

ANALYSIS

Reinstatement among possible outcomes for fired captain

By **LOLITA C. BALDOR**
AND **ROBERT BURNS**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Navy's top admiral will soon decide the fate of the ship captain who was fired after pleading for commanders to move faster to safeguard their coronavirus-infected crew on the USS Theodore Roosevelt.

In the glare of a public spotlight, Adm. Mike Gilday will decide whether Navy Capt. Bret Crozier stepped out of line when he went around his chain of command and sent an email pushing for action to stem the outbreak. As of Friday, 660 sailors on the aircraft carrier, now docked at Guam, had tested positive for the virus and seven were hospitalized. One sailor has died, and more than 4,000 of the ship's 5,000 crew members have been moved onto the island for quarantine.

Gilday's review won't be limited to Crozier. It will also look at the command climate on the ship and higher up within the Pacific-based fleet, to determine if there are broader leadership problems in a region critical to America's national security interests.

Gilday has many options as he reviews what was an extraordinarily rapid investigation by Adm. Robert Burke, the vice chief of naval operations. Burke and his staff finished the review in about a week, conducting interviews almost entirely online and by phone between Washington and Guam.

A look at some of Gilday's options, and their benefits and

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RELATED

France reports over 1,000 virus cases on aircraft carrier

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Virus resistance

Conservative organizers ramp up protest efforts amid lockdown unrest

By **TOLUSE Olorunipfa**, **SHAWN BOBURG**
AND **ARELIS R. HERNÁNDEZ**
The Washington Post

Protesters at state capitols across the country this week expressed their deep frustration with the stay-at-home orders that are meant to stem the spread of the novel coronavirus, pushing a message that is rapidly coalescing among the nation's conservatives: reopen the country.

Groups rallied in at least six states this week, and protests are planned in four more in coming days. On Friday, President Don-

ald Trump encouraged protesters in Michigan, Minnesota and Virginia, who this week violated stay-at-home orders and social distancing guidelines to march against Democratic governors.

“LIBERATE MICHIGAN!” Trump

tweeted. “LIBERATE MINNESOTA,” he continued. “LIBERATE VIRGINIA, and save your great 2nd Amendment. It is under siege!”

Nicole Hemmer
Columbia University scholar, on the anti-government, pro-personal liberty signage at lockdown protests

SEE PROTEST ON PAGE 6

Above: Protesters demonstrate Friday against stay-at-home orders put in place due to the virus outbreak in Huntington Beach, Calif.

Mark J. TERRILL/AP

Go online to read all the latest news on the virus outbreak

stripes.com/coronavirus



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10-part documentary series looks back on Jordan's 'Last Dance'

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BUSINESS/WEATHER

Hope takes reins as stocks rally worldwide

Associated Press

NEW YORK — In Wall Street's tug of war between hope and pessimism about the coronavirus pandemic, hope is fighting back.

U.S. stocks joined a worldwide rally Friday and closed out their first back-to-back weekly gain since the market began selling off two months ago. The S&P 500 jumped 2.7% for the day, following up on even bigger gains in Europe and Asia.

Investors latched onto several strands of hope about progress in the fight against the coronavirus. They included the White House's release of guidelines for states to reopen their economies and a very early but encouraging report on a possible treatment for COVID-19. Those events dovetailed with recent numbers that raised hopes for a leveling off of infections in some of the world's hotspots.

The gains came even as data

piles higher showing the severe economic and human toll of the outbreak.

The virus has killed more than 150,000 worldwide and forced the formerly high-flying Chinese economy to shrink a crunching 6.8% last quarter.

The S&P 500 rose 75.01 points to 2,874.56. The Dow Jones Industrial Average jumped 704.81, or 3%, to 24,242.49, and the Nasdaq added 117.78, or 1.4%, to 8,650.14.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates		Commercial rates	
Euro costs (April 20)	\$1.06	Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3778
Dollar buys (April 20)	60.8965	British pound	\$1.2566
British pound (April 20)	\$1.22	Canada (Dollar)	1.4027
Japanese yen (April 20)	105.00	China (Yuan)	7.0724
South Korean won (April 20)	1,187.00	Denmark (Krone)	6.8524
		Egypt (Pound)	15.5156
		Hong Kong (Dollar)	\$1.0886/0.9186
		Hungary (Forint)	77.905
		India (Rupee)	32.52
		Israel (Shekel)	3.5892
		Japan (Yen)	107.33
		Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3119
		Norway (Krone)	10.3228
		Philippines (Peso)	50.92
		Poland (Zloty)	4.16
		Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7574
		Singapore (Dollar)	1.4218
		South Korea (Won)	1216.57
		Switzerland (Franc)	0.9662
		Thailand (Baht)	32.50
		Turkey (Lira)	6.9271

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

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	3.25
Discount rate	0.25
Federal funds market rate	0.05
3-month bill	0.14
30-year bond	1.21

WEATHER OUTLOOK

SUNDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



SUNDAY IN EUROPE



MONDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

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MILITARY



Richard Eensberger/U.S. Air Force

An Air Force B-52 Stratofortress bomber lands at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, in 2018. The Air Force has nixed its regular bomber presences in favor of a less predictable global deployment.

USAF changing up Guam bomber rotation for less predictable plan

By Wyatt Olson
Stars and Stripes

Just days after showing off a runway parade of airpower on Guam, the Air Force ended its longtime practice of maintaining a continuous bomber presence in the Pacific region through aircraft rotations at the island's Andersen Air Force Base.

The service said it is nixing the six-month rotations in place since 2004 in favor of a less predictable global deployment regimen.

On Thursday, five B-52H bombers flew back to their home station at Minot Air Force Base, N.D., according to Aircraft Spots, an online military aircraft tracker.

Over the past 15 years, bomber patrols from Guam over the East and South China Seas have served as a means of projecting U.S. airpower and resolve to North Korea, China and Russia.

"In line with the National Defense Strategy, the United States has transitioned to an approach that enables strategic bombers to operate forward in the Indo-Pacific region from a broader array of overseas locations, when required, and with greater operational resilience, while these bombers are permanently based in the United States," Maj. Kate

Atanasoff, a spokesperson for U.S. Strategic Command, said in a statement.

Strategic bombers will continue to operate in the Indo-Pacific, including Guam, "at the timing and tempo of our choosing," she said.

The Air Force will maximize its opportunities to train with allies and partner nations to "bolster our collective ability to be operationally unpredictable," Atanasoff said.

"We continually reassess our overseas posture and adjust to meet the requirements of the Joint Force and combatant commanders as well as our treaty commitments," she said.

The Air Force's end of continuous bomber support from Guam was first reported by *thedrive.com*.

In response to a query by Stars and Stripes, Atanasoff said in an email that this "adjustment to our posture was long-planned and completely unrelated to the [coronavirus] pandemic."

She did not have a specific list of alternate locations to which bombers would rotate but added that the Air Force has and will continue to operate globally in multiple areas.

The bomber missions will sup-

port the Pentagon's strategy of "operational unpredictability" by using a mix of aircraft that include B-52, B-1 or B-2 bombers from bases throughout the U.S. mainland and Guam, she said.

On Monday, 14 aircraft paraded in an "elephant walk" formation along the runway at Andersen. Aside from the five Stratofortress strategic bombers were six KC-135 Stratotanker aerial refuelers, an MH-60S Knighthawk helicopter and two unmanned surveillance drones.

Multimillion-dollar upgrades to infrastructure at Andersen and Naval Base Guam over the past decade have elevated the U.S. territory into a key strategic hub. Work is also underway on and near Andersen for the planned transfer of roughly 5,000 Marines and their dependents from Okinawa in about 2024.

Guam is now the Navy's epicenter of coronavirus after the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt arrived on March 27 with hundreds of sailors sickened by the virus. One sailor has since died, and several others have been hospitalized in intensive care on Guam.

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US: Naval buildup in Caribbean not to oust Maduro

By Joshua Goodman
Associated Press

MIAMI — The top U.S. military commander for Latin America said Friday that the Trump administration isn't looking to use military force to remove Nicolas Maduro even as it expands counternarcotics operations in the Caribbean.

Adm. Craig Faller, head of U.S. Southern Command, said in an interview that the recent decision to double anti-narcotics assets in Latin America was months in the making and not directly tied to Maduro's indictment in New York on charges of leading a narcotics-rustler conspiracy that sent 250 metric tons of cocaine a year to the U.S.

Faller said economic and diplomatic pressure — not the use of military force — remains the U.S.' preferred tools for removing Maduro from power.

"This is not a shift in U.S. government policy," said Faller, who nonetheless celebrated that enhanced interdiction efforts would hurt Maduro's finances and staying power. "It's not an indication of some sort of new militarization in the Caribbean."

The deployment announced this month is one of the largest U.S. military operations in the region since the 1989 invasion of Panama to remove Gen. Manuel Noriega from power and bring him to the U.S. to face drug charges. It involves assets like Navy warships, AWACS surveil-

lance aircraft and on-ground special forces seldom seen before in the region.

Faller said the coronavirus did force some in the Pentagon to rethink the timing of the deployment out of concern for the safety of service members. While controls to protect the workforce have been enhanced, it was determined that over the long term, the U.S. is positioned to take advantage of the disruption in narcotics supply chains caused by the virus as drug cartels scramble to source precursors chemical and other inputs.

"We thrive in uncertainty and are going to try and capitalize on that," said Faller.

He cited two "quick wins" since the start of the deployment — a 1.7 metric ton seizure in the Pacific Ocean near Costa Rica last week and another 2.1-ton interdiction a few days ago.

He said growing instability in Venezuela is leading to an "up-tick" in piracy in the Caribbean, although he didn't cite any statistics or evidence to back the assertion. He said the recent sinking of a Venezuelan naval ship after it allegedly rammed an Antarctic-hardened cruise ship without passengers near Curacao was indicative of the readiness of Maduro's armed forces.

"It was a bad day for them," he said. "Their lack of seamanship and lack of integrity is indicative of how it all played out."

'It's not an indication of some sort of new militarization in the Caribbean.'

Adm. Craig Faller
head of U.S. Southern Command

Navy plans to monitor jet noise in Wash.

Associated Press

MOUNT VERNON, Wash. — The U.S. Navy has announced plans to monitor jet noise around Naval Air Station Whidbey Island in Washington state and a base in California.

The Navy submitted the plan to Congress on March 19, outlining a general timeline and the terms for monitoring, including the use of 10 or more sound level monitors in the vicinity of usual flight paths, the Skagit Valley Herald reported.

The American National Standards Institute and the Acoustical Society of America assisted in crafting the plan.

The Navy will next submit a monitoring report including testing results, comparisons of the results to previous noise modeling, and any potential changes to operations.

The projected timeline is expected to be delayed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"The details of the meters, their placement, and specific site requirements are not yet known to the Navy," Navy news desk officer Emily Wilkin said. Exact locations for the sound monitoring equipment and kind of equipment used will be coordinated with local officials and through a contractor agreement, she added.

"We want to make sure our

noise monitoring effort is comprehensive and that the data collected meets the intent of Congress and addresses local concerns," said Lucian Niemyer, acting assistant secretary of the Navy for energy, installations and environment.

Residents in nearby neighborhoods, including Coupeville and Oak Harbor, have raised concerns about the effect noise from military aircraft will have on residents' health and the surrounding environment.

The Navy has said the plan is intended "to ensure community concerns are addressed," so no public meetings are scheduled to discuss its details.

\$41M contract awarded for new hangar at Dover AFB

Associated Press

DOVER, Del. — An approximately \$41 million contract has been awarded for the construction of a new aircraft maintenance hangar at Dover Air Force Base, according to Delaware's congressional delegation.

The project will enable the base to perform maintenance in any weather on its C-5M Super Galaxy and C-17 Globemaster III aircraft, U.S. Sens. Tom Carper and Chris Coons and Rep. Lisa

Blunt Rochester said in a statement Friday.

The contract was awarded to Archer Western Federal JV.

"For too long now, our world-class Dover Air Force Base has not had a hangar large enough to fully enclose its aircraft so maintenance can be performed any day of the year, regardless of weather," Carper said in the statement, which said the hangar will increase maintenance efficiency rates.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Fired: A look at options

FROM FRONT PAGE

pitfalls.

■ **Reinstatement:** Gilday could decide that Crozier acted in the best interests of his crew and was unfairly removed. He could reinstate him as captain of the Roosevelt.

That could generate a lot of support.

In a widely viewed video, Roosevelt crew members applauded and chanted Crozier's name as he walked off the ship after being fired. When Thomas Modly, the acting Navy secretary who fired Crozier, traveled to the ship and criticized him in a speech to the crew, he came under fire and had to resign.

President Donald Trump even suggested that while Crozier shouldn't have sent the memo, he shouldn't be destroyed for having a "bad day."

But reinstating Crozier has its problems.

It would put him back on a ship with Rear Adm. Stuart Baker, commander of the carrier strike group of which the Roosevelt is the lead ship. Officials say they did not have a good relationship and that was among the problems that triggered Crozier's memo. Gilday may worry that putting them back together would exacerbate the ship's toxic command climate.

■ **Forgive and move on:** Rather than return Crozier to the Roosevelt, Gilday could absolve him of wrongdoing and recommend he move on to another job. Crozier could retain his rank and standing and perhaps command another ship, leaving open the possibility that he could gain promotion and continue his Navy career.

This would avoid sending him back into the chain of command that likely felt betrayed by his memo. But it doesn't provide the emotional lift of seeing a popular captain stride back onto the ship for which he risked his career.

■ **Administrative actions:** Gilday could fault Crozier for doing the right thing the wrong way. He could determine that Crozier was unfairly fired, but that he acted rashly and went outside his chain of command and therefore did not exhibit good leadership.

He could put a letter in Crozier's personnel file, which usually is a career-ender. Crozier could stay in the Navy and might move on to other jobs, but would probably not be promoted.

■ **Fire one, fire all:** Gilday could determine that firing Crozier was appropriate. Unless that's overturned in an appeal process, that would end Crozier's Navy career. In most cases, senior officers simply retire after being relieved of command for cause.

But Gilday could also decide that the ship's problems extended beyond Crozier. He could recommend that Baker be fired or punished for not being receptive to Crozier's concerns.

Gilday's review could also lead to criticism for leaders who may have taken too long to recognize the Roosevelt's outbreak as the deadly problem it became. Those would include the 7th Fleet commander, Vice Adm. William R. Merz; the Pacific Fleet commander, Adm. John C. Aquilino, or the most senior admiral in the Pacific, Adm. Phil Davidson, head of Indo-Pacific Command.

William Fallon, a retired four-star admiral and former commander of U.S. Pacific Com-



ALEXANDER WILLIAMS, U.S. NAVY/AP

Capt. Brett Crozier, then-commanding officer of the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt, addresses the crew on Jan. 17 in San Diego, Calif.

mand, says Gilday's decision is important to American interests in the Asia-Pacific region, where an aircraft carrier presence is central to U.S. strategy.

"He's making an administrative decision back here, but it has profound operational implications," Fallon said.

■ **And then there's the politics:** The backdrop to Gilday's decision is a fraught political environment in Washington that has taken a toll on the Navy.

Modly became acting secretary last November when his predecessor, Richard Spencer, was forced out in a clash with the White House over Trump's intervention in the war crimes case of former Navy SEAL, Eddie Gallagher. And Gilday had abruptly be-

come chief when Spencer pushed out the admiral who was in line for the job.

Gilday, known as an honest, straight shooter, is expected to make a decision based on the facts and his judgment of what is best for the ship's crew and the Navy. But the decision expected early next week can't be separated entirely from politics.

When Gilday reaches a decision, he will relay recommendations to acting Navy Secretary James McPherson. They will also go to Defense Secretary Mark Esper. More importantly, the Navy will alert members of Congress and the White House.

Any of those could weigh in on the matter. Or, in Trump's case, he could reverse it.

Trump has expressed seemingly contradictory views on Crozier.

On April 4, he publicly blasted the captain, saying Crozier's letter pleading for more urgent action was "terrible." Trump also criticized Crozier for the ship's port visit in Vietnam, where crew members may have picked up the coronavirus, even though the Navy says that decision was made by Davidson.

Two days later, Trump took a more empathetic tack, saying, "I'm not looking to destroy a person's life, who's had an otherwise stellar career, as I understand it." Trump said that as far as he could tell, Crozier had simply "had a bad day."

Navy, CDC to launch study on Roosevelt virus outbreak

By Andrew Dyer

The San Diego Union-Tribune

The Navy is coordinating with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in an investigation into the novel coronavirus outbreak on board the San Diego-based aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt, the Navy announced Friday.

The outbreak on the Roosevelt is the single largest in the military, with 660 members of its crew testing positive for the novel coronavirus, seven in the hospital and one sailor who died Monday.

The virus has sidelined the carrier in Guam for three weeks, where 4,000 sailors have been quarantined off the ship.

Rear Adm. Bruce Gillingham said Friday that officials hope the study will help the military and the country better understand how the virus behaves.

"The results of this investigation will inform medical professionals to support better public health decisions for the ship. It will also advise the broader COVID-19 surveillance and mitigation strategy for the (Theodore Roosevelt), the fleet and our



NICHOLAS V. MUYNH, U.S. NAVY/AP

An F/A-18F Super Hornet launches from the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt in the Pacific March.

nation," Gillingham said in a call with reporters.

The investigation will be done by the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center in partnership with the CDC.

They will begin gathering data Monday and spend about a week surveying sailors. The Navy is asking for 1,000 volunteers from the Roosevelt's crew to undergo additional saliva tests and antibody blood tests.

The Roosevelt left San Diego in January for a routine deploy-

ment. It was sidelined in March after sailors began testing positive for the virus 15 days after a port visit to Vietnam.

The first two cases of the virus were found among two members of the ship's air wing, a Navy official told the Union-Tribune Friday. However, because the two cases came to light 15 days after the port visit to Vietnam, Gillingham could not say how the virus got on board.

He said identifying the first case isn't the goal of the investigation.

"The intent of investigation is not to get to the source; it's to better understand the behavior of virus going forward," he said. "The information gained will add to the growing body of public health knowledge about this virus so that we can better understand it and fight it."

Blood samples will be tested at the CDC's laboratory in Atlanta using the agency's new serology test, which can identify antibodies and tell researchers whether a person has been exposed to the virus even if they are showing no symptoms.

About 60% of the 660 Roosevelt sailors who have tested positive so far have shown no COVID-19 symptoms, Pentagon officials said this week. Gillingham said one of the investigation goals is to determine how much the virus spread without sailors showing symptoms.

"Because of the pre-symptomatic transmission, we believe that it probably passed through the ship quite freely and was initially unrecognized," Gillingham said.

The Roosevelt pulled into Guam March 28 as the virus spread out-of-control among its crews.

The ship's commanding officer, Capt. Brett Crozier, was fired seven days later, after a letter he wrote predicting dire consequences for his crew if the Navy did not move them off the ship was leaked to the media and widely publicized.

COVID-19 testing of the Roosevelt's crew is ongoing but has stalled at about 94% tested.

The skeleton crew left behind on board won't be tested until they rotate off to spend 14 days in quarantine, Gillingham said. They have been keeping watch of the ship's two nuclear reactors and disinfecting the ship.

The Navy and CDC expect results from the study in about a month, Gillingham said.

Correction

A story on Saturday's edition about this year's Air Force Academy graduation should have said cadets would gather at The Terrazo pavilion, instead of in Falcon Stadium.

VIRUS OUTBREAK



CARLOS OSORIO/AP

Members of the military assemble some of the beds April 1 for use at the TCF Center in Detroit to accommodate an overflow of patients with the coronavirus.

Army Corps of Engineers plans to continue adding hospital space

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

The Army Corps of Engineers is working to provide extra hospital space to cities and states concerned that the coronavirus pandemic could peak in rural areas during the summer or return in the fall, Lt. Gen. Todd T. Semonite said Friday.

“The virus is getting a vote,” the commander of the Army Corps of Engineers told reporters at the Pentagon. “The virus has changed” in the last month.

In March, many officials believed the coronavirus would cause a huge spike, followed by a quick drop, which led to a rush for more hospital beds, Semonite said. Instead, many regions are seeing a delay in the peak — in part because of prevention efforts to slow the spread of the virus. This has allowed more time for the Corps to build alternate-care facilities that increase hospital bed space, particularly in places such as Alaska, Hawaii and Guam.

“The curve is elongated,” Semonite said. “Where we thought

it was going to come up and come back down, we seeing that curve stretch all the way out perhaps to as far as June.”

By Friday, the United States had more than 662,000 confirmed cases of the virus and nearly 29,000 deaths, according to the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center. While large cities remain the hotspots of the outbreak, rural areas are not expected to go unscathed.

In preparation for ongoing spread of the virus, Army engineers have conducted 1,099 of the requested 1,178 site assessments and are moving forward to build 28 alternate-care facilities, totaling more than 15,870 bed spaces, Semonite said.

In 41 instances, state governments chose to take the corps design and build on their own. Officials in Colorado asked the Corps to prepare the city’s convention center with about 500 bed spaces and the capacity to more than double that, if needed, Semonite said. Those beds are projected to open Saturday at an estimated cost of \$35 million.

In other instances, govern-

ments are signing seven-month leases for the facilities housing alternate-care sites to prepare for the possible return of the coronavirus in the fall, Semonite said. He did not say which locations have made that choice.

“It’s almost like insurance — a good reserve,” he said, adding he tells mayors, “If you have hospital beds that don’t get used, I don’t think that’s a problem because you had the ability to take care of the people for your city. It’s a small cost to be able to have the capability to keep people alive.”

Despite the rise in demand for the Corps, Semonite said only about 5% to 10% of their other ongoing projects have been impacted by pandemic work. That is mostly due to stay-at-home directives from area governments that limit construction.

Otherwise, work at military bases and along U.S. waterways remains steady, as does about \$8 billion worth of construction for Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals.

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French navy starts probe into cause of ship outbreak

Associated Press

PARIS — The French navy is investigating how the coronavirus infected more than 1,000 sailors aboard the aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle, amid growing pressure on government leaders to explain how it could have happened.

The ship, France’s biggest carrier and the flagship of its navy, is undergoing a lengthy disinfection process since returning to its home base in Toulon five days ago.

One person remains in intensive care, and some 20 others are hospitalized, navy spokesman Cmdr. Eric Lavault told *The Associated Press*.

Two of four U.S. sailors serving aboard the Charles de Gaulle as part of an exchange program also tested positive, according to a U.S. Navy statement. A British sailor was aboard another vessel, Lavault said, refusing to reveal the sailor’s health status.

Lavault insisted that the aircraft carrier’s commander sought to increase the physical distance among the crew on the vessel, where there was no testing equipment and for most of its three months on operations, no masks.

It is “very difficult to apply social distancing measures on a combat vessel,” Lavault said. But “security of the crew is the first concern. A combat ship, especially an aircraft carrier, is nothing without its crew.”

A similar outbreak on the USS Theodore Roosevelt and a dispute about how the at-sea health crisis was handled led to the firing of its captain and the resignation this month of the acting U.S. Navy secretary.

The French navy has been spared major controversy so far, but the defense minister and the head of the French military’s health service arm were questioned Friday about the infections at parliamentary hearings. Defense Minister Florence

Partly told lawmakers that 1,081 of the 2,300 people aboard the Charles de Gaulle and its escort vessels have tested positive so far — nearly half the overall personnel.

While the virus has immobilized the immense and important ship, “our forces continue to assure the defense of our country at sea, under the sea, on land and in the air.”

An investigation to retrace the paths of the personnel is in progress. Lavault noted that the aircraft carrier made a call in the French port of Brest, on the Atlantic Ocean; had been in the North Sea as part of a “naval diplomacy” mission with NATO partners; and had stopped in Cyprus during an operation in the eastern Mediterranean Sea to join in the fight against the Islamic State group.

Journalists had boarded the vessel at one point.

“All hypotheses are on the table,” Lavault said.

So far, 350 crew members have been grilled about their movements on and off the vessel, according to Lavault.

The defense minister defended the decision to allow the ship to stop in Brest in mid-March, even though France had already ordered all schools closed to fight the virus and the government was preparing confinement measures. Hours after the ship left, President Emmanuel Macron announced a nationwide lockdown, among the strictest in Europe.

“We are and will be transparent” about the health situation, the health director Maryline Gyagax Genero told the parliamentary commission.

Lavault said the carrier was being cleaned top to bottom, first with high-pressure water at 140 degrees, then with an anti-viral product — a process that could take weeks. He said the goal is to get the carrier back to sea sometime in May.

Infections among US service members nearing 3,000

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Nearly 3,000 U.S. service members had tested positive for the coronavirus by Friday, according to new Pentagon data that showed the number of military-affiliated people infected by the virus nearing 5,000.

The data released Friday showed that more than 22% of the 2,986 service members diagnosed

with the fast-spreading virus have recovered from the disease. Forty-four troops are now hospitalized by the virus, which has killed two service members, including 41-year-old Chief Petty Officer Charles Robert Thacker Jr., who died Monday in a Guam hospital after contracting the virus aboard the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt.

Overall, the Navy reported 1,017 positive cases among its personnel, the most of any of the

military services. The Army reported the second highest total with 725 cases among its active-duty and Reserve soldiers. The Air Force reported 328 cases, the Marines reported 236, and the National Guard reported 609 coronavirus-positive troops among its Air and Army Guard members.

Top Pentagon officials pledged this week to increase testing among its troops worldwide, especially after testing of the Roos-

velt’s crew revealed that more than half of the sailors who tested positive were asymptomatic. But the disease has also hospitalized several members of the crew, including Thacker. Seven Roosevelt crew members were hospitalized for the virus as of Friday, including one sailor who was in intensive care, the Navy said.

Army Gen. Mark Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Tuesday that the department aimed to improve its

testing capacity from about 8,700 tests per day to about 65,000 within 45 days, citing the need to ensure asymptomatic carriers were not spreading the virus unknowingly within their units.

The Pentagon especially wants to ensure it is regularly testing members of its top-tier special operations units and others responsible for its nuclear capabilities, Milley said.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Halt on military moves to last through June

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

A new directive on the movement of military personnel and their families will bar travel through June 30, but create more flexibility to allow for the deployment of troops serving overseas and some priority troops to change duty stations, a Pentagon official said Saturday.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper has yet to issue the order, which aims to curb the spread of the coronavirus by keeping service members and their families in place, according to Matthew Donovan, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness. However, Esper is expected to sign it

into effect Monday, Donovan said.

The new order will replace the travel restrictions put into place in March that have stopped thousands of military moves and forced some deployed units to remain overseas longer than anticipated.

The new order applies to service members, civilians and their families and comes as the military prepares for summer, its peak moving season. Without revealing many details, Donovan said the new directive is "more liberal" and allows more exemptions and waivers.

"You'll see that it's a little bit looser, because we know more about [the coronavirus] and can get projections on potential hotspots and more information on nations

where [troops] are moving to," he said.

Each move will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, looking at the departure and arrival locations carefully and determining whether local governments for those areas allow for such movement, including the ability to hire movers. Waivers for travel will only be granted for missions deemed essential, humanitarian relief or personal hardship. Personal leave will only be granted for the local area where service members are located now.

The services are now preparing for the new order by identifying personnel moves that are the highest priority, Donovan said.

In an average year, U.S. Transportation

Command supports about 400,000 moves, with about a quarter of those moves occurring during the summer months, Donovan said. In light of March's halt on moves, military personnel are only moving at about 30% of the normal rate. Each service is only seeing about 10% of normal movement.

For those troops and civilian personnel who are granted the ability to move under Monday's pending order, they could have to isolate themselves once they arrive at their new location. That will depend on where they left and what the local authorities in that state or host country require, Donovan said.

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Protest: Some Americans weary of quarantine orders take to the streets

FROM FRONT PAGE

Trump's tweets come as the right-wing media has amplified the protests and conservative groups have formed plans to jointly press for a reopening of the economy. The groups include several veterans of the tea party era, activism that was powered by a network of right-wing and corporate financiers interested in reducing taxes and regulations on industry.

Protesters rallied against policies that call for nonessential businesses and schools to be closed, restaurants limited to carry-out service and people to stay largely in their homes except for emergencies. They argue that the nation has sacrificed the economy, with unemployment at record levels, and people have upended their lives for something many do not see as an existential threat to society.

"I think there's a boiling point that has been reached and exceeded," said Stephen Moore, a conservative economist. Moore is a member of both the White House council to reopen the country and a coalition of conservative leaders and activists seeking to push government officials to relax stay-at-home orders.

"I call these people the modern-day Rosa Parks — they are protesting against injustice and a loss of liberties," Moore said of the protesters.

Moore described himself as a radical when it comes to getting Americans to work during a 2016 Freedomworks debate on the minimum wage.

"I'm a radical on this," he said while debating the Center for American Progress' David Madland. "I'd get rid of a lot of these child labor laws. I want people starting to work at 11, 12."

Moore said the protests have been spontaneous and organized at the local level, but he said his group has been offering them advice and legal support should protesters be arrested and prosecuted.

The protests come as governors in Texas, Minnesota and Vermont on Friday announced dates to ease certain restrictions.

In Michigan, hundreds of



GLEN STUBBE, STAR TRIBUNE/AP

Hundreds of protesters gather outside Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz' official residence, Friday, in St. Paul, Minn. President Donald Trump tweeted his support the protest.

people clogged traffic in cars or marched in the snow to protest Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, a Democrat, who last week added additional restrictions to the state's stay-at-home order. Protesters waved American flags, Trump flags and an occasional Confederate flag. Many screamed "Lock her up!" and "We will not comply!"

Protest leaders said the demonstrations evolved organically into a collective call for rolling back emergency measures that they think infringe on personal freedoms and further decimate the economy.

"I feel terrible about the lives lost, but at some point, we have to say 'mission accomplished' and come up with the next phase of this that doesn't have us continuously locked inside our homes," said Matthew Seely of the Michigan Conservative Coalition, which organized the protests.

Michigan has been one of the states hardest hit by the virus, with more than 30,000 confirmed

cases and over 2,200 deaths.

State incorporation records show the nonprofit coalition also goes by another name: Michigan Trump Republicans. The group's president, Rosanne Ponkowski, identified herself as a homemaker last year in federal campaign finance records. But the group's other directors are longtime GOP insiders, according to state records. They include Marian Sheridan, the state Republican Party's vice-chair of "grassroots" efforts.

Sheridan has "worked in Michigan grassroots for the last 10 years" and started her political career as a tea party leader and organizer, according to the state GOP's website.

Sheridan, Ponkowski and the Michigan Republican Party did not respond to messages.

Social media accounts show that part of the group's goal was to damage Whitmer. A day after the protest, the Michigan Trump Republicans posted a conservative opinion writer's column on

its Facebook page. The column, which appeared in The Washington Post, asserted that the protest had all but killed Whitmer's chances to be vice president.

"Mission accomplished?" the group wrote above the link to the column.

Nicole Hemmer, a scholar at Columbia University and author of "Messengers of the Right," about the right-wing media, said the anti-government signage and argument that stay-at-home orders infringe on personal liberty hark back to a prior conservative movement.

"In my mind, it looks a lot like the tea party," she said. "It almost seems like an excuse for getting out and rallying against politicians they oppose."

Some politicians believe Trump's egging on of the protesters is dangerous.

"The president is fomenting domestic rebellion and spreading lies even while his own administration says the virus is real and is deadly and that we have a

long way to go before restrictions can be lifted," Washington Gov. Jay Inslee, a Democrat, said. A protest against his stay-at-home order, which lifts May 5, is scheduled in Olympia this weekend.

Tyler Miller, who organized the Washington state protest, said he is urging attendees to wear personal protective equipment, practice physical distancing and not attend if they are in a high-risk category or feeling sick.

Public health experts have said any premature easing of stay-at-home orders could lead to a second wave of pandemic, erasing the social distancing progress, returning the population to quarantine, deepening the economic turmoil and resulting in more lives lost.

Some said they are protesting mainly because of the severe economic impact caused by the virus. More than 22 million people have filed for unemployment since Trump declared a national emergency last month.

In Ohio, where 100 protesters did not practice social distancing as they pushed up against the glass doors of the statehouse this week, Gov. Mike DeWine, a Republican, announced he was assembling plans to safely reopen the economy ahead of the expiration of his stay-at-home order May 1. DeWine and Amy Acton, director of the Ohio Department of Health, have said reopening will come in phases.

State Sen. Andrew Brenner, a Republican, said DeWine was right to close schools and businesses early, decisions that Brenner said are bringing the state closer to reopening.

Brenner's district near Columbus is one of the fastest-growing areas of the state. He said the pandemic has wiped out its economic gains.

"People are calling me crying because they've lost their jobs, and the government stimulus checks are not going to keep people going long," Brenner said, adding more people will need government assistance. "The next thing that's going to happen is that revenue needed to maintain vital services, such as education and Medicaid, will plummet."

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Hard-hit nations debate easing lockdowns

Associated Press

BERLIN — Facing rising unemployment and with many of their citizens struggling to make ends meet, governments around the world are wrestling with when and how to ease the restrictions designed to control the coronavirus pandemic.

Mandatory lockdowns to stop the spread of the new virus, which has so far infected more than 2.2 million people and for which there is no vaccine, have brought widespread hardship.

In a joint statement Saturday, a group of 13 countries including Canada, Brazil, Italy and Germany called for global cooperation to lessen the economic impact of the pandemic.

“It is vital that we work together to save lives and livelihoods,” they said.

The group, which also includes Britain, France, Indonesia, Mexico, Morocco, Peru, South Korea, Singapore and Turkey, said it was committed to “work with all countries to coordinate on public health, travel, trade, economic and financial measures in order to minimize disruptions and recover stronger.”

This includes maintaining “air, land and marine transportation links” to ensure the continued flow of goods including medical equipment and aid, and the return home of travelers, they said.

In the United States, the debate has taken on partisan tones ahead of this fall’s presidential elections. Republican President Donald Trump urged supporters to “liberate” three states led by Democratic governors, tweeting the kind of rhetoric some have used to demand an end to stay-



RAJANISH KAKADE/AP

Children wait to receive free food distributed in a slum during a lockdown to check the spread of the new coronavirus in Mumbai, India, on Saturday.

at-home orders that have thrown millions out of work.

The official death toll in the U.S. has topped 35,000, with more than 700,000 confirmed infections.

There have been tentative signs that measures to curb the outbreak are working, with the rate of new infections slowing across Europe in response to the lockdowns there.

In France and Spain, some field hospitals were starting to be dismantled, while Germany said the number of people infected by each person with COVID-19 fell below one for the first time this week.

Still, most governments and public health officials remain cautious about relaxing the shutdowns, despite the mounting economic toll.

“It’s wrong, sensationally wrong to com-

municate that there is a kind of conflict with health and safety on one side and economic resumption,” said Domenico Arcuri, Italy’s extraordinary commissioner for the coronavirus emergency.

Arcuri told reporters Saturday that “without health, the (economic) revival will disappear in the batting of an eyelash.”

The Italian government’s decree, shutting down nonessential industries and businesses, runs through May 3. Health experts are advising that any easing must be gradual in the country that’s seen the most deaths so far in Europe, with nearly 23,000 fatalities and over 172,000 known cases.

Some Asian nations that until recently appeared to have the outbreak under control, including Singapore and Japan, reported a fresh surge in cases Saturday.

Japan’s total case number rose above 10,000 on Saturday. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe expressed concern Friday that people were not observing social distancing and announced a 100,000-yen (930) cash handout to each resident as an incentive to stay home.

Iran, hard hit by the virus and international sanctions, allowed some businesses in the capital and nearby towns to re-open Saturday after weeks of lockdown. Gyms, restaurants, shopping malls and Tehran’s grand bazaar will remain closed.

In Africa, one of the world’s poorest regions, the pandemic is only just getting underway. The continent has now recorded more than 1,000 coronavirus deaths, among them the Nigerian president’s chief of staff.

Virus forced schools online, but many students didn’t follow

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — During the first week that her San Diego public school was shuttered to slow the spread of the coronavirus, not one of Elise Samaniego’s students logged on to her virtual classroom.

Three weeks in, the teacher still hadn’t connected online with nearly two-thirds of the students in her third- and fourth-grade combo class at Paradise Hills Elementary. She fears the pandemic will exact a devastating toll on education in the United States, especially at low-income schools like hers.

“I do have several students below grade level, and this is just going to make it worse,” said Samaniego, who has been emailing and calling families to get her 22 students to participate.

Teachers across the country report their attempts at distance learning are failing to reach large numbers of students. Hundreds of thousands of students are still without computers or internet access. Those who do log on have countless distractions: They are babysitting siblings, sharing laptops, lying in bed during lessons. Others log on only to walk away.

With schools closed for the rest of the year in at least 23 states, the uneven progress with remote

learning is raising concerns that those who already were struggling will be left further behind.

“The pandemic is an educational equity crisis for vulnerable students who were too often underserved by our education system in ‘normal’ times,” said Ian Rosenblum, executive director of The Education Trust-New York.

Not all schools are struggling. Those accustomed to technology transitioned smoothly. Derek Blunt, a math teacher at Making Community Connections Charter School in Keene, N.H., said students are issued iPads in normal times and regularly use Google Classroom and other platforms. A week after the school closed, nearly all of his 65 students were doing their work.

In contrast, students at Samaniego’s school faced several hurdles before learning could begin. Some only had internet access through their parents’ phones.

“I can’t tell them even where to start,” she said. “Do you have a computer? That’s step 1. Then you have to download Chrome. That’s step 2.”

In New York City, the nation’s largest school district, tens of thousands of tablets and laptops have been lent to students, and the plan is for everyone to have

a device by the end of April. Mayor Bill de Blasio said the district was still gathering data, but “there’s clearly an issue with attendance.”

That is true in many places. In the Los Angeles Unified School District, the country’s second largest, as many as 40% of elementary school students had not logged on even once as of the first week of April — three weeks after the system closed.

As for those who have made an appearance, superintendent Austin Beutner, cautioned that “merely logging in does not tell us anything more than the student turned on their computer.”

In ordinary times, some 16% percent of public school students nationally are chronically absent, with higher rates among high school, black and Hispanic students, according to the U.S. Education Department.

Many districts are now not tracking attendance because it tells them so little. But attendance is usually critical: Absenteeism is linked to a significant increase in the risk of dropping out of school.

And attendance is only one part of the puzzle.

Michelle Katz, a math teacher at the public Northridge Academy High School in the Los Angeles area, revamped lessons so they



RICH PEDRONCELLI/AP

Kelly Dighero, a third-grade teacher at Phoebe Hearst Elementary School, gives a thumbs-up during her first online meeting with students and parents on the front lawn of her home in Sacramento, Calif., on Monday.

would work online. Most students in her Algebra II and pre-Calculus classes are doing their work. But only about half of her 10th grade geometry students are logging on, and even some of them aren’t handing in assignments.

“When they were in class, you could get on their back and ask them about what was going on, where is the work?” Katz said. “It’s hard from a distance.”

Adding to her frustration was a student who interrupted a virtual class with yelling and profanity five times.

Schools are responding by making accommodations. San Diego Unified School District said this month is for working

out the kinks, and instruction officially starts April 27. Some schools are adopting pass or fail systems or “no harm grading,” in which grades will not be lowered during distance learning but can go up.

Given the difficulties of conceiving lessons and science labs that are effective virtually, some assignments feel like busy work to Emily Weinberg, a senior at Lexington High School, a public school in Massachusetts.

“I had to try to figure out what the kinetic energy of a dime was when I pushed it,” she said. “I felt like this is wasting my time.” Even so, she’s completing all her work.

VIRUS OUTBREAK ROUNDUP

California tops 1K deaths as economy takes tumble

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — California recorded more than 1,000 deaths from the coronavirus Friday as the pandemic pushed the state into recession, despite signs that have emerged of an improving outlook for the virus.

The state topped a number it once hoped to avoid, reaching 1,021 deaths, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. The death toll came after California recorded its greatest number of deaths in one day, 95, on Thursday, eclipsing the previous mark of 71.

The state also reported for the first time that 3,500 cases are in nursing homes or adult care facilities, where the most vulnerable people reside and infections have spread quickly. That figure reflects about 12% of more than 27,500 cases the state reported.

Gov. Gavin Newsom also named a task force Friday to help the state recover economically after he begins easing restrictions that have shuttered businesses. The nonpartisan panel of billionaires and corporate leaders that includes all four living former governors — two Democrats, like Newsom, and two Republicans — came after dismal unemployment figures ended a record 10-year economic growth streak.

"We are now in a pandemic-induced recession here in the state of California," Newsom said. "These are sober and challenging times."

The growth period ended as the state lost 100,000 jobs in March, a figure that barely begins to account for damage done to the world's fifth-largest economy.

Those March job losses occurred before the governor issued a stay-at-home order that only allows essential employees to go to work, effectively closing most shops, bars and restaurants that don't offer takeout food.

In order to begin lifting restrictions, the state will need to test 25,000 people a day and track down those they may have infected, a big task in the nation's most populous state with 40 million residents.

Illinois

CHICAGO — Gov. J.B. Pritzker on Friday ordered schools to close for the third time this year, the rest of the semester because of the lingering threat of the coronavirus.

Pritzker announced the move during his daily briefing in Chicago, extending school closures past the April 30 date he had set earlier in Friday. Illinois has recorded 27,575 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 1,134 deaths.

In issuing his latest order, Pritzker acknowledged the disruption it would cause to students and their families.

But my priority remains unchanged. How do we save the most lives during this very dif-

icult time?" Pritzker said. "The answer to that question leaves us with only one path forward."

The governor closed schools March 17 amid growing concern over the virus, idling more than 2 million children midway through the spring semester, including 355,000 in Chicago's public school district, which is the third largest in the nation.

Louisiana

NEW ORLEANS — Louisiana is working to make more clinic and hospital space available again for elective surgeries and other nonemergency medical care before May 1, Gov. John Bel Edwards said Friday.

Elective surgeries and other procedures were largely put on hold as state hospitals converted space and clinic personnel were diverted to other jobs as Louisiana ramped up to deal with the COVID-19 outbreak. The state has the third-highest rate of cases in the country, Edwards said.

But the number of those requiring hospitalization and ventilators has declined in recent days, raising hopes that an easing of economically devastating stay-at-home orders and business shutdowns may soon be in sight.

"We're going to open that up sooner rather than later and, in all likelihood, ahead of May 1," he said during a news conference at LSU's Pete Maravich Assembly Center.

Michigan

LANSING — Gov. Gretchen Whitmer said Friday that she hopes to begin gradually reopening Michigan's economy on May 1 after weeks of a strict stay-at-home order during the coronavirus crisis that has crippled businesses and caused more than 1 million unemployed people to seek aid.

Meanwhile, the number of new virus cases statewide rose 2%, a much slower pace. In Detroit, where nearly 600 people have died, Mayor Mike Duggan reported upbeat news from hospitals, declaring: "We are beating this thing."

Whitmer didn't identify which businesses may be allowed to open but said the restrictions will be relaxed in phases. She said there would be many factors: indoors work or outdoors; the number of employees; their proximity to each other; and their interaction with the public.

It will be "based on facts, science and what is the best medical advice we can get," Whitmer said.

Missouri

O'FALLON — A lawsuit filed by civil rights groups on Friday seeks to allow all Missourians



MARK LENIHAN/AP

A man wearing a face mask rides a subway in the Bronx borough of New York, on Friday.

to vote absentee in upcoming elections to help reduce the risk of catching or spreading the coronavirus.

The lawsuit was filed in Jefferson City by the American Civil Liberties Union of Missouri and the Missouri Voter Protection Coalition on behalf of the NAACP, the League of Women Voters and several residents. It claims that requiring voters to appear at traditional polling places during the pandemic puts lives at risk.

"No one should be forced to choose between staying safe and voting," Sophia Lin Lakin, deputy director of the ACLU's Voting Rights Project, said in a statement. "Expanding absentee ballot access to all registered voters during the pandemic is a common-sense solution that protects people's health and their right to vote."

New Mexico

SANTA FE — New Mexico reported seven new deaths across the state linked to the coronavirus pandemic as the number of people seeking unemployment benefits surged to nearly 80,000.

Health officials said deaths linked to COVID-19 increased to 51, with 1,711 people testing positive.

Two new deaths involving residents of La Vida Llana retirement facility in Albuquerque raised the death toll at the facility to a dozen people. The state attorney general says operators of the facility initially discouraged personnel from wearing personal protective equipment and did not warn medical providers in advance that patients from the retirement community had either tested positive or had been exposed to the virus.

Tennessee

HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania has managed to avoid the worst of the pandemic and it's now time to start talking about a gradual reopening of the state's battered economy, Gov. Tom Wolf

said Friday as he offered a set of guiding principles, but few specifics, on how he plans to get legions of unemployed residents out of their homes and back to work.

Cautioning that serious obstacles remain, Wolf said he would rely on an "evidence-based, regional approach" guided by health experts and economists that will help him decide when it's safe.

The plan released by his administration offered no timetable. It also did not spell out the metrics that Wolf and his administration will use to decide that Pennsylvania can begin emerging from the pandemic after weeks of social distancing.

Wolf called Friday's release a "framework" and said he would lay out more concrete steps next week. The state needs to be careful and deliberate in reopening the economy, the governor said, with the flexibility to respond to new outbreaks. Doing otherwise, he contended, would prolong the crisis.

Tennessee

NASHVILLE — A federal judge Friday night ruled that Tennessee has to continue allowing abortions amid a temporary ban on nonessential medical procedures that's aimed at slowing the spread of COVID-19.

U.S. District Judge Bernard Friedman said the defendants didn't show that any appreciable amount of personal protective equipment, or PPE, would be saved if the ban is applied to abortions.

In a hearing by phone Friday, attorneys representing several state abortion clinics argued that Tennessee women will face immediate harm if the ban on abortions is not lifted.

Alex Rieger, arguing for the Tennessee attorney general's office, said abortions are not being singled out but treated like any other procedure that is not necessary to prevent death or serious bodily injury. Gov. Bill Lee issued an emergency order on April 8 banning those procedures

for three weeks.

Utah

SALT LAKE CITY — Utah will aim to reopen restaurants and gyms and resume elective surgeries in early May under a plan unveiled Friday by Gov. Gary Herbert to gradually reopen the economy that has been decimated by the coronavirus pandemic.

Herbert said at a news conference the plan is dependent on continued adherence to hygiene and social distancing rules but said the state has done a good job containing the outbreak of COVID-19 and leaders must help the thousands of people suffering without paychecks.

The Republican governor said the plan, which has been in the work for weeks, mirrors guidelines issued by President Donald Trump on Thursday.

Virginia

BON AIR, Va. — Coronavirus has erupted inside a juvenile detention center in Virginia with 25 kids testing positive, accounting for a quarter of all cases reported at youth facilities nationwide, officials said Friday.

Children's rights advocates and health experts have warned state officials for weeks that it was just a matter of time before the virus took off inside juvenile facilities. They have called on Gov. Ralph Northam to start releasing as many children as safely possible from centers, including at the newly hit Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center outside Richmond.

On April 2, officials in Virginia announced two staffers at Bon Air had tested positive, but contact with residents was limited. A day later, a kid started showing symptoms and later tested positive.

Chris Moon, chief physician at Virginia's Department of Juvenile Justice, said 21 of the 25 infected kids in Bon Air exhibited no outward symptoms and only four showed signs that were more severe than a cold or a flu.

NATION

Smugglers target border wall in San Diego

By NICK MIROFF
The Washington Post

Smugglers saved into new sections of President Trump's border wall 18 times in the San Diego area during a single one-month span late last year, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection records obtained by The Washington Post via a Freedom of Information Act request.

The breaches and attempted breaches were made between Sept. 27 and Oct. 27, according to CBP records, with five of the incidents occurring on a single day, Oct.

10. The agency withheld information about the specific locations of the incidents, citing law enforcement sensitivities. The agency said the average cost to repair the damage was \$620 per incident.

The records do not indicate whether the one-month span last year is a representative sample of how frequently people are trying to breach new sections of Trump's border barrier, which are made of tall steel bollards partially filled with concrete and rebar. The Post reported last November that smuggling crews armed with common battery-operated power tools — including

reciprocating saws that retail for as little as \$100 at home improvement stores — can cut through the bollards using inexpensive blades designed for slicing through metal and stone.

The Post requested breaching data for the full 2019 fiscal year, which ended Sept. 30, but CBP provided data for the time period spanning Jan. 1 to Oct. 27.

The agency's figures show all 18 breaches and attempted breaches occurred between Sept. 27 and Oct. 27, with none recorded during the nine months prior. But CBP officials and border agents have

privately acknowledged repeated breaches and breaching attempts during that time span in the San Diego area, incidents that do not appear to have been tallied in the response to The Post's FOIA request.

CBP said the 18 incidents were a count of smuggling attempts that required the U.S. government to repair the structure and did not necessarily represent successful breaches that allowed narcotics or migrants to illegally enter the United States.

The San Diego area has the most fortified barriers anywhere along the border with Mexico.



ELLEN KHORIKMEYER/AP

A label indicating the absence of PFAS, perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances on pans is seen in Washington in June.

White House moves to weaken EPA rule on toxic compounds

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump White House has intervened to weaken one of the few public health protections pursued by its own administration, a rule to limit the use of a toxic industrial compound in consumer products, according to communications between the White House and Environmental Protection Agency.

The documents show that the White House Office of Management and Budget formally notified the EPA by email last July that it was stepping into the crafting of the rule on the compound, perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, used in nonstick and stain-resistant frying pans, rugs, and countless other consumer products.

The White House repeatedly pressed the agency to agree to a major loophole that could allow substantial imports of the PFAS-tainted products to continue, greatly weakening the proposed rule. EPA pushed back on the White House demand for the loophole, known as a “safe har-

bor” provision for industry.

Pushed again in January, the agency responded, “EPA opposes proposing a safe harbor provision, but is open to a neutrally-worded request for comment from the public” on the White House request.

The rule is one of the few concrete steps that the Trump administration has taken to deal with growing contamination by PFAS industrial compounds. The EPA has declared dating back to 2018 that consumer exposure to the substances was a “national priority” that the agency was confronting “aggressively.”

Delaware Sen. Tom Carper, the ranking Democrat on the Environment and Public Works Committee, who obtained the documents revealing the White House intervention, and public-health advocates say the White House action was led by Nancy Beck, a former chemical industry executive now detailed to President Donald Trump's Council of Economic Advisers.

In a letter sent Friday to the EPA, Carper charged the White

House pressure amounts to unusual intervention in what had been the EPA's in-house efforts to regulate imports tainted with the compound. Trump has nominated Beck to lead the Consumer Product Safety Commission, a government panel charged with protecting Americans from harm by thousands of kinds of consumer goods.

Asked about the White House actions, EPA spokeswoman Corry Schiermeyer said in an email that “consulting with other federal agencies on actions is a normal process across government,” and that “EPA is often required to engage in an interagency review process led by OMB.”

“It is routine for the agency to receive input from all of our stakeholders, including our federal partners,” Schiermeyer wrote.

The EPA did not respond to a question about whether Beck led the White House intervention. Emails sent for comment to the White House, the White House Office of Management and Budget and Beck were not immediately answered.

Biden angling to let Sanders keep delegates

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Seeking to avoid the bitter feelings that marred the 2016 Democratic convention, Joe Biden's campaign is angling to allow Bernie Sanders to keep some of the delegates he would otherwise forfeit by dropping out of the presidential race.

Under a strict application of party rules, Sanders should lose about a third of the delegates he's won in primaries and caucuses as the process moves ahead and states select the actual people who will attend the Democratic National Convention. The rules say those delegates should be Biden supporters, as he is the only candidate still actively seeking the party's nomination.

Quiet talks between the two campaigns center on allowing Sanders to keep some of his delegates, essentially a goodwill gesture from a presumptive nominee seeking to court Sanders' progressive supporters and unite the party. It is not yet settled how many.

“We feel strongly that it is in the best interest of the party to ensure that the Sanders campaign receives statewide delegates to reflect the work that they have done to contribute to the movement that will beat Donald Trump this fall,” said a Biden official, who wasn't authorized to discuss private negotiations pub-

licly and spoke on condition of anonymity. “We are in discussion with them now on how to best accomplish that.”

Sanders' campaign declined to comment on the talks. “Nothing to add from us,” said Sanders spokesman Mike Casca.

In some ways, the delegate count is a moot point. While he has yet to formally win the 1,991 delegates needed to claim the Democratic nomination on the first ballot at the party convention, Biden is the Democrat's presumptive nominee. All of his rivals — including Sanders — have endorsed him after ending their own campaigns.

But with the nomination essentially decided, who has how many delegates takes on a new meaning. In 2016, rowdy Sanders supporters boomed some speakers and any mention of nominee Hillary Clinton at the party's Philadelphia convention. The disruptions were so embarrassing to the party that Sanders pleaded with his supporters not to stage protests on the floor.

By claiming the delegates that ought to belong to him under party rules, Biden could cut down on the number of Sanders' backers — some of whom have been slow to embrace the former vice president — who could stage a replay of that divide. Instead, he's decided to try to attract Sanders' supporters.



EVAN VUCCI/AP

Former Vice President Joe Biden, left, and Sen. Bernie Sanders, IV, right, greet one another before they participate in a Democratic presidential primary debate in Washington last month.

WORLD

U.S., Russia discuss arms control pact, strategic security

By Vladimir Isachenkov
Associated Press

MOSCOW — U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov discussed arms control and other issues Friday as Moscow has signaled readiness to include some of its latest nuclear weapons in the last remaining arms control pact between the two countries if Washington accepts the Kremlin's offer to extend it.

The State Department said the two top diplomats discussed the next steps in the bilateral strategic security dialogue. Pompeo emphasized that any future arms control talks must be based on U.S. President Donald Trump's vision for a trilateral arms control agreement that includes China along with the U.S. and Russia, the State Department said.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has offered to extend the New START arms control treaty, which expires in February 2021. The Trump administration has pushed for a new pact that would include China as a signatory. Moscow has described that goal as unrealistic given Beijing's reluctance to discuss any deal that would reduce its much smaller nuclear arsenal.

Separately, the State Department on Friday sent to Congress a report on Russian compliance with the treaty. The report said that although Moscow is abiding by its terms, the accord does not cover enough weapons systems and leaves China with a free hand. It added, however, that the administration has not yet made a decision on whether to renew the treaty.

Whether continuing implementation of New START remains in the national security interests of the United States depends on a policy judgment taking into account a number of factors," the report said, listing several considerations including the impact that withdrawal would have on both the U.S. and Russian arsenals as well as the impact on American allies.

"The administration is seeking arms control that can deliver real security to the United States and its allies and partners and has not yet made a decision on whether and how extension of the New START Treaty will be an element of that effort," said the report, a copy of which was obtained by The Associated Press.

During the call with Pompeo, Lavrov reiterated Moscow's offer to extend New START, saying that Russia is ready to discuss possible new agreements but considers it important to preserve the existing treaty as a "cornerstone of global security," the Russian

Foreign Ministry said. It added that the top diplomats agreed to intensify the U.S.-Russian arms control dialogue.

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said Friday that Russia's new Sarmat heavy intercontinental ballistic missile and the Avangard hypersonic glide vehicle could be counted along with other Russian nuclear weapons under the treaty.

The Sarmat is still under development, while the first missile unit armed with the Avangard became operational in December.

The Russian military has said the Avangard is capable of flying 27 times faster than the speed of sound and could make sharp maneuvers on its way to a target to bypass missile defense systems. It has been fitted to the existing Soviet-built intercontinental ballistic missiles instead of older type warheads, and in the future could be fitted to the more powerful Sarmat.

The New START treaty, signed in 2010 by U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, limits each country to no more than 1,550 deployed nuclear warheads and 700 deployed missiles and bombers.

The treaty, which can be extended by another five years, envisages a comprehensive verification mechanism to check compliance, including on-site inspections of each side's nuclear bases.

New START is the only U.S.-Russia arms control pact still in effect after both Moscow and Washington withdrew from the 1987 Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty last year.

Arms control advocates have warned that its demise could trigger a new arms race and upset strategic stability.

Ryabkov said in an interview with the Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn magazine that other prospective weapons announced by Putin in 2018 don't fall under the pact's provisions, but Russia is open for discussion on their possible inclusion as part of a wider dialogue about strategic stability.

Those weapons include the Burevistik nuclear-powered cruise missile and the atomic-powered and nuclear-armed Poseidon underwater drone.

Russia has cast the development of Avangard, Burevistik and Poseidon as a response to U.S. missile defense, which it has called a threat to its nuclear deterrent. It also has voiced concern about U.S. plans to deploy weapons in space.

Referencing these concerns, during Friday's call Lavrov emphasized that the arms control dialogue should "include all factors that impact strategic stability."



KIN CHEUNG/AP

Former pro-democracy lawmaker Martin Lee, 81, second right, leaves a police station in Hong Kong, on Saturday. Hong Kong police arrested at least 14 pro-democracy lawmakers and activists on Saturday on charges of joining unlawful protests last year calling for reforms.

Police in Hong Kong arrest 14 involved in 2019 reform protests

Associated Press

HONG KONG — Hong Kong police arrested at least 14 veteran pro-democracy lawmakers, activists and a media tycoon on Saturday on charges of joining unlawful protests last year calling for reforms.

Among those arrested were 81-year-old activist and former lawmaker Martin Lee and democracy advocates Albert Ho, Lee Cheuk-yan and Au Nok-hin.

Police also arrested media tycoon Jimmy Lai, who founded the local newspaper Apple Daily.

Lai, Lee Cheuk-yan and Yeung Sum — a former lawmaker from

the Democratic Party — were charged in February over their involvement in a mass anti-government demonstration on Aug. 31 last year. The protests in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory against proposed extradition legislation exposed deep divisions between democracy-minded Hong Kongers and the Communist Party-ruled central government in Beijing.

The bill — which would have allowed Hong Kong residents to be sent to mainland China to stand trial — has been withdrawn, but the protests continued for more than seven months, centered around demands for voting rights

and an independent inquiry into police conduct.

While the protests began peacefully, they increasingly descended into violence after demonstrators became frustrated with the government's response. They feel that Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam has ignored their demands and used the police to suppress them.

The League of Social Democrats wrote in a Facebook post on Saturday that its leaders were among those arrested, including chairman Raphael Wong. They were accused of participating in two unauthorized protests on Aug. 18 and Oct. 1 last year.

Smoke from Chernobyl wildfires engulfs Kyiv, worsens city's air pollution rank

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Smoke from wildfires in the contaminated evacuation zone around the wrecked Chernobyl nuclear power plant has engulfed Kyiv, placing the Ukrainian capital near the top of the global air pollution index.

The authorities said Friday that radiation levels in Kyiv have remained normal, but they advised residents to stay home and close their windows. About 1,000 firefighters backed by aircraft have been deployed to battle the forest blazes near the site of the world's worst nuclear accident, which

took place 34 years ago. Wildfires erupted in the forests around Chernobyl on April 4, accidentally sparked by residents who were burning trash. The firefighting teams managed to contain the initial blazes, but new fires erupted Thursday, sweeping into wider areas thanks to strong winds.

Live air quality data on iQair.com placed the Ukrainian capital right behind several cities in China in air pollution on Friday.

The authorities in Kyiv said radiation levels in the capital, which is about 60 miles south of the plant, were within norms. They also insisted that the wild-

fires were posing no threat to radioactive waste dumps and other facilities in Chernobyl, but advised Kyiv residents to drink a lot of water and cover windows with wet fabrics if they open them.

The fires are in the 1,000-square-mile Chernobyl Exclusion Zone that was established after the 1986 disaster at the plant that sent a cloud of radioactive fallout over much of Europe.

The zone is largely unpopulated, although about 200 people have remained despite orders to leave. Fires in the area raise concerns that they could spread radioactive material.

BOOKS



Familiar, but also different

Anne Tyler discusses new book, Baltimore and social distance

Diana Walker

BY HILLEL ITALIE
Associated Press

After more than 20 books, Anne Tyler still finds ways to challenge herself.

Her new novel, “Redhead by the Side of the Road,” is, of course, set in her longtime home of Baltimore and features the family and romantic entanglements and other narrative touches Tyler fans know well. But the story’s main character, a self-employed tech consultant/repairman confronting the fallout of decisions made years before, pretty much came out of nowhere.

“This is the first book I’ve written where I began with no idea,” Tyler, the Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist known for “The Accidental Tourist,” “Morgan’s Passing” and “Breathing Lessons,” told The Associated Press in a recent email. “I was wracking my brains for something to write about, and a single sentence popped into my

head: ‘You have to wonder what goes through the mind of a man like _____.’ (I didn’t have a name for him yet.) I was baffled. Why should I have to wonder? I thought, and then up popped the next sentence: ‘He lives alone; he keeps to himself...’”

“The rest of the book was up to me, but at least I was on my way.”

The computer man’s name is Micah Mortimer. He lives alone and wonders if he’s meant to be that way as he alienates his current girlfriend and unexpectedly reconnects with the woman he loved — and drove away — back in college. Tyler tries to minimize politics and topical references in her books, but it’s quite specific about locations, placing Micah in north Baltimore, in a three-story home near York Road, with an “incongruous front porch” and a “splintery front porch swing that nobody ever sits in.”

During her recent AP interview, the 78-year-old Tyler discussed the mind of Micah, the book’s tricky title, Baltimore and her life during the coronavirus outbreak.

“On Micah, whom she describes in one passage as ‘narrow and limited’ but still aware of the world’s

sometimes by turning them off and turning them back on.

“His routine is etched in stone,” Tyler writes. “He rises, runs, eats breakfast and answers a few calls. Monday is trash night. Micah prided himself on his house-keeping.”

He may not have a pulse, but he does have a girlfriend. “She was matronly,” Tyler writes, “which Micah found kind of a turn-on.” That marks the erotic peak of this novel. “He and Cass had been together for three years or so, and they had reached the stage where things had more or less solidified: compromises arrived at, incompatibilities adjusted to, minor quirks overlooked. They had it down to a system.” Or so Micah assumes. In the first chapter, Cass fears she’s about to be evicted from her apartment. When Micah reacts with insufficient sympathy, she breaks up with him.

I have switched dry cleaners with more drama.

Of course, there’s also a sweet and somewhat amusing family in this novel, and of course, they have sweet and somewhat amusing rituals involving food. “The table itself was bare,” Tyler writes, “except for a portable Ping Pong net that had been stretched across the center.” If you’ve read and adored as many of Tyler’s novels as I have, such idiosyncrasies convey all the reassuring warmth of an old hymn.

Micah’s four sisters — all lifelong waitresses — pester him to get Cass back, lest he “end up a crusty old bachelor,” but he resists their efforts. Still, the minor disruptions to Micah’s orderly life are just beginning. A preppy young man named Brink shows up at the door. He’s run away from college and his parents. “I don’t belong in that family,” Brink tells Micah. “I’m a like, misfit. They’re all so... I’m more like you.” Having found some old photos from his mother’s

horrors, whether the 2018 shooting at a Pittsburgh synagogue or the tragedies along the U.S.-Mexican border:

“I found it easy to ‘be’ Micah, so to speak, throughout the book, but especially in that passage. We all have lone-some moments, after all; it’s no stretch to imagine those. But also the events that he’s reflecting upon here — the synagogue shooting, the plight of immigrant children — weigh so heavily on my mind these days, as I imagine they do on everyone’s, that I felt even Micah would have to be affected by them.”

On the book’s title, based on a recurring hallucination of Micah’s:

“Several times I mistook the same object for another on my morning walk, although you’d think I would have learned after the first time. The experience started me thinking: How many other mistakes, more serious mistakes, do we repeat in the course of our lives? How often do we fail to realize that they were mistakes, even? I thought it would be fun to explore the issue.”

On life in Baltimore:

“I guess it’s no secret that Baltimore is going through a hard spell. And yet it’s such a kindhearted city, paradoxical though that sounds. Just about everyone here, across all classes and cultures, behaves with grace and patience. Watch some trying episode in, say, a supermarket checkout line — a customer taking too long counting coins or a cashier who doesn’t know his produce codes. Bains and moreans stand by quietly, or they try to help out if they can. Not even an eye-roll! I think this has an influence on my writing. In such surroundings, how could I possibly invent a mean-spirited character?”

On how Micah would handle social distancing:

“I think he would have handled it the way I have. First I thought, ‘Oh, well, never mind, I basically shelter in place anyway, and I already know about working from home — how you have to be sure and change out of your pajamas.’ But then after a few days I thought, ‘Oh, wait a minute. I’m surprised at how often now I feel the need to step out on my front stoop and start a conversation with a passing neighbor.’”

On how the book, completed well before the pandemic, might read now:

“I haven’t read the book since the virus began. A friend asked recently, though, how I’d know to write pages 94-95, so I checked to see what she meant. Lo and behold, there was Micah on his early-morning run fantasizing, briefly, that the empty streets were due to some global disaster and he was the last person left alive. Then he comes upon two women talking up a storm together, and he’s extremely pleased to see them. I relate to that scene now much more than when I wrote it.”

On writing while sheltering in place:

“For the first few days, I seemed to keep writing the same three pages over and over again. I just had a general feeling of distractedness. Eventually, though, I did sink back into my work. I happened to be writing about an Easter dinner with a lot of people attending, some of them behaving a bit snarkily with each other. I thought, Oh, now I remember why I write. I write because it makes me happy.”

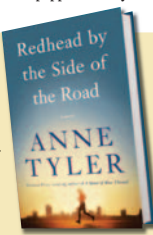
“As for whether the virus will turn up in my next book: Well, generally I don’t think current events make for very good literature. They have to mellow for a while. We need a little distance to see them for what they are.”

Redhead by the Side of the Road

Anne Tyler

Anne Tyler’s new novel, “Redhead by the Side of the Road,” is either wholly irrelevant or just what we need — or possibly both. Slight and slightly charming, it’s like the cherry Jell-O that Mom serves when you’re feeling under the weather. Not much of a meal, perhaps, but who could handle more now?

The mellowest protagonist is Micah Mortimer, “a tall, bony man in his early 40s with not-so-good posture.” He lives in a basement apartment in Baltimore, which over the course of more than 20 novels has become Tyler’s Yoknapatawpha. Gilded with a patina of quirkiness, Micah is a self-employed computer fix-it guy. Tellingly, he calls himself the Tech Hermit. He repairs elderly folks’ PCs,



college years, Brink is convinced that Micah must be his real father. Alas, the calendar won’t support that conclusion.

Tyler says in a small story about a man perplexed by the tepid state of his life: “He had no one,” he realizes. “His entire life ran in a rut.” But maybe, he thinks, he just doesn’t want all the “fuss and bother” of being close to someone.

There is nothing necessarily objectionable about a novel focused on “such a narrow and limited man,” as Tyler calls Micah. Writers as diverse as Sinclair Lewis and Anita Brookner have found profound comedy and pathos in the lives of apparently dull people. But in this case, the mold growing on Micah’s airless character seems to have spread to the narration itself.

Tyler’s best novels are so wonderful that they’ve tended to eclipse her short stories, but that would have been a more effective form for “Redhead by the Side of the Road.”

— Ron Charles/The Washington Post

MUSIC

Getting in tune

After a 'really, really hard year' that included the death of his best friend and collaborator, jazz-funk bass virtuoso Thundercat beat his demons and made peace with himself

By JEFF WEISS ■ Special to *The Washington*



hey all know Thundercat here: the weathered, seen-it-all counter-man who reserves the lanes, the acne-ridden teenager handing out floppy and slick leather shoes, the waiter bringing heaping platters of fruit and bowls of matzo ball soup. To them, the interstellar jazz bassist is practically family. But don't mistake this for "Cheers."

The Pinz Bowling Center in Studio City is no insular neighborhood tavern, but rather one of the most popular social nexuses in Los Angeles (at least in pre-pandemic days). It attracts everyone from stoned Valley high schoolers to the Los Angeles Lakers, young working-class families to those old

enough to remember when bowling was televised every Saturday afternoon on ABC. And one regular is Thundercat, nee Stephen Bruner, who never fails to abide.

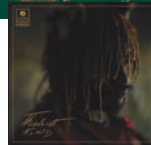
To be fair, it is impossible to forget Thundercat. On this Tuesday night in early February, he's wearing oversized cat-eye pink sunglasses and red silk shorts seemingly designed for a boxer obsessed with Edo-period Japanese woodblock prints. His magenta dreadlocks are partially covered by Gucci headphones. There's a fanny pack slung around his black Pokemon sweatshirt, a nest of gold chains dangling around his neck, and his shoes are leopard

print. He looks like the star of an Afro-futurist manga about George Clinton's P-Funk Mothership: The Next Generation. But this isn't a pose. Thundercat used to amble through his native South Central in the warzone late '90s wearing a tuxedo T-shirt.

"Haven't seen you here in a minute," the gravelly-voiced clerk says, swiping Thundercat's credit card and letting us know the lane will be available in 15 minutes or so. "Everything OK?"

"It was a really, really hard year," Thundercat says, nodding his head in appreciation. "Glad to be back, though."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13



After coming to terms with the 2018 death of Mac Miller, Thundercat got sober, lost 100 pounds and finished his fourth studio album, "It Is What It Is."

Motormouth Media
Top photo: The1point8

MUSIC

FROM PAGE 12

The September 2018 death of rapper Mac Miller — Thundercat's best friend and close collaborator — has colored almost every day since then. Miller's death at age 26, by accident or overdose, occurred roughly one month before the pair were set to embark on a national tour, which would have featured Thundercat as both opening act and the bassist in Miller's band. The tragedy forced Thundercat to grapple with his own demons involving alcohol abuse, triggering a newfound but hard-fought and shaky sobriety.

Around this same time, he decided to go vegan and lost 100 pounds. ("I didn't notice until I saw a picture of myself, and it freaked me out. It's still kind of hard to process.") Shortly thereafter, he experienced the emotional ransacking of a breakup. Somehow in the fog, he found the clarity to finish his fourth studio album, the typically brilliant "It Is What It Is," which cements his unlikely but deserved ascent to the ranks of jazz-funk fusion superstar — roughly 35 years after critics read the genre's last rites.

"When Mac died, I realized I couldn't drink my way through it," Thundercat explains. "I sat with it, let the pain in, and accepted that this would be a roller coaster. I needed to feel every part of it, and I still don't know how to feel. There are moments when I break down about it."

To understand Thundercat, you need to accept his natural duality. In one moment, the 35-year-old bassist/producer/general musical virtuoso can be unflinchingly open, vulnerable, generous and sincere. In the next, he will comically hump one of those machines where you put in a dollar and try to grab stuffed animals with a giant claw. This is what he briefly does while we wait to bowl, squandering a couple bucks in a vain effort to win an oversized plush Sonic the Hedgehog.

"It took me a while to deal with my struggles with alcohol and the friends 'I've lost,'" he continues, as we play air hockey amid the chirping whirs and epileptic fits of the arcade adjacent to the alley's 32 lanes. "Some days I feel good about it, some days I feel horrible. I spent a lot of time self-medicating, and it served its purpose until it couldn't anymore," he says wistfully. "Sometimes, when I look behind, I see smoke and ashes. I feel like I survived, but in a different form."

He sighs and adds for emphasis. "Sometimes I have a hard time."

The Dionysian equation of "sorrow + excess = great art" has gone afoot of vogue in the past decade. It's a slightly antiquated notion that usually leads to pretension and maudlin indulgence. Thundercat's genius lies in his ability to both reinvent that frayed calculus and combine it with a hilarious streak of absurdist postmodern irony and fluorescent intergalactic symphonies. The result is something like a one-man synthesis of Frank Zappa and George Duke scoring the soundtrack to a live-action reimagining of "Dragon Ball Z" set in the contemporary San Fernando Valley.

His catalogue includes multiple peans to his natty attire cat, Tron, and guest raps from everyone from Kendrick Lamar to Pharrell Williams to Lil B. Thundercat's bass lines formed the sonic bedrock of "To Pimp a Butterfly," Lamar's Grammy-winning generational triumph of an album; he will appear on the next Herbie Hancock album; he reintroduced Michael McDonald and Kenny Loggins to millennials on his last album's underground smash, "Show You the Way." In line with the ever-evolving Thundercat Cinematic Universe, the first single off "It Is What It Is" is a gossamer falsetto funk levitation about moving out of the hood and making ill-advised posts on Instagram, pairing Steve Lacy with Childish Gambino with Steve Arrington — the sequin boogie sorcerer behind Slave, a band whose biggest hits all came before Bruner was born in 1985.

"These older artists are beacons of sound and light, and it's important for me to remind people of the context and understanding that ground the music I'm making," Thundercat says. "In this weird algorithm era, it's important to remind people about jazz and the funk and all the stuff that came before us and remains timeless."

His obligation to tradition can only come from someone acutely aware of their place in a deeper slipstream of funk, jazz, rock and soul. His father crafted gorgeous strobe-light grooves in a late-70s disco ensemble named Chameleon. Thundercat's older brother, Ronald, is one of the best drummers in the world; his younger brother, Jameel, is a gifted beatmaker who until recently played keys in The Internet. Thundercat's original guru was Reggie Andrews, the Mr. Holland of South Central music education. And Thundercat refined his trademark Richter-wobble backing up Erykah Badu and Snoop Dogg, and as a member of venerable L.A. punk thrashers, Suicidal Tendencies.

It's fitting that he feels perfectly at ease in Pinz, enjoying a sport whose peak popularity came during the Watergate era. "People automatically associate bowling with fun, but there's something relaxing about it to me. Some people love to get competitive, but there's no pressure to win. I'm only competing with myself," he says, breaking down his love affair with the lanes. "There's a real Zen quality to it; it's similar to music in the sense that you have to be okay with your style and learn to be in tune with yourself."

He removes his sweater, revealing a Mac Miller T-shirt underneath. Knuckles are cracked. It's time to bowl. As a musician, Thundercat is always dazzling, unleashing perfect-pitch walls that sound like tears from heaven splashing on an open-collared white leisure suit; his bass riffs are as chunky and rumbling as King Hippo. But as a bowler, he is solid, workmanlike, straightforward. There is no chimerical spin to his

‘When Mac died, I realized I couldn’t drink my way through it. I sat with it, let the pain in, and accepted that this would be a roller coaster. I needed to feel every part of it, and I still don’t know how to feel. There are moments when I break down about it.’

Thundercat

On the death of his friend and collaborator Mac Miller



Parker Day

throws, but he has precision aim and cruises through the first half of the game with a series of nines, a spare and a strike.

Bowling's appeal is obvious for someone like Thundercat, who alternates between whimsical joy and profound grief. It's a sport that oscillates between the euphoria and cruelties of life, a sure-thing strike that turns into a 7-10 split. Beneath the sartorial flamboyance and eccentricity, Thundercat retains the unaffected quality of someone who grew up in South Central, who would never go Hollywood — even if Brad Pitt recently came to his show at the Wilton. "That was trippy as hell," he says later. "I guess he reached out to my management, but I had no idea and while I was playing, I look over and he's sitting next to Ariana Grande. So I waved."

For now, it's serious business at the bowling alley. Kind of. Thundercat takes a laissez-faire approach to the sport, drifting off and wandering about, breaking to FaceTime his 13-year-old daughter. Pinz is his happy place, a cocoon of sentimentality and nostalgia that reminds him of when he used to come here with his friend, Austin Peralta, the jazz piano prodigy. They used to watch "The Big Lebowski" on loop and always dreamed of starting a bowling team, until Peralta's 2012 death from viral pneumonia aggravated by a combination of alcohol and drugs. He was just 22. Peralta played on Thundercat's 2011 debut, and the duo had been virtually inseparable right up until his last night on earth.

If Thundercat has a superpower, it's in his ability to transmute his intense grief into art. It's a quality he shares with his label boss, close friend and producer, Flying Lotus — who walks into the bowling alley about halfway through our game.

"He's slowly been able to introduce people to who he really is: a maniac who can be very silly but also someone who is super emotional and wears his heart on his sleeve," Flying Lotus says.

"We're both super grateful to have the art to turn to," Lotus continues. "The closing track on ("It Is What It Is") was the first thing we did after we heard the news about Mac. It was painful for us to write the music. It was like, 'Are we really going to try to do this — feeling this way?' But he was like, 'Let's go!' We listened back to it for hours, just crying, but how else could that have translated into something beautiful?"

Not long after Peralta's death, Thundercat and Miller became close friends based on a shared musical bond and countless other similarities. They'd go on double dates to Pinz and endlessly re-watch "The Big Lebowski."

"We used to argue about who was Walter, who was the Dude, and who was Donny," Thundercat recalls. "But Mac and I eventually realized we were both two Lebowskis."

It's now the 10th frame, and by some cosmic synchronicity, the video screen above is playing the Doobie Brothers' "What a Fool Believes." Thundercat busts out a smooth two-step to Michael McDonald's 10,000-third-count croon. He nails the spare to finish with a respectable 118 score.

This is where the story was supposed to end. A few days later, Thundercat embarked on what was supposed to be a two-month-long national tour — his first since the death of Miller. The tour was, of course, eventually canceled because of the coronavirus outbreak.

About a week after he returned home, we spoke about the surreal nature of the present moment:

"I've never dealt with anything like this, and I know it's not easy for anyone. I'm just trying to be emotionally supportive to my homies and homegirls," he says wearily via phone.

In a perverse way, Thundercat's new album feels particularly suited for this moment — filled with both celestial, futuristic escapism and plaintive grief, the strength of human resilience and an unending sense of frustration. After all, its title is a Zen koan unto itself: "It Is What It Is."

"The name hits a little different now," Thundercat says, laughing.

We talk a little more about his last year and the emotions stirred by yet another false start. The tour was a chance to forget it all and focus on the music, but now he's back home. Even worse, Pinz is closed indefinitely. I ask if there's been anything — any piece of art or record or minor consolation of philosophy — that has gotten him through the deaths, the breakup, the battle for sobriety, the disappointments.

"The Big Lebowski," Thundercat reflexively answers.

"What about it?"
 "Strikes and gutters, man. It's all just strikes and gutters."

CROSSWORD AND COMICS

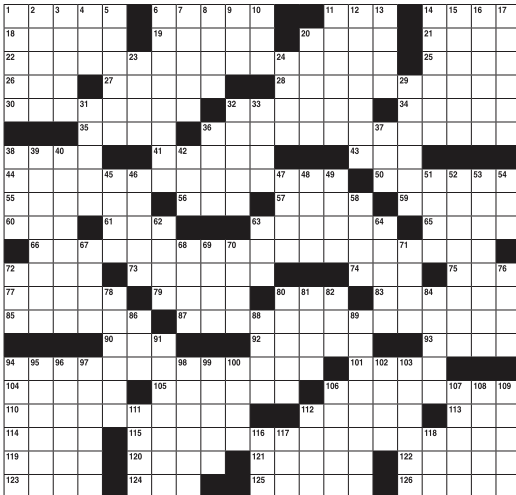
NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

DOUBLE TALK

BY JIM PEREDO / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Jim Peredo of Lakewood, Wash., is a stays-at-home dad and former communications engineer in the Air Force. He got into crosswords by way of googling — posing puzzles online whose answers are geographic coordinates. (Search for "Team Peredo" for examples.) His counts himself as a Chamorro. Both his parents are Guamanian, although he himself has lived in Guam for only a year. This is his ninth puzzle for The Times and his second Sunday. — W.S.

- ACROSS
1 Orchestra
heavyweights
6 Mushroom in ramen
11 When tripled, a comment of annoyance
14 "Oh, my!"
18 It has a very big bed
19 One of a pair of explorers on the Missouri state quarter
20 Spring feature
21 Golden-rule word
22 Run-on sentence?
25 ___by date
26 Common female middle name
27 Wax theatrical
28 Sharply dressed, shoeless?
30 Boring events
32 Bit of coniving
34 Five-letter world capital that locals spell as two words
35 Tempe neighbor
36 Passing comment?
38 Finding the waves
41 Something a bib catches
43 Busy Bee, for short
44 Single quote?
50 Doesn't touch
55 Head to bed
56 Surreal finale?
75 Big name in student grants
114 Yonder, in dialect
115 Old saw?
119 Anger
120 Spew anger
121 ___ Mitchell, creator of the Tony-winning musical "Hedestown"
122 Handle
123 "What are the ___?"
124 Deli sandwich, hold the vowels
125 Like stereotypical Seattle weather
126 Symbol of the National Audubon Society
DOWN
7 Preschooler
77 Nickname for Baseball Hall-of-Famer Ernie Banks
79 When tripled, "etc."
80 Educational TV spot, for short
83 Square dance move
85 Fireplace item
87 Stock phrase?
90 Not commercial: Abbr.
92 Briskly
93 Bring in
94 Self expression?
101 Trade jobs
104 Sports venue
105 "Outta luck!"
106 Magical powder
110 Prepped for surgery
112 Children's-song refrain
113 Uma Thurman's role in "Pulp Fiction"
17 "Stop right there!"
20 Adorable one
23 ___ Research Center
24 Org. tracking workplace accidents
29 English setting for a series of Impressionist paintings by Monet
31 Neighbor of an Emirati
32 Young weaned pig
33 Monk's dugs
36 Word with tippy or twinkle
37 "2001: A Space Odyssey" computer
38 Put on ... or things put on
39 Ugly ones sometimes come out in December
40 Nosh at noon, say
42 Diamond star
45 Second-most-common Vietnamese surname
46 Home of Wichita Falls
47 Magnum ___
48 Game-ball material
49 The seat got her tongue, you might say
51 Where hills pile up
52 Lower-extremity affliction
53 Secret target
54 Cap's assistant, maybe
58 Milk: Fr.
62 When the meaning of life was sold in 2000 for \$3.26
63 Part of a job application
64 European museum whose name means "meadow"
67 Sign on again
68 Another name for the moonfish
69 Common wedding hairstyle
70 Undergo rapprochement
71 Stern's opposite
72 "Today" rival, for short
76 "Old ___ Road," longest-running No. 1 single in Billboard history (19 weeks)
78 You might open one at a pub
80 Kind of book or ad
81 Didn't just float
82 Home of 72-Down
84 Mortimer ___
86 Numcomet, informally
88 Org. in charge of the 23-Down
89 Not worry
91 Country whose most widely spoken language is Wolof
94 Democratic politician
95 Flower for a corsage
96 First name in the 1970s White House
97 Gets used to (to)
98 Gopher, e.g.
99 Fighter pilot's wear
100 [head slap]
102 Masochist's pleasure
103 Generate, as suspicion
106 Peaceful protest
107 Brown shade
108 Evening hour in Spain
109 Cartoonist's deck
111 Painted remark
112 Actor Morales
116 Rattle
117 "___, voce poco fa" (Rossini aria)
118 One of the March sisters

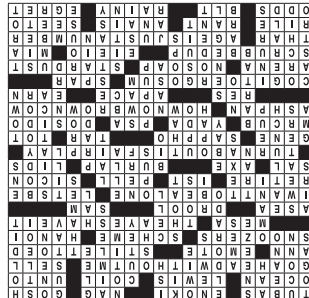


GUNSTON STREET



"Gunston Street" is drawn by Basil Zaviski. Email him at gunstonstreet@yahoo.com, and visit gunstonstreet.com.

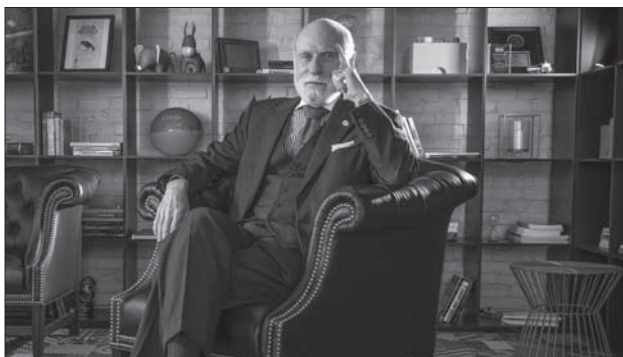
RESULTS FOR ABOVE PUZZLE



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GADGETS & TECHNOLOGY



Bill O'Leary/Washington Post

Internet pioneer Vinton Cerf, shown in May 2015 at Google's offices in Washington, D.C., has been a driving force in developing key internet protocols.

Built to withstand anything

The internet is working the way Cold War-era designers intended

By CRAIG TIMBERG
The Washington Post

Coronavirus knocked down — at least for a time — internet pioneer Vinton Cerf, who offers this reflection on the experience: "I don't recommend it ... It's very debilitating."

But Cerf, 76 and now recovering in his northern Virginia home, has better news to report about the computer network he and others spent much of their lives creating. Despite some problems, the internet overall is handling unprecedented surges of demand as it helps keep a fractured world connected at a time of global catastrophe.

"This basic architecture is 50 years old, and everyone is online," Cerf noted in a video interview over Google Hangouts, with a mix of triumph and wonder in his voice. "And the thing is not collapsing."

The internet, born as a Pentagon project during some of the chillier years of the Cold War, has taken such a central role in 21st century civilian society, culture and business that few pause any longer to appreciate its wonders — except perhaps, as in the past few weeks, when it becomes even more central to our lives.

Many facets of human life — work, school, banking, shopping, flirting, live music, government services, chats with friends, calls to aging parents — have moved online in this era of social distancing, all without breaking the network. It has groaned here and there, as anyone who has struggled through a glitchy video conference knows, but it has not failed.

"Resiliency and redundancy are very much a part of the internet design," explained Cerf. Comcast, the nation's largest source of residential internet, serving more than 26 million homes, reports that peak traffic was up by nearly one third in March, with some areas reaching as high as 60% above normal. Demand for online voice, video and VPN connections — all staples of remote work — have surged, and peak usage hours have shifted from evenings, when people typically stream video for entertainment, to daytime work hours.

But so far, internet industry officials report that they've been able to manage the shifting loads and surges. To a substantial extent, the network has managed them automatically because its underlying protocols adapt to shifting conditions, working around trouble spots to find more efficient routes for data transmissions and managing glitches in a way that doesn't break connections entirely.

Some credit goes to Comcast, Google and the other giant, well-resourced corporations essential to the internet's operation today. But perhaps even more goes to the seminal engineers and scientists like Cerf, who for decades worked to create a particular kind of global network — open, efficient, resilient and highly interoperable so anyone could join and nobody needed to be in charge.

"They're deservedly taking a bit of a moment for a high five right now," said Jason Livingood, a Comcast vice president who has briefed some members of the internet's founding generation about how the company has been handling increased demands.

Cerf was a driving force in developing key internet protocols in the 1970s, while working for Stanford University and, later, the Pentagon's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, which provided key early research funding but ultimately relinquished control of the network it spawned.

"You're seeing a success story right now," said David Clark, a Massachusetts Institute of Technology computer scientist who worked on early internet protocols, speaking by the videoconferencing service Zoom. "If we didn't have the internet, we'd be in an incredibly different place right now. What if that had happened in the 1980s?"

Such a system carries a notable cost in terms of security and privacy, a fact the world rediscovers every time there's a major data breach, ransomware attack or controversy over the amount of information governments and private companies collect about anyone who's online — a category that includes more than half of the world's almost 8 billion people.

Some of the early internet architects — Cerf among them, from his position at the Pentagon — were determined to design a system that could continue operating through almost anything, including a nuclear attack from the Soviets.

That's one reason the system doesn't have any preferred path from Point A to Point B. It continuously calculates and recalculates the best route, and if something in the middle fails, the computers that calculate transmission paths find new routes — without having to ask anyone's permission to do so.

Steve Crocker, a networking pioneer like Cerf, compared this quality to that of a sponge, an organism whose functions are so widely distributed that breaking one part does not typically cause the entire organism to die.

"You can do damage to a portion of it, and the rest of it just lumbers forward," Crocker said, also speaking by Zoom.

GADGET WATCH

Speaker has vintage look, modern sound and ports

By GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

With an attractive vintage look, Electrohome Birmingham's retro Bluetooth speaker seeks to bring back the era of mop tops and mullets from the golden age of rock 'n' roll. I prefer to say it reminds me of a hi-fi stereo system my dad had long ago.

While the look takes you back in time, the sound and features are up to date and forward marching. It produces room-filling sound from any play list or can stream any music service with a Bluetooth connection from your smartphone, tablet or computer.

The exterior is handcrafted from engineered MDF wood with a carrying handle built into the top. Producing the sound inside are dual full-range 4-inch woofers with an integrated amplifier.

To add to the vintage look, controls for adjusting the music, power and volume are all knobs along the top of the front side of the speaker. There's also a 3.5 mm aux input for a direct connection and USB charging port to connect your cable for device charging.

Working as a Bluetooth speaker is the primary function of the Birmingham, but there's an appealing feature for guitar players who want to jam along. Since I have zero musical talents, I couldn't try it, but if you're a guitar player, you can plug into the built-in input and customize the live sound with the volume and gain control. Online: electrohome.com; \$149

Rather than having to remember a combination or have a key to open it, the Taplock Lite uses your fingerprint.

The smart fingerprint portable padlock opens in less than 1 second after being programmed with your fingerprint. You can store up to 100 fingerprints for each lock, which are managed in the Taplock app.



TAPLOCK/TNS

The Taplock Lite uses your fingerprint as security.



ELECTROHOME/TNS

Electrohome Birmingham's retro Bluetooth speaker is handcrafted from engineered MDF wood with a carrying handle built into the top.

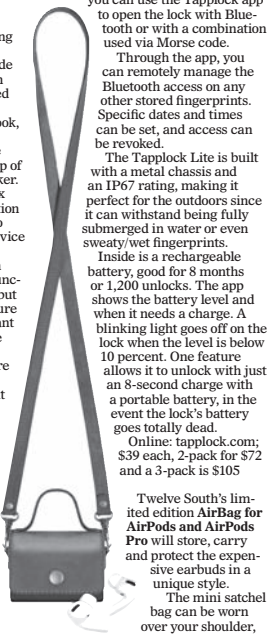
In addition to the fingerprints, you can use the Taplock app to open the lock with Bluetooth or with a combination used via Morse code.

Through the app, you can remotely manage the Bluetooth access on any other stored fingerprints. Specific dates and times can be set, and access can be revoked.

The Taplock Lite is built with a metal chassis and an IP67 rating, making it perfect for the outdoors since it can withstand being fully submerged in water or even sweaty/wet fingerprints.

Inside is a rechargeable battery, good for 8 months or 1,200 unlocks. The app shows the battery level and when it needs a charge. A blinking light goes off on the lock when the level is below 10 percent. One feature allows it to unlock with just an 8-second charge with a portable battery, in the event the lock's battery goes totally dead.

Online: taplock.com; \$39 each, 2-pack for \$72 and a 3-pack is \$105



TWELVE SOUTH/TNS

AirBag for AirPods and AirPods Pro

Twelve South's limited edition AirBag for AirPods and AirPods Pro will store, carry and protect the expensive earbuds in a unique style.

The mini satchel bag can be worn over your shoulder, around your neck or just take the leather strap off to carry it with the leather top handle or just carry it in a purse, pocket or backpack.

Your AirPods will stay in the AirBag securely when closing the front-sided metal snap button, which also allows wireless charging for the AirPods Pro. There's also an opening for a Lightning cable for charging.

The limited edition AirBag is made with full-grain leather and protects all sides of the AirPods case. Online: twelvesouth.com; \$49.99

TRAVEL

The trail now less traveled

Damascus, Va., which relies heavily on business from thru-hikers on the Appalachian Trail, is quieter than usual March 31.

PHOTOS BY SARAH BLAKE MORGAN/AP

The Appalachian Trail has closed due to the pandemic, forcing hikers to head home

By SARAH BLAKE MORGAN
Associated Press

When Alexandra Eagle first mentioned plans to hike the entire Appalachian Trail alongside her new husband, her sister told her they'd either be divorced in five months or married forever.

Eagle, 33, and Jonathan Hall, 36, had just moved out of their Brooklyn apartment when they married on March 2, the third anniversary of the blind date that brought them together. They had talked about the Appalachian Trail in their first conversation and, when it came time to plan a honeymoon, they decided to make the hike.

"This was going to be an epic adventure," Eagle told The Associated Press.

The couple spent a year researching, training and saving before setting off on the roughly 2,190-mile journey seven days after their wedding. They knew about the new coronavirus spreading across the globe but considered themselves lucky to be trading Brooklyn for a tent on the trail, especially as New York fell under restrictions to prevent the virus spread.

"We always figured that being out on the trail and seeing a dozen people a day was a fine position to be in," Hall said.

As the pandemic grows, hikers face the difficult decision to postpone their dreams or ignore warnings and forge ahead. Like virtually every other entity in the U.S., the Appalachian Trail Conservancy began issuing COVID-19 safety guidance in March. But social distancing and hand-washing suggestions soon shifted to urging all hikers to leave the trail immediately. Shelters and privies were shut down, and volunteer programs



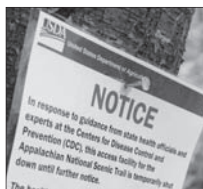
Above, Alexandra Eagle and Jonathan Hall soak up their last moments hiking the Appalachian Trail in Cosby, Tenn., March 30. The couple is postponing their roughly 2,190-mile hike until the coronavirus pandemic ends. Below, a notice is nailed to a tree along a portion of the trail in Cosby, Tenn. Hikers have been asked to leave the trail immediately as trailheads continue to close due to the pandemic.

were halted. On April 1, the conservancy and 29 other trail-maintaining clubs asked federal officials to close the trail until the end of the month.

"Though more than 3,000 'thru-hikers' set out to traverse the length of the trail each year, only about 25% successfully make the hike from Georgia to Maine, which typically takes about six months.

Eagle and Hall never considered any scenario but finishing. They picked up speed as they moved into the Great Smoky Mountains along the Tennessee-North Carolina border. They woke to sunrise on Clingmans Dome — the trail's highest point — a view that seemed to sum up exactly what they'd hoped for from their newlywed adventure.

At the same time, families across the U.S. braced for lockdowns as COVID-19 spread through cities and towns, claim-



ing more lives. Days would pass before Eagle and Hall had enough cellphone service to see just how dire the crisis had become.

Fellow thru-hiker Kimberly Selvage was 30 minutes from Hot Springs, N.C., when she called a local host to confirm her reservation.

"He was like, 'Ma'am, I think you've been in the woods too long; the whole world is shutting

down,'" she said. That wasn't exactly the type of solitude Selvage had in mind when she quit her job, rented out her house in Las Vegas and started her hike on Feb. 26.

Selvage, 51, said she thrives by herself and set out to hike the trail alone, so when whispers of closures and restrictions started to spread, she wasn't too concerned and pressed on.

With her two kids in college and her parents gone, the Appalachian Trail was home for the time being, and it's where she believed she was safest. Leaving it would mean a cross-country drive exposing her to far more people than she encounters while hiking, she said.

But as more trails closed and communities issued shelter-in-place orders, Selvage decided to throw in the towel for the time being after hiking 470 miles. "The closures and general virus fear was changing the vibe of my hike," said Selvage, who started the hike, in part, to experience the culture of trail towns. "I chose to pause to get the full experience when it was less controversial."

Selvage rented an SUV and drove back home to Las Vegas. She slept in the back of the car. Now, she's renting out a room in a friend's house until the all-clear is given to hike again.

"I still think I was saying to the trail," Selvage said.

For Eagle and Hall, deciding to stay or go was brutal. The couple debated day after day as they hiked over rocks and waterfalls. They hadn't yet come to terms with their choice when they loaded their backpacks into the trunk of a rental car in Tennessee.

"Even right now, I don't know if we're doing the right thing," Eagle said through tears. Their decision came down to the small chance that they might catch and spread the virus, something Eagle said she couldn't live with. For now, they'll stay with her parents in Louisiana, which has more than 12,000 confirmed cases.

"Is that better? That's hard to say," she said. They'll try to stay in shape while they wait for the all-clear. Hall joked about looking into a treadmill sale he saw online. But as the timeline becomes grimmer with each passing day, he thinks they might be saying goodbye to the trail for good.

His wife disagrees and sees them starting again in a few months. Until then, she's trying to keep her disappointment in perspective.

"I'm just trying to focus in on the fact that we are in such a better position than most of the world," she said.

MOVIES



Sharing the journey

Alan Yang's 'Tigertail' is loosely based on his Taiwanese father's immigration story

By LINDSEY BAH
Associated Press

Four years ago, when "Master of None" co-creator Alan Yang started writing a film loosely based on his Taiwanese father, Hollywood wasn't exactly clamoring for Asian American stories. "Crazy Rich Asians" had not made more than \$200 million, "The Farewell" was only a



Yang

"This American Life" episode, and "Parasite" hadn't yet swept the Oscars. It was a long shot that "Tigertail" would even get made, let alone with a partner like Netflix, where it is currently available to stream.

"This was a crazy, crazy choice on my part to write a movie with no white people in it," said Yang from his home in Los Angeles. "This is the only movie I know that starts in Taiwan, segues into Mandarin and ends in English." But he carried on, winnowing down the 250-page odyssey to something more focused: A story about a Taiwanese man named Pin-Jui who leaves his great love for an arranged marriage and a new life in America. It splits between his life as a young man in the 1960s and the present day with his now-grown daughter.

Yang has described it as his "fever

dream of my dad's stories melded with some Wong Kar-Wai and some Hou Hsiao-Hsien."

Thanks to "Master of None," Yang had a pre-existing relationship with Ted Sarandos, the streaming giant's chief content officer. So while it was easy to get the script to him, anything beyond a read was hardly a guarantee.

"It's an art house-inflected movie that's almost entirely in Mandarin and Taiwanese and it features no Marvel stars," Yang said with a laugh about its marketability.

But Sarandos didn't need convincing: He loved the script and that was that. The movie was a go.

"I'm incredibly grateful to Netflix for taking a chance and allowing us to make the movie in the way we saw fit," Yang said. That included shooting the past on 16mm film to give it a dreamier feel and the present on digital.

Yang cast Chinese-American actor Tzi Ma to play Pin-Jui (also called Grover) in the present day, Ma, who recently played a version of filmmaker Lulu Wang's father in "The Farewell," knew that his character was inspired by Yang's father, but said that's where the similarities end.

"The first thing Alan told me was his dad was a doctor," Ma said. "Already I know this is a huge departure. (Pin-Jui) is [a] common man. This is a common man's journey."

Regardless, Ma knew just who this character was. "This character is modeled after my brother," Ma said.



Netflix photos

A man (played by Lee Hong-chi, top right, and Tzi Ma, above left) reflects on the lost love of his youth and his long-ago journey from Taiwan to America in "Tigertail," co-starring Kunjue Li, top left, and Fiona Fu, above right, and directed by Alan Yang.

His brother was an architect in Hong Kong before their family immigrated to the United States, where his degree wasn't recognized.

"Basically, in the '60s there were two businesses we could get into as Asian Americans, Chinese Americans in particular: Restaurants and laundry," Ma said. "So we bought a restaurant on Staten Island and he became the cook."

When they moved, Ma remembers a distinct change in his brother, who was once so vibrant and full of life.

Actress Christine Ko, who plays his grown daughter, Angela, in the present-day scenes, had a similarly personal connection to the material.

"It felt like therapy for me, two years of therapy," Ko said. "I grew up in a home that was a little more strict and wasn't as emotionally forthcoming with discussions of feelings and all that, so I felt like I could really relate to the distance that Angela has with her father."

Netflix had planned on having a premiere and a simultaneous theatrical release for "Tigertail" before theaters shuttered due to coronavirus. Yang said he was a little disappointed that he wouldn't be able to celebrate with everyone who worked on it, but that there are discussions to hold some select screenings down the line and maybe even a make-up premiere.

It also means he won't even be able to watch it with his family.

"I just told my family, this movie is a love letter to you guys, and please don't take offense at anything," Yang said.

Even though things are strange right now, everyone is excited to be working in this moment where Asian American films are having such mainstream success.

"For the first time it feels like we have solid footing, whereas in the past it always felt like we're the flavor of the month," Ma said. "The talent has always been there; they've just not had the opportunity to show the world how wonderful they are."

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Block falls through ice in sign of spring

VT DANVILLE — A cinder block fell through the ice on Joe's Pond in West Danville last week, an official sign of spring in northeastern Vermont.

Each year, people buy tickets to guess when that happens in the Joe's Pond Ice Out Contest.

The block went through the ice disconnecting a clock at 6:07 a.m., Michelle Walker of the Joe's Pond Association said in an email. The winner had not yet been determined. The prize is a little less than \$4,500, she said.

This is the 33rd year of the contest, which was started in the 1980s due to cabin fever.

Police say man teased cops about having gun

NM LAS CRUCES — A New Mexico man faces charges after police said he teased officers about having a gun.

The Las Cruces Sun-News reported Asher Madrid was arrested following a domestic violence call in Las Cruces.

Court documents said Madrid, 37, asked an officer to run his name through central dispatch to check if he had felony warrants.

Documents said Madrid asked the officer what would happen if he had felonies and was also in possession of a gun. The officer then asked Madrid if he had a gun on him. Madrid allegedly responded that he did not this time, but would the next time he had an encounter with police.

As officers were walking away, court documents said Madrid threw his hand behind his back.

Court documents state the officers on the scene then drew their guns on Madrid, who was searched to make sure he didn't have any weapons.

Store brawl ends with 2 arrested, bystander shot

NJ HACKENSACK — A dispute between two customers at a northern New Jersey convenience store ended with a bystander being shot and both customers being arrested, authorities said.

The men began arguing in the store and soon one of them pulled out a gun, authorities said. One of the two men wrestled for control of the gun it went off, with the bullet striking the torso of an other customer. One of the men then gained control of the weapon and fired a shot at the other combatant as that man ran away, but that shot did not hit anyone, authorities said.

The wounded bystander was taken to a hospital. The two men involved in the dispute were both arrested, authorities said.

Man apologizes, pays fines for slapping seal

HI HONOLULU — The attorney for a man who slapped a Hawaiian monk seal while visiting Oahu issued an apology on behalf of his client, who paid fines issued by federal



CHRIS DILLMANN, VAIL (COLO.) DAILY/AF

Bundled up brothers

Kari Bangston of Mintum, Colo., pushes Owen, 2, left, and Bradley, 5, home after snowboarding and sledding in Maloit Park in Mintum, Colo. The two brothers were tucked out after a day of playing in the snow.

and state agencies. Attorney Blake Long in North Carolina said the man paid the fines following an investigation of a video shared on social media, The Honolulu Star-Advertiser reported.

City orders tourist birth motel to shut down

CA ORANGE. — A California city ordered the shutdown of a motel that caters to pregnant Chinese women who travel to the United States to deliver their babies.

The Orange County Register reported that council members in the city of Orange revoked the JR Motel's conditional use permit.

Officials said the motel doesn't take reservations from the public but rather hosts Chinese women who travel to the country to give birth to babies that automatically have American citizenship.

Man threatened to bomb 'Alice' statue

NY NEW YORK — A New York City man was arrested after he texted several friends that he was going to blow up a statue of Alice in Wonderland in Central Park with a pipe bomb, authorities said.

THE CENSUS \$400K

The amount given to restore a school built 100 years ago to educate African Americans in South Carolina. Dorchester County Council approved the money for repairs on the St. George Rosenwald School as part of a larger package for parks and tourism projects, The Post and Courier of Charleston reported. The school was one of about 5,000 across the nation and 500 schools across the state built in the 1920s with help from well-known educator Booker T. Washington and Julius Rosenwald, the philanthropic president of Sears & Roebuck.

Kevin Fallon, 30, was arrested after police found what appeared to be three pipe bombs in his apartment, according to court documents. The bombs turned out to be empty. Police also found rifle ammunition and several knives taped together, the court papers said.

According to the criminal complaint against him, Fallon sent a text to several people on April 9 threatening to blow up the Central Park statue of Alice, the Mad Hatter and other guests at her famous tea party.

Flies that crawl into noses, ears infest state

LA BATON ROUGE — It's that time of year again when flies that bite and crawl into people's bodies infest areas with standing water in Louisiana.

Residents should expect these "annoying" black flies to be around until the weather becomes warmer, East Baton Rouge

Parish's Mosquito Abatement and Rodent Control department said in a Facebook post. It said the flies, also known as "buffalo gnats," will try to crawl into people's ears, noses and eyes. Insect spray, including those used for mosquitoes or other insects, is not effective on them.

Woman arrested for scam 2 years later

MN MINNEAPOLIS — A Minnesota woman wanted in an alleged ginseng scam was arrested after evading capture for more than two years. Hennepin County prosecutors said Mai Vu Vang, 51, of Brooklyn Center, was arrested in Georgia and extradited to Minnesota. Vang made her first court appearance, where bail was set at \$500,000 without conditions. She remains in jail.

Vang was charged in 2017 with six counts of theft by swindle for allegedly duping several mem-

bers of the Hmong community into investing in a nonexistent ginseng farm, the Star Tribune reported.

Prosecutors allege that between 2012 and 2014, Vang persuaded nine Minnesota victims to give her more than \$450,000 for a purported farm near Wausau, Wis. One couple who knew Vang from church allegedly gave her their life savings.

Police search for man suspected of firebomb

GA BRUNSWICK — Authorities issued an arrest warrant for a suspect accused of hiding a makeshift explosive device underneath a Georgia woman's car and dousing the vehicle in gasoline, police said.

Brunswick police and a Georgia Bureau of Investigation bomb squad were called to a neighborhood when a woman spotted a suspicious package underneath her car and noticed gasoline on the vehicle, Chief Kevin Jones said.

The squad used a robot to retrieve the firebomb, which was made out of a firework that was at least 4 inches in diameter, Jones said. Investigators also found another large firework, a bag of smaller fireworks and a bottle of accelerant beneath the car, according to officials.

From wire reports

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OPINION

Vital to acknowledge virus' effect on youth

By ASHLEY Y. SHAW, JOSEPH K. YUN AND NISARG A. PATEL
Special to The Washington Post

In less tumultuous times, pediatric emergency departments evaluated and treated asthma attacks, fussy eating habits and, of course, scrapes and bruises. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought a new trauma to emergency departments nationwide: children left alone — often in isolation rooms to minimize the risk of infection spread — because there is no one to care for them.

Families exposed to the new coronavirus experience additional challenges at hospitals, where health care workers must separate parents from children because both are at risk for contagion. Children usually experience milder symptoms than adults, but they are not spared by the virus. Some 40% of U.S. hospitals have specialized in-patient pediatric floors, where children might be treated for their own symptoms or wait, alone, because their loved ones have been admitted.

At our hospitals and others nationwide, the toll of family separation is clear. Younger children are placed in single rooms in the department bay for hours while health care workers like us try to distract them with toys or cajole them to stay inside. Often, older children stand against the walls, not saying much, their faces and posture betraying anxiety about their loved ones.

Children are assumed to be positive when the caregivers they arrive with are hospitalized for COVID-19. To be observed or tested, these children are often admitted to in-patient pediatric floors as “social admissions,” a category typically used for child victims of abuse or non-accidental trauma awaiting placement with local protective agencies. Hospital protocols craft-

ed to minimize contamination prohibit children from visiting COVID-19 patients even if the children have been admitted. At best, their hellos — and possibly goodbyes — are communicated through video. When working around children who are isolated but might not be infected, it is hard not to wonder how we are seeing the first of the COVID-19 orphans.

While much coverage of COVID-19 understandably involves fatality rates and end-of-life matters, the disease affects all ages and life stages. Hospitals have restricted visitors to minimize infection, leaving many pregnant women without loved ones in the delivery room. Some new mothers have developed signs of coronavirus infection and been whisked, hours after childbirth, from labor and delivery floors to COVID-19 surge units or intensive care units. Newborns of mothers who have tested positive are restricted to nurseries and neonatal ICUs, on a recent recommendation of the American Academy of Pediatrics, meaning they can no longer “room-in” during a crucial period for infant-mother bonding. Alone in hospitals, parents view their newborn on baby monitors that nurses switch on while they care for the infant.

Although much has yet to be learned about COVID-19, the disease’s psychological impact on patients and their relatives is almost certain to be severe. During the 2003 SARS outbreak, parents and children experienced varying degrees of depression and anxiety as a result of family separation and hospital isolation policies implemented to contain disease spread. The developing neurological pathways in children are particularly susceptible to such stressors; long-term behavioral and psychological issues can result. Failure to provide effective family-centered care options could exacerbate such consequences. After all, children

experience the physical manifestations of COVID-19 and inherit its burdens.

Field hospitals and other isolation facilities such as the Boston Hope Medical Center and the Javits Center in New York that care for recovering COVID-19 patients have been designed for adults. These types of facilities lack amenities for children, such as infant cribs and safety gates for beds. Additionally, incorporating pediatric psychologists, social workers and child-life specialists into health care teams would help mitigate the psychological trauma of COVID-19. Increased funding for pediatric care would help distressed hospitals achieve these goals.

Ultimately, a vaccine will keep the new coronavirus at bay. But the traumas inflicted by COVID-19 will remain and most likely resurface. We cannot completely shield children from the consequences of this pandemic, but acknowledging its effects on their well-being and taking other meaningful actions might lessen their scars.

As health care providers, we are doing what we can right now: We fight the solitude these children face with our company. We point out murals of athletes, animals and trains on our department walls. We chat about favorite television shows and school subjects. We joke until we belly-laugh together, cutting through the tension heavy in many hospitals of late. When our shifts end, we update our colleagues so the children can make new friends. We aim to help them understand that regardless of what lies ahead, we will continue to care for them — and that they are not alone.

Ashley Y. Shaw is a resident pediatrician at Massachusetts General Hospital, Joseph K. Yun is a pediatrician at Children’s Medical Center Dallas. Nisarg A. Patel is a resident surgeon at the University of California at San Francisco.

Finding the right words for health care workers

By DOROTHY R. NOVICK
Special to The Washington Post

One of my friends grew so concerned about my safety during the new coronavirus outbreak that she began sending articles. First, about why health care providers get sicker than others. Then about how the virus might penetrate my mask. Then a map of the United States, with my city enveloped in a giant red circle.

These are things I have read before. I spend most days calming my nerves in the face of them, so I can be a guiding force for my patients. I know my friend sends these articles because she’s worried and wants me to stay safe. But with each one, a freezing chill seeps in through my pores and I am shaking again.

As a pediatrician during the greatest pandemic in our time, I understand that it’s hard to find the right words. Some of my friends and family process their fears for my safety with me, as we’ve always processed everything together. Others ask whether I also worry after each trip to the grocery store. Or whether I’ve picked up new hobbies.

We are frightened — for ourselves, for their families, for me. And I know everyone is wrestling with the quarantines. These struggles are real. But what can be difficult for my loved ones to realize is that, although this is a collective plight, we are not sharing the same experience.

Years ago, my friend Margi watched her husband die in a car crash. They were caravanning home from vacation, he in the lead and she with their children behind.

As soon as we had a moment alone, I asked what had happened at the scene of the crash. I shared my shock and devastation. We had always talked like that — no holds barred. But this conversation changed our friendship for years to come. Everything I said seemed to worsen her agony. I was heartbroken. I couldn’t figure out how to reach and support her.

Finally, I came across an article about “Ring Theory,” written by Susan Slink and Barry Goldman. In this construct, we imagine a person who is suffering, like Margi, sitting in a small circle surrounded by concentric rings. Her dearest relatives sit in the circle closest to her. Best friends sit in the next larger circle. More friends and colleagues occupy the next one.

According to “Ring Theory,” a person in any given circle should send love and compassion inward, to those in smaller circles, and process personal grief outward, to those in larger circles. To Margi and her mother, I should have said, “I love you, and I’ll do everything I can to support you.” And only when talking to others should I have said, “Her suffering feels impossible to bear.” Comfort in, grief out.

“Ring Theory” works for supporting health care providers suffering the trauma of COVID-19. We are grappling with a complex duality of mission plus terror. We are proud of what we can contribute and passionate about our patients’ well-being. But we are frightened — for our safety, for our patients, for the spouses and children we might expose.

Then I imagine the COVID-19 Ring Theory. I picture my emergency room colleagues in the center circle. Their spouses

occupy the ring closest to them. Next come their parents. Then their friends like me, who work in lower-risk fields. Then my family. And then everyone else who is worried but is not tying back their hair and putting on scrubs each morning.

I may want to tell my ER friends how scared I feel for them. But as close as I am to the battleground, they are closer. So instead I say, “If you take no risks, you will stay safe. I am here for you, every step of the way.”

If you care about a health care worker on the front lines of this crisis, imagine the circles and decide where you want. Then send your love. Tell us you are proud, and you believe in our mission. It’s fine to say you are worried. We feel loved when you ask about our days and remind us to be careful. But if you are having a dark moment full of doomsday predictions, if you are crying for fear we will die, please know this increases our anxieties. Please process your worst nightmares with others. And please, don’t forget to call us once you feel better.

Yesterday I received this message from a relative: “I am holding you in my heart being on the front lines of these difficult times. The professional skill, kindness, support and tenacity you give your patients and your medical community I am sure is a comfort in this darkness. Sending much love, appreciation and admiration.”

My heart rate slowed and my skin warmed over as I read the message. Then I pulled my mask over my face and opened the door to the next patient room.

Dorothy R. Novick is a pediatrician in Philadelphia.

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SCOREBOARD/NBA

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Deals

Friday's transactions

FOOTBALL
National Football League
CHICAGO BEARS — Released TE Trey Burton, Signed OL Rashad Coward, TE J.P. Holtz, OL Jason Springs and K Romie Ahmed to one-year contracts.
CINCINNATI BENGALS — Signed HB Jacques Patrick to a three-year deal, Signed TE Cethan Carter to a one-year contract.
NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS — Signed DL Adam Butler.
TENNESSEE TITANS — Agreed to terms with OL Avery Gering.
HOCKEY
National Hockey League
WINNIPEG JETS — Terminated the contract of D Dustin Bylandt.
COLLEGE
LA SALLE UNIVERSITY — Named Maxey Hancock, Head Field Hockey Coach.
RICE UNIVERSITY — Signed Junior College transfer G Jake Lieppert

Pro basketball

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	46	18	719	3
Boston	41	27	672	3
Philadelphia	39	26	600	7½
Brooklyn	34	34	469	16
New York	21	45	318	26
Southeast Division				
Miami	24	63	—	—
Orlando	20	46	—	—
Washington	14	40	375	16½
Charlotte	23	42	354	18
Atlanta	20	47	269	22
Central Division				
Milwaukee	43	12	815	—
Indiana	39	26	600	14
Chicago	22	43	338	31
Detroit	20	47	299	33½
Cleveland	19	46	292	34
WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Southwest Division				
Houston	40	24	625	—
Dallas	40	27	599	½
Memphis	33	33	492	8½
New Orleans	28	36	438	12
San Antonio	27	43	379	17½
Northwest Division				
Denver	43	18	662	—
Utah	41	23	641	½
Oklahoma City	39	24	612	1½
Portland	37	27	439	14½
Minnesota	45	29	237	—
Pacific Division				
L.A. Lakers	49	14	778	—
L.A. Clippers	44	20	688	5½
Sacramento	28	36	438	21½
Phoenix	28	39	427	22
Golden State	15	50	231	38

All games postponed at least until mid-May.

Pro hockey

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE						
Atlantic Division						
	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Boston	70	44	14	142	100	227
Montreal	60	43	16	126	96	165
Toronto	70	36	25	81	138	227
Florida	59	35	26	89	121	229
Washington	41	41	18	68	119	217
Buffalo	69	30	31	88	195	217
Ottawa	51	37	14	104	191	242
Detroit	71	17	10	149	155	267
Metropolitan Division						
Washington	69	41	20	88	90	240
Pittsburgh	69	40	23	6	94	225
Pittsburgh	69	40	23	6	94	225
Carolina	69	40	23	6	94	225
Columbus	70	33	25	15	181	187
N.Y. Islanders	68	35	23	10	81	195
N.Y. Rangers	70	37	28	5	79	234
New Jersey	69	28	29	8	68	189
New York	69	28	29	8	68	189
WESTERN CONFERENCE						
Central Division						
St. Louis	71	42	19	10	94	225
Colorado	69	40	23	6	94	225
Chicago	70	37	28	8	82	180
Minnesota	69	39	26	8	86	224
Winnipeg	69	37	28	8	90	216
Nashville	69	39	26	8	82	180
Minnesota	69	35	27	7	72	220
Chicago	69	35	27	7	72	220
Pacific Division						
Vegas	70	36	27	84	86	227
Edmonton	71	37	25	9	83	225
Calgary	70	36	27	84	86	227
Vancouver	69	36	27	6	78	228
Arizona	70	33	29	8	74	187
Anaheim	71	29	33	8	67	187
San Jose	69	35	26	6	64	178
Los Angeles	70	29	35	6	64	178
San Jose	70	29	35	6	64	178

All games postponed at least until early May.

Players' salaries being cut 25%

Still no plan in place for games to resume

By TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

Commissioner Adam Silver said it remains impossible for the NBA to make any decisions about whether to resume this season and that it is unclear when that will change.

But in a clear sign that at least some of the 259 remaining regular-season games that were not played because of the coronavirus pandemic will not be rescheduled, the league announced Friday it will withhold 25% of player pay starting with their May 15 checks.

Silver, speaking after the league's regularly scheduled April board of governors meeting — one that took place through video conferencing and not the usual in-person setting in New York — said all options remain on the table for trying to resume play and eventually crowning a champion.

"I think there is a sense that we can continue to take the leading role as we learn more in coming up with an appropriate regimen and protocol for returning to business," Silver said. "There's a recognition from (owners) that this is bigger than our business; certainly, bigger than sports."

The salary decision was made in concert with the National Basketball Players Association, the league saying it would "provide players with a more gradual salary reduction schedule" if games are officially canceled or the rest of the season is totally lost.

Players will be paid in full on May 1. The cutback in salary has been expected for some time in response to the NBA's shutdown that started March 11, as hands end in sight.

Silver said the league will weigh several factors as it continues to try to save the season, among them whether the infection rate of COVID-19 comes down nationally, the availability of large-scale testing and progress on the path toward a vaccine.

The NBA playoffs would have started Sat-



The seats are empty at the Anway Center in Orlando, home of the NBA's Orlando Magic.

STEPHEN M. DOWELL, ORLANDO SENTINEL/TNS

urday. If none of the 259 outstanding regular-season games were played, the league's players would lose about \$800 million in gross salary.

In other matters Silver discussed Friday:

More player positives

There were 10 players known to have tested positive for coronavirus as of late March: four from the Brooklyn Nets including Kevin Durant, two from the Los Angeles Lakers, Christian Wood of the Detroit Pistons, Marcus Smart of the Boston Celtics, and Rudy Gobert and Donovan Mitchell of the Utah Jazz.

More players have tested positive since, Silver said.

"For privacy reasons, we're not reporting" any other positive tests, Silver said.

No deadlines

Silver said there is no cutoff date in mind for a decision to be made about playing some games or calling everything off.

"All rules are off at this point during the situation we find ourselves in and the country is in," Silver said. "If there is an opportunity to resume play, even if it looks different than what we've done historically, we should be modeling it. ... We don't have a good understanding of exactly sort of what those standards are that we need to meet in order to move forward ... because the experts don't necessarily, either."

Return-to-play sites

The NBA is still listening to ideas from those pitching so-called "bubble" scenarios as a way to resume play. Teams would be brought to a site or sites to finish a season in a way that theoretically could minimize exposure risks.

Sites such as Las Vegas, Los Angeles and the Disney complex near Orlando have been mentioned as possibilities. But Silver said the league isn't actively pursuing any such "bubble" plan yet, again citing so much uncertainty in so many areas.

Last: Bulls knew 1997-98 season was their last together

FROM BACK PAGE

dynasty that won six NBA titles in eight years.

"The beginning of the season, it started when (general manager) Jerry Krause told (coach) Phil Jackson that he could go 8-20 and he would never get a chance to come back," Jordan said. "Knowing that I had married myself to him, and if he wasn't going to be the coach, then obviously I wasn't going to play. So Phil started off the season saying this was the last dance — and we played it that way."

The series will debut Sunday night on ESPN in the United States and on Netflix internationally over five consecutive Sundays through May 17. There will be two hour-long episodes each of those nights.

Jordan said Thursday that after Jackson told the team it was to be the final season together, the Bulls focused on completing the task of a second three-peat.

"Mentally it tugged at you that this had to come to an end, but it also centered our focus to making sure we ended it right," Jordan said. "As sad as it sounded at the beginning of the year, we tried to rejoice and enjoy the year and finish it off the right way."

The documentary was originally scheduled to be released in June during the NBA Finals, but ESPN made the decision to accelerate its release due to the lack of live sports programming because of the coronavirus pandemic.

‘Mentally it tugged at you that this had to come to an end, but it also centered our focus to making sure we ended it right.’

Michael Jordan

Hall of Famer on final season with Bulls

"I said to Michael, 'you're not thinking about the risk-reward ratio,'" Reinsdorf said in the clip aired by GMA. "If you had a terrible headache and I gave you a bottle of pills and nine of the pills would cure you and one of the pills would kill you, would you take a pill?" Jordan replied that "it depends on how (ex-

pletive) bad the headache is."

Reinsdorf ultimately won out; Jordan sat out 64 games that season before returning for the playoffs.

Jordan also talks about his time at the University of North Carolina where he would write his mother asking for money for postage stamps so he could send her letters and to pay his phone bill.

"It's a little different today," Jordan said. "I had a phone bill in college that was \$60 or less, but I only had \$20 in my account. The thing that people will learn, and my kids will laugh about when they see it, is we used postage stamps back in those days. Looking at the video you will see things that people have forgotten, that life was this way."

"We didn't have Instagram or Twitter, so you had to live life as it came. ... Spending time with friends and family, it wasn't the phone. It was in presence — and you wrote letters."

Jordan discussed his parents during the interview with Good Morning America, saying they were the biggest influence in his life. He said he learned many valuable lessons from them, including the ability to learn from the negatives in life and turn them into positives.

The series will also include extensive profiles of Jackson, and some of Jordan's key teammates, including Scottie Pippen, Dennis Rodman and Steve Kerr.

SOCCER/AUTO RACING

NWSL's momentum headed off by virus

By ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — Morgan Weaver laughed it off when her agent told her she was going to be the second pick in the National Women's Soccer League Draft.

A four-year starter at Washington State, Weaver wasn't among the names getting a lot of buzz heading into the January draft.

"He told me and I was like, 'OK, right. Whatever. I don't believe you,'" she said, recalling the conversation she had before her name was announced. "Then it actually happened."

Weaver went to the Portland Thorns, who also got the first overall pick, Sophia Smith out of Stanford.

Weaver said one of her greatest strengths as a player is that she's a good learner. But for now, like the rest of the NWSL's players, she's learning to be patient.

The league was supposed to start its eighth season this weekend with plenty of momentum behind it courtesy of an enthusiastic new commissioner in Lisa Baird and a new TV deal with CBS.

The league was also riding a surge in attention following the United States' victory in the Women's World Cup last summer. The national team's players are scattered throughout the NWSL, with U.S. Soccer paying their salaries.

The league averaged 7,337 in attendance last season, a 21.8% increase over 2018 — the so-called "World Cup Bump."

The nationally televised opener between the Washington Spirit and OL Reign was originally scheduled for Saturday afternoon at Audi Field. The Thorns were supposed to host the Utah Royals on Saturday night.

Becky Sauerbrunn, a defender who was on that winning World

Cup team, was about to make her Thorns debut after a trade from the Utah Royals in the offseason.

"It's been a little bit of a bummer to get the trade done, join the Thorns and then not actually meet any of the Thorns in person. And so that's been a sad part about this for me personally, is that I didn't get to start preseason and kind of get my feet wet with the team," Sauerbrunn said.

Saturday might have also marked Weaver's debut on the Thorns' roster.

The rookie forward has had a whirlwind six months. First, she helped lead Washington State to the semifinals of the NCAA College Cup for the first time in school history.

The unseeded Cougars were the tournament's Cinderella after knocking off top seed Virginia in the second round, downing West Virginia 3-0 and blanking South Carolina 1-0 in the quarterfinals. The run came to an end in the Final Four, when Washington State fell 2-1 to North Carolina.

"I knew we had it in us and I knew that we had the fight and the grit. I think we just all had to believe in ourselves — and I think that's what happened," Weaver said. "Once we hit the tournament, we all believed in each other, knew what we had to do to get to that spot. And I think that was what helped us through everything."

Weaver had already reported to her first pro training camp when the NWSL shuttered. Currently, she spends her days working out with her roommate, Thorns defender Christen Westphal.

"It's just crazy what's been going on," she said. "Everyone just needs to stay safe and I think that's been more important than starting this season."



COLIN MULVANY, THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW/AP

Washington State forward Morgan Weaver, right, competes for the ball with Gonzaga's Maddie Cooley during a college soccer match in Spokane, Wash., in September. Weaver was selected by the Portland Thorns with the second pick in the NWSL Draft. The league was supposed to start its season this weekend.



iRACING INDYCAR/AP

In this image taken from video provided by iRacing IndyCar, Pato O'Ward, foreground, heads into a turn during the opening lap of the American Red Cross Grand Prix virtual IndyCar race at Watkins Glen International. The mind-boggling success of virtual racing has put motorsports out front in the race to create competition during the sports shutdown caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

Pumping the brakes

Drama around Larson dulls initial shine on iRacing experiment

By JENNA FRYER
Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Scott Dixon, five-time IndyCar champion and relatively new iRacing competitor, received a brief set of instructions from boss Chip Ganassi about the world of virtual racing.

"I did get a text from him that said 'Just lay low,'" Dixon said Friday.

What started out as a fun way for racing leagues to fill time and engage fans during the sports shutdown because of the coronavirus pandemic has taken a dark turn.

Kyle Larson was fired by Ganassi this week for using a racial slur during a virtual race. Bubba Wallace lost a sponsor for "rage quitting" the game a week earlier. And NASCAR's iRacing event this Sunday is drawing criticism after the series decided to trim the field of lesser-known drivers.

The decision was intended to avoid the wreckfest of two weeks ago at virtual Bristol Motor Speedway. But it came at the expense of drivers such as London Cassill and Michael McDowell, who have sponsorship for the events and then learned they were not invited to compete on the virtual Richmond track. Retired star Dale Earnhardt Jr. even pulled out in an effort to give his spot to one of the excluded drivers, but it was clear the shine is wearing off.

NASCAR came up with a solution: A heat race Sunday morning for drivers not already invited, with the top two finishers eligible to compete in the nationally televised virtual race and two other drivers selected by broadcast partner Fox.



MARY SCHWALM/AP

NASCAR Cup Series driver Kyle Larson, right, was fired Tuesday by Chip Ganassi Racing after nearly every one of his sponsors dropped the star driver for using a racial slur during a live stream of a virtual race. Considered the top free agent in NASCAR mere weeks ago, Larson is now out of a job in what could be an eight-figure blunder.

It seemed a fair concession for Cassill, who does not currently have a Cup Series ride. He has competed in the first three official NASCAR virtual races, hosted other virtual events and signed topical pain reliever Blue-Emu — the sponsor that dropped Wallace — as a backer.

"The best thing that I've learned from this week is that my sponsor Blue-Emu is behind me 100% and ultimately that relationship is what will scale these iRacing events from the virtual world into opportunities in the real world," Cassill said. "That I have to qualify in this week is just another opportunity to prove myself as a racer."

It's become very messy in the month since NASCAR pivoted from real racing to iRacing, which has twice set esports viewership records on Fox and its cable channel. IndyCar launched a league with Saturday races now aired by NBCSN, and IMSA hosted a huge field of sports car drivers Thursday in a race that was

streamed.

Virtual racing has become the only way for drivers to promote their partners during stay-at-home orders, and teams have recognized the value in having their drivers participate. But what started as fun became very serious business and snowballed Sunday night when Larson used the N-word while trying to communicate with his spotter. Almost all of his sponsors dropped him the next day, and he was fired by Ganassi.

IndyCar Series owner Roger Penske urged team owners to caution their drivers about their conduct while virtual racing — a message delivered after Penske driver Will Power had his stream muted by the service for calling Dixon a "wanker."

NASCAR on Friday postponed its next scheduled event, May 9 at Martinsville, Va., and is exploring racing at venues without spectators. IndyCar's next scheduled race is June 6 at Texas Motor Speedway.

WNBA DRAFT/NHL

Ionescu goes No. 1 to New York Liberty

Oregon star set NCAA record for triple-doubles

By DOUG FEINBERG
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Oregon star Sabrina Ionescu was the No. 1 pick in the WNBA Draft, as expected. When she'll play for the New York Liberty is unclear.

With sports on hold during the coronavirus pandemic, it was a draft Friday like no other — with players in their own homes instead of a central location. Commissioner Cathy Engelbert announced selections from her home in New Jersey, holding up the jersey of the player being chosen.

"Of course it was different than what I had expected, and just excited to be able to be here with my family and the people closest to me and be able to spend this time," Ionescu said from her home in California. "Making the most out of what's going on in today's society. Just really happy to be able to spend this moment with them and excited to have gone through this process."

Ionescu set the NCAA record for triple-doubles and was the first college player to have over 2,000 points, 1,000 rebounds and 1,000 assists in her career. Ionescu was one of three first-round picks for New York, which also had Nos. 9 and 12.

"I've been working for this for my entire basketball career and super excited to see that come to fruition," Ionescu said. "I'm very humbled and excited for the opportunity."

Ducks teammate Satou Sabally, one of three juniors to enter



JOHN LOCKER/AP

Oregon guard Sabrina Ionescu was taken No. 1 overall by the Liberty on Friday, the first of three first-round picks for New York, which also took Connecticut forward Megan Walker at No. 9 and another guard, Louisville's Jazmine Jones, with the 12th pick.

the draft, went second to Dallas. It's the third time in the history of the draft that the top two picks were college teammates.

"To go 1-2 with Satou is a really cool feeling and shows all the hard work we went through this year paid off," Ionescu said.

"Really proud of her and what we were able to do as teammates and excited to see her future in the pros."

Lauren Cox went third to Indiana and Chennedy Carter was the fourth pick by Atlanta. Dallas took Bella Alarie with the fifth

WNBA Draft

Friday

First Round

1. New York, Sabrina Ionescu, G, Oregon
2. Dallas, Satou Sabally, F, Oregon
3. Indiana, Lauren Cox, F, Baylor
4. Atlanta, Chennedy Carter, G, Texas A&M
5. Dallas (From Phoenix), Bella Alarie, G/F, Princeton
6. Minnesota, Mikiah Herbert Harrigan, F, South Carolina
7. Dallas (From Seattle - via Connecticut), Tyasha Harris, G, South Carolina
8. Chicago, Ruthy Hebard, F, Oregon
9. New York (From Dallas - via Las Vegas), Megan Walker, F, Connecticut
10. Phoenix (From Los Angeles - via Connecticut), Jocelyn Willoughby, G/F, Virginia
11. Seattle (From Connecticut), Kitija Laksa, F, TTT Riga (Latvia)
12. New York (From Washington), Jazmine Jones, G, Louisville

Second Round

13. New York (From Atlanta), Kylee Shook, F, Louisville
14. Indiana (From New York - via Minnesota), Kathleen Doyle, G, Iowa
15. New York (From Dallas), Leaonna Odum, F, Duke
16. Minnesota (From Indiana), Crystal Dangerfield, G, Connecticut
17. Atlanta (From Phoenix), Brit-

18. Phoenix (From Minnesota), Te'a Cooper, G, Baylor
19. Seattle, Joyner Holmes, F, Texas
20. Los Angeles (From Chicago), Beatrice Komprämier, F, Miami
21. Dallas (From Las Vegas), Luisa Geisendorf, G, Germany
22. Los Angeles, Leonie Fiebich, G, Germany
23. Connecticut, Kaila Charles, G/F, Maryland
24. Washington, Jaylyn Agnew, F, Creighton

Third Round

25. Atlanta, Mikayla Pivec, G, Oregon State
26. New York, Erica Ogumwike, G, Rice
27. Atlanta (From Dallas), Kobi Thornton, F, Clemson
28. Indiana, Kamiah Smalls, G, James Madison
29. Phoenix, Stella Johnson, G, Rider
30. Chicago (From Minnesota), Jaeprece Dean, G, UCLA
31. Seattle, Haley Gorecki, G, Duke
32. Chicago, Kiah Gillespie, F, Florida State
33. Las Vegas, Lauren Manis, F, Holy Cross
34. Los Angeles, Tynice Martin, G, West Virginia
35. Connecticut, Juley Landrum, G, Baylor
36. Washington, Sug Sutton, G, Texas

pick. The Princeton star was only the second Ivy League player to be drafted that high. Harvard star Allison Feaster was also selected fifth in the 1998 draft by the Los Angeles Sparks.

South Carolina players Mikiah Herbert Harrigan and Tyasha Harris went sixth and seventh to Minnesota and Dallas. The Gamecocks finished No. 1 in the AP poll this season.

Chicago chose Ruthy Hebard with the eighth pick — marking the third consecutive season and ninth overall that three college teammates were taken in the opening round.

"Really shows what kind of environment we had at Oregon," Sabally said.

New York took UConn's Megan Walker with the ninth pick. Phoenix picked Jocelyn Willoughby of

Virginia 10th. Seattle took former South Florida star Kitija Laksa with the 11th pick and New York closed out the first round drafting Jazmine Jones from Louisville.

New York, which was the first team ever to have five of the first 15 picks in the draft, selected Jones' Louisville teammate Kylee Shook at 13 and Duke's Leaonna Odum at 15.

The Liberty also made two trades after the draft, acquiring Willoughby for Shatori Walker-King and Utah. New York also traded Erica Ogumwike, who they drafted in the third round, to Minnesota for Stephanie Talbot.

The WNBA tried to create a draft-like experience for the players, sending them a care package with hats of all 12 teams, a WNBA sweatshirt, confetti and a few other items.



JIM MONE/AP

The Winnipeg Jets came to an agreement with Dustin Byfuglien to mutually terminate his contract Friday, ending a lengthy dispute between the 35-year-old defenseman and the organization over his absence this season.

Jets, Byfuglien agree to terminate contract

By STEPHEN WHYNO
AND JOHN WAWROWA
Associated Press

Dustin Byfuglien and the Winnipeg Jets agreed to mutually terminate his contract Friday, potentially marking the end of a playing career for "Big Buff."

The agreement ended a lengthy dispute between Byfuglien and the organization over his absence this season. Because there was no financial settlement as part of the termination, the defenseman walked away from the \$14 million remaining on his contract with no guarantee he'll play again.

"This was never our desired outcome or ending with Dustin," Winnipeg general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff said on a conference call with reporters. "If it were the Jets writing the perfect script, it would've ended with Dustin holding a great, big silver trophy over his head at center ice and flashing that great, big smile of his."

In reality, it ended seven months after Byfuglien told the Jets he'd lost the desire to play and following surgery in October to

repair an ankle injury, which prompted a grievance filed through the NHL Players' Association and settled Friday.

It wasn't clear how much Byfuglien waived about returning to play. Cheveldayoff broached the possibility of trading him on multiple occasions, and came away questioning whether a change of scenery would make a difference for Byfuglien.

Cheveldayoff said, "There's only one person and one person only who can answer if he'll ever play again, and that's Dustin."

Agent Ben Hankinson told The Associated Press by email that Byfuglien doesn't have anything to say and "will take some time to decide" on his future.

The 35-year-old Byfuglien patrolled the ice at multiple positions for 14 NHL seasons with a rare blend of size, skill and power. He hasn't played since Winnipeg's first-round playoff series last April, and is now an unrestricted free agent. It's unclear when he would be allowed to sign with any team because the NHL's season is on hold due to the new coronavirus pandemic.

The league hasn't decided when it will resume play and whether it will skip the

remainder of the regular season and open with the playoffs. At the very least, Byfuglien would be ineligible to compete in this year's playoffs.

A person familiar with the situation told The AP that Byfuglien was healthy enough to return playing, which is why he was no longer eligible to collect on his contract. The person spoke on the condition of anonymity because that information was not revealed in the announcement released by the NHL and union.

"Dustin's choice was to be true to himself and not put himself and maybe the team and everybody in a difficult situation," Cheveldayoff said. "If he really didn't have it in him to continue to play, that's probably the most honest thing that he could say."

If Byfuglien hangs up his skates, his legacy will be that of a Stanley Cup winner who switched positions and became one of the most feared blueliners of this era. Big hits and powerful slap shots allowed Byfuglien to make a difference all over the ice.

"He was a force of nature," Cheveldayoff said.

SPORTS



No. 1 pick

As expected, Oregon's Ionescu first player taken » **WNBA Draft, Page 23**



'The Last Dance'

Final title of Bulls dynasty chronicled

By **TIM REYNOLDS**
Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C.

Michael Jordan described his final NBA championship season with the Chicago Bulls as a "trying year."

"We were all trying to enjoy that

year knowing it was coming to an end," Jordan told Good Morning America on Thursday. Jordan appeared on the show via video conference from his home in Florida to promote the "The Last Dance," a 10-part documentary series focused on the final year of the '90s Bulls

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Top: Members of the Chicago Bulls attend a rally on June 16, 1998 to celebrate the team's sixth NBA title. Right: Michael Jordan looks at the league MVP award presented to him before a playoff game on May 19, 1998.

BETH A. KEISER, TOP, AND FRANK POLICH, RIGHT / AP

TO OUR READERS

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