

STARS AND STRIPES®

Tuesday, July 14, 2020

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Navy cites progress fighting fire on ship

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — The battle to save the USS Bonhomme Richard from a ravaging fire entered a third day in San Diego Bay on Tuesday with indications that the situation aboard the amphibious assault ship was improving.

The U.S. Navy said in a statement late Monday that firefighters were making significant progress with the assistance of water drops by helicopters.

The ship was emitting much less smoke than the previous two days, when acrid billows poured out and blanketed parts of the region.

The Navy, meanwhile, has taken precautions in case the warship sinks and potentially releases 1 million gallons of oil on board into the harbor.

The U.S. Coast Guard has hired an oil clean-up crew to put a containment boom in place that could be ready if any oil is spilled. It also halted boat and air traffic within a nautical mile of the vessel.

On Monday, health officials warned people to stay indoors as acrid smoke wafted across San Diego from one of the Navy's worst shipyard fires in recent years. At least 61 people, including 38 sailors and 23 civilians, have been treated for heat exhaustion, smoke inhalation and minor injuries. Five people who had been in a hospital under observation were released.

Some 400 sailors along with Navy helicopters and local and federal firefighters poured water on the carrier-like ship, which erupted in flames Sunday morning.

Rear Adm. Philip Sobeck said fire temperatures had reached up to 1,000 degrees, causing the mast of the ship to collapse and threatening the central control island where the captain operates the vessel. He said there were about two decks between the fire and the fuel supplies.

Water being dumped on the vessel was causing the 840-foot ship to list to one side, but crews were pumping off the water.

Sobeck said it was too soon to give up on saving the 23-year-old amphibious assault

ship, which has been undergoing maintenance since 2018.

"I feel absolutely hopeful because we have sailors giving it their all," said Sobeck, commander of Expeditionary Strike Group 3.

The fire was first reported in a lower cargo area where seafaring tanks and landing craft are parked. It appears to have started where cardboard boxes, rags and other maintenance supplies were being stored, Sobeck said.

A fire suppression system had been turned off because it was being worked on as part of the ongoing maintenance. The system uses Halon, a liquefied, compressed gas that disrupts a fire and stops its spread by cutting off its oxygen.

Sobeck said there was no ordnance on board the ship and he did not believe there was anything toxic.

However, the flames were burning plastic, cabling and other materials, sending a haze over downtown San Diego.

US challenges China's claims in South China Sea

BY WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

China's claims to natural resources across most of the South China Sea "are completely unlawful, as is its campaign of bullying to control them," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Monday in the State Department's most vigorous pushback to date on the disputed sea.

"The United States champions a free and open Indo-Pacific," Pompeo said in the policy statement, which aligns America's position with a 2016 international court ruling. "[China] has no legal grounds to unilaterally impose its will on the region.

"Beijing uses intimidation to undermine the sovereign rights of Southeast Asian coastal states in the South China Sea, bully them out of offshore resources, assert unilateral dominion, and replace international law with 'might makes right.'"

China asserts sovereignty over most of the South China Sea, claims disputed to various degrees by the neighboring na-

tions of the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia and Brunei.

In 2016, the Hague's Permanent Court of Arbitration determined that, under the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention, China's claims over isles and reefs in the Spratly Islands near the Philippines were baseless.

China has ignored the ruling, and in recent years built and militarized artificial islands in the area.

"Today we are aligning the U.S. position on [China's] maritime claims in the [South China Sea] with the Tribunal's decision," the statement said.

It specifically rejected China's claims over Scarborough Shoal and the Spratly Islands near the Philippines; waters surrounding Vanguard Bank off Vietnam, Luconia Shoals off Malaysia, Natuna Besar off Indonesia; waters in Brunei's exclusive economic zone; and James Shoal, an entirely submerged reef off the coast of Malaysia.

The policy made no change in the United

States' long-held position of taking no sides in the sovereignty disputes.

The change coincides with a far more robust presence by the U.S. military in the sea, where the U.S. Navy has stepped up the pace and visibility of operations in recent months.

Last week, the aircraft carriers USS Nimitz and USS Ronald Reagan conducted joint operations in the South China Sea and were joined by a B-52 bomber.

That show of force came as China was concluding its own maritime exercise near the Paracel Islands, an archipelago that Vietnam also claims as its own.

China routinely encroaches on waters within neighboring nations' so-called exclusive economic zones.

China's embassy in Washington issued a statement Monday saying the U.S. State Department "deliberately distorts the facts and international law" and attempts to "sow discord between China and other littoral countries."

Bonhomme Richard's fate still uncertain

The San Diego Union-Tribune

For as long as the Navy has had ships, there have been fires, and some have been deadly. That the Bonhomme Richard appears to have escaped without fatalities also explains why the fire has been so hard to put out.

Hardly anyone was on board when it started.

"As counterintuitive as this sounds, I would much rather fight a fire at sea with a whole crew than fight it dockside," said Bryan McGrath, a retired Navy commander. "The ability to act quickly with a massive response and inhibit the spread is aided when you have all your people."

Some military experts believe the Bonhomme Richard can't be saved, and if that's the case, the mini-aircraft carrier — it

was being retrofitted to deploy the latest-generation fighter jets — would be among the largest Navy ships ever lost.

It's already joined the ranks of significant noncombat fires and explosions that have occurred while ships have been at a stateside pier or anchored nearby.

In 1905, the gunboat Bennington blew up in San Diego Bay, killing 65 sailors. In 1944, 322 people died when an ammunition ship exploded at a port north of San Francisco. Fifty people perished in 1960 when the carrier Constellation caught fire during the final stages of construction at the Brooklyn Naval Yard.

"We obviously don't know yet what happened here, but the dangers in the industrial environment are well-understood,"

McGrath said. "Crews are grinding, welding, chipping — all those activities have the capacity to start a fire, and a ship is full of flammable materials."

McGrath, who spent 21 years in the Navy, including a stint as commander of the Bulkeley, a guided-missile destroyer, said crews at sea are trained to set smoke and flame boundaries when a fire breaks out, limiting its spread to adjacent spaces.

"It's not like a structural fire; you can't just pour water on it from the outside," he said. "You have to be inside where the fire is, get to the source of it."

That's easier done if the ship is fully staffed. The Bonhomme Richard has about 1,000 sailors assigned to it. When it caught fire Sunday morning at Naval Base San Diego, about 160 people were on board.

Sixty-one people — 38 sailors and 23 civilians — were treated for minor injuries, including heat exhaustion and smoke inhalation, the Navy said.

An investigation will be "exhaustive," McGrath said, and probably last months.

Also to be determined is the fate of the ship, which cost \$761 million, according to estimates by the Federation of American Scientists, and was at the tail-end of a two-year, \$250 million upgrade. Navy officials said they are hopeful it will sail again, but some military observers — noting the extensive damage so far, including the collapse of the forward mast — believe it will have to be scrapped.

Even if the ship is saved, it will be out of action for an extended period of time.

Sailors, Marines must don formal uniforms around DC

BY WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

The U.S. Navy and Marine Corps have ordered service members to wear more formal uniforms while at the Pentagon and other sites in the National Capital Region to project a more professional look.

As of July 6, the Navy has restricted sailors from wearing Navy Working Uniform Type III and flight suits inside the Pentagon and Pentagon Library and Conference Hall, the Navy said in a message this month. The greenish-brown Type III uniform is the Navy's standard working attire.

Sailors may not wear them in the National Mall area that is bounded by Capitol Hill and the surrounding Senate and House Staff offices, the White House and Executive Office Building, Department of State and all monuments and memorials, the Navy said.

A Marine Corps directive issued last month required its service members to wear the

seasonal "B" or "C" uniforms at the Pentagon. That uniform consists of olive-green trousers or skirt and a khaki shirt.

"We aligned the Navy-Marine Corps uniform policies in the National Capital Region and the Pentagon Reservation to demonstrate a unified, professional image of our integrated Naval Force," Ed Zeigler, a spokesman for Naval District Washington, told Military.com.

The change was made in coordination with Navy and Marine Corps leadership, he said.

Sailors are exempted from the requirement if they are authorized for a Joint Task Force National Capital Region mission, the Navy said. Exemptions are also made for Navy personnel on watch-standing duty in the National Military Command Center, Navy Operations Center and DiLorenzo Tricare Health Clinic.

Sailors wearing the Type III working uniform may stop outside Defense Department bases or installations for emergencies only.

Japan report warns of virus threat, aggressive competitors

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The coronavirus pandemic made the list of primary security concerns for Japan this year, alongside familiar names like China, Russia and North Korea, according to a Ministry of Defense white paper released Tuesday.

The ministry releases a report on its guiding philosophies, goals and challenges each summer. This year's document outlines security trends similar to those highlighted in 2019, including China's "relentless" militarization and coercion in the South China Sea and North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

"Such military trends in North Korea pose grave and imminent threats to Japan's security," the document said.

The defense ministry paper advises the government to "keep an eye on" the coronavirus' spread as it brings "diverse impacts and restrictions

to military activities of respective countries."

The virus reached global pandemic status in March and temporarily sidelined a U.S. aircraft carrier, but it has not crippled military activity by Japan's chief ally or its competitors, according to the white paper. In Russia, "even amid the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic within the forces, military activities have remained active," the report said. COVID-19 is the respiratory disease caused by the coronavirus.

The Japan Self-Defense Forces contributed significant efforts against the coronavirus, the white paper states. About 2,700 JSDF personnel worked aboard the Diamond Princess cruise ship that in February quarantined its 3,700 passengers and crew in Yokohama Bay.

Japan's service members also administered nearly half of all coronavirus tests given at Tokyo's Narita and Haneda international airports between March 28 and May 31.

Marine Corps to house new arrivals on base on Okinawa

BY DAVE ORNAUER AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — New arrivals to Marine Corps bases on Okinawa will no longer stay in local hotels during their 14-day coronavirus quarantine but will instead be lodging on Camp Foster, the Marines announced Tuesday.

The Marine Corps on Okinawa was struck with a cluster of coronavirus cases last week that has created several dozen infections at three bases so far: Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, Camp Hansen and Camp Kinser.

Marines and their families arriving for permanent changes of station have been quarantined in recent weeks on Marine bases and at the DoubleTree by Hilton Okinawa Chatan Resort. Complaints of their presence in town have surfaced in local and national Japanese media.

The new cases are another complication in a sometimes-tense relationship between Okinawa and the U.S. military. Okinawa Gov. Denny Tamaki said it was “extremely regrettable” that so many cases had surged among U.S. personnel in just a week.

The “decision was made that all new inbound personnel will be housed on base,” after representatives of Marine Corps Installation Command met with Okinawa prefectural government officials Tuesday, Marine spokesman Maj. Ken Kunze said in an email to Stars and Stripes on Tuesday.

“It’s about being gracious to our hosts and making them feel comfortable,” he added during a follow-up phone call that day.

The Kadena cases are the first there since

three were reported in late March. The air base has imposed restrictions on use of some of its facilities and off-base dining and entertainment.

Also, Air Force personnel from Kadena may travel to MCAS Futenma and Camps Hansen and Kinser only on official business. They have also been urged to limit their travel to and from other Marine bases on the island. Activity and movement on those camps are restricted.

Tracing the affected individuals’ contacts found no exposure to anyone in the local community, according to a post late Monday on the official base Facebook page. Health authorities are continuing to look for additional exposures, the post states.

At the Marines’ Camp Foster, personnel waiting in base lodging to leave the island will be moved to the DoubleTree by Hilton Okinawa Chatan Resort to make way for inbound personnel, Kunze said.

At no time will the two populations be allowed to mix, he said.

“It’s a decision we thought was prudent ... between base officials and the Okinawa prefectural government” Kunze said. “It eases concerns, knowing [inbound personnel and their families] are coming on base and staying on base.”

Also Tuesday, the health official said 130 Japanese bar and nightclub employees in Chatan village, a popular nightlife district, were tested en masse on Sunday by the prefectural government. All came back negative.

It’s customary in Japan for some government officials to speak to the media on condition of anonymity.

Missing airman returns to Osan

From staff reports

SEOUL, South Korea — A U.S. airman who went missing last week returned safely to Osan Air Base on Tuesday nearly a week after he was reported absent from his unit, the military said.

The Air Force launched a search for Staff Sgt. Tristin Blake Jarvis, 26, of the 51st Force Support Squadron on July 9, saying he was last seen in the vicinity of the Osan Fitness Center the day before, according to the 51st Fighter Wing.

Jarvis “safely reported to Osan Air Base” at about 4:15 p.m. Tuesday, the 51st Fighter Wing said in a press release. The airman was reported absent from his unit on July 9.

Wing commander Col. John Gonzales expressed gratitude to U.S. security forces teams, South Korean police, community partners and people on base “for quickly coming together and helping us locate him safely.”

More details were not immediately provided.

Marine who drowned in Hawaii remembered

BY CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

Dozens of loved ones gathered in North Carolina late last week for a candlelight vigil in memory of a Marine who drowned in Hawaii last month.

Sgt. James Jayqon Parker, 26, of Rocky Mount, N.C., died two weeks ago, but funeral arrangements had not yet been finalized, a brief obituary on the website of the H.D. Pope Funeral Home in his hometown said.

“James was a brother that could never be replaced — he was a friend that could never be replaced. We started out as friends and we ended as brothers,” said Darrius Epps, before being overcome with emotion during the memorial, which was livestreamed Friday on Facebook.

An infantryman with 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, Parker was pulled unresponsive from the water at Marine Corps Base Hawaii’s Pyramid Rock Beach on June

28, said 1st Lt. Colin B. Kennard, a III Marine Expeditionary Force spokesman, in an emailed statement Monday.

Parker was pronounced dead after being transported to Castle Medical Center in Kailua.

Parker joined the service in December 2015. His awards and decorations included the Global War On Terrorism Service Medal, Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal and Sea Service Deployment Ribbon, said a service history Kennard provided.

Parker was the father of a young son who attended the memorial Friday with Parker’s mother. His friends presented them with face masks printed with Parker’s name and rank, which some friends also wore.

After remembering Parker’s sense of humor and sharing memories, the friends and family released blue and black balloons into the sky, a video streamed live on Facebook by user Cynthia A. Brewer showed.

Task force: Control virus, then reopen school

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A top member of the White House coronavirus task force said Tuesday that “none of us lie” to the public, an accusation President Donald Trump had retweeted, and that while kids need to be back in school as Trump has insisted, “we have to get the virus under control.”

Adm. Brett Giroir’s comment came a day after Trump shared a Twitter post from a former game show host who, without evidence, accused government medical experts at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, among others, of “lying.”

Trump himself has at times disregarded the advice of his medical experts on the task force and continues to play down the threat from the virus as it spikes across the country, forcing some states to slow or reverse steps to reopen their economies.

Asked on NBC’s “Today,” whether the CDC and other doctors are lying, Giroir allowed that mistakes have been made and that public guidance is updated when more is learned about the virus, “but none of us lie. We are completely transparent with the American people.”

Trump has said on several occasions that the virus will

“just disappear.” Giroir, Assistant Secretary for Health at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, said that is unlikely “unless we take active steps to make it disappear.” He appealed to people to wear masks, practice social distancing and to avoid bars and other tightly packed areas.

With virus cases spiking in the United States and the death toll mounting, the White House has worked to undercut its most trusted coronavirus expert, playing down the danger as Trump pushes to get the economy moving before he faces voters in November.

The U.S. has become a cautionary tale across the globe,

with once-falling cases now spiraling. Trump has suggested, however, that the severity of the pandemic which has killed more than 135,000 Americans is being overstated by critics to damage his reelection chances.

Trump on Monday retweeted a post by Chuck Woolery, onetime host of TV’s “Love Connection,” claiming that “Everyone is lying” about COVID-19. Woolery’s tweet attacked not just the media and Democrats, but also the CDC and most doctors “that we are told to trust. I think it’s all about the election and keeping the economy from coming back, which is about the election.”

Fla. reports highest one-day virus death total

Sun Sentinel

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — Florida’s COVID-19 emergency had equal measures of hope and despair Tuesday, with a record number of new deaths but a drop-off in new cases.

The state Department of Health reported that 4,514 people have died since the pandemic began, an increase of 132 since Monday’s report. It’s the latest in a two-week trend of a rising death rate.

But Tuesday’s report of 9,194 new cases of the highly infectious disease was the lowest number since Thursday.

The state has been down this bumpy path before with days of declining cases only to veer back into record-setting territory.

The previous two days brought a U.S. record with 15,300 cases on Sunday, followed by 12,624 cases on Monday.

In another troubling sign,

the positivity rate, a key figure to indicate the prevalence of the disease, increased again. The rate Tuesday was 15%, up from Monday’s 11.51% but still off last Wednesday’s peak of 18.4%.

In May, Florida’s positivity rate hovered around 5%.

Public health experts have said that a positivity rate of 10% or less is optimal. The World Health Organization has recommended a positivity rate of 5% before countries start to

reopen.

South Florida, which accounts for 29% of Florida’s population, reported 3,893 new cases in the past day, or 42.3% of the total.

The number of people being treated for COVID-19 at hospitals also continued to increase. The total is 8,253 patients statewide, as of midday Tuesday. It’s an increase of 181 since Monday, according to the Florida Agency for Healthcare Administration.

Concerns spur renewed efforts in fighting virus

Associated Press

LONDON — Britain and France announced Tuesday they will require people to wear face masks in public indoor spaces and an Australian state threatened to jail anyone caught violating quarantines, amid rising global fears about a resurgence of the coronavirus pandemic.

“We are not out of the woods yet, so let us all do our utmost to keep this virus cornered and enjoy summer safely,” British

Health Secretary Matt Hancock told lawmakers in the House of Commons.

British officials announced the requirement after weeks of dismissing the value of masks, and said it will take effect July 24. In France, President Emmanuel Macron said masks will be required by Aug. 1, after recent rave parties in France and widespread backsliding on social distancing raised concerns that the virus may be starting to rebound.

Meanwhile, officials in the

Australian state of Queensland said those breaking quarantine rules could face up to six months in jail.

The current set of fines for breaking a mandatory 14-day hotel quarantine for some visitors or lying about their whereabouts “appears not to be enough” in some cases, Queensland Deputy Premier Steven Miles said.

With higher fines and a threat of six months’ imprisonment, “I hope that will demonstrate to the public just how serious

we are about enforcing these measures,” Miles said.

Queensland shut its state borders to successfully contain the outbreak, but reopened to all but residents of Victoria, Australia’s worst affected region, two weeks ago.

The city of Melbourne in Victoria recorded 270 new coronavirus infections overnight, with more than 4,000 cases now active across the state. Melbourne is one week into a six-week lockdown in an attempt to stop a spike in new cases there.

US carries out 1st federal execution since 2003

Associated Press

TERRE HAUTE, Ind. — The federal government on Tuesday carried out its first execution in almost two decades, killing by lethal injection a man convicted of murdering an Arkansas family in a 1990s plot to build a whites-only nation in the Pacific Northwest.

The execution of Daniel Lewis Lee came over the objection of the victims' relatives and following days of legal wrangling and delays.

Lee, 47, of Yukon, Okla., professed his innocence just before he was executed at the federal prison in Terre Haute, Ind.

"I didn't do it," Lee said. "I've made a lot of mistakes in my life, but I'm not a murderer."

His final words were: "You're killing an innocent man."

The decision to move forward with the first execution by the Bureau of Prisons since 2003 — and two others scheduled later in the week — drew scrutiny from civil rights groups

and the relatives of Lee's victims, who had sued to try to halt it, citing concerns about the coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic has killed more than 135,000 people in the United States and is ravaging prisons nationwide.

Critics argued that the government was creating an unnecessary and manufactured urgency for political gain.

The developments are likely to add a new front to the national conversation about criminal justice reform in the lead-up to the 2020 elections.

The execution of Lee, who died at 8:07 a.m. EDT, went off after a series of legal volleys that ended when the Supreme Court stepped in early Tuesday in a 5-4 ruling and allowed it to move forward.

Attorney General William Barr has said the Justice Department has a duty to carry out the sentences imposed by the courts, including the death penalty, and to bring a sense of closure to the victims and those

in the communities where the killings happened.

But relatives of those killed by Lee in 1996 strongly opposed that idea and long argued that Lee deserved a sentence of life in prison. They wanted to be present to counter any contention that the execution was being done on their behalf.

They noted that Lee's co-defendant and the reputed ringleader, Chevie Kehoe, received a life sentence.

Kehoe, of Colville, Wash., recruited Lee in 1995 to join his white supremacist organization, known as the Aryan Peoples' Republic. Two years later, they were arrested for the killings of gun dealer William Mueller, his wife, Nancy, and her 8-year-old daughter, Sarah Powell, in Tilly, Ark., about 75 miles northwest of Little Rock.

A U.S. District Court judge put a hold on Lee's execution Monday, over concerns from death row inmates on how executions were to be carried out, and an appeals court upheld it,

but the high court overturned it. That delay came after an appeals court Sunday overturned a hold that had been put in place last week after the victims' relatives argued they would be put at high risk for the coronavirus if they had to travel to attend the execution.

Two other federal executions are scheduled for later this week, though one remains on hold in a separate legal claim.

There have been two state executions in the U.S. since the pandemic forced shutdowns nationwide in mid-March — one in Texas and one in Missouri, according to the Death Penalty Information Center. Alabama carried out one in early March.

Executions on the federal level have been rare, and the government has put to death only three defendants since restoring the federal death penalty in 1988 — most recently in 2003, when Louis Jones was executed for the 1995 kidnapping, rape and murder of a young female soldier.

Former VA staffer faces 7 charges of murder

Associated Press

A former staffer at a Veterans Affairs hospital in West Virginia is being charged with killing seven patients by giving them fatal doses of insulin, according to court documents unsealed Tuesday.

Reta Mays, a former nursing assistant at the Louis A. Johnson VA Medical Center in Clarksburg, W.Va., is being charged with second-degree murder in the deaths of seven people and assault with the intent to commit murder of an eighth person.

Mays' attorney did not immediately return a voicemail seeking comment. She had a plea hearing scheduled for Tuesday.

Federal government's monthly budget deficit hits all-time high of \$864B in US

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The federal government incurred the biggest monthly budget deficit in history in June as spending on programs to combat the coronavirus recession exploded while millions of job losses cut into tax revenues.

The Treasury Department reported Monday that the deficit hit \$864 billion last month, an amount of red ink that surpasses most annual deficits in the nation's history and is above the previous monthly deficit record of \$738 billion in April. That amount was also tied to the trillions of dollars Congress has provided to cushion the impact of the widespread shutdowns that occurred in an effort to limit the spread of the viral pandemic.

For the first nine months of this budget year, which began

Oct. 1, the deficit totals \$2.74 trillion, also a record for that period. That puts the country well on the way to hitting the \$3.7 trillion deficit for the whole year that has been forecast by the Congressional Budget Office. That total would surpass the previous annual record of \$1.4 trillion set in 2009 when the government was spending heavily to lift the country out of the recession caused by the 2008 financial crisis.

The June deficit was driven higher by spending on various government relief programs such as an extra \$600 per week in expanded unemployment benefits and a Paycheck Protection Program that provided support to businesses to keep workers on their payrolls.

The report showed that the cost of the Paycheck Protection Program in June was \$511 billion. That reflected a charge to

the government for all the bank loans made under the program even though the government will not actually have to pay out funds until the banks determine whether the businesses met the criteria for having the loans forgiven. Those requirements include spending at least 60% of the loan amount on worker pay with the other 40% going to overhead costs such as rent and utilities.

Another reason for the surge in the June deficit was the government's decision to delay tax payments this year until July 15. That decision means that quarterly payments made by individual taxpayers and corporations will not be due until July 15 this year rather than June.

The CBO estimate of a \$3.7 trillion deficit for this year could go higher depending on the course of the economy.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Officials: Deputy falsely reported his assault

VA WARRENTON — Authorities said a sheriff's deputy in Virginia who claimed he was the victim of a roadside assault was not telling the truth.

Fauquier County Sheriff's Deputy Jake Dooley was charged with falsely summoning law enforcement after detectives from the sheriff's office investigated his claims, the Fauquier County Sheriff's Office said in a Facebook post.

Dooley, 22, made the allegations after a passerby found him lying unconscious on a roadside in Marshall, a town in the county, according to the sheriff's office.

Investigators previously said the deputy was struck in the head with an object by an individual in another car. Officials said it had happened as he was walking back to his patrol car after stopping to remove a hazard from a road.

For sale: A tiny house made by students

MI HANCOCK — A tiny house built by teenagers in the Upper Peninsula is up for sale.

Bids start at \$29,000 for the house, which was built by students in a technical program offered by the Copper Country Intermediate School District in Hancock. The house stands on an 8-foot-by-20-foot trailer.

So-called tiny houses have been embraced by people seeking a minimalist lifestyle. This one has water and sewer hook-up, an electric stove, 50-amp electric service, a carpeted loft and a queen bed.

Gavin Simonson, who will be a senior at Hancock Central High School, said he worked on it for two hours a day between September and March. With

just a few exceptions, the work was done only by students.

Biologists: No cause for alarm over dead fish

ME BANGOR — The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife said there's no cause for alarm by reports of dead fish in four northern lakes.

A large number of fish, mostly yellow perch, have died on Long Lake, Cross Lake, Square Lake and Madawaska Lake, Frank Frost, the department's fisheries resource supervisor for the Fish River Lakes Region, told the Bangor Daily News.

Such fish kills are often caused by temperature stress, said David Russell, a state fish pathologist.

Russell said the fact that fish are dying needn't cause alarm, and he noted in a blog post that thousands of dead white and yellow perch can be observed each year in some part of the state.

Swimming area closed due to sewage spill

HI KAILUA — Officials closed a swimming area and part of a road after a rupture released untreated sewage on Hawaii island.

The sewer line break discharged about 20,000 gallons of sewage onto a street in Kailua-Kona, West Hawaii Today reported.

Crews quickly diverted the sewage to a different pump station, Hawaii County Department of Environmental Management Wastewater Division Superintendent Alike DeMello said.

Swimmers were told to leave the area of Niunalu Beach at Kailua Bay, and signs were posted warning of contaminated water.

Police say man had fake gun during standoff

CA SACRAMENTO — A man brandished what police later learned was a fake gun during a standoff that resulted in the evacuation of a hotel, authorities said.

Guests were evacuated from a Comfort Inn in Red Bluff during the standoff between police and a domestic violence suspect, The Sacramento Bee reported.

Christian Sandoval-Perez, 21, of Corning, faces multiple charges including child abuse and domestic violence, the Red Bluff Police Department said in a release.

Officers went to the hotel's second floor and encountered Sandoval-Perez with a gun. He held off police for more than 75 minutes, police said. After he put down the gun and allowed himself to be taken into custody, police determined the weapon was fake.

Agriculture agency warns of rabbit disease

VT MONTPELIER — The Vermont Agency of Agriculture is warning rabbit owners about an exotic disease that affects both wild and domestic rabbits that is spreading through the western United States.

The deadly disease is called rabbit hemorrhagic disease and has been found in California, Nevada, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah and Texas, and has also been identified in Mexico.

The virus is not related to the coronavirus and it does not infect humans or domestic animals other than rabbits.

State Veterinarian Kristin Haas says the state is greatly concerned for Vermont rabbit owners.

Woman marks 105th birthday with parade

IN WESTFIELD — A suburban Indianapolis woman turned 105 years old with a car parade to mark the occasion.

Ruth George celebrated her birthday Saturday in Westfield, according to WTHR-TV. A line of cars drove by the seniors center where she lives and greeted her. Family, friends and a few strangers participated.

She said she has been lonely without a lot of visitors, but the parade cheered her up.

George, a three-time cancer survivor, said her secret is working hard and trusting in God.

Police: In-debt man took catalytic converters

AZ MARICOPA — A man in Maricopa was arrested for allegedly stealing catalytic converters to cover a gambling loss, according to police.

They said that Daniel Danforth, 34, was held on suspicion of burglary in the third degree, possession of burglary tools, possession of dangerous drugs and possession of drug paraphernalia.

A man told Maricopa police that he had parked his car to do business. When he returned, he saw someone underneath his vehicle, but the suspect fled in a green pickup truck.

The Casa Grande Dispatch reported police found that the exhaust pipe on the victim's car had been cut. Police said the man may have been trying to steal its catalytic converter, which reduces the amount of pollutants and toxic gases that vehicles produce.

From wire reports

STARS AND STRIPES

On a mission to provide credible reporting and daily news to America's military, wherever they serve.

Mobile apps available: www.stripes.com/apps.

NHL teams return to ice after 3 months

Associated Press

St. Louis Blues goalie Jordan Binnington is so accustomed to wearing a mask, he didn't mind doing so for the past four months during the coronavirus pandemic.

"Sometimes, I forgot I'm wearing it while driving," Binnington said Monday, when the Blues were among the NHL's 24 teams to open training camp for the upcoming playoffs. "You make fun of those people who are driving by themselves with a mask on, but I sometimes forget."

Goalies weren't the only ones wearing masks as the NHL hit the ice, en masse, in the first full glimpse of hockey's return since the regular season was placed on pause March 12.

Masked equipment managers patrolled the benches, clearing them of water bottles and towels following practices. In Nashville, general manager David Poile, 70, wore one while watching the Predators practice from a private suite.

And in Dallas, Stars interim coach Rick Bowness wore a mask while observing practice from an empty bench. At 65, he wasn't taking any chances.

"I was going to err on the side of caution. I'm still very nervous about the COVID, and we haven't tested our players since last Thursday," Bowness said. Once results come back, he intends to return to the ice, perhaps as early as Wednesday.

Players and staff all have their eyes on resuming the season with an expanded 24-team playoff set to begin in two hub cities — Toronto and Edmonton, Alberta — on Aug. 1.

"On the ice is normal," Washington Capitals captain Alex Ovechkin said. "On the ice is same rules what we have before. But soon as you step off the ice in the locker room, everybody have to wear a mask. It's kind of weird, but I'm pretty sure we're going to get used to it."

Players and everyone else who will be spending up to two months inside the "bubble" —

including hotel staff, bus drivers and arena workers — will have no other choice but to get accustomed to the new reality if the NHL hopes to complete its most unique season. Once games resume, they will be played in empty arenas, with as many as three games played per day at each site, and with the Stanley Cup awarded in late September at the earliest.

There is no guarantee the league will be able to pull it off.

Though the familiar sound of pucks, skates and sticks echoed through arenas once again, the reminders of COVID-19 were also prevalent.

The NHL announced that 43 players had tested positive for the coronavirus from June 8 through the end of the league's optional workouts. In Toronto, star forward Auston Matthews confirmed he tested positive while spending the break at his home in Arizona last month.

"It was the safest place to be. And then obviously things flipped pretty quickly there," Matthews said. "I did my quar-

antine, and I'm feeling healthy now, so it's all good."

In Pittsburgh, the Penguins voluntarily sidelined nine players after learning they may have had secondary exposure to a person testing positive for COVID-19. NHL rules barred the Penguins from revealing who the players were, but the most notable player not on the ice was forward Patric Hornqvist.

It was a far different story in Denver, where the Avalanche had nearly a fully complement of players practicing, which is a considerable turnaround. Nathan MacKinnon, Mikko Rantanen, Nazem Kadri, Cale Makar and goalie Philipp Grubauer were among the formerly injured players back on the ice, with only center Colin Wilson deemed not fit to play.

In St. Louis, the defending champion Blues welcomed back scoring star Vladimir Tarasenko, who sustained a major injury to his shoulder 10 games into the season and was projected to miss five months.

NBA 'bubble' faces first big challenge at Disney World

Associated Press

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Houston's Russell Westbrook hasn't made it to the NBA restart yet.

The coronavirus did — but health protocols seemed to work as the league and its players hoped they would.

On a day of troubling news for the league — Westbrook revealing that he has tested positive for the virus and two other players facing 10-day quarantines for leaving the league campus perimeter at Walt Disney World — it was also announced that two players tested positive for the virus after arriving in Central Florida last week.

But neither of those positive players ever made it out of quarantine, so neither entered the so-called bubble and could mingle freely with other players, coaches and staff. The

NBA said both players, neither of whom were identified, "have since left the Campus to isolate at home or in isolation housing." They could rejoin their teams later.

"Our protocols are unbelievable," said Toronto Raptors guard Kyle Lowry, one of the players who helped craft the restart rules. "I think our protocols and our health and safety measures have been top-notch. I think this thing will work perfectly. ... We're doing everything that we can possibly do to make sure that we're healthy, we're safe and we're in an environment where we can be successful and do our jobs at a high level."

It's unclear when Westbrook will arrive. As recently as Sunday, the Rockets believed that Westbrook, NBA scoring leader James Harden and newly re-acquired Luc Mbah a Moute — none of the three traveled

with the team to Walt Disney World near Orlando last week — would be with the team in the next few days.

In Westbrook's case, that now seems most unlikely.

"I tested positive for covid-19 prior to my teams departure to Orlando," Westbrook wrote on his social media channels. "I'm currently feeling well, quarantined, and looking forward to rejoining my teammates when I am cleared."

The arrival dates for Harden and Mbah a Moute are murky as well. Neither player has revealed why they aren't at Disney, and Rockets coach Mike D'Antoni would only say that "these are things that people are dealing with."

D'Antoni said Westbrook had taken part in individual workouts when they were permitted back in Houston, but declined to elaborate further on the guard's condition. He also isn't

sure when the missing Rockets will arrive.

"I did have one year of premed," D'Antoni said. "But I don't know when it's going to happen. As soon as protocols get out of the way ... they're all anxious to get here and they're doing what they need to do to stay in shape."

"This is not going to set us back. We're not going to let it set us back, and we're going to be ready to roll here in the next two, three weeks."

Houston has clinched a playoff spot and resumes its season with the first of eight seeding games on July 31 against Dallas.

"I'm praying for his safety and the same for his family," Phoenix guard Devin Booker said of Westbrook. "Hopefully he can get healthy and get down here as soon as possible."

Other teams face scrutiny over names

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — The spotlight for change is shining on the Cleveland Indians.

Now that the NFL's Washington Redskins have retired their contentious nickname and logo after decades of objection and amid a nationwide movement calling for racial justice, the Indians appear to be the next major sports franchise that might assume a new identity.

Along with the Indians, who recently announced they are in the early stages of evaluating a name change for the first time in 105 years, the Atlanta Braves, Chicago Blackhawks and Super Bowl champion Kansas City Chiefs are among those facing backlash along with the potential of sponsors pulling their financial support.

For some, the time has come for widespread changes to sports nicknames, mascots and symbols as the country reckons

with its legacy of racism.

"I understand people aren't willing to change so quickly, or they're hoping this moment is going to pass. It's not," said activist Frances Danger, who is Muscogee (Creek) and Seminole from Oklahoma. "And now that we've gotten what we needed on the Redskins side, we're going to start working on the rest of them. We're not going to let up."

On Monday, Washington announced it was dropping a nickname that had been in place since 1933. The team buckled under financial pressure from sponsors including FedEx, the shipping giant and naming rights holder to the team's stadium, as well as other groups.

While the debate over the Redskins' nickname raged for years, the drastic change came just two weeks after owner Dan Snyder, who once said he would never change the team's moni-

ker, said the franchise would undergo a "thorough review" before its next move.

Cleveland's situation is different from Washington's on several fronts.

First, the Indians are not feeling heat from any corporate sponsors. At least not publicly.

When the Redskins announced their review earlier this month, the Indians released a statement within hours of Washington's that said, "we are committed to engaging our community and appropriate stakeholders to determine the best path forward with regard to our team name."

The Indians didn't promise to change their nickname. But it would be hard to imagine them going through a detailed evaluation and deciding to stick with a nickname that Native American groups have condemned for years as degrading and racist.

Cleveland showed a willingness to rebrand itself when it pulled the highly debated Chief Wahoo logo off its game jerseys and caps. While the red-faced, toothy caricature remains a presence on some team merchandise, its removal from the diamond and signage around Progressive Field was applauded as a positive step.

While the Indians seem open to a new identity, the Braves aren't budging.

They have no plans to change their nickname, telling season-ticket holders in a letter last week that "we will always be the Atlanta Braves." However, the team said it will review the team's "tomahawk chop" chant — a tradition borrowed in the early 1990s from Florida State's football program.

The Blackhawks, too, have no plans for change, saying their name honors a Native American leader, Black Hawk of Illinois' Sac & Fox Nation.

Patriot League latest conference to cancel fall sports

Associated Press

The Patriot League joined the Ivy League on Monday, punting on football and other fall sports because of the coronavirus pandemic while holding out hope the games can be made up.

The Patriot League said its 10 Division I schools will also not compete in men's and women's soccer, women's volleyball and field hockey. The conference's council of presidents said the league will consider playing those seasons in the winter and spring.

"Really, really tough decision," Patriot League Commissioner Jennifer Heppel said. "Nobody's happy. Happy is a word that's kind of gone out the window."

The conference is mostly composed of private schools located in the Northeast that offer limited athletic scholarships. Pennsylvania rivals Lehigh and Lafayette have played 155 times, more than any opponents in college football history.

Army and Navy are league members, but not in football.

Heppel said news about the United States' inability to control the pandemic coming out of the July 4 weekend heightened concern within the Patriot League about its ability to safely conduct a sports season.

"That really spurred a lot of individual conversations of, 'What are you thinking? Where are you? How might we best begin to think about moving forward?'" she said. "And that led into more collective conversations last week."

The Patriot League competes in Division I's second tier of college football (FCS) like the Ivy League, which announced a similar decision last week. Unlike the Ivy League, the Patriot League participates in the FCS playoffs.

"Of course you take note," Heppel said of the Ivy's decision. "When a decision that's made like the Ivy made that hadn't been made before, you want to understand because in-

formation is valuable."

Meanwhile, Southeastern Conference athletic directors met in person in Birmingham, Ala., to discuss how the SEC can have a football season as COVID-19 cases spike throughout much of the South.

"It is clear that current circumstances related to COVID-19 must improve and we will continue to closely monitor developments around the virus on a daily basis," SEC Commissioner Greg Sankey said in a statement after the meeting.

The meeting had been scheduled for a while but came just days after the Big Ten and Pac-12 said they would play conference-only schedules this fall in football and a number of other sports.

"We believe that late July will provide the best clarity for making the important decisions ahead of us," Sankey said.

Some programs are taking steps toward playing and even starting football seasons on time. Monday was the first

day the NCAA allowed football players to take part in mandatory team activities with coaches, including unpadded walk-through practices.

Florida State posted a video on social media of its team hitting the field with players and coaches wearing face coverings and shields to help stop the spread of the virus.

Pac-12 football teams will have to wait. Last week, conference presidents delayed mandatory team activities, acknowledging the league would likely delay the start of the fall sports seasons.

Army and Navy play football in the highest tier of Division I and were exempt from the Patriot League's decision regarding other fall sports. The Patriot League council said the service academies will be allowed to pursue competition in those sports in which they usually compete within the conference, including soccer and volleyball, as the schools' leaders see fit.