

STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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2020 Marine Corps Marathon canceled

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Organizers have canceled the Marine Corps Marathon for the first time in its 45-year history, reluctantly bowing to the uncertainties of an uncontrolled pandemic.

“I don’t think I ever thought I would be saying these words, but we will not be presenting the race,” said Race Director Rick Nealis, who has presided over the event since 1993. The 45th running had been scheduled for Oct. 25.

Nealis said the final decision was made Friday by Marine Corps Commandant David Berger after it became clear that key logistics could not be nailed down until uncomfortably close to race day.

The official announcement is going out to runners Monday via email and will be posted on the race’s website and social media accounts.

The Marine Corps race had been one of the last mega-marathons remaining on the

country’s 2020 race calendar.

Boston, which had been held every year since 1897, first rescheduled to September but then canceled entirely in May. New York City dropped in June, and a week ago, Chicago threw in the towel. The only huge marathon left is Honolulu, which (so far) is still on for Dec. 13.

Nealis said runners can opt for a full refund of their entry fees, which for most was about \$172, or they can defer with no fee to 2021, 2022 or 2023. Any runners who had previously paid to defer will have that fee refunded as well.

And runners who still want 2020 swag, including the medal, shirt and commemorative face mask, will have the option of running a virtual marathon for \$45 after their original fee is refunded.

“I don’t know what more we could do for the runner,” Nealis said.

The Marine Corps Marathon debuted in 1976 as a post-Vietnam recruiting tool and showcase of military goodwill.

It grew into a huge event, with an accompanying 10K, 50K and kids run, that annually draws 30,000 runners to the Washington area from all over the world — often with families and friends in tow. A Towson University study after the 2013 race found that runners pumped \$88 million into the local economy on race weekend.

The threat of cancellation loomed over previous editions of the race.

There was talk of calling off the 2002 race when the D.C. snipers terrorized the area, but they were caught three days before. The 2012 and 2013 editions were threatened by Hurricane Sandy and a government shutdown, respectively.

But Nealis said that the closest call was in 2001, when the race was set for six weeks after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Rather than shutting down, as some other large events had done, the Marines marshaled loads of extra security, and the marathon became a moving demonstration of strength and healing.

Expert: Japanese citizens worry about US alliance

BY SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — Japan values its security pact with the United States and will never accept Chinese hegemony in the region, a Keio University expert on international politics recently told foreign journalists.

“People feel anxious and concerned about the alliance,” Masayuki Tadokoro, an expert in international politics and a professor at the Keio University Faculty of Law, said of the 1960 treaty during a video press conference on Japan’s postwar foreign policy July 13. The event was hosted by the Foreign Press Center Japan in Tokyo.

President Donald Trump had demanded Japan pay \$8 billion a year, up from \$2.5 billion, toward the cost of hosting more than 50,000 American troops

in the country, former national security adviser John Bolton wrote in his memoir, “The Room Where It Happened,” published last month.

Just before the book’s release, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga denied Bolton’s claims, saying cost-sharing talks had yet to begin. However, the demand was also reported in a Nov. 18 Foreign Policy magazine report that cited unidentified former officials.

The president said the best way to persuade allies such as Japan and South Korea to pay more was to threaten to withdraw troops, Bolton wrote in his book.

“It appears that [Trump] sees Japan as merely the counterpart in a deal,” Tadokoro told reporters in the video-conference. “He doesn’t place much emphasis on traditional

values such as freedom and democracy.”

Japan’s security policies are premised on the U.S. alliance so any threat to its credibility undermines those policies, he added.

“I would say the majority of the public in Japan still consider it important to maintain the current institutions,” he said.

Tadokoro singled out a 2018 poll by the Japanese government showing 89.9% support among Japanese for maintaining the U.S. alliance and the Japan Self-Defense Forces, which are tasked with preserving the nation’s peace, independence and safety, but are barred from offensive military actions.

“There is very little support for disarming the Self-Defense Force and pulling out of the alliance,” he said.

However, security experts are coming to grips with the possibility that the United States might not be a reliable ally, Tadokoro said, in reference to Trump’s alleged statements about the alliance.

“For Japan, it’s best to maintain the current framework,” he added, citing public opinion.

Tadokoro said Japan has two options if the U.S. alliance breaks down: It could dramatically strengthen and reinforce its security policies and self-defense forces on its own or it could accept Chinese hegemony.

“These two options are extremely unpopular for Japanese,” he said, adding that Chinese dominance would be particularly difficult for Japanese people to accept since they have internalized ideals such as freedom and democracy.

Soldier, cook apologize for Okinawa robbery

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI

Stars and Stripes

NAHA, Okinawa — Japanese prosecutors on Monday asked for six-year sentences for two men from Kadena Air Base who pleaded guilty to robbing a currency exchange of nearly \$65,000 in May.

Army Pvt. Demetrius Moton Jr., 21, and Hassan Smith, 34, a cook for Kadena's Child Development Center, appeared a second time this month in Naha District Court, this time for victim impact statements, recommendations from both the prosecution and defense as well as apologies from the two men.

They pleaded guilty July 13 in connection with the robbery at knife-point of the exchange near the Camp Foster gate. Both men appealed Monday for leniency from the three-member court.

"I am a failure to my country and a failure to my family," Moton said in court. "I beg you with all my remorse for your forgiveness. I had lost everything, and all I have now is my wife and my kids."

Moton and Smith are scheduled for sentencing at 3 p.m. on Aug. 25 for robbery and invasion of a building, according to the court.

At their first appearance, Moton admitted planning the May 12 robbery. The pair entered the exchange wearing masks; Moton went inside the counter area, brandished a knife and threatened an employee. He and Smith made off with \$64,700 in Japanese and U.S. currency.

"Moton is the main person who planned the whole thing," the prosecutor told the court. "However, Smith was there

with Moton to check the site and checked again on the day of the crime to make sure no one was there before entering the shop. Also, Smith got half of the money. Because of that, both defendants should be considered for the same amount of time."

Moton's lawyer asked for probation and that Moton be returned to his family in the U.S.

A conviction of robbery with threat or assault carries between five to 20 years imprisonment under Japanese criminal law, according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

All but approximately \$5,200 of Moton's split has been accounted for, along with \$875 of Smith's, according to defense lawyers, who displayed a flow chart showing where the stolen money went.

Smith's wife, Air Force Staff

Sgt. Danielle Smith, testified that she first learned of the robbery when police arrived at their door days after the crime. She said she intends to stay with Smith regardless of the trial's outcome. They have five children under age 8.

The exchange shop manager, whose name was not disclosed in court, described the stress of the robbery, the loss in revenue after the shop was closed following the crime and daily media harassment.

"Both suspects caused a tremendous amount of stress and pain to myself and another employee who was at shop that day," the manager said in court. "I could have been seriously injured."

He demanded an apology from both men or, failing that, the maximum sentence from the court.

Both men offered apologies.

China diplomat to UK: Don't join US in South China Sea

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS

Stars and Stripes

China's ambassador to London said the United Kingdom should not "gang up with the United States on the Chinese" in the South China Sea, according to a report in the London newspaper *The Times*.

Ambassador Liu Xiaoming, in an interview with *The Times*, expressed dismay over Britain's plans to send its aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth on patrol to the South China Sea next year, the newspaper reported Saturday.

"After Brexit, I think the U.K. still wants to play an important role in the world," he told *The Times*. "That is not the way to play an important role."

Beijing claims nearly all of the South China Sea as its territorial waters and believes it has a historic right to the region.

A United Nations panel in

2016, however, ruled in a case brought by the Philippines that China's claims are invalid. China bases its claims on its own early maps that include a line which encompasses the South and East China Seas.

On July 13, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo for the first time announced the official U.S. stance rejecting China's claims and operations in the South China Sea.

The aircraft carriers USS Nimitz and USS Ronald Reagan have been operating in the South China Sea since June, according to the Navy. The U.S. has also stepped up the pace of freedom-of-navigation operations it's conducted regularly near the Spratly and Paracel island groups since 2017. The chains are subject to competing claims by nations bordering the South China Sea, including China.

US, Ukraine start Black Sea drills; Moscow goes on alert

BY JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — The Navy destroyer USS Porter and submarine-hunting aircraft joined a large-scale exercise that kicked off Monday in the Black Sea, where Russia recently ordered snap combat readiness drills involving thousands of troops.

About 400 U.S. sailors and 2,000 personnel from allied and partner states are participating in Sea Breeze 20, an annual exercise in the Black Sea cohosted by Ukraine and the United States.

"The exercise will focus on multiple warfare areas including maritime interdiction operations, air defense, anti-submarine warfare, damage control and search and rescue operations," the U.S. Navy said in a statement Monday.

The long-planned exercise began just days after Russia put thousands of its troops on alert. On Friday, state media reported that Russia's Black Sea Fleet was deployed in a "surprise combat readiness check" involving 3,000 troops, warships and combat aircraft.

It wasn't clear from Moscow's statements if the Sea Breeze drill factored into its decision to launch the surprise drills.

"During the exercise, the ships' crews made their urgent preparation for a battle and practiced withdrawing the main forces from a notional enemy's strike," the Russian Black Sea Fleet said in a statement.

Sea Breeze, now in its 20th iteration, runs through Sunday and includes 26 ships and 19 aircraft from eight nations — Bulgaria, Georgia, Norway, Romania, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine and the U.S.

More countries require face coverings

The Washington Post

As countries around the world reopen their economies amid ongoing coronavirus outbreaks, governments are increasingly embracing what remains in some places a divisive public health measure: mandatory masks.

In France, face coverings are required in all public enclosed spaces as of Monday.

England is set to begin enforcing new rules that make masks mandatory inside supermarkets and other shops, effective Friday.

A country's caseload and mortality rate are the product of diverse epidemiological factors, but health researchers say more evidence is emerging to support what some policymakers and experts have maintained all along: Masks work. Although it is difficult to isolate mask use as the key factor in a country's success so far, or draw a direct line between mask mandates and

outcomes, many countries where masks were in wide, early use have fared better than those that resisted the broad adoption of face coverings.

"It is striking just on the face of it that essentially every country that has used masks has done better than every country that hasn't," said Richard Stutt, a postdoctoral research associate at Cambridge University. Stutt was the lead author on a recent peer-reviewed study, which concluded that universal use of face masks in public could significantly reduce the spread of the virus, and if paired with lockdowns, prevent future waves of infection.

In the United States, where coronavirus cases are surging in many states, messaging about the effectiveness and necessity of masks has been inconsistent. Early on, government officials instructed Americans to stop buying masks and said they would not be effective in preventing infection. Even now, after leading health authorities

came around to masks as a key measure to fight the virus, the country has resisted a national mask mandate. On Friday, President Donald Trump doubled down on his insistence that there would be no national requirement.

But at the state level, a growing number of mask requirements have come into force. Last week, Robert Redfield, the director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said that the country's outbreak could be controlled within four to eight weeks if everyone wore masks.

"Masks are a very low cost and high available thing that everyone can do," Stutt said. "We're gathering all this new information and evidence about how effective masks are and it is adding up more and more in favor of masks every day."

Several other studies have also found that widespread mask use has helped communities slow their infection rates.

Despite the stakes, squabbles continue over virus relief

Associated Press

MIAMI — The desperate race to corral the coronavirus pandemic took on even greater urgency Monday as a burgeoning economic crisis collided with political turmoil. Even as the latest experimental vaccine appeared to show promise, politicians in Washington seemed far apart in finding a way to bring financial relief to Americans.

As the first federal relief package was poised to come

to an end, members of Congress were trying to come to agreement on another package to ease the financial burden Americans have dealt with as businesses have endured repeated shutterings or pauses since the virus first appeared on the continent.

The political turmoil in the U.S. and in Europe was playing out as there appeared to be good news on the medical front as scientists involved in the development of at least one vaccine reported promising re-

sults in an early trial.

Even as Republicans were at odds with Democrats over how much money was enough, top Republican members of Congress also faced pushback from the White House. GOP leaders were expected to meet Monday with President Donald Trump as the White House panned some \$25 billion in the GOP's plan that would be devoted to testing and tracing, said one Republican familiar with the discussions.

There remains a wide gulf

between the GOP and Democratic packages, with Democrats passing in the House a \$3 trillion package, while the Republican package came in at about \$1 trillion.

There has been a glimmer of hope on the medical front with scientists at Oxford University saying their experimental coronavirus vaccine has been shown in an early trial to prompt a protective immune response in hundreds of people who got the shot.

German leaders ask Congress to block troop cuts

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTT GART, Germany — The leaders of four southern German states where U.S. forces are based are urging Congress to block a plan by President Donald Trump to remove thousands of troops from the country.

The appeal, reported by Reuters and German news agencies, called U.S. troops

in Germany "the backbone of U.S. presence in Europe and NATO's ability to act.

"We therefore ask you to support us as we strive not to sever the bond of friendship but to strengthen it, and to secure the U.S. presence in Germany and Europe in the future," wrote the chief ministers from Baden-Wuerttemberg, Bavaria, Hesse and Rheinland-Pfalz.

The letter was addressed to 13

U.S. lawmakers, including Sen. Jim Inhofe, R-Okla., a Trump ally who chairs the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Trump's plan has already run into bipartisan resistance in Congress, where lawmakers have introduced legislation that aims to block the effort to cut 9,500 troops in Germany. Some of the forces are expected to be relocated to other European countries while most would

likely return to the United States.

Trump has said he wants the cuts because Germany doesn't invest enough in defense and takes advantage of the U.S. on trade.

For Germany, the loss of nearly one-third of 34,500 U.S. troops in the country would hit local economies hard since the military is a major job provider.

Delayed UAE Mars spacecraft lifts off

Associated Press

TOKYO — A United Arab Emirates spacecraft rocketed into blue skies from a Japanese launch center Monday at the start of a seven-month journey to Mars on the Arab world's first interplanetary mission.

The liftoff of the Mars orbiter named Amal, or Hope, starts a rush to fly to Earth's neighbor that is scheduled to be followed in the next few days by China and the United States.

At the space center in Dubai, people watching were transfixed by the liftoff, then cheered and clapped, with one woman offering a celebratory cry common for weddings.

Amal blasted off from the Tanegashima Space Center aboard a Mitsubishi Heavy Industries' H-IIA rocket on time at 6:58 a.m. after being delayed five days by bad weather.

Mitsubishi later said the probe successfully separated

from the rocket and was now on its solo journey to Mars.

The probe was sending signals that would be analyzed later but everything appeared good for now, Omran Sharaf, the UAE Mars mission director told journalists in Dubai about an hour and a half after liftoff.

Amal is set to reach Mars in February 2021, the year the UAE celebrates 50 years since the country's formation. In September that year, Amal will start transmitting Martian atmospheric data, which will be made available to the international scientific community, Sharaf said.

"The UAE is now a member of the club and we will learn more and we will engage more and we'll continue developing our space exploration program," UAE Space Agency chief Mohammed Al Ahababi told a joint online news conference from Tanegashima.

At Mohammed bin Rashid

Space Center in Dubai, Emirati men in their traditional white kandora robes and women in their black abayas watched the liftoff. As its stages separated, a cheer went out from men seated on the floor. They began clapping, one using his face mask, worn due to the coronavirus pandemic, to wipe away a tear.

"It was great to see everything going according to schedule today. It looks like things are all on track. It's a huge step in terms of space exploration to have a nation like the UAE taking that giant leap to send a spacecraft to Mars," said Fred Watson, Australia's astronomer-at-large. "Being on route to a planet like Mars is an exceptional achievement."

A newcomer in space development, the UAE has successfully put three Earth observation satellites into orbit. Two were developed by South Korea and launched by Russia, and a third — its own — was

launched by Japan.

A successful mission to Mars would be a major step for the oil-dependent economy seeking a future in space, coming less than a year after the launch of the first UAE astronaut, Hazzaa Ali Almansoori. He spent over a week at the International Space Station last fall.

The UAE has set a goal to build a human colony on Mars by 2117.

"It sends a very strong message to the Arab youth that if the UAE is able to reach Mars in less than 50 years, they could do much more," Sharaf told The Associated Press on Sunday as his colleagues prepared for the launch.

The Emiratis also acknowledged it represented a step forward for the Arab world, the home of mathematicians and scientists for centuries before the wars and chaos that have gripped wide swathes of it in recent times.

Iran executed man convicted of spying for US

Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran executed a man convicted of providing information to the United States and Israel about a prominent Revolutionary Guard general later killed by a U.S. drone strike, state TV reported on Monday.

The report said the death sentence was carried out against Mahmoud Mousavi Majd, without elaborating.

The country's judiciary had said in June that Majd was "linked to the CIA and the Mossad," the Israeli intelligence agency, and alleged that Majd shared security information on the Guard and its expeditionary unit, called the Quds, or Jerusalem Force, which Qassem Soleimani commanded.

Soleimani was killed in an American drone strike in Baghdad in January.

Iran later retaliated for Soleimani's killing with a ballistic missile strike targeting U.S. forces in Iraq. That same night, the Guard accidentally shot down a Ukrainian jetliner in Tehran, killing 176 people.

Kanye West hosts first campaign rally, criticises Harriet Tubman

Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Rapper Kanye West, in his first event since declaring himself a presidential candidate, ranted against historical figure Harriet Tubman on Sunday, saying the Underground Railroad conductor "never actually freed the slaves, she just had them work for other white people," comments that drew shouts of opposition from some in the crowd.

West delivered a lengthy monologue, touching on topics from abortion and religion to international trade and licensing deals, before a crowd in North Charleston, S.C. Whether he is actually seeking the nation's highest office remains a question.

Tubman is one of the most respected figures of 19th century America. An African American who escaped slavery, she helped enslaved Black men and women travel north to freedom and fought for the Union during the Civil War. She later became a supporter of women's suffrage.

On abortion, West said that while he believes it should be legal, financial incentives to help struggling mothers could be a

way to discourage the practice.

"Everybody that has a baby gets a million dollars," he said as an example.

Wearing a protective vest and with "2020" shaved into his head, the entertainer appeared on a livestream of the event. Several hundred people gathered in a venue, where gospel music played before West's appearance.

The event was reportedly for registered guests only, although a campaign website had no registration or RSVP information.

Speaking without a microphone, West became tearful at one point while talking about his mother, who died following plastic surgery complications in 2007.

West missed the deadline to qualify for the ballot in several states, and it was unclear if he was willing or able to collect enough signatures required to qualify in others. Last week, he qualified to appear on Oklahoma's presidential ballot, the first state where he met the requirements before the filing deadline.

West, who is married to reality television star Kim Kardashian West, initially announced his candidacy on July 4.

Fla. daily life different as virus cases surge

Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE — As coronavirus cases skyrocket, daily life is looking very different in the Sunshine State, where many popular beaches are shuttered, residents and tourists can be fined for not wearing masks and bars across the state aren't allowed to pour liquor to toast the carefree days of summer.

The state Department of Health on Sunday reported 12,478 new confirmed cases of the coronavirus and 87 more deaths. Overall, there have been nearly 350,047 cases, resulting in more than 5,000 deaths.

Florida recently closed bars again because customers weren't wearing masks or practicing social distancing. Miami-Dade County again recently prohibited restaurants from having indoor seating and Broward County, home to Fort Lauderdale, announced a two-week curfew Friday that bans most people from being outside from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. and an order limiting private gatherings, indoor or outdoor, to no more than 10 people.

The coronavirus has tapped out intensive care units of some hospitals around the state, and hospitalizations continue to rise, though not quite as steeply as on some days during the past week.

Kentucky

FRANKFORT — A daily record of nearly 1,000 coronavirus cases was reported Sunday in Kentucky, a spike that the governor said should be a "wake-up call" for the state's citizens to abide by mask and social distancing restrictions.

Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear announced in a news release that there were 979 new cases reported Sunday, including 30 which involved children 5 years old or younger.

Beshear said there were at least 23,161 coronavirus cases in Kentucky, including the new cases reported Sunday.

Beshear also reported three

new deaths, raising the total to 670 Kentuckians that have been lost to the virus.

Massachusetts

The city of Gloucester banned beach parking for out-of-town visitors this weekend as temperatures were expected to reach into the upper 90s.

The move came after complaints about excessive traffic last weekend. Gloucester officials are limiting the number of non-residents and only allowing beach parking on weekdays to slow the spread of the coronavirus, WBZ-TV reported.

The city said it would be monitoring parking lots and nearby streets this weekend, and violators could face a \$75 fine and be towed.

Massachusetts reported 218 new cases Sunday, and 12 deaths. That brings the state's total confirmed case count to nearly 107,000, and deaths to 8,213.

Vermont

The Vermont Department of Health Department said Sunday that 33 of 63 people in the Manchester area who tested positive for the coronavirus after taking a type of test not considered to be as accurate as that used by the department have been retested, and only two were confirmed as positive cases.

As of Saturday, the Health Department had reached out to all but seven of the 63 people who had positive antigen tests. Most who were interviewed were not symptomatic.

The Burlington Free Press reported that antigen testing provides rapid results and can be helpful as a screening tool for those who are symptomatic. But they have shown the potential for producing false negatives, according to Health Commissioner Mark Levine, and are considered less reliable than PCR (polymerase chain reaction) tests.

Vermont reported 12 new cases of the virus Sunday for a total of 1,350 cases.

Arizona

PHOENIX — Arizona health officials Sunday reported 31 additional deaths from the coronavirus, a day after reporting a daily record of 147 deaths that officials attributed to the inclusion of information gathered from a review of death certificates.

The virus death toll in Arizona stands at 2,761 as of Sunday, according to Department of Health Services data. There have been 143,624 confirmed cases statewide as of Sunday, up more than 2,300 from the day before.

The Arizona Republic reported there were no new records set for ventilators in use, inpatient hospitalizations, intensive care unit beds in use or emergency department visits by suspected and confirmed COVID-19 patients.

Nevada

LAS VEGAS — Las Vegas-area hospitals are adding beds and staff to accommodate an increasing number of COVID-19 patients, officials said.

Hospital occupancy was not high enough to require activation of a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers plan developed in April to use the Las Vegas Convention Center for up to 900 patients, Clark County Fire Chief John Steinbeck told the Las Vegas Review-Journal.

Acute-care hospitals in Clark County added 441 staffed beds as of Thursday, according to data from the Nevada Hospital Association. Another 49 were added in other parts of the state.

Wisconsin

Wisconsin health officials reported 830 more confirmed cases of COVID-19 on Sunday, bringing the total number of confirmed coronavirus cases in the state to 42,315 since the pandemic began.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services reported that the positive cases make up 10.3% of the 8,089 tests processed since Saturday. The

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported that the daily positivity rate fell below 3% during the first half of June but increased recently.

Sunday's positivity rate is the highest percentage of tests to come back positive in the past two weeks.

On Saturday, Wisconsin health officials reported the most cases in a single day at 978. One more COVID-19 death was reported Sunday, raising the state's death toll to 844.

Michigan

HILLSDALE — A politically-connected conservative college in southern Michigan defied warnings from state and public health officials during the coronavirus pandemic by hosting an in-person graduation ceremony.

Hillsdale College held graduation Saturday evening, capping days of celebrations, according to The Detroit News.

The college of about 1,500 students had expected more than 2,000 people at the event, which Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel called illegal with public gatherings capped at 100 people during the pandemic.

The liberal arts college has connections to top Republicans. Vice President Mike Pence gave 2018's commencement address.

Illinois

CHICAGO — A county sheriff in southwestern Illinois has tested positive for COVID-19, according to officials.

The Monroe County Sheriff's Department said Sheriff Neal Rohlfing has been in quarantine since he had symptoms earlier this month. He received a positive test Wednesday, according to a department statement.

Officials said department operations have not been affected because of his limited contact with employees.

County public officials said there has been a recent uptick in cases likely due to social gatherings around the Fourth of July.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Mountain lion removed from neighborhood

NV LAS VEGAS — Authorities tranquilized and removed a 70-pound mountain lion found in a foothills area on the western edge of metro Las Vegas after being seen near a park and an elementary school.

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department said the female mountain lion wasn't acting aggressively while in the Summerlin area, and police waited for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to arrive and help capture it.

The Nevada Department of Wildlife was transporting the animal to the Spring Mountains to be released.

Police said the mountain lion appeared to be hot and tired when police confined it to a backyard.

Trucker with hostage arrested after chase

OH CINCINNATI — Authorities in Ohio said they have arrested the driver of a tractor-trailer who held a female hostage and led police on a wild chase.

The Ohio State Highway Patrol began pursuing the rig in the eastbound lanes of I-275 in Cincinnati. Hours later, after the hostage was freed, police were able to disable the truck by firing into the engine block, and the driver, who was armed with a knife, was subdued with a stun device.

Cincinnati police said the chase stemmed from an apparent domestic violence situation, and the hostage — believed to be the driver's wife — was taken to a hospital for treatment. Police said she might have a broken leg.

The driver was treated for minor injuries following his arrest, police said.

Wrong turn leads to a prison sentence

MI SAULT STE. MARIE — A Canadian man who said he took a wrong turn into Michigan's Upper Peninsula has been sentenced to 3½ years in federal prison for transporting opium paste possibly worth millions of dollars.

Abdolnasser Mahmoudikanesbi of Gatineau, Quebec, acknowledged that he was trying to transport 220 pounds of the drug. He said he got confused on a journey to western Canada and ended up on the bridge connecting Ontario and Sault Ste. Marie, Mich.

Mahmoudikanesbi wanted to resell premium cotton shipped by a friend in Iran and didn't know until later that the container held opium paste, defense attorney Michael Manning said.

The government, however, said Mahmoudikanesbi was not a "patsy."

"He knew all the players, including the believed-to-be leader of a multinational drug trafficking organization," Assistant U.S. Attorney Theodore Greeley said.

Rainbow house won't have to be repainted

IL MOLINE — Officials in a western Illinois city have told a homeowner that the vibrant colors on her family's rainbow-striped house can stay despite an earlier order that she repaint the residence.

Moline city officials said in a hand-delivered letter to Taylor Berg that she does not have to paint over the broad purple, blue, green, yellow, orange and red horizontal stripes that run top to bottom down her two-story wood-frame house, the Quad-City Times reported.

The same colors are vertical on the home's picket fence.

The city told Berg that she had until July 21 to repaint her house a color similar to other houses on the block or face a fine of up to \$750 a day.

Berg created an online petition for support that went viral. The petition had nearly 17,000 signatures, some from countries as far away as Malaysia and Australia, according to the newspaper.

Moline Mayor Stephanie Aciri said that the code Berg was cited for was meant for development of new homes, not existing structures.

Holy Goat! Stray billy goat protects church

MS MCCOMB — A stray billy goat has made himself the guardian of a church in southwestern Mississippi.

People in the McComb area are calling it the "Holy Goat."

The Enterprise-Journal reported that the animal has been hanging out on the steps of Rose Bower Missionary Baptist Church. Associate minister Larry Thomas said the congregation has not been meeting during the coronavirus pandemic, so the goat is not bothering anybody.

A nearby resident, Anita Campbell, said the goat looks like "a regal king." Her son, Greyson, said: "Goat might be a Baaaptist."

Dog makes 50-mile trek to her old home

MO LAWSON — A dog named Cleo who disappeared from her home in Kansas turned up later at her old home in Missouri, about 50 miles away.

Colton Michael told television station KMBC that the 4-year-old Labrador retriever-border collie mix showed up on the front porch of his family's

home in Lawson, which is about 30 miles northeast of Kansas City.

At first, she wouldn't let anyone get near her, said Michael, who has lived in the home for nearly two years.

"She finds her way home, and there's some strangers living in it. That would be scary for anybody," he said.

Eventually, he was able to gain Cleo's trust and to get her checked for a microchip, which showed that she belonged to the former owners of his house.

Neither family knows how Cleo made the trip, which would have required her to cross at least one river.

Woman seriously injured in bear attack

NM LOS ALAMOS — A woman was seriously injured when she was chased and attacked by a bear that approached her and her husband as they were comet-watching on the deck of a northern New Mexico ski area's lodge, authorities said.

The bear came within a foot of the couple and then began chasing the woman before attacking her in the parking lot of the ski area on the outskirts of Los Alamos, the state Game and Fish Department said in a statement.

The woman was hospitalized for treatment of multiple injuries, including several broken bones, a collapsed lung, bite marks and scratches, the department said.

Los Alamos police officers who responded to a 911 call shot and killed a bear eating trash in the vicinity, the department said. A forensic laboratory will analyze DNA samples to determine whether the bear killed by police was the one involved in the attack, the department said.

From wire reports

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Rahm moves to No. 1 with Memorial win

Associated Press

DUBLIN, Ohio — The drama was more than Jon Rahm wanted. The result was what he always imagined.

Rahm became the No. 1 player in the world Sunday with a victory in the Memorial in which he watched an eight-shot lead at the turn shrink to three shots with three holes to play, and then hit what he called the greatest shot of his life that turned into a bogey because of a penalty.

All that mattered was that fist-bump — not a handshake — with Jack Nicklaus, and taking his place along his idol Seve Ballesteros as the only Spaniards to reach No. 1 in the world.

With a two-shot penalty for his ball moving the length of a dimple on his chip-in behind the 16th green, Rahm closed with 3-over 75 for a three-shot victory over Ryan Palmer.

Rahm got up-and-down on the final four greens, which made it feel even sweeter.

“One of the best performances of my life,” Rahm said. “Yesterday was probably one of the best rounds of my life, and finished today with some clutch up-and-downs. As a Spaniard, I’m kind of glad it happened that way.”

The fiery emotion is his hallmark. He showed it with a tee shot that sailed left into a creek on the 11th hole, Rahm slamming his club into the ground in a pique of anger. And it was evident with that ferocious fist-pump when his flop shot from deep rough behind the 16th green rolled into the cup.

Birdie or bogey, it was a winner, a shot that would have made Ballesteros proud.

“I still can’t believe it, I’m not going to lie,” he told Nicklaus off the 18th green.

With the penalty — Rahm had no idea it was an issue after his round, but accepted the penalty when he saw a video that zoomed in close on the ball — he finished at 9-under 279 for his 10th career victory, fourth on the PGA Tour.

As DH goes leaguwide, NL pitchers contemplate season without swings

Associated Press

Three or four hours before a National League game, they’d be cackling around the cage.

Madison Bumgarner and buddies — or pitchers from any home team, really — taking batting practice under an afternoon sun in an otherwise empty ballpark.

After all the bunting drills, when they finally got to swing some lumber, you’d hear oohs and aahs, hoots and hollers, boasting and bragging, teasing and laughing.

Maybe even the occasional wager or two.

But that merry pursuit of a secondary skill is suddenly an endangered species in baseball. Under new rules for this abbreviated season delayed by the coronavirus, all games will include the designated hitter — knocking NL pitchers right out of the batter’s box.

“Well, obviously my thoughts don’t really matter,” said a smiling Bumgarner, the Arizona Diamondbacks newcomer who leads active pitchers with 19 career home runs. “I do what I’m told. I’ll sit there and pitch and that’s it for now. I think that’s obviously where everybody wants the game to go, so it is what it is.”

Looking to protect pitchers and simplify roster construction in the middle of a pandemic, Major League Baseball players and owners agreed to expand the DH this year to the National League, a rule in place for AL clubs since 1973.

There’s no guarantee the change will stick beyond this abnormal season sheared to 60 games — but it certainly might. And even if not next year, it seems a universal DH is coming soon, which would mean pitchers never hit regularly again.

Decades of hot debate ... decided just like that.

“I’m upset I can’t get a Silver Slugger,” joked San Diego Padres right-hander Chris Paddack, who batted .119 as a rookie last season.

No more one-in-a-million surprises from funny-looking pitchers at the plate — like Bartolo Colon’s rousing home run in 2016, and Dae-Sung Koo’s long double off Hall of Famer Randy Johnson in 2005.

Not in 2020, at least.

“I get it for this year, but I hope it doesn’t continue,” said Milwaukee Brewers All-Star starter Brandon Woodruff, a .267 hitter last season who homered off Clayton Kershaw in the 2018 NL Championship Series. “I think that’s pretty much the consensus for all of our pitchers. We like to hit. It changes the game.”

Of course, for every Zack Greinke (.280, three homers, eight RBIs last year) or Adam Wainwright (10 career homers, 71 RBIs) or German Márquez (.300 average in 2018), there are dozens of other pitchers who appear completely overmatched at the big league level with a bat in their hands.

Not to mention legions of fans who’d much rather see a muscular DH taking dangerous cuts

than an inexperienced starter flailing away or trying to sacrifice.

For them, the new rule is a welcome relief that saves some embarrassment.

“I don’t have to punch out every time I go up there,” Washington Nationals pitcher Austin Voth said.

Curiously, the push away from pitchers hitting comes at a progressive time when creative teams seem much more inclined to experiment with two-way players than in the past.

DH/starter Shohei Ohtani is the biggest such star with the Los Angeles Angels, of course. But there’s also Brendan McKay in Tampa Bay, reliever/outfielder Michael Lorenzen in Cincinnati and more in the minor league pipeline.

If a guy is uber-talented enough to contribute both on the mound and in the lineup, some clubs don’t want to stifle that spark and waste a potential opportunity anymore simply out of skepticism or fear of injury.

Babe Ruth, where have you been?

“I’m going to miss it a lot,” Miami Marlins pitcher Pablo López said. “I love taking batting practice and having that opportunity to be in the box and produce offensively. But it’s going to give you way more time to focus on your pitching.”

Accomplished starters such as Wainwright, Masahiro Tanaka, Steven Wright, Carlos Zambrano, Chien-Ming Wang and more have been hurt hitting or running the bases in recent memory. That can infuriate the executives paying those pitchers and making big plans based on their valuable arms, not their offense.

Owners and general managers don’t want to put those pricey investments at risk doing something unfamiliar on the field.

“Who doesn’t want to watch nine real hitters get after it? I think it’ll be better for the game,” said Pittsburgh Pirates pitcher Steven Brault, who batted .333 (14-for-42) with a homer last season.

“Do I want to hit? Of course, because I got a taste of it last year and now it’s gone, stripped from me. Unbelievable.”

Taking pitchers out of the lineup will alter strategy as well, drastically reducing sacrifice bunts, pinch hitters and double switches.

In game, at least, the job of National League managers just got easier.

“There’s a lot less to think about with the DH,” Marlins skipper Don Mattingly said.

But even pitchers who struggle at the plate and see advantages to the new rule are fully aware of what’s lost.

“It’s good to have the DH, but I think I’m going to miss having fun with the guys in the cage,” Brewers right-hander Freddy Peralta said.

Players plead with NFL to fix safety concerns

Associated Press

NFL players are publicly pleading with the league to address several health and safety concerns on the eve of training camp.

The league informed teams on Saturday that training camps will open on time even though discussions with the players' union regarding testing for the coronavirus and other health and safety protocols are ongoing.

Rookies for Houston and Kansas City are set to report Monday and rookies for other teams are due on Tuesday. Players for all teams are scheduled to report by July 28.

Many prominent players expressed their thoughts in a social media blitz Sunday.

"We need Football! We need sports! We need hope!" Saints quarterback Drew Brees wrote on Twitter. "The NFL's unwillingness to follow the recommendations of their own medical experts will prevent that. If the NFL doesn't do their part to keep players healthy, there is no football in 2020. It's that simple. Get it done @NFL."

Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson said he is concerned because his wife, Ciara, is pregnant.

He wrote: "My wife is pregnant. @NFL Training camp is about to start.. And there's still No Clear Plan on Player Health & Family Safety. ??? We want to play football but we also want to protect our loved ones. #WeWantToPlay."

NFL Players Association executive director DeMaurice Smith and President JC Tretter addressed the union's concerns in a 90-minute videoconference call with reporters on Friday.

They want 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.

Players also wanted a 45-day acclimation period to help avoid injuries. The league asked them to report early but the union declined. Questions remain on protections for players who want to opt out of playing.

All 32 teams have sent the union their Infectious Disease Emergency Response that have been approved by joint infec-

tious disease experts and NFL chief medical officer Dr. Allen Sills, according to a person familiar with the details. The person, speaking to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because protocols haven't been finalized, said the union has approved several and continues to review them.

On Friday, the league sent players and teams an Education Protocol for camp which requires clubs to distribute joint educational materials and to conduct educational sessions for players, staff and family members.

Tretter, a center for the Browns, wrote: "What you are seeing today is our guys standing up for each other and for the work their union leadership has done to keep everyone as safe as possible. The NFL needs to listen to our union and adopt the experts' recommendations #wewanttoplay."

Under the collective bargaining agreement, the NFL has the right to impose report dates and teams can fine players who don't report.

The NFLPA could file a grievance to argue the league isn't providing a safe work environment under the labor deal.

Dillon leads 1-2 RCR finish in Texas

Associated Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — Austin Dillon stayed in front after a restart with two laps to go and beat rookie teammate Tyler Reddick to the checkered flag at Texas, giving Richard Childress Racing its first 1-2 NASCAR Cup finish in nine years.

With spectators spread out in the stands on a scorching Sunday, a very dehydrated Dillon got the checkered flag and did some celebratory burnouts on the frontstretch before going to the infield care center.

"I got a couple IVs in me, feeling great. I felt great once I kind of got in (by the) air conditioner. I was wanting to come back out because it stinks to win the race and you're falling out," Dillon said when finally on his postrace Zoom call. "But I gave it all. I left it all out there. At least I can say that, and left it all on the track."

Dillon raced to his third ca-

reer win and first since Daytona at the start of the 2018 season. It was Dillon and Reddick in the front on the final three restarts, the first after an incident with 29 laps left that shuffled the fast car of Ryan Blaney to a lap back.

"Not bad for a silver spoon kid, huh?" Dillon, the grandson of Childress, said immediately after the race. "Tyler Reddick, he raced me clean. 1-2 for RCR. This has been coming. We've had good cars all year. I've got my baby Ace back home, my wife. I'm just so happy."

It was the first 1-2 finish for RCR in the Cup Series since Clint Bowyer won at Talladega in 2011 ahead of Jeff Burton.

Childress watched the race from a command center at the team's race shop in North Carolina.

"I mean, it's great. ... Having Tyler right there, to work with, he's got a teammate that he's really working good with,"

Childress said. "And to see both of those guys racing for the win, I knew they weren't going to, I was hoping they didn't wreck each other. It was pretty cool to see RCR in the front."

On the final restart in Texas, Dillon got a good jump, holding off his rookie teammate.

Joey Logano finished third, with Kyle Busch fourth a day after he finished ahead of the field in two races — his Xfinity Series victory was taken away after his car failed a postrace inspection, and he then won the Trucks Series race. Series points leader Kevin Harvick, the winner of the last three fall races at Texas, was fifth.

"Can't ask for much more than what we got there," said Reddick, the Xfinity Series champion each of the past two seasons. "I just wanted it to be between us. I didn't want bring other cars into it, make sure that we could fight it out. We just got the restarts that kept

giving us opportunities."

There were an estimated 15,000-20,000 spectators at the track, where it reached 97 degrees late in the first summertime Cup race at Texas — it was supposed to be a spring race nearly four months ago, before the coronavirus pandemic postponed and then shuffled NASCAR's schedule. Inside the cars, it was 130-140 degrees.

It was 30 degrees warmer than it was on March 29, when the race had been scheduled before the pandemic. Texas will host a playoff race Oct. 25.

Before four-time Super Bowl champion quarterback Terry Bradshaw gave an emphatic command to start engines, he shouted hello to the "beautiful people" in the stands.

It was the first major sporting event in Texas in more than four months to allow spectators, and one of the largest gatherings of any kind in the state during the pandemic.