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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Military jobs with highest suicide rates listed

BY SETH ROBSON

Stars and Stripes

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

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

"There were 325 deaths by

suicide identified among active-component service members," the report stated.

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

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

- Army infantry, gun crews, with 40 suicides, or 37.4% of the service's total.

- Marine infantry, gun crews, with 13 suicides, or 23.2% of the service's total.

- Navy electrical/mechanical equipment repairers, with

13 suicides, or 19.4% of the service's total.

- Air Force service and supply handlers, with 10 suicides, or 20.8% of the service's total.

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

The suicide rate for reservists was 22.9 deaths per 100,000, while the rate for the National Guard was 30.6 per 100,000, the report states.

That compares with a suicide rate for American adults ages 17-59 of 18.2 per 100,000

in 2017, according to the report.

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

Some of the data analyzed in the report was released by the Pentagon in September in its first Annual Suicide Report.

At that time, Karin Orvis, director of the Defense Suicide Prevention Office at the Pentagon, said that the rates were not where leaders wanted them to be.

Asymptomatic USS Reagan sailors test positive

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS

Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — An undisclosed number of sailors from the USS Ronald Reagan strike group tested positive for the coronavirus after a Task Force 70-ordered sequestration period, a Navy spokesman said Tuesday.

The sailors showed no symptoms and were tested over the weekend as their mandated isolation came to an end, said Task Force 70 spokesman Lt. Cmdr. Sean Brophy in an email Tuesday. Those who tested positive did not board any ships and were isolated instead, he said.

All crewmembers of the Reagan and its strike group are sequestered and tested for the virus before embarking ahead of an upcoming deployment, Task Force 70 commander Rear Adm. George Wikoff told Stars and Stripes on Friday.

The strike group includes the Reagan and the accompanying

guided-missile cruisers and destroyers.

Wikoff didn't say how long the sequestration period was, but Navy guidance suggests a 21-day restriction of movement for a "99% 'clean' confidence level."

Those sailors who tested negative over the weekend boarded their ships, Brophy said.

He said that catching the positive cases among sailors who otherwise appear healthy "highlights how our measures are working as they were designed to."

The sequestration plan is preventing the virus' spread by screening sailors and isolating those who have tested positive, Brophy said.

The sailors who tested positive had been sequestered at Naval Air Station Atsugi and Yokota Air Base in Japan, but were not in contact with either base community, Brophy said. Others were sequestered at Marine Corps Air Station

Iwakuni and at Yokosuka.

The Reagan and its strike group typically patrol the western Pacific from late spring through early winter, undergoing regular maintenance in the interim.

As they gear up for another deployment to the Indo-Pacific, Navy commanders must also ensure that the illness which sidelined another aircraft carrier in the Pacific last month doesn't come aboard the Reagan or the ships of its strike group.

Several Reagan sailors tested positive for the coronavirus before the pre-boarding sequestrations began. Officials have not disclosed how many, but on April 22, the New York Times reported 16 positive cases associated with the carrier.

Wikoff and Reagan commander Capt. Pat Hannifin spoke with Stars and Stripes about the precautions being taken for the Reagan and its strike group in a joint phone in-

terview Friday.

"Americans everywhere are facing adversity in their own ways right now and while that is happening, they count on us to stand the watch," Hannifin said.

The amphibious assault ship USS America and its expeditionary strike group are patrolling the South China Sea, but no U.S. aircraft carrier is patrolling the western Pacific since the coronavirus sidelined the USS Theodore Roosevelt in March.

The unprecedented event has posed a unique challenge to the strike group, Wikoff told Stars and Stripes on Friday. In his role, Wikoff oversees the Reagan strike group and Task Force 70, which is the battle arm of the 7th Fleet.

"A cookie-cutter 'here's what you do in case of this' answer is not out there as we continue to learn about this virus," Wikoff said.

DOD releases videos that show pilots' UFO moments

New York Daily News

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

The Pentagon officially released three videos Monday that appear to depict unexplained "unidentified aerial phenomena" which were recorded by pilots between 2004 and 2015.

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

The Pentagon released the videos "to clear up any misconceptions by the public on whether or not the footage that has been circulating was real, or whether or not there is more to the videos," spokesperson Sue Gough said. "The aerial phenomena observed in the videos remain characterized as 'unidentified.'"

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

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

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

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

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

For this cycle, Navy scraps the E-4 advancement exam

By JOSHUA KARSTEN

Stars and Stripes

Sailors looking to tack on their petty officer crow's this cycle won't be taking an advancement test following the Navy's move to scrap the exams as a coronavirus prevention measure.

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

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

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

The Navy "has determined that it is in the best interest and safety of our Sailors to not administer the E-4 exam," senior Navy personnel official Vice Adm. John B. Nowell said.

The formula for this cycle will use a "rank-

order" method dominated by sailors' performance mark average, which averages rank-based annual evaluation scores and counts for 72% of the calculation. Other factors include awards, previous pass-but-not-advance points and time in rank. The Navy also directed sailors to ensure that their enlisted advancement worksheets are accurate and up to date — 35,000 of them are not, the statement said.

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

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

USS Theodore Roosevelt has nearly 1,000 coronavirus cases after Navy reassessment

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Nearly 1,000 sailors assigned to the USS Theodore Roosevelt are still fighting the coronavirus after the Navy reassessed how it determines whether someone has recovered from the virus.

Medical staff were finding that asymptomatic sailors placed in quarantine for 14 days were testing positive for the coronavirus when leaving isolation, according to Cmdr. Clayton Doss, a Navy spokesman.

Positive tests for the virus continued to happen with Roosevelt sailors who initially tested negative, so Navy officials determined that the service needed to reevaluate its criteria and testing procedures, Doss said. The initial negative test can happen when the amount of virus in the body is not high enough for the test to detect it at the time, he said.

As of Tuesday, the Navy has 1,691 cases of the coronavirus among its sailors, the highest number of cases among the military services.

The Navy will now only count sailors recovered for the virus once they have had two successive negative tests, with the second test happening 24 hours after the first negative. Every sailor on the Roosevelt is now being re-

tested this way when they begin the process to leave their quarantine, Doss said.

The initial testing of all 4,800 crew members aboard the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier has been complete as of Monday, according to the Navy.

The reported active cases on the Roosevelt increased from 833 Saturday to 955 Monday. Now with 98 cases being reset and 24 new cases of the virus, the overall number of Roosevelt sailors still considered sick increased by 122, according to the Navy's Monday coronavirus case report.

As the outbreak among the Roosevelt crew continues, the outcome of the investigation into their former commander and the Navy's response to their plight has stalled. Defense Secretary Mark Esper received a verbal briefing Friday from Navy leaders about their investigation into the virus outbreak on the Roosevelt and whether Capt. Brett Crozier should regain command of the ship, according to Jonathan Hoffman, the chief spokesman for the Pentagon. According to news reports Friday, the recommendations included reinstating Crozier.

Esper said, however, that he will read the written report before meeting again with Navy leaders and making his decision, according to Hoffman.

Reopening is coming — with a new ‘normal’

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Everyone wants to know: When, oh when, will it go back to normal?

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

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

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

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

Even there, though, life was far from normal Monday. Patrons went to restaurants with X’s on some tables, chatted

across the room to one another and gave orders to servers whose faces were covered by masks.

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

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

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

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

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

What he calls community support, econ-

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

“After an initial pop to growth, when businesses do reopen, it’s going to be a slog until there’s a vaccine,” said Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody’s Analytics. “I think there’s going to be a lot of cautious people and therefore a lot of cautious businesses.”

For most people, the new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness and death. And while many point to a vaccine as the surest path to normal, public health experts see another way that’s no less daunting: millions more tests, 100,000 or more health workers to track and isolate those exposed to COVID-19, and a seamless data network to coordinate the effort.

The U.S. is far from implementing any of this. So in the absence of a vaccine or other reassuring measures — and in the face of a threat that is largely invisible — how will Americans believe that it’s safe to go out again?

“You know when a flood is there and when it’s gone,” says Steven Taylor, a professor at The University of British Columbia who wrote “The Psychology of Pandemics.” He predicts confidence will return when people see others hugging, shaking hands and crowding into elevators — and not getting sick.

Trump suggests opening schools ahead of summer

Associated Press

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

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

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

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

Trump made the comments as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention worked to finalize guidelines for reopening the economy. For schools, that included putting students’ desks 6 feet apart, serving meals in the classroom instead of the cafeteria and closing playgrounds.

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

But some education officials say opening schools quickly would bring major risk and little reward, especially since the end of the school year is approaching.

“Are they going to reopen for two weeks?

Three weeks?” said Daniel Domenech, executive director of the American Association of School Administrators, “It’s not the right thing to do. Particularly when we’re involving the safety and welfare of our students.”

At a White House news conference Monday, Trump acknowledged that there’s little time left in the school year, even as he said many states are thinking about getting kids back into the classroom.

“I think you’ll see a lot of schools open up even if it’s for a very short period of time,” he said. “In terms of what this vicious virus goes after, young people seem to do very well. Young people seem to do very well so I know that there are some governors that aren’t necessarily ready to open up states, but they may be ready to open up the school systems.”

Trump hints he knows Kim's condition

BY KIM GAMEL

Stars and Stripes

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

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

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

Trump and Kim have held three summits as the United States tries to persuade the

North to give up its nuclear weapons program.

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

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

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

Concern over Kim Jong Un's whereabouts has mounted since April 15, when he missed celebrations of his late grandfather and the country's founder Kim Il Sung — a major holiday.

Several unconfirmed media reports and rumors circulating on social media have suggested that he may be "gravely ill" after heart surgery or isolated because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Trump said last week that he believed those reports were incorrect.

South Korean government officials also have insisted that intelligence shows no unusual movements to indicate any problems with Kim's health.

Kim's last known public appearances were around April 11 when he was shown in photos presiding over a meeting of the ruling Workers' Party's political bureau and inspecting an air defense unit in a western part of the country.

North Korea's state-run media also have reported that Kim has conducted recent activities including expressing gratitude to construction workers at a new tourist zone, but no details or photos were published.

Experts have urged caution because it's virtually impossible to confirm information about the North Korean leader's health.

Democrats get new chance to force McGahn testimony

Associated Press

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

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

The hearing comes two months after a three-judge

panel of the court ruled that judges have no role to play in the subpoena fight between Congress and the White House over the testimony of high-ranking administration officials.

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

Both cases turn on whether the House can seek the help of

federal judges.

Time is growing short for Democrats, who want McGahn's testimony before the November elections. But it's unclear how salient the issue of Russia's interference in the 2016 election will be now that the coronavirus outbreak has dramatically altered life in the U.S., with more than 55,000 people dead and 26 million out of work.

The House Judiciary Committee first subpoenaed McGahn in April 2019 as it examined potential obstruction of justice by the Republican president during special coun-

sel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation. Trump directed McGahn not to appear, and the Democratic-led panel filed a federal lawsuit to force McGahn to testify.

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

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

Congress about-face: House will not resume next week

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Facing fierce blowback, House Democratic leadership announced Tuesday the House will not resume session next week as planned because of risks associated with the coronavirus pandemic.

Majority Leader Steny Hoyer declared the sudden about-face a day after lawmakers revolted. He said after discussions with the Capitol physician, the risk was too great. The physician has privately warned

senior lawmakers it will be at least a year before Congress can return to business as usual.

"We will not come back next week," Hoyer told reporters on a conference call. "But we hope to come back very soon."

Hoyer, D-Md., said that because the Washington, D.C., area remains a "hot spot" under stay-home orders — with the number of cases "going up and not down" — the House's nearly 435 lawmakers and staff will not be asked to return.

Leaders of both parties had announced

the House and Senate would return May 4. But the congressional physician's view was there is a "risk" to members, Hoyer said.

Uncertainty in the congressional schedule, along with deepening partisan divide, could stall work on a new coronavirus relief bill. Hoyer said lawmakers will be asked to return when the legislation is complete.

He noted that negotiations were set to resume Tuesday with Republicans on proxy voting proposals in the House.

The Senate, meanwhile, remains on track to return Monday.

Calif. governor weighs reopening businesses

Associated Press

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

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

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

On Monday, Newsom said that the state is “a few weeks away, not months away” from making “meaningful changes” to the order.

Arizona

GLENDALE — Contractors overseen by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are completing the rehabilitation of a shuttered Phoenix hospital planned to house coronavirus patients. The work comes amid signs that a spike of cases may not emerge in Arizona and as Gov. Doug Ducey nears a decision on whether to ease his closure and stay-at-home orders.

The \$4.1 million rehabilitation of St. Luke's Medical Center should be done by the end of the week and handed to the state Department of Health Services.

Health Services officials on Monday reported no new virus deaths for the first time in a month, holding steady at 275.

Florida

TALLAHASSEE — Florida officials opened an online portal Saturday for the public to weigh in on reopening the state amid the coronavirus outbreak that has now shuttered schools and businesses for more than a month.

In making the announce-

ment, the governor's office said that “public feedback will be a critical component” in the work of the Re-Open Florida Task Force, a panel charged by Gov. Ron DeSantis to help guide him in deciding whether to lift certain restrictions put in place to limit the spread of the virus.

As of Saturday, the state reported more than 30,800 known infections and said that about 1,050 Floridians have died from COVID-19.

Idaho

BOISE — Idaho nursing homes have been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic, with at least 150 cases reported at 16 different long-term care facilities in the state. So far, at least 26 people at such facilities have died from COVID-19.

In addition, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare officials are currently tracking 10 COVID-19 outbreaks at long-term care facilities, department spokeswoman Niki Forbing-Orr said last week.

State officials have declined to release the names of the facilities. The situation makes it difficult to gauge if the facilities had appropriate access to testing for staffers and residents or whether they have had previous infection control problems.

Kentucky

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

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

But with that easing will come requirements for the public to wear masks in certain areas, since contacts will increase as people go back to work and step out in public, he said.

Louisiana

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

But if the state's rate of infections continues to fall, the Democratic governor said that he expects his constraints will begin to loosen May 16.

Edwards said that he made the decision in consultation with infectious disease specialists and other public health experts, as Louisiana ranks sixth in the nation for confirmed virus cases per capita.

Michigan

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

The Democratic governor also said that she will ask the Republican-led Legislature to lengthen her emergency declaration by 28 days before it expires late Thursday. A lawmaker-approved extension, she said, would keep liability protections for health care workers and first responders in place amid the outbreak.

Operations to be reopened besides construction include “outdoor enterprises.”

Mississippi

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

Advocates have repeatedly raised concerns that the highly contagious virus is difficult to

control in prisons, where inmates have little chance to keep distance from one another even when they're told to do so. They have also pushed for wider testing for COVID-19 in prisons.

The corrections department said that four Mississippi inmates had tested positive for the highly contagious virus by Monday — two at the State Penitentiary at Parchman and two in the Winston-Choctaw County Regional Correctional Facility.

Pennsylvania

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

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

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

South Carolina

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

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

The governor, who has said that his goal is to have the South Carolina economy “humming” again by June, has already begun to loosen the restrictions that have shuttered portions of the state's business community for weeks. Last week, he said that some businesses previously deemed nonessential — department stores, flea markets, florists, bookstores and music shops — would be allowed to reopen.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Large seabird colony gets new habitat

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

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

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

High-speed car chase ends in crash, arrest

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

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

The trooper tried to stop one of the three vehicles, a Hyundai Genesis, but the driver fled east on Highway 6. The Hyundai started driving west in the eastbound lanes before trying to cross the median into the westbound lanes. The driver lost control and crashed.

The 19-year-old driver, Faud Al Dhary, was arrested on suspicion of fleeing arrest, reck-

less driving, engaging in racing and several other charges.

Instagram squirrel with 1 eye back in nature

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

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

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

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

Hundreds of gallons of oil spill into river

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

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

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

The spill was contained with 550 feet of a rigid boom across the river.

Virtual program tackles people's grief responses

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

The free international online event called Science of Grief is scheduled for Wednesday on Science Gallery Dublin's YouTube page and will be followed by a virtual after-party on Science Gallery Detroit's Instagram Live. Academics, researchers, scientists, health care workers, artists, storytellers and musicians will provide content on responding to many forms of grief.

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

Man arrested after shooting inside Walmart

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

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

The victim required surgery and was being hospitalized.

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

Police warn drivers about reptile road rage

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

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

"It's gator mating season," the sheriff's office wrote in a Facebook post. "This means they could be more mobile and aggressive than usual."

A male gator measuring 9 feet, 2 inches had to be removed after it was spotted "being aggressive with traffic." Sheriff's deputies relocated him to an alligator farm.

Police arrest 2 with loaded gun at vigil

MA SPRINGFIELD — Police in Massachusetts who were monitoring a large gathering being held to remember a homicide victim may have prevented more tragedy by arresting two teenagers with a loaded weapon.

People attending the Saturday gathering in Springfield stayed in their cars for the most part, Springfield police spokesman Ryan Walsh said in a statement. But officers, acting on a tip, stopped one car and recovered what they described as an AK-47 loaded with a 30-round magazine, Walsh said.

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

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College athletes prepared to cash in

Associated Press

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

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

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

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

Lawrence said it would be reasonable to assume the quarterback would sign separate

deals with 10 local businesses and post a total of 60 to 120 sponsored content messages a year on one of his social media accounts.

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

While autograph signing and public appearances have been traditional ways for professional athletes to make extra money, most opportunities now are tied to social media. The bridge between athlete and sponsor will likely be content delivery platforms — a cottage industry of sorts eager to link the two and cash in. And having those platform relationships in place will almost surely be a recruiting tool for schools.

"There's going to be a whole industry springing up around NIL," or name, image and likeness, Lawrence said. "There is an ecosystem forming, and the incumbents are jostling and de-

veloping different types of tools and technology, and it's going to be wild."

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

All three have contracts with pro teams and leagues as well as college athletic departments. They store and manage content — game photos and videos, for example — that athletes can share on their personal social media accounts. The photos and videos are provided by the teams themselves and through agreements with media organizations.

Athletes can access the content and share it with their followers. The pros use it to promote brands and supplement their income; college athletes will be able to do the same once they get the green light.

"Will some athletes make less than \$1,000 (per year)? Yes. Can some athletes make more than \$100,000? Yes," INFLCR founder and CEO Jim Cavale said. "Are any millionaires going to be made off this? Very few, if any."

Opendorse, based in Lincoln, Neb., has contracts with 75 colleges in addition to deals with the PGA Tour and players' unions for the NFL and Major League Baseball, among other entities. INFLCR, based in Birmingham, Ala., has 100-plus colleges as clients as well as NBA and NFL players, NASCAR drivers and other pro athletes. Greenfly, based in Santa Monica, Calif., has worked mostly with professional sports, notably baseball.

Once NIL rules go into effect, athletic departments will be under pressure to go all-in with opportunities for their athletes or risk watching recruits go elsewhere. The delivery platforms will need to provide transaction management technology that meets NCAA standards for oversight amid concerns about abuses, sham deals and play-for-pay schemes.

An athlete wouldn't necessarily have to use the platform provided by their school, but going elsewhere would mean paying for it and there could be technical obstacles in reporting transactions to their school.

Medical group says Olympics difficult without vaccine

Associated Press

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

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

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

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

Japan has reported 13,576

COVID-19 cases, and 712 others from a cruise ship quarantined near Tokyo earlier this year. On Tuesday, the health ministry reported 389 total virus deaths.

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

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

"I am very pessimistic about holding the Olympics Games next summer unless you hold

the Olympic Games in a totally different structure such as no audience, or a very limited participation," said Kentaro Iwata, professor of infectious disease at Kobe University.

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

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

Mori added: "This is a gamble for mankind. If the world

triumphs over the virus and we can hold the Olympics, then our games will be so many times more valuable than any past Olympics."

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

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

"Science is just half the battle," Sridhar said in an email to The Associated Press. "The other half is manufacturing enough doses and getting these into people across the world. How would prioritization be done?"

NBA won't reopen facilities until May 8

Associated Press

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

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

The May 8 date is far from firm, the NBA said, warning teams that it “may push this timing back if developments warrant.” The league planned on giving teams the option of reopening facilities as early as Friday, though ultimately decided more time was needed across the league for many reasons.

But whenever those practice courts open — local government clearance would be needed first in all cases — there will not be an immediate return to normal. A person with knowledge of the league's plans said players would have to wear face masks inside facilities except when working out, that any staff members present would have

to wear face masks and gloves, and that a minimum distance of 12 feet would be required as a buffer between players and staff members.

The exception in that 12-foot case would be when medical or athletic training personnel are in contact with players. The person spoke to the The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the details were not publicly released.

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

- Players who return to their home-team markets from out of town will have to quarantine before being allowed back in the facility.

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

- Teams will have to designate a staff member as a “Facility Hygiene Officer” to oversee all new policies. Players will

have to enter the facility alone, without family members, friends or personal security.

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

“Our foremost priority remains everyone's health and well-being and we will continue to follow the NBA's guidelines, while also continuing to listen to public health experts and observe local governmental directives,” Orlando Magic spokesman Joel Glass said.

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

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

The NBA suspended the season March 11 after Rudy Gobert of the Utah Jazz was the first player to test positive for COVID-19. It ordered teams to shutter their facilities eight days later, saying at the time it was doing so “in light of the rapidly developing coronavirus

situation, and consistent with evolving advice from health experts regarding how to promote individual and public health while minimizing the spread of the virus.”

Facilities have not been opened since, and this step — when it happens — does not mean a return to NBA play is imminent. NBA Commissioner Adam Silver has said repeatedly that he does not believe the league will be in position to make any decision on whether the season can resume until sometime in May, at the earliest.

“There's too much unknown to set a timeline, even too much unknown to say, ‘Here are the precise variables,’” Silver said on April 17.

The push toward reopening facilities started after certain states and municipalities began loosening restrictions on personal movement. Georgia and Oklahoma are among the states that have already allowed some businesses to reopen and Florida's two most populous counties, Miami-Dade and Broward, announced plans Monday to loosen some of their stay-at-home policies starting later this week.

In surprising move, Blackhawks fire team president

Associated Press

CHICAGO — The Chicago Blackhawks fired team president John McDonough on Monday, cutting ties with a key figure in the most successful decade in team history and raising questions about the direction of one of the NHL's marquee franchises.

The surprising move, coming with the season suspended because of the coronavirus pandemic, could have a domino effect on Chicago's leadership structure. Stan Bowman has served as general manager for almost 11 years, but the Blackhawks haven't made the playoffs since 2017 — a painful drought for a franchise that

hoisted the Stanley Cup in 2010, 2013 and 2015.

The Blackhawks announced McDonough's dismissal in a news release. Owner Rocky Wirtz pointed to the coronavirus crisis and the pause in play as an opportunity to assess the team's direction.

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

Danny Wirtz, Rocky's 43-year-old son and a vice president with the team, is replacing McDonough on an in-

terim basis.

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

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

McDonough was a big factor in Chicago's rise to the top tier of the NHL on and off the ice. The team has an active sellout streak of 531 games. The orga-

nization is well known for its fan experience and marketing abilities, one reason why it has been a regular participant in the NHL's outdoor games.

“Thirteen years ago, I recruited John to the Blackhawks because of his leadership, direction and vision. John brought all of that to the table and more,” Rocky Wirtz said. “His contributions went well beyond leading the team to three Stanley Cup championships. He rebuilt the front office and helped guide the organization toward a winning vision.”

“As difficult as this is, we believe it was the right decision for the future of the organization and its fans.”