

# STARS AND STRIPES®

Wednesday, July 15, 2020

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Explosion threat eases as Navy ship burns

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — A fire aboard a U.S. warship moved away from fuel tanks, easing the threat of an explosion or a million-gallon oil spill in the San Diego harbor, but it was too early to say whether the vessel can be saved, a top Navy official said.

Days of battling flames deep within the USS Bonhomme Richard were bearing fruit and the blaze could be declared out sometime Wednesday, said Rear Adm. Philip Sobeck, commander of the strike group that includes the Bonhomme Richard as its flagship.

But he cautioned Tuesday that there was still “a major fire inside” being fought by hundreds of sailors who were focusing on two isolated spots near the ship’s bow and stern.

Fuel was stored below the waterline and the risk of it spilling or exploding was now “very low,” Sobeck said, although the U.S.

Coast Guard was standing by in order to boom off any spill.

Navy officials were able to inspect four main engineering rooms and found no major damage, and the external structure of the ship appears to be safe, Sobeck said, but it was still unclear whether the 840-foot amphibious assault ship can be repaired.

“We haven’t been inside the ship well enough to be able to get a full picture,” Sobeck said.

It could cost the military an estimated \$4 billion to replace the ship, which is akin to a mini-aircraft carrier.

The Bonhomme Richard was undergoing maintenance when the fire was first reported Sunday morning in a lower cargo area where seafaring tanks are parked. It appears to have started where cardboard boxes, rags and other maintenance supplies were being stored, Sobeck said.

As of early Wednesday, helicopters had dumped 1,500 buckets of water on the ship,

cooling the superstructure and flight deck to enable crews to move further inside the ship to fight the blaze, a Navy statement said. Federal and local firefighters also fought the blaze and tugboats threw streams of seawater from the waterline.

More than 60 sailors and civilians have been treated for minor injuries, heat exhaustion and smoke inhalation. None remained hospitalized Wednesday.

Sobeck said the ship’s design may have helped spread the blaze.

“For this class of ship, the open area above the vehicle storage is all open, a big hangar,” he said. “Once the fire hit that amount of oxygen, it found other ways to go up.”

The fire raced along the ship’s ventilation and cables, causing it to traverse the ship. Cables and duct work snaking through hatches as part of the ship’s maintenance fed the fire and later created barriers to sailors trying to fight it, Sobeck said.

## Sailors share Navy bias stories with new task force

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Before Lt. Destini Henderson was nominated for the U.S. Naval Academy, she experienced her first barrier to her military career from her own congressman.

“I remember meeting with my congressional representative in Huntsville, Texas — that’s where I graduated from high school. And he made it pretty clear that he did not believe that I belonged in the Naval Academy. So my very first barrier was from my hometown,” she said.

Henderson, of the US Naval Academy Minority Association, was one of several sailors to speak Monday about her experiences with racism and sexism as a Black woman in the Navy during the first roundtable discussion with the leadership of a new task force that aims to address disruptive bias.

Task Force One Navy was established June 29 to recommend reforms in nine key areas, including recruiting, promotion, health care and military justice. Its creation follows other Defense Department efforts to address diversity in the military in

response to the national dialogue over the past month about systemic racism in the United States and police brutality.

The task force members are officers, enlisted personnel and civilians. It is led by Rear Adm. Alvin Holsey, an African American. Force Master Chief Huben Phillips, an African American, is the deputy, and the civilian adviser is Jane Roberts, who is Hispanic. All three listened to sailors’ stories during Monday’s discussion.

The leaders heard from sailors about racism, sexism and homophobia in the Navy and their recommendations for changes the task force could explore.

Henderson told the task force to assume that there are barriers everywhere for minorities. She described how her peers at the Naval Academy heckled her when she put her long hair into cornrows. And how the lack of representation at flight school meant she was one of two Black students to graduate.

Henderson was also “the only one that people could turn to” when sailors had questions or wanted to debate race and women’s issues.

“Those are things that maybe people don’t see as barriers, but it definitely load-

ed up my plate a lot more than it needed to be. And a lot more than my counterparts — white male counterparts, white female counterparts — had to deal with for sure,” she said.

Henderson said she wanted to see the task force work on providing education about the history of minorities in the Navy and acknowledgement of their service.

“I think education could absolutely go a long way. I remember taking naval history at the Naval Academy, but I didn’t hear anything about minorities in the military, in naval history or anything like that,” she said.

Lt. Cmdr. Rolando Machado, of the Association of Naval Services Officers and a Naval Academy graduate, described his experiences as a Hispanic man who could not fully express his true self during his Navy career. Machado said he was raised in Miami and grew up in an environment where Hispanics were the majority. When he arrived at the Naval Academy where Hispanics are not the majority, he said he felt like “a fish out of water” and was not prepared for how the culture there would impact him.

## Army official: Details on troop cuts coming soon

By JOHN VANDIVER  
*Stars and Stripes*

STUTTGART, Germany — Details on a Pentagon plan to cut nearly 10,000 troops from Germany will be disclosed soon, a top U.S. Army official said Wednesday during a call with reporters.

“How it all specifically will roll out, the mechanical details, will come out in the coming weeks,” said Secretary of the Army Ryan D. McCarthy, who was in Poznan, Poland, on Wednesday to meet with soldiers based there.

McCarthy declined to say if the military has already identified the units that would be removed from Germany. “I am not going to get out in front of my boss on this one,” he said.

Last month, Defense Secretary Mark Esper said President Donald Trump approved a plan to reduce by one-third the number of troops in Germany. Roughly 20,700 of the 34,500 U.S. troops in Germany belong

to the Army. Trump has said that some of the 9,500 troops to be pulled out of Germany could be relocated to other countries in Europe while the rest would be sent back to the U.S. Some troops are expected to be sent to Poland, which has long sought a larger American military presence.

The withdrawal would be done in a way to ensure U.S. European Command can still meet its mission, McCarthy said.

The Pentagon said in a statement last month that reducing forces in Germany would “enhance Russian deterrence, strengthen NATO, reassure allies, improve U.S. strategic flexibility and U.S. European Command’s operational flexibility.”

But it didn’t elaborate on how cutting troop numbers would achieve those aims.

McCarthy declined to go into detail Wednesday when he was asked how the troop reduction would strengthen the military’s position in Europe.

## Form change could slow overseas post office visits

By ROSE L. THAYER  
*Stars and Stripes*

New electronic customs forms will be required in a month and could result in longer lines at military post offices for service members looking to mail packages back to the United States.

A previously delayed roll-out of the U.S. Postal Service’s electronic customs forms, which significantly changes how overseas service members mail packages, is set to go into effect Aug. 13, according to U.S. Army Europe’s Installation Management Command.

Overseas post offices will stop accepting handwritten customs declaration forms at that time. Military postal of-

ficials recommend customers begin adjusting to the change now and familiarize themselves with the new requirement. Customers can fill out and print the correct form online either at home or at computer-equipped kiosks that will be available at military post offices.

After Aug. 13, customers who fill out customs worksheets at the post office will have to wait as a postal clerk enters the information into the retail system, Bill Hilsher, chief of postal plans and policy at U.S. Army Europe, said in a statement. This will cause longer lines and wait times, he said. The change took effect stateside in March, but officials asked to delay the requirement at overseas military post offices, Hilsher said.

## House bill has \$1M to rename 10 posts

By COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — A draft of the 2021 defense funding bill approved Tuesday by a key House panel would support efforts to strip Army installations of Confederate-linked names, block Pentagon money for border wall construction and boost pay for troops.

The \$694.6 billion version of the 2021 Defense Appropriations Act passed by the House Appropriations Committee would provide \$1 million for the Army to rename 10 southern installations named for Confederate generals from the Civil War. After four hours of public debate, the bill passed Tuesday by a vote of 30-22, along party lines.

Democratic committee members, who lead the panel, praised the bill as an effort that takes strides to improve service members’ day-to-day lives and advances U.S. national security efforts.

“Most importantly, the bill continues to focus on the well-being and morale of those in uniform and their families, [Defense Department] civilians and their communities,” said Rep. Pete Visclosky, D-Ind., chairman of the House Appropriations Committee’s defense subpanel.

The wide-ranging bill would give American troops a 3% pay raise for the second consecutive year — the first back-to-back 3% boost in a decade. That effort matches a White House request and draft legislation passed recently by the Senate and House Armed Services Committees.

It also backs a White House effort to boost the size of the military, adding about \$7.5 billion for some 12,000 new troops, and includes about \$450 million for coronavirus-related efforts.

But the bill was not supported by the committee’s GOP members, including its top Republican, Rep. Kay Granger of Texas who voted against it because she said she believed even if passed in its current form it would be rejected by President Donald Trump.

Granger listed several issues included in the legislation likely to draw a veto from Trump, including the provisions aimed at blocking the Pentagon from diverting any of its funds to support wall construction along the U.S.-Mexico border and stripping Army posts of Confederate namesakes.

“We’ll have to drop or modify controversial language that could jeopardize this bill’s chances of being signed into law,” Granger said at the outset of debate on the bill. “This bill is simply too important to be slowed down by politics.”

The bill must be passed by Sept. 30 alongside another — the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act, which sets the Pentagon’s spending and policy priorities — to provide the Defense Department an on-time budget. Lawmakers, however, have said it is unlikely either will be passed on time, though they are hopeful to approve the measures by late fall.

Trump has already vowed to veto any legislation that reaches his desk that would rename any U.S. military installations, and is unlikely to accept any efforts to slow the building of border wall, which was one of the central themes of his 2016 presidential campaign.

Democrats have balked at Trump’s actions in recent years to divert nearly \$15 billion of Pentagon money meant for military construction, purchasing equipment for National Guard troops and other activities to fund the border barrier instead.

# US forces' control of virus alarms Japan

By **SETH ROBSON**  
AND **HANA KUSUMOTO**  
*Stars and Stripes*

TOKYO — The commander of U.S. Forces Japan on Wednesday admonished his personnel to adhere to public health restrictions a day after the country's defense minister cited "a number of problems" with military personnel arriving during the coronavirus pandemic.

Lt. Gen. Kevin Schneider's comments — delivered via a video message posted to Twitter that tagged Okinawa Gov. Denny Tamaki — came the same day that 36 new cases were reported at the Marine Corps' Camp Hansen on the southern island prefecture.

An Okinawa prefectural health official confirmed the Hansen cases to Stars and Stripes by phone Wednesday. They are the latest in clusters exceeding 100 infections that erupted a week ago at Camp Hansen and Marine Corps Air Station Futenma.

At a news conference Tuesday, which was recorded and posted on the ministry's website, Japanese Defense Minister Taro Kono singled out a U.S. military family that traveled Monday on a domestic flight to Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, in western Japan, after arriving at Haneda Airport in metro Tokyo. The family, Kono said, gave false information about their travel plans and later came up posi-

tive for the coronavirus.

Kono also cited the U.S. practice, soon to be curtailed, of housing military personnel newly arrived on Okinawa in an off-base hotel during their 14-day mandated quarantine.

Schneider, in his video message, called the coronavirus a challenge that will be around for the foreseeable future.

He and USFJ's senior enlisted leader, Chief Master Sgt. Rich Winegardner Jr., urged U.S. personnel in Japan to obey rules aimed at curbing the virus' spread.

"We are relying on all of you, whether you are a service member, a dependent, government civilian, contractor or anyone who lives or works on our bases," Schneider said.

"We must each continue making good decisions and reducing our risk of exposure ... our response as a community to this challenge has direct consequences on our Japanese partners."

Winegardner, in the same video, added: "No leader wants to see restrictions increase again but we might have to if the situation requires it."

Americans generally are denied entry to Japan due to the pandemic. U.S. service members, Defense Department civilian employees, contractors and their families are the exception; however, they must quarantine upon arrival and refrain from using public transportation to the quarantine site.

## Rule on colleges and foreign students rescinded

*Associated Press*

BOSTON — Facing eight federal lawsuits and opposition from hundreds of universities, the Trump administration Tuesday rescinded a rule that would have required international students to transfer or leave the country if their schools held classes entirely online because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The decision was announced at the start of a hearing in a federal lawsuit in Boston brought by Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. U.S. District Judge

Allison Burroughs said federal immigration authorities agreed to pull the July 6 directive and "return to the status quo."

A lawyer representing the Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement said only that the judge's characterization was correct.

The announcement brings relief to thousands of foreign students who had been at risk of being deported, along with universities that were scrambling to reassess their plans for the fall in light of the policy. With the policy rescinded, ICE

will revert to a directive from March that suspended typical limits around online education for foreign students.

Harvard President Lawrence Bacow called it a "significant victory."

"While the government may attempt to issue a new directive, our legal arguments remain strong and the Court has retained jurisdiction, which would allow us to seek judicial relief immediately to protect our international students should the government again act unlawfully," Bacow said in a statement.

MIT's president said his institution also stands ready "to protect our students from any further arbitrary policies."

"This case also made abundantly clear that real lives are at stake in these matters, with the potential for real harm," President L. Rafael Reif said in a statement. "We need to approach policy making, especially now, with more humanity, more decency — not less."

Under the policy, international students in the U.S. would have been forbidden from taking all their courses online this fall.

## Okla. governor says he has tested positive for virus

*Associated Press*

OKLAHOMA CITY — Oklahoma Gov. Kevin Stitt announced Wednesday that he's the first governor in the United States to test positive for the coronavirus and that he is isolating at home.

Stitt, 48, a Republican, said he mostly feels fine, although he started feeling "a little achy"

Tuesday and sought a test. He said his wife and children were also tested Tuesday and that none of them have tested positive.

Stitt has backed one of the country's most aggressive reopening plans, resisted any statewide mandate on masks and rarely wears one himself.

"We respect people's rights

... to not wear a mask," Stitt said during Wednesday's news conference, held virtually. "You just open up a big can of worms."

"A lot of businesses are requiring it, and that's fine. I'm just hesitant to mandate something that I think is problematic to enforce," he said.

Stitt attended President Don-

ald Trump's rally in Tulsa last month, which health experts have said likely contributed to a surge in coronavirus cases there. He said he's confident he didn't contract the virus at the rally. Stitt came under fire early in the pandemic after he tweeted a photo of himself and his children eating at a crowded restaurant.

# Resurgence forces countries to bring back restrictions

Associated Press

PROMACHONAS, Greece — Countries around the world are reimposing lockdowns and implementing new health checks at their borders in an effort to curb a resurgence of the coronavirus before it spins even further out of control.

Starting Wednesday, all travelers arriving in Greece from a land border with Bulgaria were required to carry negative coronavirus test results issued in the previous 72 hours and translated into English. The new rules, which follow an increase in tourism-related COVID-19 cases, triggered an immediate drop in arrivals compared to recent days.

Romania's president, citing the rising number of infections, announced Wednesday a 30-day extension for the nationwide state of alert. Measures include the mandatory wearing of face coverings on public transportation and in shops, while restaurants may only serve customers in outdoor locations. The country set a record for new infections Saturday.

Residents of Australia's second-largest city, Melbourne, were warned Wednesday to comply with lockdown regulations or face tougher restrictions. Melbourne's 5 million people and part of the city's semi-rural surroundings are a week into a new, six-week lockdown to contain an new outbreak there.

The developments come with more than 13 million cases of coronavirus confirmed worldwide, and with over 578,000 deaths, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

Renewed restrictions took effect in Hong Kong on Wednesday, with public gatherings limited to four people, restaurants restricted to takeout after 6 p.m. and a one-week closure for selected businesses. Masks were mandated on public transit for the first time, with the noncompliant being fined.

In Spain, authorities in the northeastern Catalonia region made fresh attempts to stem the spread of new coronavirus outbreaks as health experts warned that more and better contact tracing is needed.

# First vaccine tested in US for COVID-19 poised for final testing

Associated Press

The first COVID-19 vaccine tested in the U.S. revved up people's immune systems just the way scientists had hoped, researchers reported Tuesday — as the shots are poised to begin key final testing.

"No matter how you slice this, this is good news," Dr. Anthony Fauci, the U.S. government's top infectious disease expert, told The Associated Press.

The experimental vaccine, developed by Fauci's colleagues at the National Institutes of Health and Moderna Inc., will start its most important step around July 27: A 30,000-person study to prove if the shots really are strong enough to protect against the coronavirus.

But Tuesday, researchers reported anxiously awaited findings from the first 45 volunteers who rolled up their sleeves back in March.

Sure enough, the vaccine provided a hoped-for immune boost.

Those early volunteers developed what are called neutralizing antibodies in their bloodstream — molecules key to blocking infection — at levels comparable to those found in people who survived COVID-

19, the research team reported in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

"This is an essential building block that is needed to move forward with the trials that could actually determine whether the vaccine does protect against infection," said Dr. Lisa Jackson of the Kaiser Permanente Washington Research Institute in Seattle, who led the study.

There's no guarantee, but the government hopes to have results around the end of the year — record-setting speed for developing a vaccine.

The vaccine requires two doses, each a month apart.

There were no serious side effects. But more than half the study participants reported flu-like reactions to the shots that aren't uncommon with other vaccines — fatigue, headache, chills, fever and pain at the injection site. For three participants given the highest dose, those reactions were more severe; that dose isn't being pursued.

Some of those reactions are similar to coronavirus symptoms, but they're temporary, lasting about a day and occur right after vaccination, researchers noted.

# Man blamed for nearly half of Sri Lanka's cases speaks out

Associated Press

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka — For months he's been anonymous, but now, Prasad Dinesh, linked by Sri Lankan authorities to nearly half of the country's more than 2,600 coronavirus cases, is trying to clear his name and shed some of the stigma of a heroin addiction at the root of his ordeal.

Under President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, a former army lieutenant colonel credited with helping end Sri Lanka's long civil war in 2009 with a brutal military campaign against separatists, the Indian Ocean island nation has used the armed forces to combat the virus.

When Rajapaksa was elected president

last year, a health unit was created in the intelligence service that sprang into action when COVID-19 first appeared, according to State Intelligence Service Assistant Director Parakrama de Silva.

After Dinesh, 33, tested positive for the virus in April, navy sailors raided his village, forcing his contacts into quarantine. But authorities have blamed a melee that ensued on Dinesh — and said the rumour led to at least 1,100 additional virus infections.

These cases, they declared, were all linked to a single patient.

Authorities said that on April 5, Dinesh was caught for a robbery and handed over to police. At the station, Dinesh had a fever

as well as a leg injury he had sustained, so authorities admitted him to a hospital. It was there that he tested positive for the coronavirus.

After he tested positive, the police who made the arrest, Dinesh's friends and more than 100 people in his neighborhood were ordered to quarantine at home.

But not everyone complied.

Of the 28 people seized from the community and quarantined, 16 tested positive. Two weeks later, some sailors involved in the operation did, too.

Sri Lanka has confirmed at least 2,665 cases in all, including 11 deaths, meaning nearly half of its caseload has been blamed on one man — Dinesh.

# Trump revokes Hong Kong trade benefits

*CQ Roll Call*

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump announced Tuesday he had signed legislation that establishes a regime for gradually sanctioning foreign banks if they continue to indirectly support Chinese officials' crackdown on Hong Kong.

In a Rose Garden news conference, the president also announced he had signed an executive order that would revoke the special trade privileges the United States has maintained since 1992 toward the former British colony, which helped Hong Kong rise to become one of the biggest financial hubs in the world.

"Today, I also signed an ex-

ecutive order ending U.S. preferential treatment for Hong Kong," Trump said. "Hong Kong will now be treated the same as mainland China. No special privileges, no special economic treatment and no export of sensitive technologies."

Hong Kong is the United States' 15th-largest export market. Last year, the U.S. had a \$26.1 billion trade goods surplus with Hong Kong.

The legislation signed by Trump requires the sanctioning of Chinese officials deemed to have violated human rights in Hong Kong. The measure further orders gradually stronger and stronger sanctions on foreign banks that opt to continue to do significant business

with Chinese officials who have been sanctioned because of their repressive actions toward Hong Kong.

The bill, which was initially developed by Sens. Patrick J. Toomey, R-Pa., and Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., unanimously cleared both chambers of Congress at the beginning of the month as U.S. lawmakers were infuriated by the swiftness with which the Chinese Communist Party — ignoring criticism and condemnation from a number of democratic countries — moved to draft and impose its sweeping anti-sedition law on Hong Kong.

The anti-sedition law effectively strips Hong Kong residents of many of the free speech

rights and civil liberties they have known and that Beijing promised in a treaty, the Sino-British Joint Declaration, to respect when the United Kingdom relinquished control of the city back to China in 1997.

The Toomey-Van Hollen measure gives the president the ability to waive sanctions should it be in the national security interests of the U.S. to do so. But the law also lays out an expedited process for lawmakers to vote to overturn the use of that waiver if they can muster veto-proof majorities. In his signing statement of the law, Trump said he would treat these potential congressional limitations on his authority as "advisory and nonbinding."

## Groups seek release of Floyd bodycam footage

*Associated Press*

MINNEAPOLIS — Video from the body cameras of two police officers charged in George Floyd's death is being made available for public viewing by appointment Wednesday, but a judge thus far has not allowed news organizations to publish the footage for distribution.

Footage from the body cameras of Thomas Lane and J. Kueng was filed with the court last week by Lane's attorney, but only the written transcripts were made public. A coalition of news organizations and attorneys for Lane and Kueng have said that making the videos public would provide a more complete picture of what happened when Floyd was taken into custody.

The viewing was taking place on the same day Floyd family attorney Ben Crump was announcing a lawsuit against the city and the police officers involved in his death.

Members of the media and the public are viewing the video Wednesday by appoint-

ment at the courthouse. The media coalition, which includes The Associated Press, has said this arrangement is the equivalent of keeping the videos under seal, and the coalition is asking Judge Peter Cahill to allow the media to copy the videos and publish them.

Media attorney Leita Walker said in a court filing that the footage should be made widely available to "all members of the public concerned about the administration of justice in one of the most important, and most-watched, cases this State — perhaps this country — has ever seen."

She also said allowing journalists to copy the footage, watch it multiple times, transcribe it and compare it to the transcripts and time stamps from bystander video will help reporters piece together a more complete story.

Floyd, a Black man who was handcuffed, died May 25 after Derek Chauvin, a white police officer, pressed his knee against Floyd's neck for nearly nine minutes as Floyd said he couldn't breathe.

## Rabbi hurt in synagogue shooting admits to fraud

*Associated Press*

SAN DIEGO — The longtime leader of a Southern California synagogue who was wounded in a deadly attack at the house of worship he founded pleaded guilty Tuesday to participating in a multimillion-dollar fraud that disguised charitable contributions for personal gain.

Rabbi Yisroel Goldstein faces a maximum sentence of five years in prison for fraud, but prosecutors will recommend probation as part of a plea agreement. They noted his cooperation with investigators after federal agents raided his home and office in October 2018 and his widely-praised response to the attack on the Chabad of Poway synagogue in April 2019.

Robert Brewer, the U.S. attorney in San Diego, said it was "a very difficult day for all of us."

"His role after the 2019 terrorist attack was exemplary," Brewer said at a news conference. "He became a significant advocate for peace and elimination of violence based on reli-

gious hatred. He spoke all over the world and sent a strong message of peace."

Goldstein, 58, lost his right index finger in the attack on the last day of Passover, which killed one congregant, Lori Gilbert-Kaye, and injured the rabbi and two others. The rabbi received an outpouring of support that included meeting President Donald Trump at the White House.

Goldstein, who founded Chabad of Poway near San Diego in 1986, collected \$6.2 million in fake donations to the synagogue and affiliates and returned 90% to contributors with phony receipts, allowing them to deduct the full amount from their taxes, prosecutors said. Goldstein kept the remaining 10%, or \$620,000, for himself.

Goldstein acknowledged concealing a fake donation of more than \$1.1 million in late 2017 by purchasing about \$1 million in gold coins and giving them to the phony donor.

"We call this the 90-10 tax fraud scheme," Brewer said.

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Career criminal gets 5 years for bank robbery

**RI** PROVIDENCE — A Rhode Island man described by authorities as a career criminal was sentenced to five years in federal prison for his second bank robbery conviction, prosecutors said.

David L. Evans, 51, stole \$568 from a Providence bank in May 2018, according to the U.S. attorney's office in Rhode Island.

He pleaded guilty to the latest charge on Feb. 6.

Evans was convicted of robbing a bank in a Warwick supermarket in March 2010, prosecutors said. His record includes arrests and convictions for firearms, drugs, assault, domestic assault, breaking and entering, wire fraud, transportation of stolen goods, and second-degree robbery charges, the U.S. attorney's office said.

## Trio of sisters give birth on the same day

**OH** MANSFIELD — Three Ohio sisters have defied odds by giving birth on the same day in the same hospital with the same obstetrician overseeing their deliveries.

Daneesha Haynes, Ariel Williams and Ashley Haynes gave birth July 3 at OhioHealth Mansfield Hospital within a four-and-a-half-hour span, the Mansfield News Journal reported.

All three sisters had their deliveries induced. Daneesha was not due until July 23. Dr. Edroy McMillan delivered all three babies. He declined to be interviewed.

Williams was the first to give birth that day, naming her 8 pound, 2 ounce daughter Sincere. Ashley Haynes followed with her 6 pound, 10 ounce

son Adrion. Daneesha Haynes completed the trifecta with daughter Emrie, who weighed in at 4 pounds, 14 ounces.

## Police: Shop owner throws pizza at robber

**DE** GREENWOOD — The owner of a pizza shop used his available resources to fend off a robbery attempt by a man with a machete outside his store in Delaware, police said.

He threw a pizza at him.

It happened as the owner of Stargate Pizza in Greenwood was closing his shop for the night, Delaware State Police said in a news release. The owner told troopers that a man with a machete approached him demanding money. He said he told him he didn't have any, and threw a pizza at him, causing the machete-wielding man to flee in a car.

## Feds: Moonshiner owes \$1.2M in taxes

**MS** GULFPORT — A Mississippi man who pleaded guilty in a moonshining case owes \$1.2 million in federal and state taxes, a federal prosecutor said in a news release.

Willie Necaise Jr., 77, of Hancock County bought enough sugar out of state to make 74,000 gallons of whiskey, according to Mike Hurst, U.S. attorney for Mississippi's Southern district.

Since he never paid excise tax on the whiskey, he owes about \$898,700 to the U.S. government and more than \$369,700 to Mississippi, according to the news release.

Necaise pleaded guilty in Gulfport to illegally making distilled spirits and to traveling interstate for racketeering. Each carries a maximum penalty of 5 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

## Postal service employee indicted for mail theft

**NE** OMAHA — A former U.S. Postal Service employee in Omaha was indicted for mail theft, and federal prosecutors said that they have identified about 216 victims.

Austin M. Thomas, 29, is accused of committing theft by mail between September of last year and this past January, the Omaha World-Herald reported.

The government alleges the thefts involve "a large number of card-sized envelopes and greeting cards that contained gift cards and cash."

Due to the large number of victims requiring notification, U.S. Magistrate Judge Susan Bazis granted the government's motion to use alternative procedures to alert victims.

## Man arrested for threatening passengers

**WA** SEATTLE — Seattle police arrested a man accused of threatening other passengers on a flight to Chicago.

Video from a passenger shows the man walking in the aisle and shouting that he would kill everyone on board "in the name of Jesus."

The incident occurred shortly after Alaska Airlines Flight 422 took off, Port of Seattle Police spokesman Peter McGraw told The Seattle Times. The plane was forced to return to Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. The man was apparently unarmed and no one was injured.

Flight crew, two passengers and a law-enforcement officer who happened to be on board quickly subdued the man, according to Ray Lane, external communications manager for Alaska Airlines.

## 1st sea turtle nest of the season hatches

**SC** KIAWAH ISLAND — South Carolina's first known sea turtle nest of the summer has hatched.

The Department of Natural Resources said volunteers on Kiawah Island on Saturday discovered dozens of tiny sea turtle tracks leading from the beach to the ocean.

Beginning in May each year, four sea turtle species come ashore to lay eggs on South Carolina beaches.

About halfway through this year's nesting season, officials said they've counted about 4,200 sea turtle nests on South Carolina's beaches.

## College hockey players raise funds for charity

**MA** BOSTON — Two varsity hockey players at the University of Massachusetts Boston donned inline skates and plan to roll roughly 875 miles to Mason, Mich., to raise money for the American Cancer Society.

Roommates Andrew Walker and Jacob Adkins took off from campus Monday. They planned to skate 100 to 150 miles per day and finish in seven to 10 days.

Adkins, of Windham, N.H., is a biology major whose mother, Ali, was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma in 2014. She was in and out of the hospital for a year until being declared in remission in 2015.

Walker, of Mason, Mich., a biochemistry major whose grandfather passed away from cancer, said the American Cancer Society was an easy choice of a charity to support.

From wire reports

# STARS AND STRIPES

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## Commentary

# Woods' return isn't a return to normal

Associated Press

DUBLIN, Ohio — The PGA Tour has been back for five weeks and already has delivered a tournament scoring record one week, a former No. 1 winning another week, two sudden-death playoffs and a player who grew by two shirt sizes to try to change the game.

And it still felt as though something was missing.

Or someone.

That changed a few minutes past 7 a.m. Tuesday when Tiger Woods pulled his courtesy car into the parking lot at Muirfield Village, changed his shoes and began preparations for his first PGA Tour event in five months.

He was wearing a mask.

The return of Woods is not the return to normal, except for those watching on television.

Woods had an idea of what to expect from seeing empty golf courses at Colonial and Harbour Town and even last week at Muirfield Village. He has heard from friends on tour how eerie it is with no fans, no

cheering.

"It's a very different world out here not to have the distractions, the noise, the excitement, the energy that the fans bring," Woods said. "It's just a silent and different world."

And it's going to stay that way.

The PGA Tour returned June 11, and the Memorial was supposed to be the first tournament with fans, at 20% capacity, until coronavirus cases began to spike and the prudent action was to play it safe. The "Nicklaus Club" hospitality tent is still to the right of the 16th tee. A small grandstand overlooks the 18th green. There wasn't time to dismantle them.

Four more tournaments announced Monday they won't have spectators, all the way through the Tour Championship to end the FedEx Cup season.

They're still playing, though. And now, so is Woods.

"I think he was starting to get a little sassy," Justin Thomas said over the weekend. "I was telling him he's scared to come

out and play against all of us when he's sitting at home, just trying to give him a hard time. But yeah, we're excited to have him out."

Woods and Thomas played the back nine Tuesday morning with just over a dozen people watching, mainly media. That's not entirely new for Woods. The final round of his victory in Japan had no spectators because of flooding. The third round of the AT&T National in 2012 had no fans because of a freak wind storm that toppled 75-foot trees at Congressional.

They were back the next day. They won't be at Muirfield Village all week.

They will be missing as Woods, a five-time winner of the tournament Jack Nicklaus built, goes after his 83rd career victory to break the PGA Tour record he shares with Sam Snead.

Woods was last seen at a PGA Tour event on Feb. 16 at Riviera, where he shot 77 and finished in last place. His back felt stiff in the cold weather. He skipped the next four weeks to

be in shape for the Masters, and then the pandemic happened.

Woods has barely been seen at all this year.

That much was clear when Woods was asked about his chances of winning after a five-month layoff. His intentions are to win, just like always. Can he do it this week? He went just over two months without playing last fall and won in his first tournament back at the Zozo Championship.

"Whether that plays out come Sunday, hopefully that will be the case," he said. "It was that one particular week — well, three tournaments ago at Zozo. There's no reason I can't do it again this week."

Three tournaments ago for Woods was nearly nine months ago.

Any tournament would love to have Woods in the field, but in this environment, does it even matter? It's not like ticket sales would explode because there are no tickets to sell.

So it becomes a TV show, and that's not bad, either.

## Barnes joins list of NBA players who have COVID-19

Associated Press

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — Harrison Barnes of the Sacramento Kings became the latest NBA player to reveal that he has the coronavirus, making the announcement Tuesday and saying he has hopes to join his team for the league's restart later this summer.

Barnes is the only player who has started all 64 of the Kings' games this season. To extend that streak, he'll need to be cleared and arrive at Walt Disney World before Sacramento's season resumes with the first of its eight seeding games on July 31 against San Antonio.

"Prior to the team leaving last week, I tested positive for COVID-19," Barnes wrote on social media. "I've been pri-

marily asymptomatic and am doing well. I'm quarantined and am abiding by the safety protocol until I'm cleared for action. I hope to join my team in Orlando when it is safe to do so! Stay safe out there."

Barnes is averaging 14.7 points this season for the Kings.

The league said Monday that 19 players tested positive during in-market testing after July 1, those tests being done before teams began arriving at Disney on July 7. Based on the timetable Barnes used in his message, it's likely that he was one of those 19 players in the NBA's latest count.

The Kings have gotten Buddy Hield and Jabari Parker back after each had positive tests.

Alex Len, however, remains out after his positive test, and now Barnes is in that situation as well.

"We have to prepare as if we're not going to have either one of those guys," Sacramento coach Luke Walton said. "That's just getting ready for whatever the worst-case scenario may be."

Denver's Nikola Jokic, who tested positive last month, is now at Disney and the Nuggets are waiting to see when the All-Star is going to be cleared to get on the floor.

"I have seen Nikola. It's been somewhat limited and his interaction with his teammates and other coaches has been very limited as well," Nuggets coach Michael Malone said Tuesday

night. "That's kind of where we're at with it right now."

Houston's Russell Westbrook said Monday that he has tested positive and has yet to join the Rockets at Disney. Many players have chosen to not make their diagnosis public, including two players who tested positive after arriving at Disney last week — but never got out of quarantine and into the NBA's so-called bubble.

"This is the reality of the world that we're living in right now, with the virus," Miami coach Erik Spoelstra said. "We're putting together something that we think really is safe and has everybody's health as the No. 1 priority. But we know that nothing is 100 percent guaranteed. You have to adhere to the protocols."

# Puig signs with Braves; Glasnow back

Associated Press

Opening day rosters gained clarity on Tuesday when the Atlanta Braves reached an agreement with Yasiel Puig, and Tampa Bay pitcher Tyler Glasnow provided hopes for teams awaiting players to be cleared following positive tests for the coronavirus.

Puig agreed to a one-year deal pending a physical, a person with knowledge of the agreement told The Associated Press. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the agreement is not official until Puig passes the physical.

The 29-year-old Puig, who began his career with the Los Angeles Dodgers, hit a combined .267 with 24 homers and 84 RBIs for Cincinnati and Cleveland in 2019. He also stole 19 bases.

Puig was the last big-name free agent from the off-season who had not signed with a team. He helps the Braves fill a void left when Nick Markakis opted out for the season.

Glasnow rejoined the Rays after missing the first 11 days of summer camp following his positive test. The right-hander immediately jumped into a simulated game at Tropicana Field and threw 49 pitches over

3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings.

Glasnow said he felt fine and expects to be ready to begin the 60-game season on time.

Mets second baseman Robinson Cano also returned to camp after missing five straight workouts for undisclosed reasons. The 37-year-old Cano was scheduled to participate in practice, but not the intrasquad game at night.

Mets relief pitchers Brad Brach and Jared Hughes remained absent.

Also returning was Orioles outfielder Anthony Santander, whose late arrival might have been attributed to COVID-19 testing. The team has not provided an explanation.

Santander, who hit 20 home runs last year, is a projected starter. The short-handed outfield is without slugger Trey Mancini, who had colon cancer surgery in March. Dwight Smith Jr. has not yet reported, for reasons not disclosed by the Orioles.

**Springer held out:** Houston outfielder George Springer missed practice because of a delay in receiving his coronavirus test results, the latest in a series of testing snafus for the Astros.

They were forced to cancel

their practice on July 6 because the Fourth of July holiday delayed test results. Third baseman Alex Bregman was held out of practice last week because he hadn't received his test results.

**A little scared:** Marlins catcher Francisco Cervelli said "everybody is concerned" about the virus outbreak in South Florida.

"I don't want to have this virus, or anyone on my team," Cervelli said. "We just have to be careful. We don't know what's going to happen. Every day here Miami is getting crazy. I'm a little scared, yes, but we're here to play baseball."

**More than a little scared:** White Sox catcher Yasmani Grandal is concerned about being unable to maintain proper social distancing behind the plate.

"I'd be lying to you if I said I wasn't worried about it," Grandal said. "Obviously, this is something you've got to take very serious because it can spread out as fast as anything. In my case, this is not only for my health and the health of my teammates, but it's also for the health of my family. My wife is pregnant, so I don't want (anything) to happen to her. I don't want (anything) to happen to

my kids. So, we're going to take all the precautions we need in order to stay safe and keep ourselves safe."

**DeShields baffled by positive test:** Indians outfielder Delino DeShields Jr. says he was taking every necessary precaution and still contracted the coronavirus while in Arizona.

"I was doing everything I was supposed to do," he said Tuesday. "We were doing a good job in Goodyear of keeping our distance and making sure we were cleaning up after ourselves. So, honestly, I have no idea."

DeShields missed the re-start of Cleveland's camp after he experienced COVID-19 symptoms, including a loss of taste and smell. He said he didn't have an appetite and added: "It wasn't fun at all. ... It was pretty brutal."

**Soroka gets opening day start:** Manager Brian Snitker has named Mike Soroka, 22, the Braves' youngest opening day starter in the modern era. The Braves open at the New York Mets on July 24.

"It's something that you dream about as a kid," Soroka said.

The right-hander was 13-4 with a 2.68 ERA in 2019.

## Blue Jays still awaiting OK to play games in Toronto

Associated Press

TORONTO — A top Canadian government health official says the Blue Jays might want to consider hosting an extended stretch of home games in order to get approval to play in Toronto amid the pandemic.

Dr. Howard Njoo, Canada's Deputy Chief Public Health Officer, said Tuesday that back and forth travel from the United States, where coronavirus cases are surging, is a major issue that could prevent the government from approving Major League Baseball to play in Canada.

"The fact of the matter is today in Canada we've done a good job of flattening our curve.

The situation doesn't appear to be changing quickly in the U.S.," Njoo said.

Njoo noted Canada has been reporting about 300 cases per day compared to 60,000 per day in the U.S.

Njoo said discussions with the Blue Jays and MLB continue and the government is always open.

The Blue Jays are scheduled to open the season July 24 at Tampa Bay. The home opener is listed as July 29 against Washington.

"We're seeing what's in the realm of possible," Njoo said. "I could get myself in trouble but I'm going to say it anyway.

Look at the epidemiology of COVID-19 in Canada. I know the schedule has already been set for the Blue Jays, but in trying to respect the quarantine and keeping players safe, I don't know, maybe one option is the Blue Jays staying in Canada for an extended period of time and playing a quite a long series of games."

Such a change would require a change in MLB's schedule and would mean opposing teams flying to Canada for what would have been home games in their home ball parks.

MLB requires an exemption to a requirement that anyone entering Canada for nonessential reasons must self-isolate for 14

days. The U.S.-Canada border remains closed to nonessential travel and the two countries are poised to extend their agreement to Aug. 21, but a final confirmation has not been given, a person familiar with the matter said Tuesday.

The Blue Jays have said they prefer to play in Toronto. Their training facility in Dunedin, Fla., has been mentioned as an alternative if they are not given an exemption to play in Toronto. But Florida is seeing a record surge in COVID-19 cases.

"This whole year has been super crazy. We're hopeful that we can play in Toronto but we know that can change," infielder Cavan Biggio said.