursday night. “Take this seriously. It’s definitely for real.”

The Super Bowl MVP is the highest-profile American athlete to announce he’s contracted COVID-19. Last month, NBA star Kevin Durant was among several members of the Brooklyn Nets to test positive.

“Von wants to let everyone out there know how serious it is; it doesn’t just happen to old people in nursing homes,” agent Joby Branion told The Associated Press on Thursday.

Miller told KUSA-TV in Denver that he developed a cough a couple of days ago and when his nebulizer for his asthma didn’t clear things up, he decided to get tested for the coronavirus and the test came back positive Thursday.

“I’m in good spirits,” Miller told the TV station. “I’m not feeling sick or hurting or anything like that.”

The Broncos released a statement, saying Miller “elected to share his diagnosis publicly to emphasize that anyone can be affected with coronavirus.”

“Von is doing well and recovering at home in self-isolation. He remains under the care of team doctors, who are following all coronavirus treatment procedures to ensure a safe environment for Von and our community,” the team added.

Branion said that aside from his allergy to grass, the 31-year-old Miller is the picture of health.

“Von lives to take care of his health and his body and it hit him, too,” Branion said. “Hopefully, he’s like the 85 percent who kick this disease in the teeth in two weeks. But the bottom line is he got it, too.”

Brandon said Miller is in good spirits while quarantined at his home in the Denver area and that the Broncos linebacker plans to speak publicly about his diagnosis on Friday.

Branion said Miller went for a test after he began coughing a couple of days ago and consulted with the Broncos medical team.

“I’ve seen him a lot sicker after games. He’s allergic to grass and after he’s been inundated with pollen, he’s sounded worse,” Branion said.

Miller, who was recently a unanimous pick to the NFL’s All-Decade team of the 2010s, said on a conference call last week he trained in San Francisco before returning home to Colorado when the stay-at-home measures went into effect to contain the virus.

Branion said Miller isn’t sure how he became infected.

“What happened? We don’t know,” Branion added. “But it can get you. It got him, and he’s Superman!”

Miller is the second active NFL player to acknowledge testing positive during the coronavirus pandemic that has sickened more than 2 million people worldwide, resulting in tens of thousands of deaths and sending millions into unemployment.

On Wednesday, Los Angeles Rams center Brian Allen said he tested positive for COVID-19 three weeks ago. New Orleans Saints coach Sean Payton revealed last month that he tested positive for the virus.

Virtual: Ability to show skills online was crucial amid canceled pro days

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out,” Dunn said. “We had to do something for these guys.”

Dunn and Gudmundsen decided to turn their typical, mock pro days into a live event streamed online on Facebook. Players gathered at the facility on March 16 and performed various drills — 40-yard dash, shuttle, three-cone — for four hours. The video has more than 8,500 views.

“We just tried to make it as authentic and as real as possible and give scouts the opportunity to view the whole thing from where their perspective would be and bring a virtual experience right to their living room,” Dunn said.

“That was the only way that these kids would have the opportunity. We’ve sent multiple scouts to our Facebook page because we saved the feed. They’ve watched it and reached out to us about the times.”

TEST uses a laser timing system and Ric Serritella, creator of NFL Draft Bible, registered hand-held times. Serritella posted the results on his website.

Trainer Geir Gudmundsen, right, gives pointers at TEST Football Academy in Martinsville, N.J. With many pro days being canceled because of the coronavirus outbreak, TEST decided to turn its typical mock pro days into a live event streamed online on Facebook.

Serritella says he expects 15-20 “non-combine” players to be selected next week, down from the average of about 30 players per draft in previous years.

“Under the circumstances, it went very smooth,” said Gudmundsen, a former offensive lineman who signed with the Buffalo Bills as an undrafted rookie in 2005 and played in the Arena Football League. “The kids needed another opportunity to be able to be seen. It’s huge for kids that might not be drafted or are on the cusp of that.”

Clancy, listed at 6-foot-5, 305 pounds, said the numbers he posted were personal bests.

“I just need one shot,” he said. “I’ve always been the underdog in life so I’m not afraid of a challenge. Looking forward to next week and this process.”

His agent, JR Richert, said he’s heard from scouts who watched Clancy’s performance.

“For a guy like Griffin from a smaller school, you want to get as many opportunities for scouts to see him as possible,” Richert said.

“Losing the pro day workout can be a big challenge. For a credible facility like TEST to organize the virtual pro day and make the content available was a huge help to us. Many scouts have commented to me that they were able to get a sense of how well Griffin moves based on the film.”

Greg Liggs, a defensive back from Elon University, flew in the day before TEST’s virtual pro day and ran the 40-yard dash in 4.47 seconds.

“With everything going on, this pro day allowed us to display all the hard work we put in since the end of the football season,” Liggs said. “Being able to put numbers on tape is a huge win for guys during this time because it gives each player one last fighting shot at making their dreams come true, especially small-school guys like myself. This was a giant win toward making my NFL dreams come true.”

NFL agent Cary Fabrikant had five players participate in TEST’s pro day.

“It was an awesome opportunity for them to get this time to showcase their talent,” Fabrikant said. “NFL scouts have seen the video and are able to take this information and share it with the decision-makers.”

Shippensburg University wide receiver Kyle Haines ran a 4.48 40-yard dash and showed off reliable hands.

“The virtual pro day was vital for us athletes,” Haines said.
BY ROB MAADDI
Associated Press

ours before New Jersey closed all gyms indefinitely last month because of the COVID-19 global pandemic, 30 NFL Draft hopefuls had a chance to showcase their talents in a “virtual” pro day at TEST Football Academy in Martinsville.

It was the culmination of countless hours the players had spent training and preparing, both physically and mentally, for their actual pro days that ended up being canceled. None of the players at TEST’s virtual pro day attended the NFL combine, so this was their best shot to show what they can do.

"I spent 12 weeks at TEST with 5-6 hours of work a day," said Griffin Clancy, an offensive lineman from the University at Albany. "We were very close to getting our opportunity eliminated because of COVID-19."

But Kevin Dunn, founder and CEO of TEST Sports Clubs, and Geir Gudmundsen, the director of football operations, weren’t going to let that happen. They quickly organized the event in anticipation of a nationwide lockdown that forced sports to shut down.

"We were very close to getting our opportunity eliminated because of COVID-19."

Griffin Clancy
University at Albany offensive lineman

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