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Foggo calls for new strategy in Europe

By JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

NATO needs a new maritime strategy to deal with the resurgence of Russia's submarine force and China's emergence as a military factor in Europe, the outgoing U.S. naval commander on the Continent said.

Adm. James Foggo, who relinquished command Friday of U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa, said the security situation has changed dramatically in the nine years since allies last crafted a formal sea strategy.

The current plan "misses the return, or the resurgence of the Russian submarine force ... it misses the rise of China as a great power (and) it misses completely the illegal annexa-

tion of Ukraine," Foggo said in a phone interview ahead of Friday's change of command ceremony at Navy headquarters in Naples.

"That's not a criticism of NATO. That's just something that, you know, I'm making my colleagues aware of," he said. "I think we need to do a refresh."

Foggo, who will retire later this summer, is being replaced by Adm. Robert P. Burke, who will also lead NATO's Allied Joint Forces Command. The dual-hatted job means Burke will be a key voice should allies follow Foggo's call to formally adopt a new strategy.

Burke, in a statement Friday upon assuming command, said China and Russia pose "overt challenges to the free and open

international order.

"Maritime forces are going to be key in this era of great power competition," he said.

For Foggo, commanding the Navy in Europe capped a 39-year career, much of it focused on countering Russia. As a young submariner in the 1980s, Foggo patrolled the Arctic at the height of the Cold War.

His time in Europe also included command of the Navy's three-star 6th Fleet headquarters in Naples from 2014-16, a time when a post-Cold War period of calm was upturned by a more assertive Russia.

Moscow's 2014 intervention in Ukraine and ramped up naval maneuvers stretching from the Arctic to the Mediterranean are the chief reasons

why an updated strategy is needed, Foggo said. So is China, which now describes itself as a near-Arctic state despite being far from it.

China is a "new player in town," Foggo said. For Beijing, the Arctic is an aspect of its "Belt and Road" initiative, which aims to drive global commerce in the decades to come. But for allies, a challenge will be choosing regions to prioritize, Foggo said.

"There're a lot of hot spots out there nowadays," Foggo said. But by forming a new strategy, the United States and its allies would be better positioned to advocate for resources that can be directed at such threats, he added.

South Korea downplays US troop reduction report

By KIM GAMEL

Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea on Sunday played down a report that the White House is weighing options to reduce the U.S. military presence on peninsula, saying the allies have not discussed the issue.

The Pentagon provided proposals for cutting the number of troops in South Korea to the White House in March as part of an overall review of how to reposition and potentially reduce military deployments around the world, the Wall Street Journal reported Friday.

It cited unnamed officials who declined to provide details and said no decision has been made.

South Korea's Defense Ministry said Sunday that it has had "no discussions about cutting the number of U.S. troops here" with the Defense Department.

The administration's call for options, however, which the Journal said was first made last fall, came against a backdrop of growing tensions between the two al-

lies amid tough negotiations over defense cost-sharing.

President Donald Trump's administration has also signaled that it's eager to restart nuclear talks with North Korea — which considers U.S. troops an existential threat — as a foreign policy win ahead of the November election.

Talks have stalled on both fronts, with South Korea rebuffing Trump's demands for a multibillion dollar increase in its contribution to offset the cost of stationing more than 28,500 troops on the divided peninsula.

Duyeon Kim, a Seoul-based senior adviser with the International Crisis Group, said a proposal for cutting troops may be a negotiating tactic but would not likely succeed if so.

"I'd be surprised if Seoul gave him his asking price just to keep U.S. troops in Korea," she said in an email, adding that the South Koreans would likely wait to resolve the issue until after the U.S. presidential election in November.

"The report reiterates to South Koreans

that Trump takes a transactional approach to alliances, instead of one based on common values, which is insulting and offensive to them," she said.

Kim also said a move to reduce the U.S. military footprint on the divided peninsula would send a negative signal about America's commitment to security in the region.

"It delivers an easy win for China, North Korea and Russia that want to reduce American influence in the region," she said in an email. "If U.S. troops are drawn down without reducing North Korean threats first, the U.S. will look weak."

Trump has often complained about the cost of stationing troops overseas and has said he would like to bring them home.

He agreed to end joint military exercises with South Korea in what was seen as a major concession during his first summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

Trump also approved a plan last month to cut nearly a third of the 34,500 American service members in Germany, prompting speculation that South Korea could be next.

Trump may not commit to election results

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump is refusing to publicly commit to accepting the results of the upcoming White House election, recalling a similar threat he made weeks before the 2016 vote, as he scoffs at polls showing him lagging behind Democrat Joe Biden. Trump says it's too early to make such an ironclad guarantee.

"I have to see. Look ... I have to see," Trump told moderator Chris Wallace during a wide-ranging interview on "Fox News Sunday." "No, I'm not going to just say yes. I'm not going to say no, and I didn't last time either."

The Biden campaign responded: "The American people will decide this election. And the United States government is per-

fectly capable of escorting trespassers out of the White House."

It is remarkable that a sitting president would express less than complete confidence in the American democracy's electoral process. But for Trump, it comes from his insurgent playbook of four years ago, when in the closing stages of his race against Hillary Clinton, he said he would not commit to honoring the election results if the Democrat won.

Pressed during an October 2016 debate about whether he would abide by the voters' will, Trump responded that he would "keep you in suspense."

Trump has seen his presidential popularity erode over his handling of the coronavirus pandemic and in the aftermath of nationwide protests centered on racial in-

justice that erupted after Floyd's death in Minneapolis nearly two months ago.

Trump contends that a series of polls that show his popularity eroding and Biden holding an advantage are faulty. He believes Republican voters are underrepresented in such surveys.

"First of all, I'm not losing, because those are fake polls," Trump said in the taped interview, which aired Sunday. "They were fake in 2016 and now they're even more fake. The polls were much worse in 2016."

Trump, 74, stuck to a campaign charge that Biden, 77, is unable to handle the rigors of the White House because of his age. As for polls showing the incumbent is trailing, Trump noted he was thought to be behind for much of the 2016 contest. "I won't lose," he predicted.

Aviator takes command of Pacific Marine Corps

BY WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — Lt. Gen. Steven Rudder, an aviator who deployed to Afghanistan, Pakistan and Qatar for Operation Enduring Freedom, assumed command Thursday of U.S. Marine Corps Forces Pacific.

Stepping down was Lt. Gen. Lewis Craparotta, who has headed the Hawaii-based combatant command for nearly two years. He now heads to Quantico, Va., to lead the Marine

Corps' Training and Education Command.

No formal change-of-command ceremony was held because of restrictions in place to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, the Marine Corps said in a statement.

In lieu of a ceremony, the service released a video featuring statements by Craparotta, Rudder, Marine Corps Commandant Gen. David Berger and Adm. Phil Davidson, commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command.

Rudder, who most recently

served as deputy commandant of the Marine Corps for aviation at the Pentagon, will now oversee about 86,000 Marines, sailors and civilians under the dual command of Marine Corps Forces Pacific and Fleet Marine Force Pacific.

Roughly 22,000 of those personnel are deployed west of the International Date Line at any given time, the statement said.

Rudder — like Craparotta a Connecticut native — was commissioned in 1984 and served in the Pacific during several points in his career, including

command of 1st Marine Air Wing on Okinawa, Japan, and as director of strategic planning and policy at U.S. Pacific Command, according to his official biography.

He was commander of Marine Aircraft Group 26 when it was deployed to Al Asad, Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 9.1.

His decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit with Gold Star and Distinguished Flying Cross with Combat "V."

Air Force deploys 2 B-1B bombers to Guam

BY WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

The Air Force on Friday deployed two B-1B bombers to Guam as the Navy continued its dual-aircraft carrier operations in the contested South China Sea.

Both services described the operations as routine, but they follow a U.S. State Department announcement Monday explicitly embracing a 2016 decision by an international tribunal that rejected China's claim of sovereignty over certain reefs and isles in the South China Sea.

The pair of Lancer bombers — from the

37th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron, 28th Wing at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D. — will conduct bilateral bomber task force operations out of Andersen Air Force Base, the Air Force said in a statement.

They will train with allies, partner nations and other U.S. services. The deployment also supports "strategic deterrence missions to reinforce the rules-based international order in the region," the Air Force said.

About 170 airmen also deployed from Ellsworth to Guam in support of the bomber mission, according to the statement.

The Air Force did not disclose the intended length of the deployment.

Before arriving on Guam, the bombers conducted intercept training over the Sea of Japan with F-15J fighter jets belonging to the Japanese Air Self-Defense Force, the Air Force said.

B-1s were last deployed to Guam in May when they flew in from Dyess Air Force Base, Texas.

Meanwhile, the more than 12,000 sailors and Marines aboard the vessels of the USS Nimitz and USS Ronald Reagan carrier strike groups continued training Friday in the South China Sea, where they have been operating since early July.

Fort Sill teen who died from virus mourned

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

Anna Carter began to feel tired. The 13-year-old had attended two days of socially distanced dance classes and thought she'd just overdone it. Her muscles were sore, so her parents encouraged her to stay home and rest.

For the past three years, Anna had battled scleroderma, an autoimmune rheumatic disease, which occasionally left her feeling this way, said Amber Carter, her mother.

On July 10, her parents decided it was best to take her to Comanche County Memorial Hospital in Lawton, the city just outside of Fort Sill, Okla., where the Marine Corps family is stationed.

"It happened so quick when I got there," Carter said. "She was literally just plucked from us."

Anna died shortly after arriving at the

hospital. After her death, the family learned she had tested positive for coronavirus.

Six military dependents have died from the virus since the start of the pandemic, though the Defense Department declined Thursday to provide details on the ages of those military family members. Of the 2,478 reported cases among dependents, 89 have required hospitalization, according to the Defense Department.

Anna's father, who has served nearly 20 years in the Marine Corps, did not want to be identified, seeking to maintain his privacy.

Soon after Anna's death, her four siblings and parents would learn they too had somehow contracted the virus and have been confined to their home as they grieve. None of them have had similar or consistent symptoms, including Anna, who never had a cough or fever, Carter said. Through contact tracing, no one else the family has come into contact with had tested positive

for the virus.

"It is hard because we're a really close family," Amber Carter said. Over the weekend, Carter began looking for photos to share that included only Anna, and she said she's struggled to find one. In most photos, Anna, the middle child, is smiling next to her siblings.

Children and younger people have fared better against contracting and becoming seriously ill from that coronavirus, though researchers have said they don't have enough information on the new illness yet to understand why. There have been nearly 3.5 million confirmed cases in the United States with more than 137,400 deaths, according to Johns Hopkins University.

Children ages 5 to 17 account for about 0.1% of all U.S. coronavirus-related deaths, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In Oklahoma, Anna's death was the first for a person younger than 17.

Troops heading to Europe from US must quarantine

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
AND JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — Troops coming to Europe from the U.S. have to quarantine for 14 days and can no longer test out of it, military officials said Friday as they moved to contain a "significant spike" in coronavirus infections among incoming forces.

Military families and Defense Department civilians coming to Europe from international risk areas for the coronavirus, including the U.S., will also have to quarantine for two weeks, a general order issued by the 86th Airlift Wing at Ramstein Air Base said.

Personnel arriving from risk areas who are passing through Ramstein en route to a final destination must also quarantine while on base. They may leave their lodging for take-out at the base food court or shopette, but are barred from going to the commissary or the main exchange, the order said.

Ramstein is shifting its

posture back to "red," which includes reintroducing a stop-movement order on official travel to and from the base in southwest Germany.

"Being a red installation will help us manage the inbound flow of travelers and balance our resources, such as lodging and dorms, to ensure we have sufficient space on base for people to quarantine," officials said in a message posted on the base's Facebook page.

Ramstein's red designation will not affect leave policy, they said.

"Members and families already stationed here may continue to take leave outside the local area per previous guidance," they said on Facebook. "Ensure your destinations are authorized using our Ramstein COVID-19 webpage, and continue to get your commander's approval beforehand."

U.S. Army Europe also tightened up restrictions, announcing that quarantine waivers will no longer be granted to troops who test negative for the virus on arrival in Germany.

Deaths hit 600K as rebound strains South Africa, India

Associated Press

BERLIN — The coronavirus pandemic has found fresh legs around the world, as confirmed deaths pass 600,000 and countries from the U.S. to South Africa to India struggle to contain a surge of new infections. Hong Kong issued tougher new rules on wearing face masks, Spain closed overcrowded beaches and Germany reported another outbreak at a slaughterhouse.

Pope Francis said "the pandemic is showing no sign of stopping" and urged compassion for those suffering during the outbreak has been worsened by conflicts.

The World Health Organization said that 259,848 new infections were reported Saturday, its highest one-day tally yet.

While the U.S. leads global infections, South Africa now ranks as the fifth worst-hit country in the pandemic with more than 350,000 cases, or around half of all those confirmed on the continent. Its struggles are a sign of trouble to come for nations with even

fewer health care resources.

India, which has now confirmed more than 1 million infections, Sunday reported a 24-hour record of 38,902 new cases.

In Europe, where infections are far below their peak but local outbreaks are causing concern, leaders of the 27-nation European Union haggled for a third day in Brussels over a proposed \$2.1 trillion EU budget and coronavirus recovery fund.

Confirmed global virus deaths have risen to nearly 603,000, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins. The United States tops the list with over 140,000, followed by more than 78,000 in Brazil. Europe as a continent has seen about 200,000 deaths.

The number of confirmed infections worldwide has passed 14.2 million, with 3.7 million in the United States and more than 2 million in Brazil. Experts believe the pandemic's true toll around the world is much higher because of testing shortages and data collection issues.

Fires set as Portland protests intensify

Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — Protesters broke into a building, set it on fire and started dumpster fires late Saturday night in Oregon's largest city, police said, as demonstrations that have been taking place since the death of George Floyd intensified for another night in Portland.

The fire at the Portland Police Association building was put out a short time later, Portland police said on Twitter. The department declared the gathering a riot, and began working to clear the downtown area.

"As the crowd was dispersed, several people in the crowd were arrested and officers were able to extinguish the fire. Portland Police did not use any CS gas," the bureau said in a statement early Sunday. Several arrests were made.

Police also said protesters had gathered Saturday evening at the Portland Police Bureau's North Precinct, vandalizing patrol vehicles and taunting officers who were reporting for work. Later, as police dispersed a group that had gathered near North Interstate Avenue, people threw rocks and paint-filled balloons at officers. Some were injured, the statement said.

President Donald Trump has decried the demonstrations, and Homeland Security Secretary Chad Wolf blasted the protesters as "lawless anarchists" in a visit to the city Thursday.

"We are trying to help Portland, not hurt it," Trump tweeted Sunday. "Their leadership has, for months, lost control of the anarchists and agitators. They are missing in action. We must protect Federal property, AND OUR PEOPLE. These were not

merely protesters, these are the real deal!"

Before the aggressive language and action from federal officials, the unrest had frustrated Mayor Ted Wheeler and other local authorities, who had said a small cadre of violent activists were drowning out the message of peaceful protesters in the city. But Wheeler said the federal presence in the city is now exacerbating a tense situation and he has told them to depart.

"Keep your troops in your own buildings, or have them leave our city," Wheeler said Friday.

Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum late Friday sued Homeland Security and the Marshals Service in federal court. The complaint said unidentified federal agents have grabbed people off Portland's

streets "without warning or explanation, without a warrant, and without providing any way to determine who is directing this action."

Rosenblum said she was seeking a temporary restraining order to "immediately stop federal authorities from unlawfully detaining Oregonians."

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., issued a joint statement Saturday denouncing the Trump administration's actions.

"We live in a democracy, not a banana republic. We will not tolerate the use of Oregonians, Washingtonians — or any other Americans — as props in President Trump's political games. The House is committed to moving swiftly to curb these egregious abuses of power immediately," they said.

Trump may push court pick before election given chance

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell have tried to make it clear: Given the chance, they would push through a Supreme Court nominee should a vacancy occur before Election Day.

The issue has taken on new immediacy with the disclosure Friday that Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg is receiving chemotherapy for a recurrence of cancer after four earlier bouts with the disease. The 87-year-old liberal, who apologized in 2016 for her pointed public criticism of Trump during his first campaign, says she has no plans to retire.

The development has focused even more on what's at stake this election, with the winner in position to help shape the trajectory of the court for years to come.

Trump administration officials have underscored that Trump would not hesitate to fill an opening before voters have

their say Nov. 3, less than four months away, on whether to give him a second term.

Four years ago, also in a presidential election year, the GOP-controlled Senate refused to hold a hearing or vote when President Barack Obama, a Democrat, nominated federal judge Merrick Garland to succeed Justice Antonin Scalia after his death in February. Nine months before that year's election, McConnell said voters should determine who would nominate the person to fill that seat.

Fast forward to this past week. Trump's chief of staff, Mark Meadows, told reporters: "I can't imagine that if he had a vacancy on the Supreme Court that he would not very quickly make the appointment and look for the Senate to take quick action."

Trump sees his efforts at reshaping the judiciary as a signature achievement of his presidency. Last month he marked his 200th judicial appointment.

Activists, politicians across party lines mourn Rep. Lewis

Associated Press

Rights activists, politicians from both parties and many other people touched by the legacy of John Lewis mourned the congressman and pillar of the civil rights movement Saturday, lauding the strength, courage and kindness of a man whose lifelong struggle against racial discrimination took him from a bridge in Selma to the nation's Capitol.

"As a young man marching for equality in Selma, Ala., John answered brutal violence with courageous hope," said former President George W. Bush. "And throughout his career as a civil rights leader and public servant, he worked to make our country a more perfect union."

Former President Barack Obama, America's first Black president, recalled being sworn in for his first term: "I hugged him on the inauguration stand before I was sworn in and told him I was only there because of the sacrifices he made."

Lewis died Friday, several

months after the Georgia Democrat announced that he had been diagnosed with advanced pancreatic cancer.

Lewis, 80, often recalled his upbringing in the segregated South, including how he was denied a library card because the library was for "whites only."

He went on to make a career in politics, representing Atlanta in Congress for more than 30 years, and all the while imploring people to press for justice — to make what he came to call "good trouble, necessary trouble."

There was no immediate announcement on funeral plans, which could be affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

State law says Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp must schedule a special election to fill the current term of Lewis, who was first elected to represent Georgia's majority Black 5th District in 1986, said Georgia Deputy Secretary of State Jordan Fuchs. A vote would have to be held within 30 days.

Texas virus cases include over 80 infants

From wire reports

AUSTIN, Texas — A health official on the Texas Gulf Coast said 85 infants have tested positive for the coronavirus.

Corpus Christi Nueces County Public Health Director Annette Rodriguez said Friday that the 85 infants are each younger than 1, but offered no other details, including how the children are suspected to have become infected.

Republican Gov. Greg Abbott is also stressing that the widespread use of face coverings could avoid another lockdown, which he hasn't ruled out.

Texas health officials reported more than 10,000 new cases for a fifth consecutive day Saturday and said 130 more people have died due to COVID-19, bringing the number of reported cases to 317,730 and the number of deaths to 3,865.

Montana

WOLF POINT — Cowboys lined the metal chutes that released bucking horses and their riders into the arena, Miss Rodeo Montana signed autographs for fans and coronavirus warning signs ended with "Face mask usage is of personal choice."

Most of the rodeo riders and audience at the Wolf Point Wild Horse Stampede appeared to skip masks, despite public health recommendations and increasing pressure to stem the spread of COVID-19 cases spiking across Montana and much of the U.S.

Rodeos are a summertime staple across the West, but the pandemic has presented a dilemma for cities and towns dependent on the economic and cultural boost the events give.

Florida

TALLAHASSEE — The Florida Division of Emergency Management closed down part of its facilities after 12 employees tested positive for the coronavirus.

The areas where the employees work were going through a deep clean over the weekend

and were expected to reopen Monday, said agency spokesman Jason Mahon.

The agency has been going through biweekly virus testing of employees for several weeks. Four tested positive Thursday, raising the total to 12. That prompted the closure, Mahon said,

Employees who remained on the job were told to work in other areas of the division's complex or to work from home. None of those who tested positive showed symptoms of the disease, Mahon said.

Maryland

ANNAPOLIS — Court clerks offices will be open in Maryland on Monday as the state judiciary begins reopening amid the coronavirus pandemic.

The Capital Gazette reported that clerks offices will be open to the public to file and review court records with restrictions in place to accommodate physical distancing.

District court judges will also start presiding over certain emergency protective hearings again that were being handled by court commissioners, and certain non-jury trials will be allowed to go forward in district and circuit courts.

California

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK — With no confirmed cases of the coronavirus, Yosemite National Park appeared to be a safe haven from the pandemic.

But tests of the park's raw sewage have confirmed the presence of the virus, the San Francisco Chronicle reported Saturday, and dozens of people are believed to have been infected.

No park employee or resident has tested positive at the park's health clinic, and no visitors have reported being sick since Yosemite began a phased reopening June 11 after being closed for nearly three months.

Working with the National Park Service, Mariposa County health officials began taking samples of untreated wastewa-

ter and sent it to a lab in Cambridge, Mass., for analysis. The lab, Biobot Analytics, told the county that based on how much of the virus they counted, it's possible about 170 people were infected in Yosemite Valley.

Connecticut

STORRS — The University of Connecticut said Saturday that residential students will return to its campuses two weeks before the first day of fall classes to be tested for COVID-19 and quarantined on campus.

The university outlined its testing strategy for the fall semester with different rules depending on whether students and faculty will be on campus. For instance, the university said it is arranging for testing for residential students during check-ins. Off-campus students and faculty involved only in online classes will not be tested.

Students commuting to campus for in-person classes are encouraged to submit proof of a negative test result obtained within two weeks of the start of the fall semester on Aug. 31. The university will provide testing to those commuter students who don't obtain a test on their own.

Alaska

ANCHORAGE — The largest city in Alaska has mandated that residents wear masks in public to limit the spread of COVID-19, but several other cities and boroughs declined to follow suit, arguing the mandates weren't needed, would be difficult to enforce or were illegal.

Anchorage, Cordova, Dillingham, Kotzebue, Seward, Unalaska and Valdez were the only large cities to require masks in all public indoor spaces, including stores and restaurants, the Anchorage Daily News reported. The Northwest Arctic Borough was the only borough to do so.

Some smaller communities, such as Gustavus in southeast Alaska, have also issued mask requirements, but they are outnumbered.

Mississippi

JACKSON — Mississippi is hiring more people to investigate the spread of COVID-19, but cases are expanding rapidly in the state and the work is outpacing the number of employees.

The state health officer, Dr. Thomas Dobbs, is imploring the public to take precautions against the pandemic. Resources such as hospital beds, personal protective equipment and coronavirus tests can be exhausted.

At the beginning of the pandemic during the spring, Mississippi had approximately 200 contact tracers. They communicate with people who test positive for a particular disease to find out who they've been near. The tracers then reach out to the others and suggest that they get tested or take precautionary steps such as isolating themselves while they could be contagious.

Nevada

LAS VEGAS — A union representing workers in Las Vegas casinos has reported 22 deaths and 352 hospitalizations of its members or their family members since March.

The Culinary Workers Union Local 226 and affiliated Bartenders Union Local 165 said in a joint statement Friday that hospitalizations for its members, their spouse or dependents have climbed 800% since Gov. Steve Sisolak allowed casinos to reopen June 4.

The union, representing 60,000 housekeepers, porters, bartenders, servers, cooks and other workers in Las Vegas and Reno, is calling on Sisolak, the state Legislature and casino companies to do more to protect workers.

The Culinary Union is requesting the daily cleaning of hotel guest rooms, mandatory testing of all employees who are returning to work and regular testing after that, along with PPE for workers, the enforcement of social distancing and a safety plan posted publicly online.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Store workers lock in man wanted in killing

LA LAKE CHARLES — Workers at a Dollar General store recognized a convicted sex offender accused of killing two teenagers and kidnapping a third — and locked him in after quietly escorting other customers out.

“Thank you Sallye Salter and Tiffany Cook, you both exemplified great character in a high pressure situation,” the Beau-regard Parish Sheriff’s Office said in a Facebook post after Neil Broussard was arrested.

Broussard, 51, of Lake Charles surrendered to police after Salter and Cook alerted authorities, the American Press reported.

Broussard, a registered sex offender, is accused of killing Kyla Hidalgo, 17, and Kaleb Charlton, 18; wounding the girl’s mother, Catherine Hidalgo, 40, and kidnapping her other daughter in the Calcasieu Parish town of Westlake.

Violence prompts park to limit homeless tents

MN MINNEAPOLIS — The Minneapolis Park Board is placing limits on the number of tents allowed in the city’s parks.

It’s a reversal for the commission that voted overwhelmingly a month ago to allow all city parks to be used indefinitely and with no limits by people who are homeless.

The commission voted to limit encampments to 25 tents at each of 20 city parks, Minnesota Public Radio News reported.

Residents of the Powderhorn Park neighborhood have been pressuring the board to make changes.

Park police say violence in

Powderhorn Park is rising. In the last week, officers have responded to an armed kidnapping and robbery, a man out running who was struck by a rock, and the sexual assault of a person who had overdosed.

State police return gun 26 years after burglary

VT SWANTON — Vermont State Police troopers returned to its rightful owner a shotgun stolen during a burglary in 1994 in the town of Albany.

They determined that the Swanton resident in possession of the gun was not involved in the burglary 26 years ago and had only recently taken possession of it.

The firearm, a Remington Shotgun, has since been returned to its owner.

Also stolen in the original burglary were a television and VCR, a second shotgun, a handgun and some baseball and football cards. The investigation into the original burglary is continuing.

Utility worker healing after being impaled

NE FIRTH — A Nebraska power utility worker is recovering from surgery after being impaled by a 2-foot long steel rod while on the job near Firth, authorities said.

The incident happened while Nebraska Public Power District worker Roger Kempf, 46, and a coworker were clearing brush from underneath power lines, the Lincoln Journal Star reported.

The coworker was operating a skid loader with a front-mounted disk grinder when it struck a piece of rebar from an electric fence post concealed in the brush, Chief Deputy Todd Duncan said. Duncan said the

disk grinder launched the steel post about 60 yards at high speed, impaling Kempf in the lower back.

Kempf was rushed to a Lincoln hospital, where he had surgery to remove the rebar.

Jesus statue beheaded at Catholic church

FL MIAMI — Someone beheaded a statue of Jesus Christ in the courtyard of a South Florida church, an act of vandalism now being investigated by the Miami-Dade police and the Department of Homeland Security.

The statue was destroyed in the courtyard of Good Shepherd Catholic Church in West Kendall.

“This is an attack on the church,” Mary Ross Agosta, a spokeswoman for the Archdiocese of Miami, told the Miami Herald. “This is not only private property, it is sacred property.”

“This is not something you can trip over and say, ‘Oh, sorry,’” she continued. “Someone did this intentionally.” She said surveillance video has been handed over to police.

Toxic bacteria found in river after death of dog

UT SALT LAKE CITY — Toxic levels of a cyanobacteria have been detected in a Utah river for the first time after a dog suffered seizures and died at Zion National Park, officials said.

Public health officials cautioned people against swimming or letting their animals enter the Virgin River’s North Fork, which flows out of the park and through several towns.

The dog died July 4, an hour after clawing at and ingesting the algae in the river, according to park spokesman Jeff Axel.

“When the dog was pawing at the rocks, it freed up the toxins from the bacterial mat,” he said.

Police chief helps subdue stabbing suspect

VA CHANTILLY — The police chief of Virginia’s biggest county was injured when subduing a suspect who stabbed two people at a church.

WRC-TV reported that Fairfax County Police Chief Ed Roessler was in a Bible study class at Grace Covenant Church when a man walked into the room and stabbed the pastor leading the class. Roessler and another person disarmed the suspect, police said.

Police said two people suffered injuries that weren’t considered life threatening.

Hail damages area’s best crop in 5 years

MN MINNEAPOLIS — Agricultural experts have been tallying the crop damage caused by a recent storm that packed 50 mph winds and baseball-sized hail in parts of Minnesota.

The storm was a blow for farmers from Kandiyohi County to Nicollet County at a time when commodity prices are already down.

“We had a wonderful crop. Best we’ve had in this area in five years,” Curt Burns, farmer and crop consultant, told WCCO-TV.

The hail storm was up to 60 miles long and six miles wide and caused extensive damage.

“This affected thousands of acres of corn, soy beans, kidney beans, sugar beets, peas, sweet corn and alfalfa,” all adding up to millions in losses, Burns said.

From wire reports

STARS AND STRIPES

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Canada denies Blue Jays' bid to play in Toronto

Associated Press

TORONTO — The Blue Jays won't play their home games in Toronto this year because Canada's government doesn't think it's safe for players to travel back and forth from the United States, one of the countries hit hardest by the coronavirus pandemic.

Immigration Minister Marco Mendicino said Saturday the federal government had denied the Blue Jays' request to play at Rogers Centre, confirming what an official familiar with the matter had told The Associated Press ahead of the announcement.

The Blue Jays were informed via a phone call. The team's alternate sites for home games include its training facility in Dunedin, Fla., which is among the states that are virus hot-spots, as well as Sahlen Field in Buffalo, N.Y., which is home to Toronto's Triple-A affiliate and just across the Niagara River from Canada.

The Blue Jays are scheduled to start the season July 24 at Tampa Bay. Their home opener was set for five days later against Washington.

Mendicino told the AP frequent travel to the U.S., where COVID-19 cases are surging, was the biggest issue.

"There were serious risks if we proceeded with the regular-season proposal of the MLB and the Jays and therefore we concluded it was not in the national interest," Mendicino said.

In other baseball news:

■ Former Army outfielder and captain Jacob Hurtubise has agreed to a minor league contract with the Cincinnati Reds for the \$20,000 maximum signing bonus allowed to players bypassed in last month's amateur draft.

The Zionsville, Ind., native becomes the first baseball player to receive a professional offer since the U.S. Department of Defense endorsed a policy last November to allow service academy athletes to pursue professional sports after graduation.

Baseball has dress rehearsal

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Didi Gregorius watched over the top of his face mask as his drive off Washington ace Max Scherzer sailed into empty outfield seats.

Fake cheers — meant to encourage the hometown Nationals — accidentally piped through the stadium as the Philadelphia Phillies shortstop rounded the bases. After touching home plate, he pantomimed air-fives to teammates.

"This is 2020 baseball," Scherzer said. "Embrace it and have fun with it."

Exhibition games in Washington, New York and Pittsburgh on Saturday gave Major League Baseball its first look at coronavirus-era games — cardboard cutouts for fans, sound effects for crowds and more. Still, for clubs limited to practices and intrasquads in their own ballparks for the past two weeks, Saturday stood as an important mile marker as the sport tries to start a shortened 60-game season next Thursday amid a pandemic.

"In some ways, this is very much a dress rehearsal for the new world we're in," Yankees manager Aaron Boone said before an exhibition at the crosstown Mets.

No fans rushed off the 7 train in Flushing at Citi Field, and no masses hurried over the Clemente Bridge in Pittsburgh — not with MLB planning to start this pandemic-shaken season at empty stadiums. At Nationals Park, several people watched from a building balcony far beyond the left field wall.

Umpires wore face masks, as did some players. Backups watched from the stands to maintain social distancing in dugouts. They all tried to follow safety protocols, including a ban on licking fingers or spitting.

Another new look — the Mets became the first club to sell ad space on the field itself, spray painting a Ford logo on the back of the pitcher's mound.

Gregorius drilled a three-run homer in the first inning in Washington, the first big fly by a player in any of Saturday's games.

The 30-year-old Phillies newcomer is one of a handful of players who has said he'll wear a mask full-time this season. Gregorius has a chronic kidney disorder that makes him high risk for the coronavirus.

Scherzer is expected to throw the first pitch of the regular season when the Nats host new ace Gerrit Cole and the Yankees on Thursday night. The right-hander struggled in his final tuneup, also allowing a three-run shot to former teammate Bryce Harper.

Booed heartily last season after spurning Washington in free agency, Harper heard no such jeers this time.

For their first exhibition game since the virus outbreak shut down spring training in mid-March, Yankees players took a team bus from the Bronx to Queens to meet the Mets — no subways for this series.

The pregame routine looked familiar enough

— soaring batting practice homers from Giancarlo Stanton and Pete Alonso, ground ball work for Gleyber Torres and Robinson Canó.

Signs of the times were certainly there. Some coaches hit fungoes in face masks, and the usual high fives and hugs between opponents around the batting cage were replaced by elbow taps and distanced chats — including one between Yankees general manager Brian Cashman and Mets counterpart Brodie Van Wagenen.

With no fans filing in for first pitch, nearly 1,000 cardboard likenesses of Mets supporters were set up behind home plate. The team plans to have 5,000 in place by opening day.

Reserve players watched from under large awnings built behind both dugouts. Mets backups gave a standing ovation to scheduled starter Rick Porcello as he returned from the bullpen, then started a chant of "Let's go, Mets!"

The first homer in Flushing also came from a masked player — Yankees outfielder Clint Frazier. The 25-year-old, who says he's taken heat on social media for his decision to wear a face covering at all times, drove a two-run homer into the second deck in the fourth inning.

The Cleveland Indians loaded into three buses Saturday for the 2-hour-plus drive to Pittsburgh. Manager Terry Francona said the team adhered to social-distance guidelines — and staggered arrival times — for the team's first trip since camp re-opened.

"I think it's a good experience for all of us," he said. "We're not used to getting on a bus and get your temperature taken and things like that, so it's good to go through that."

Cleveland made a public show of support for social justice before its 5-3 win, standing with their right hands over their hearts and their left hands on the right shoulder of their teammates during the national anthem.

A few fans gathered outside PNC Park, hoping to catch some sort of game action.

Michael Kirkpatrick, 73, and his son, Zac, stood on the Clemente Bridge beyond center field — the same place they crammed shoulder to shoulder during the NL wild-card game in 2013. No trouble finding a spot this time.

"I just need to hear a bat hit a ball," Zac said.

In Washington, a moment of silence was held for late civil rights trailblazer John Lewis. Players stood socially distanced for the national anthem — an acoustic rendition by the U.S. Army Brass Quintet performed before Game 4 of last year's World Series and replayed on the video scoreboard.

"Definitely has a different feeling to it," Nationals center fielder Michael A. Taylor said.

Postgame handshake lines got a shake-up, too. The Yankees air-fived each other outside the dugout after finishing a 9-3 win, and Cleveland celebrated its victory by tapping toes with teammates.

AP Sports Writers Will Graves and Howard Fendrich and Associated Press Writer Rob Gillies contributed to this report.

Figueiredo claims UFC flyweight title

Associated Press

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates — Deiveson Figueiredo won the vacant UFC flyweight championship Sunday, finishing a dominant performance against Joseph Benavidez with a rear naked choke with 12 seconds left in the first round.

Jack Hermansson also stunned Kelvin Gastelum with a first-round submission by heel hook in the penultimate bout of the third UFC show in eight days from Fight Island, the UFC's base of operations on Yas Island in Abu Dhabi.

Figueiredo (19-1) became just the third 125-pound champion in UFC history by thoroughly dominating his second victory in five months over Benavidez. The Brazilian veteran knocked down Benavidez three times with punches and barely missed on several choke attempts before finally landing a choke that appeared to render Benavidez unconscious.

"I knew that my time was going to come, and this is my time," Figueiredo said through a translator. "I'm going to continue to defend this belt, and I'm going to be an active champion."

Benavidez (28-7) dropped to a heartbreaking 0-4 in UFC title fights with the first submission defeat of his 14-year pro career.

The main event was a rematch of the flyweights' meeting Feb. 29 for the same belt vacated by Henry Cejudo's retirement. Figueiredo missed weight for that fight in Norfolk, Va., making him ineligible to claim the title when he stopped Benavidez in the second round with a spectacular one-punch knockdown.

Figueiredo, the first non-American UFC flyweight champ, joins Demetrious Johnson and Cejudo as the only UFC fighters ever to hold the

125-pound title. Johnson beat Benavidez in that inaugural title bout in 2012, and Mighty Mouse reigned for nearly six years before Cejudo dethroned him in 2018.

The 32-year-old Figueiredo is 8-1 since joining the UFC in 2017. He had previously fought only in Brazil.

"I wanted to come here and take this belt home to my city, my state," said Figueiredo, who grew up near the mouth of the Amazon River. "I'm so proud to get this belt. I said I was going to take it, and here I am."

Benavidez is one of the top lighter-weight fighters of his generation — but just like longtime friend Urijah Faber, he has repeatedly fallen just short of a UFC title. Benavidez has lost twice to Johnson and twice to Figueiredo, but has lost only one other fight in the past decade.

Hermansson (21-5), a Swede who trains in Norway, rebounded impressively from a knockout loss last September with his fifth win in six bouts overall since 2017.

After a solid opening exchange with Gastelum, the former middleweight title contender, Hermansson alertly grabbed Gastelum's leg out of a ground exchange and violently twisted it to force Gastelum to tap.

"We knew he wanted to engage in the grappling, but then he's in my game," Hermansson said. "You're in my world when we get down there."

Afterward, Hermansson called out the winner of former middleweight champ Robert Whittaker's showdown with Darren Till next weekend in Abu Dhabi.

Gastelum (15-6) took his third consecutive loss and just the second stoppage defeat of his pro career.

NFL says camps will open on time

Associated Press

The NFL has informed teams their training camps will open on time.

League executive Troy Vincent sent a memo to general managers and head coaches on Saturday informing them rookies can report by Tuesday, quarterbacks and injured players by Thursday and all other players can arrive by July 28.

Rookies for Houston and Kansas City are set to report Monday.

The league and the NFL Players Association are still discussing testing for the coronavirus and other health and safety protocols. Union leadership expressed several concerns in a 90-minute conference call with reporters Friday.

However, under the collective bargaining agreement, the NFL can impose report dates.

The NFLPA could file a grievance to argue the league isn't providing a safe work envi-

ronment under the labor deal.

"The league is management," NFLPA executive director DeMaurice Smith said Friday. "They have the exclusive right, just like somebody who owns a plant, regarding when it opens and when it closes. They want training camps to open on time. The role of the union is to hold them accountable about whether it's safe to open now."

The players' union wants players tested daily for the virus. A joint committee of doctors, trainers and strength coaches formed by the NFL and NFLPA recommended testing every other day.

Other outstanding issues include number of preseason games. The league has planned to cut the exhibition schedule from four games to two while the union wants none.

Both sides are also negotiating economic issues and questions remain on players' rights to opt out of playing.

NBA will play shortened games for first exhibitions

Associated Press

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — The first exhibition games of the NBA restart will go a little more quickly than usual.

The NBA is tweaking the rules for those initial matchups, going with 10-minute quarters instead of the usual 12 minutes. The change is for several reasons — among them, not wanting to overly tax players after they went more than four months without games, and because some teams do not have their full rosters at Walt Disney World yet because of coronavirus and other issues.

The change will apply only to the first exhibition for teams; their second and third exhibition games at Disney will use standard timing. All teams are

slated to play three exhibitions.

"This is a different situation," Dallas coach Rick Carlisle said Saturday. "In all areas, really. ... I do think that there's some latitude to do some different things."

Exhibitions start with a four-game slate Wednesday and continue through July 28.

"I believe that it's done just trying to get safety first for the players," Orlando coach Steve Clifford said of the shorter first exhibition. "I think most teams are like us, where everybody is just feeling their way and guys aren't in the type of condition they would normally be in in a training camp situation."

The league is still working on some of the specifics for the first games.