

STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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USS Roosevelt sailor dies of coronavirus

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A sailor assigned to the USS Theodore Roosevelt died Monday from the coronavirus, the first death of the nearly 600 confirmed cases among the crew in an outbreak that has kept the aircraft carrier docked in Guam and weighed down in controversy.

The Navy said in a statement that the sailor had been in intensive care on Guam, where the warship arrived March 27 as the coronavirus spread throughout the carrier.

As of Monday, there are 585 Roosevelt sailors with positive tests for the virus. Most of the about 4,800-member crew has been tested, with 3,921 receiving a negative result. About 4,021 sailors have been transferred from the ship to Guam. The sailor who died Monday tested positive for the virus March 30 and was taken off the ship and placed into isolation with four other sailors, the Navy said.

"The entire [Defense] Department is deeply saddened by the loss of our first active-duty member to [the coronavirus],"

Defense Secretary Mark Esper said in a statement. "Our thoughts are with the family of the USS Theodore Roosevelt sailor who lost his battle with the virus today. We remain committed to protecting our personnel and their families while continuing to assist in defeating this outbreak."

On Thursday, April 9, the Roosevelt sailor was found unresponsive during a medical check at about 8:30 a.m. and other sailors started CPR while emergency responders were notified, according to the Navy. The sailors who are isolated receive twice daily checks by Navy medical personnel.

"We mourn the loss of the sailor from USS Theodore Roosevelt who died today, and we stand alongside their family, loved ones and shipmates as they grieve. This is a great loss for the ship and for our Navy," Adm. Mike Gilday, chief of naval operations, said in a statement. "My deepest sympathy goes out the family, and we pledge our full support to the ship and crew as they continue their fight against the coronavirus. While our ships, submarines and aircraft are made of steel, sailors are the real strength of our Navy."

The Roosevelt sailor, whose name will not

be announced until the individual's family is notified, is the second service member to die from the coronavirus. On March 28, Army Capt. Douglas Linn Hickok, 57, with the New Jersey National Guard also died from the coronavirus. He was preparing to activate with the Guard as a physician assistant in response to the pandemic when he became sick.

As of Monday, about 2,941 service members have tested positive for the virus, according to the Defense Department. Of the services, the Navy has been hit hardest by the pandemic, with 1,056 cases.

And Air Force Gen. John Hyten, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Thursday that the Navy should expect more ships to have outbreaks of the coronavirus.

"I think it's not a good idea to think that the Teddy Roosevelt as a one-of-a-kind issue. We have too many ships at sea, we have too many deployed capabilities ... To think that it will never happen again is not a good way to plan," Hyten said during a news conference at the Pentagon.

Navy captain removed after lying about ship's position

The San Diego Union-Tribune

The captain of the San Diego-based guided-missile destroyer USS Decatur was removed from command in January for filing false position reports to the Navy, according to a Navy investigation recently obtained by the Union-Tribune.

According to the investigation, Cmdr. John "Bob" Bowen, the Decatur's commanding officer, ordered his crew in September not to report that the ship had gone dead in the water.

The ship had stopped to conduct maintenance on one of its propeller shafts while transiting the eastern Pacific from Hawaii to Seal Beach, Calif.

In order to hide the 4-hour-

long stop from the fleet, the crew reported inaccurate ship positions to make it appear as though the vessel never stopped, the investigation said.

To cover up that deception, the investigation said, staff in the ship's Combat Information Center disabled two electronic systems, called Link 16 and Global Command & Control, to prevent the ship's true position from being relayed automatically.

Instead, the ship falsely reported "dead reckoning" coordinates to the fleet that made it appear the ship had continued on course, the investigation found.

In his interview with investigators, Bowen said that he could not recall ordering his crew to

turn off electronic trackers or to report false coordinates.

On Sept. 13, the Decatur was cruising at full power about halfway between Hawaii and Seal Beach Naval Weapons Station. About halfway between the islands and the California coast, the pitch of the destroyer's starboard shaft — which connects the engine to the propeller — came out of alignment.

In order to repair and calibrate, the ship would need to lock the shaft, meaning that for the duration of the maintenance the ship would be adrift.

According to the investigation, the ship went dead in the water just after 10 a.m. A bridge watchstander soon called Bowen — who was not on

the bridge — to ask if 3rd Fleet, the San Diego-based fleet in charge of the eastern Pacific Ocean, was aware that the ship had stopped for repairs.

"No, I don't think they are aware," Bowen responded, according to the investigation. When the crew member asked the captain if the fleet should be told, Bowen said not to worry about it, the sailor told investigators.

The sailor remembered Bowen saying that the repairs wouldn't take long, so there was no need to worry about letting the fleet know they'd stopped.

In his interview with investigators, Bowen said that the maintenance was routine and not due to a failure.

Guam worries as US sailors quarantine in island's hotels

Associated Press

HONOLULU — People in Guam are used to a U.S. military presence on the strategic Pacific island, but some are nervous as hundreds of sailors from a coronavirus-stricken Navy aircraft carrier flood into hotels for quarantine. Officials have insisted that they have enforced strict safety measures.

An outbreak aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt began in late March and has thrust the Navy into a leadership crisis after the ship's commander distributed a letter urging faster action to protect his sailors. Acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly fired Capt. Brett E. Crozier and then assailed him during a speech on the ship in Guam, saying Crozier was either "too naïve or too stupid" to be in charge of an aircraft carrier. Modly resigned Tuesday after facing blowback and

after publicly apologizing for his comments about Crozier.

The carrier has been docked in the U.S. territory for more than a week as the 4,865-person crew is tested for the virus and moved ashore. More than 585 sailors have been confirmed infected and one died Monday.

More than 1,700 sailors who have tested negative are isolating in hotels, while the sick remain on base, Navy officials said.

"Our people are getting slapped in the face," said Hope Cristobal, who worries that officials are making promises about safety they won't keep.

She lives less than a quarter-mile from hotels in Tumon, Guam's version of Hawaii's popular Waikiki neighborhood, saying, "We don't know exactly where they're being housed."

Mary Rhodes, president of the Guam Hotel and Restaurant Association, declined to

identify the hotels, but said that as many as 10 have been set aside to house up to 4,000 sailors. Seven of them had already stopped taking reservations and seen a dramatic drop in visitors as airlines canceled flights, she said.

Guam's hotels frequently host military members, and the Department of Defense controls about a third of the island, which is 3,800 miles west of Honolulu and a crucial strategic hub for U.S. forces in the Pacific.

Each sailor is staying in a room stocked with two weeks' worth of linens, towels and water, Rhodes said. There is no contact with hotel workers and only military police and medical teams can visit.

The Navy has sent masks, gloves and other safety equipment to the hotels, where employees make food that military personnel deliver, Rhodes said.

Air Force clears virus patients from Afghanistan

Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — The Air Force has used an infectious diseases containment unit developed during the 2014 Ebola outbreak to evacuate three U.S. government contractors who tested positive for the coronavirus from Afghanistan to Ramstein Air Base in Germany.

The patients were transported nearly 4,000 miles inside the Transport Isolation System, which is designed to minimize risks to air crew, medical caregivers and the aircraft while allowing patients to be treated in-flight, Air Mobility Command said in a statement.

The evacuation, on board a C-17 out of Joint Base Charleston, S.C., marked the first time patients who have tested positive for the coronavirus have been transported on a U.S. Air Force aircraft, and was the first operational use of the isolation unit since it was developed, the statement said.

The system is made up of an antechamber module for medical staff and two isolation modules set on retrofitted aircraft pallets. The modules' air filtration systems trap and hold airborne and nonairborne pathogens.

Patient care occurs in the isolation modules, while the antechamber provides medical workers with a space to decontaminate and remove their protective equipment.

On arrival at Ramstein, the patients were sent to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center for further treatment, officials said.

"Our unique capabilities paired with our strategic locations across the globe enable us to rapidly help those in need," Gen. Jeff Harrigian, commander of U.S. Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa, said in a statement.

Chinese carrier crosses Miyako Strait

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS

Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — Japan and Taiwan kept watch on the Chinese aircraft carrier Liaoning and its strike group as they steamed through the Miyako Strait and past Taiwan over the weekend, according to the Japanese Ministry of Defense and published reports Monday.

The Liaoning and five accompanying warships passed through the 155-mile-wide strait halfway between the Japanese islands of Okinawa and Miyako on Saturday, turned south and passed east of Taiwan on Sunday, according to reports. The strait is wide enough to qualify as an international waterway.

The Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force tracked the Chinese aircraft carrier, two guided missile destroyers, two multirole warships and one supply-class fast combat support ship as they passed 262 miles southwest of Nagasaki's Danjo Islands about 7 p.m. Friday, according to a de-

fense ministry Joint Staff official.

At about 4 p.m. Saturday, the carrier and its group steamed through the strait, according to the official. Some Japanese government spokespersons traditionally speak under the condition of anonymity.

"We continuously checked those ships by the sea and air," the official said.

The Taiwanese navy also sent ships from Suao to monitor the strike group as it passed the island on Sunday, according to the South China Morning Post, which cited the Taiwan Ministry of Defense.

The six vessels sailed east of Taiwan, according to the Japanese outlet Sankei News, which also cited the Taiwan defense ministry.

The Liaoning is the only aircraft carrier currently in the Western Pacific, but the USS America, a smaller amphibious assault ship that carries F-35B Lightning II stealth fighters, is underway in the East China Sea, according to its official Facebook page.

StarsandStripesreporterAyalchihashicontributedtothisreport.

Trump says he has final say on guidelines

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump asserted Monday that he is the ultimate decision-maker for determining how and when to relax the nation's social distancing guidelines as he grows anxious to reopen the coronavirus-stricken country as soon as possible.

Governors and local leaders, who have instituted mandatory restrictions that have the force of law, have expressed concern that Trump's plan to restore normalcy will cost lives and extend the duration of the outbreak.

Trump has pushed to reopen the economy, which has plummeted as businesses have shuttered, leaving millions of people out of work and struggling to obtain basic commodities.

Taking to Twitter on Monday, Trump said that some are "saying that it is the Governors decision to open up the states, not that of the President of the United

States & the Federal Government. Let it be fully understood that this is incorrect...it is the decision of the President, and for many good reasons."

He added, "With that being said, the Administration and I are working closely with the Governors, and this will continue. A decision by me, in conjunction with the Governors and input from others, will be made shortly!"

Trump's claim that he could force governors to reopen their states comes after he spent weeks arguing that he didn't believe he should pressure states that hadn't imposed stay-at-home restrictions to do so.

Trump has bristled at criticism that the social restrictions aimed at stopping the spread of the coronavirus could have saved lives if they'd been started earlier — and that when they're eased, new cases are certain to arise.

Comments by the nation's top infectious disease expert, Dr. Anthony Fauci, partic-

ularly seemed to draw the president's ire.

When asked Sunday on CNN if acting earlier on social distancing and "stay at home" policies could have saved lives, Fauci responded in part: "It's very difficult to go back and say that. I mean, obviously, you could logically say that if you had a process that was ongoing and you started mitigation earlier, you could have saved lives. Obviously, no one is going to deny that. But what goes into those kinds of decisions is complicated."

Trump reposted a tweet that referenced Fauci's comments and that said "Time to #FireFauci."

Fauci said that the economy in parts of the country could have a "rolling reentry" as early as next month, provided health authorities can quickly identify and isolate people who will inevitably be infected. But he said he "can't guarantee" that it will be safe for Americans to vote in person on Election Day, Nov. 3.

Americans start to see relief payments

Associated Press

Americans are beginning to see the first economic impact payments hit their bank accounts.

The IRS tweeted Saturday that it had begun depositing the funds into taxpayers' bank accounts and would be working to get them out as fast as possible. The one-time payments were approved by Congress as part of an emergency relief package intended to combat the economic damage from the coronavirus pandemic.

The exact timing of when people get their money depends on a few factors, such as income and payment deliv-

ery method. Here is what you should expect:

Who is getting a check?

Any adult earning up to \$75,000 in adjusted gross income who has a valid Social Security number will receive a \$1,200 payment.

Parents will also get payments of \$500 for each eligible child; this is generally those 16 years old or younger.

Who doesn't get one?

High-income filers are excluded, as is anyone without a valid Social Security number.

If someone can be claimed as a dependent on someone else's return, such as an adult child or student, they will not get a pay-

ment. Nonresident aliens aren't eligible.

What do I have to do to get one?

For most people, nothing. Checks will arrive via direct deposit if a taxpayer included the relevant information on their tax return filed this year or last.

Some Americans are not required to file a tax return — such as low-income taxpayers, Social Security recipients, some veterans and people with disabilities. After some back and forth with lawmakers, the Treasury and IRS ultimately decided Social Security recipients and railroad retirees

would not need to file a simple tax return to get the payment.

Anyone else who isn't typically required to file taxes and does not receive Social Security will still need to file an abbreviated return to get the payment.

And for people who filed taxes for 2018 or 2019 but did not include direct deposit information, the IRS plans to have a "Get My Payment" app available later this week that will allow them to add their bank information so their payment can be deposited.

For everyone else, the government will mail a check.

High court to hold arguments via teleconference

The Washington Post

The Supreme Court for the first time will hold oral arguments via teleconference next month, the court announced Monday, including President Donald Trump's legal battle to keep congressional committees and a New York prosecutor from obtaining his financial records.

Audio of the teleconference hearings will apparently be available in real time, a stunning change for the way the court normally conducts business. Cameras are not allowed in the courtroom, and the court does not allow live audio of oral arguments.

The court's decision to schedule some

arguments for May was announced in a news release.

It is unclear if the late deliberations — usually, the court ends oral arguments in April — will affect the court's term, which normally concludes by the end of June.

The justices last met in public on March 9.

Easter storms cause deaths, damage in South

Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. — Severe weather has swept across the South, killing at least 19 people and damaging hundreds of homes from Louisiana into the Appalachian Mountains. Many people spent part of the night early Monday sheltering in basements, closets and bathroom tubs as sirens wailed to warn of possible tornadoes.

Eleven people were killed in Mississippi, and six more died in northwest Georgia. Two other bodies were pulled from damaged homes in Arkansas and South Carolina.

The storms blew onward through the night, causing flooding and mudslides in mountainous areas, and knocking out electricity for nearly 1.3 million customers in a path from Texas to Maine, according to poweroutages.us.

Striking first on Easter Sunday across a landscape largely emptied by coronavi-

rus stay-at-home orders, the storm front forced some uncomfortable decisions. In Alabama, Gov. Kay Ivey suspended social distancing rules, and some people wearing protective masks huddled closely together in storm shelters.

Andrew Phillips crowded into a closet-sized “safe room” with his wife and two sons after watching an online Easter service because the pandemic forced their church to halt regular worship. Then, a twister struck, shredding their house, meat-processing business and vehicles in rural Moss, Miss. The room, built of sturdy cinder blocks, was the only thing on their property left standing.

“I’m just going to let the insurance handle it and trust in the good Lord,” said Phillips.

Meteorologists warned the mid-Atlantic states to prepare for potential tornadoes, wind and hail Monday. The storms knocked down trees across Pennsylvania,

and an apparently strong tornado moved through southern South Carolina, leaving chaos in its wake.

Mississippi’s death toll rose to 11 early Monday, the state’s emergency management agency tweeted.

In northwest Georgia, a narrow path of destruction five miles long hit two mobile home parks, killing five people and injuring five more, Murray County Fire Chief Dewayne Bain told WAGA-TV. Another person was killed when a tree fell on a home in Cartersville, the station reported.

In Arkansas, one person was killed when a tree fell on a home in White Hall, south-east of Little Rock, the Jefferson County Department of Emergency Management said. And in South Carolina, a person was found dead in a collapsed building near Seneca as an apparent tornado struck, Oconee County Emergency Management Director Scott Krein said.

Former Senate staffer, aide accuses Joe Biden of sexual assault in 1993

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A former aide to Joe Biden is accusing the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee of sexually assaulting her during the early 1990s when he was a senator. Biden’s campaign has denied the charges.

In two recent interviews with The Associated Press, Tara Reade alleged that the assault occurred in the basement of a Capitol Hill office building in the spring of 1993. She filed a police report in Washington on Thursday saying that she was the victim of a sexual assault by an unnamed person in 1993, a copy of which was obtained by the AP.

It’s not the first time Reade has made an accusation against the former vice president. Last year, Reade publicly accused Biden of inappropriate touching, but did not allege sexual assault.

In a statement, Biden deputy campaign manager and communications director Kate Bedingfield said that the former vice president has “dedicated his public life to changing the culture and the laws around violence against women,” pointing to his work passing the Violence Against Women Act. She said that “he firmly believes that women have a right to be heard — and heard respectfully,” but added: “Such claims should also be diligently reviewed by an independent press.

“What is clear about this claim: it is untrue. This absolutely did not happen,” Bedingfield said.

In recent weeks, Reade has given a handful of interviews saying that Biden’s actions went further than she initially disclosed. In an interview with the AP, she detailed a 1993 encounter that she said occurred when she was asked by a supervisor to bring Biden his gym bag as he was on his way down to the Senate gymnasium. She said that Biden pushed her against a wall in the basement of a Capitol Hill office building, groped her and penetrated her with his fingers.

“He was whispering to me and trying to kiss me at the same time, and he was saying, ‘Do you want to go somewhere else?’” she said. “I remember wanting to say, ‘Stop,’ but I don’t know if I said it out loud or if I just thought it. I was kind of frozen up.”

Reade said that she pulled away and Biden looked “shocked and surprised,” and replied, “Come on, man, I heard you liked me.”

Reade, who was a staff assistant in Biden’s office at the time, said she did raise accusations of sexual harassment, but not assault, against Biden in multiple meetings with her supervisors, including Marianne Baker, Biden’s executive assistant.

In a statement provided by the campaign, Baker said that in the nearly two decades she worked for Biden, “I never once witnessed, heard of or received any reports of inappropriate conduct, period — not from Ms. Reade, not from anyone.”

Assange’s partner reveals they had 2 children together

Associated Press

LONDON — Julian Assange’s partner revealed Sunday that she had two children with him while he lived inside the Ecuadorian Embassy in London and she issued a plea for the WikiLeaks founder to be released from prison over fears for his health during the coronavirus pandemic.

Assange has been imprisoned at London’s Belmarsh prison since police dragged him out of the embassy a year ago. He is awaiting a May 18 hearing on his extradition to the United States, where he faces espionage charges over the activities of WikiLeaks.

In a video uploaded onto YouTube, Stella Moris said she met Assange in 2011 when she helped out his legal team and that they got together four years later. Moris says their children are 3-year-old Gabriel and 1-year-old Max.

Moris said in a statement last month in support of Assange’s bail application that she had gone “to great lengths to shelter our children from the climate that surrounds him.” Assange respected her wish for privacy, she wrote in the statement seen by The Associated Press.

Moris said she decided to make the statement a day after the British government put the country under lockdown, because “our lives are on the brink and I fear that Julian could die.” She worried about the coronavirus taking root in the prison.

Major SD pork plant closes due to infected workers

Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. — Virginia-based Smithfield Foods announced Sunday that it is closing its pork processing plant in Sioux Falls until further notice after hundreds of employees tested positive for the coronavirus — a step the head of the company warned could hurt the nation's meat supply.

The announcement came a day after South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem and Sioux Falls Mayor Paul TenHaken wrote to Smithfield and urged the company to suspend operations for 14 days so that its workers could self-isolate and the plant could be disinfected.

The plant, which employs about 3,700 people in the state's largest city, has become a hot spot for infections. Health officials said Sunday that 293 of the 730 people who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 in South Dakota work at the plant.

"As a critical infrastructure employer for the nation's food supply chain and a major employer in Sioux Falls, it is crucial that Smithfield have a healthy workforce to ensure the continuity of operations to feed the nation. At the same time, employees need a healthy work environment," Noem and TenHaken wrote to the plant's operators.

Smithfield announced a three-day closure last week so it could sanitize the plant and install physical barriers to enhance social distancing. But on Sunday, it announced the plant's indefinite closure.

Smithfield said the facility supplies nearly 130 million servings of food per week.

Delaware

WILMINGTON — The Delaware Department of Correction on Sunday announced eight new cases of COVID-19 among offenders, all inmates at the James T. Vaughn Correctional Center in Smyrna.

The department said in a news release that it tested 45 inmates at a housing unit where four other inmates tested positive over the past five days. All eight were asymptomatic, with

no fever, cough or other known symptoms of the virus, the statement said.

Of the 12 inmates with confirmed cases, nine were being housed in a stand-alone building on the prison compound that's been established as a COVID-19 treatment center, the department said. Two were at a hospital and one was in the prison infirmary. The department also announced Sunday that one additional correctional officer has tested positive, bringing the total to 11.

Georgia

ATLANTA — Two hundred hospital beds will be set up in a large convention center in Atlanta as an alternative treatment site for patients with mild to moderate cases of the new coronavirus, Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp said Sunday.

The state has a contract with a private company, PAE, to prepare the site inside the Georgia World Congress Center, Kemp said in a news release. He said the company will work with the Georgia National Guard, the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency, the Department of Community Health and the Department of Public Health.

The first parts of the temporary site should be available in about a week, and the site will be used for patients who do not need to be on ventilators. Kemp said projections show Georgia could hit its peak of the virus in late April.

Illinois

SPRINGFIELD — The U.S. District Court for the central district of Illinois emptied its closets in the fight against COVID-19.

Officials said courts throughout the district donated nearly 500 protective masks to health care providers aiding those affected by the illness caused by the coronavirus.

"We extend our gratitude to the healthcare providers and essential workers who are keeping our communities safe," Chief Judge Sara Darrow said in a statement. "We hope our donation is one small way we

can help the greater cause of defeating this deadly virus."

Kentucky

LOUISVILLE — Most Kentucky churches did not hold in-person Easter services, heeding warnings against such gatherings in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic.

Many celebrated the holiday Sunday at home with sermons and masses delivered online, the Courier-Journal reported.

But Kentucky State Police recorded license plate information on about 50 cars parked outside Maryville Baptist Church in Bullitt County so they could be ordered to self-quarantine for 14 days, news outlets reported. Before the service, the church's pastor, the Rev. Jack Roberts, cleaned up nails that had been left at the entrances. He had covered his license plates.

Michigan

LANSING — Michigan public health officials reported a big drop in the daily number of COVID-19 cases on Sunday but cautioned against drawing wider conclusions as fewer tests are conducted on weekends.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services reported 645 new cases Sunday compared with 1,392 the day before. Public health officials said Sunday's tally included 95 deaths, compared with 111 deaths on Saturday.

"We cannot say if this represents a true decline in COVID-19 cases and deaths in our state," read a statement from the department.

New Jersey

TRENTON — New Jersey's governor said Sunday there are models that suggest the state's coronavirus crisis is reaching its peak, but others indicate the worst impact may still be weeks away.

Democratic Gov. Phil Murphy told CNN that health care recovery must occur before economic recovery takes place, and he's concerned that reopening and relaxing social distancing too early could backfire.

"And I fear, if we open up too early, and we have not sufficiently made that health recovery and cracked the back of this virus, that we could be pouring gasoline on the fire, even inadvertently," Murphy said.

Murphy told CBS that he supports a regional approach to reopening and that he has been having "discussions with our neighboring states on the whole question of testing, contact tracing, what are the rules of the road going to be for things like bars and restaurants."

Wisconsin

MADISON — The number of people testing positive for the coronavirus in Wisconsin continued to rise Sunday, as the state began preparing to use Alliant Energy Center as a possible care facility in the event of a potential surge.

Gov. Tony Evers announced Sunday that an application has been submitted to begin developing an alternative care facility at Alliant Energy Center. If the Federal Emergency Management Agency approves, the Army Corps of Engineers would work with contractors to develop the facility.

West Virginia

MORGANTOWN — An undisclosed number of residents at a West Virginia University dormitory complex have been ordered to self-quarantine after someone living there tested positive for the new coronavirus, the university said.

The Monongalia County health department notified the university of the positive test Sunday. The individual has been isolated, and residents of the Evansdale Residential Complex must quarantine until they are tested starting Monday and the test results are known, WVU said in a statement Sunday night.

The complex has a living capacity of 1,800. The statement didn't indicate how many people are currently living there. WVU, closed since March 20, prohibited students from returning from spring break and shifted almost all instruction online through summer.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Motorists urged to watch for salamanders

VT MONTPELIER — Biologists are urging motorists to watch out for frogs and salamanders that are migrating from their wintering areas to vernal pools, ponds and wetlands where they breed.

The early spring migrations mean the animals are often crossing busy roadways where they can be killed by vehicles.

The Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife is asking motorists to slow down and be cautious or take alternate routes away from where frogs and salamanders are crossing.

93-year-old requests more beer for quarantine

PA SEMINOLE — A 93-year-old Pittsburgh-area woman is using the powers of the internet to keep a stock of beer while doing her part to “flatten the curve” on the coronavirus pandemic.

Olive Veronesi posed in her window with a dry erase board that read “I NEED MORE BEER!!” while holding a can of Coors Light, KDKA-TV reported.

The image has been widely shared and has been seen by over a million people on the KDKA Facebook page.

The station reported that several people have reached out to help Veronesi get more beer.

Man dies after fight with deputies at airport

FL FORT LAUDERDALE — A man died shortly after a confrontation with deputies at a Florida airport, officials said.

Kevon Todd, 29, was pronounced dead at a Fort Lauderdale hospital, according to

a Broward County Sheriff’s Office news release.

Deputies at the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport stopped Todd several hours earlier as he attempted to breach a security checkpoint, authorities said. He had been yelling at JetBlue staff members before he rushed the security area, officials said.

After a physical struggle, deputies detained Todd and brought him to the front of the terminal. Broward Sheriff Fire Rescue was evaluating Todd when he became unresponsive, the release said. Rescue workers began life-saving measures and transported Todd to the hospital, where he died.

The Broward County Medical Examiner’s Office will perform an autopsy to determine an official cause of death.

Farmer must pay EPA \$100K civil penalty

OR SALEM — To settle a federal Clean Water Act lawsuit, an Oregon farmer must pay a \$100,000 civil penalty, remove two rock embankments and convert a field into a forest.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency filed the complaint against farmer Bill Case, of Albany, four years ago, saying he’d unlawfully reinforced the banks of the North Santiam River to prevent erosion, The Capital Press reported.

The federal agency claimed that Case had created rock levees along the river in 2009, 2012 and 2013 without getting a Clean Water Act permit, which subjected him to penalties of up to \$37,500 per day.

Case claimed the rock embankments were necessary to keep sediment from polluting the river and to prevent floodwaters from eventually eroding his field.

Nurses, in virus fight, find their tires slashed

NY CORTLANDT — Some nurses at a New York hospital who had just been lauded for their work during the coronavirus pandemic ended their stress-filled overnight shifts to find their tires had been slashed while they worked.

New York state police reported that the tires of 22 vehicles were found slashed outside New York-Presbyterian Hudson Valley Hospital in Cortlandt.

Daniel R. Hall, 29, was arrested on charges including criminal mischief and possession of a controlled substance. Police said he had a small amount of PCP when he was arrested.

3 charged with tossing object off overpass

NJ CARNEYS POINT — State police have charged three teenagers with throwing an object off an overpass that injured a truck driver on the New Jersey Turnpike last month.

Police said that a 17-year-old youth from Elmer, a 16-year-old youth from Penns Grove, and a 16-year-old youth from Pittsgrove were charged with aggravated assault, criminal mischief and disorderly conduct.

Troopers were called to a section of the turnpike in Carneys Point, Salem County, where they found that two tractor-trailers had been struck by an object thrown from the Penns Grove Auburn Road overpass. The object, which NJ.com reported was a cinder block, shattered the windshields of the trucks. Police said one of the drivers was taken to a hospital with injuries to his face and eyes.

The 37-year-old driver said that he “got a face full of glass.” He said “I couldn’t see anything. My whole face was bleeding.” He credited an exterior metal sun visor over the top portion of the windshield with preventing more serious injury.

Orphaned bear cub rescued by game warden

VT STRATTON — A bear cub was rescued after being found on the side of the road in Vermont.

The orphaned cub was rescued by the Vermont Game Warden Association and is now recovering with world-renowned bear experts, WPTZ reported.

Officials received multiple calls from drivers who spotted the small black cub on the side of Stratton Mountain Access Road. The Winhall Police Department watched the cub until Warden Kyle Isherwood was able to get there.

Isherwood believes the cub had been stranded in the area for a while. The cub’s mother has not been located.

Police search suspected cockfighting operation

AZ PHOENIX — A search of a suspected cockfighting operation resulted in 10 people being given citations and numerous roosters being seized, Phoenix police said.

Spectators tried to run off when police animal cruelty investigators and Arizona Humane Society personnel arrived to conduct the search, police said in a statement.

According to police, 203 roosters and two dogs described as being in poor health were seized.

From wire reports

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Reporting
World, National
and Military News

Larson suspended for iRacing racial slur

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — NASCAR star Kyle Larson was suspended without pay by Chip Ganassi Racing on Monday for using a racial slur on a livestream during a virtual race.

Larson was competing in an iRacing event Sunday night when he appeared to lose communication on his headset with his spotter. During a check of his microphone, he said, “You can’t hear me?” That was followed by the N-word.

“We are extremely disappointed by what Kyle said last night during an iRacing Event. The words that he chose to use are offensive and unacceptable,” Chip Ganassi Racing said. “As of this moment, we are suspending Kyle without pay while we work through this situation with all appropriate parties.”

Larson is half Japanese — his grandparents spent time in an internment camp in California during World War II — and

he climbed from short-track racing into NASCAR through its “Drive for Diversity” program. He is the only driver of Japanese descent to win a major NASCAR race.

“NASCAR is aware of insensitive language used by a driver during an iRacing event on Sunday, and is currently gathering more information,” NASCAR said.

Larson had no immediate comment Monday.

NASCAR in 2013 suspended Xfinity Series driver Jeremy Clements for using the same word Larson used while Clements was speaking to a reporter. Clements was reinstated after completing a sensitivity training course and still competes.

Larson is the second driver in a week to draw scrutiny while using the online racing platform to fill time during the coronavirus pandemic.

Bubba Wallace one week earlier “rage quit” an official NASCAR iRacing event and his sponsor fired him immediately.

Wallace had been wrecked, and, fed up, quit the game and admitted it was out of anger on Twitter. Blue-Emu, a topical pain reliever who had sponsored Wallace for the virtual race and has an association with him for real, replied to the tweet firing Wallace.

Larson, in his seventh full season racing at NASCAR’s top Cup level, is in the final year of his contract with Chip Ganassi Racing. He was at the top of the list of a crowded free agent field when the circuit was suspended four races into the season as sports stopped during the coronavirus crisis.

Larson used the slur during a Sunday night race for fun against drivers from various series. The event was not part of NASCAR’s official series.

Drivers in the chat immediately reacted to Larson’s use of the slur, with one instantly alerting him, “Kyle, you’re talking to everyone, bud.” Others were in disbelief.

Schools across country shine out ‘sign of hope’

Associated Press

The virus outbreak weighed heavily on Brett Beesley’s heart and mind as the Dumas High School principal drove past the stadium along the main highway in his Texas Panhandle town.

Seeking to brighten the spirits of his suddenly disconnected students in a gloomy and frightening time, he made a decision. They should turn on the lights.

“To let them know that we’re thinking about them and we miss them and we love them,” said Beesley, who quickly called football coach Aaron Dunnam with his idea.

Dunnam didn’t wait for their conversation to end before climbing into his car to head to the field and do the honors back on March 24 during the first full week of closed schools in Texas.

“I had chills running down my arms, running down my body,” said Dunnam, who has flipped the switch each weeknight at 8 p.m. since for an hour of hope and encouragement.

Nearly as fast, the symbolic act became a movement — fueled by social media with the

hashtag #BeTheLight — across the country.

“I just love the focus to be on kids of this nation now,” said Beesley, who used Twitter to challenge other Texas schools to follow suit.

Dunnam’s oldest daughter, Lyssa, is the top-ranked powerlifter in Texas, a senior who likely won’t get to compete for a state title this spring. She joins her dad every night at the stadium.

“This has probably been the hardest situation I’ve had to deal with because I don’t have all the answers for her,” Dunnam said.

It’s fitting this originated in Texas, the home of the book, movie and television series “Friday Night Lights” about the windswept oilfield towns where high school football shapes both culture and community. As the author H.G. Bissinger wrote, “It could be anywhere in this vast land, where on a Friday night, a set of spindly stadium lights rises to the heavens to so powerfully, and so briefly, ignite the darkness.”

The goal was to provide a beacon for all students in the district, not just the seniors or

the athletes. Leaving the lights on for an hour costs adds \$25 to the electric bill, Beesley said.

“I didn’t think the taxpayer would mind too much if it meant giving our kids some hope,” he said.

Adam Bright, an assistant commissioner at the Colorado High School Activities Association, discovered the ritual on Twitter and shared the news. Over 80 schools have joined.

Christopher Noll, the athletic director for District 11 in Colorado Springs, challenged coaches, teachers and administrators to place a combined 1,000 phone calls to families simply to be supportive during the shutdown. The total for that first effort was 1,728 calls and the number was put up in glowing orange numbers on the stadium scoreboard.

“I’m a huge believer that positivity is contagious,” said Noll, who produced a 14-minute video on Monday night inside an illuminated and vacant Garry Berry Stadium in Colorado Springs.

In Minnesota, the mother of a senior lacrosse player at Centennial High School pointed out the trend in Texas to activities

director Brian Jamros, who first flipped on the lights March 30 in Circle Pines, a suburb north of the Twin Cities.

“As you get older, it brings you back in time, what it means to be that student athlete representing your community,” Jamros said. “Even for those with no affiliation to athletics or Centennial, there’s this metaphor that there’s light at the end of the tunnel.”

The next morning, Minnesota State High School League information specialist John Millea sent out the clarion call to his 23,000-plus Twitter followers for schools to participate. Less than a week later, he stopped counting at 236, roughly half the state’s high schools.

Most have chosen Mondays or Fridays for the lighting, often for 20 minutes to commemorate the class of 2020. Some turned the event into a parade of first-responder vehicles in tribute to emergency workers. Others pushed play on a recording of the school fight song.

“At some point we’re going to be under these lights again, gathering together as a community,” Millea said. “To me, it’s like the ultimate sign of hope.”

MLS goalie moonlights as kid's author

Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — Jeff Attinella is unique in that he's the only MLS goalkeeper who can also say he's a children's book author, a side job that has helped earn him the nickname "Dadtinella" from the Portland Timbers faithful.

He's already written five books for kids, and has even launched a publishing company.

"I had the idea to write these books because I just love storytelling, in all forms," he said. "It's inspiring when people figure out a way to tell a story in their own unique way, or when people tell the story about how they got where they are — I just love storytelling."

While Major League Soccer is on hold because of the coronavirus pandemic, Attinella has been embracing his super dad role, in a major way. He and wife Kendall recently welcomed a son to their family.

Attinella's foray into writing came shortly after the birth of his first child, daughter Remy Rose, in 2016. An avid sports fan, he started thinking up a Dr. Seuss-style story about the Chicago Cubs winning the World Series.

"I was just fooling around on my iPhone in the notes section and came up with a nursery rhyme for my favorite sports team," he said.

He showed his father-in-law his work and together the family founded a publishing company, It Had To Be Told. The end result was Attinella's first book, "The Curse Ends: The Story of the

2016 Chicago Cubs."

Since then, he's added four more books: "Cleveland Wins a Championship: The story of the 2016 Cavaliers," "Greatest Ever: The Story of a Coach, a Quarterback and a Comeback," and "The Great Space Race: The Story of How America Put a Man on the Moon." His latest is, "Roll Crimson Roll: The Story of College Football's Greatest Dynasty."

Attinella often takes his stories on the road to Portland schools. During social distancing for the coronavirus, he's offering free downloads for parents who are suddenly homeschooling.

"I just thought that by making these books available to families — their kids might not be in school, or their families are really missing sports — hopefully it's a good way to create something a little bit different, maybe spark up a conversation about their favorite sports moments or just give kids without school and kids without sports something to look to."

As for the future of his blossoming career as an author, Attinella is thinking big.

"Maybe it will happen when I'm done playing, maybe it'll happen when I'm still playing, but my ultimate goal for the books is to have one for every sports team," he said. "I just think that every fan base deserves something like this where they could pass the story down from generation to generation, giving parents and kids a way to share their passion for sports."

Bach: Delay will cost IOC 'several hundred million'

Associated Press

TOKYO — The International Olympic Committee will face "several hundred million dollars" of added costs because of the postponement of the Tokyo Games, the body's president said.

Thomas Bach spoke in an interview with German newspaper Die Welt on Sunday.

Estimates in Japan put the overall cost of the postponement at \$2 billion-\$6 billion. Except for the IOC portion, all added costs will be borne by the Japanese side, according to an agreement signed in 2013 when Tokyo was awarded the Olympics.

Bach said it was "impossible to say for now" the extent of the added costs for the IOC caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

"We agreed with the prime minister that Japan will continue to cover the costs it would have done under the terms of the existing agreement for 2020, and the IOC will continue to be responsible for its share of the costs," Bach said. "For us, the IOC, it is already clear that we shall be faced with several hundred million dollars of additional costs."

Before the postponement, Japanese organizers put the official cost of the games at \$12.6 billion. However, a government audit report in 2019 said the costs were at least twice that. All but \$5.6 billion of it is in taxpayer money.

Tokyo said the 2020 Games would cost about \$7.3 billion when it won the bid seven years ago.

On Friday, the CEO of the Tokyo organizing committee said the pandemic left some doubts about the games going ahead next year.

"I don't think anyone would be able to say if it is going to be possible to get it under control by next July or not," Toshiro Muto said, speaking through an interpreter. "We certainly are not in a position to give you a clear answer."

Boycott of '80 Olympics still rankles

Associated Press

DENVER — By the time the news filtered to him, Edwin Moses had already left a promising engineering job to focus on a full-time career on the track.

He was lucky. He already had an Olympic gold medal hanging on his wall.

Hundreds of other American athletes would never get their chance.

They were part of the 1980 U.S. Olympic team — the team that never made it to the Moscow Games after President Jimmy Carter spearheaded a now-infamous first-of-its-kind decision to boycott the Olympics.

The full board of the U.S. Olympic Committee rubber-stamped Carter's decision 40 years ago Sunday — April 12, 1980.

"I'd walked away from my career to get ready for the 1980

Olympics, and all was moot," Moses said. "So, it was horrible. For me, and for everyone."

Moses said by the time the USOC's unwieldy delegation of nearly 2,400 people met at the Antlers Hotel in Colorado Springs, Colo., on a Saturday morning in April, with Vice President Walter Mondale in attendance, it was all but a done deal that the U.S. team would not be traveling to Moscow.

Carter had begun the push in late 1979, with the Soviet Union pressing a military campaign into Afghanistan.

In his 2010 memoir, Carter called it "one of my most difficult decisions." Maybe more telling, as former USOC spokesman Mike Moran wrote in a recap of the events leading to the boycott, was an exchange the late 1984 Olympic champion wrestler Jeff Blatnick had with Carter on a plane many years later.

"I go, 'President Carter, I have met you before, I am an Olympian,'" Moran said in his retelling of Blatnick's story. "He looks at me and says, 'Were you on the 1980 hockey team?' I say, 'No sir, I'm a wrestler, on the summer team.' He says, 'Oh, that was a bad decision, I'm sorry.'"

Forty years later, there is virtually no debate about that conclusion. And the lingering irony of this year's games postponed by a year because of the coronavirus pandemic isn't lost on Moses.

"As an athlete, you lose one of your cat's nine lives," he said.

There will be a handful of could've-been 2020 Olympians who will not make it to 2021, because of age, injury or a changed qualifying procedure.

Of the 466 U.S. athletes who had qualified for Moscow in 1980, 219 would never get to another Olympics, Moran wrote.