

STARS AND STRIPES®

Wednesday, June 10, 2020

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Navy wants to ban public Confederate flags

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Navy is working to prohibit the Confederate battle flag in public spaces a day after other Defense Department leaders said that they were open to discussions about renaming 10 Army posts named for Confederate generals from the Civil War.

Adm. Mike Gilday, the chief of naval operations, directed his staff Tuesday to begin to write an order that would prohibit the Confederate battle flag from all public spaces and work areas on Navy installations, ships, aircraft and submarines, Cmdr. Nate Christensen, Gilday's spokesman, said in a statement.

The Navy announcement follows growing sentiment by

some active and past military leaders that displaying the Confederate battle flag or honoring Confederate figures by naming installations after them is not in agreement with military values.

"The order is meant to ensure unit cohesion, preserve good order and discipline, and uphold the Navy's core values of honor, courage and commitment," the Navy statement said.

In February, Marine Commandant Gen. David Berger banned the Confederate battle flag and items with the flag on them from Marine bases. In an April letter that he posted to Twitter, Berger defended his decision, saying that he did it because the flag is a symbol that "has shown it has the power

to inflame feelings of division. I cannot have that division inside our Corps."

The Marine Corps on Friday also issued further guidance on the removal of public displays of the Confederate battle flag at installations and work places, including on clothing, mugs and bumper stickers.

The topic of renaming Army posts named for Confederate generals once again emerged on social media in the days following the death of George Floyd, an African American man, in Minneapolis. A white police officer has been charged with second-degree murder after he placed his knee on the back of Floyd's neck for several minutes while Floyd was handcuffed on the ground.

As recently as February, Army officials said that there

was no intention of addressing the Confederate names of Army posts. That changed Monday when Army officials said that Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy wants to have a "bipartisan discussion" about renaming 10 Army posts named after Confederates. Defense Secretary Mark Esper also supported a discussion on the renaming the Army bases.

The posts are Camp Beauregard and Fort Polk in Louisiana, Fort Benning and Fort Gordon in Georgia, Fort Bragg in North Carolina, Fort A.P. Hill, Fort Lee and Fort Pickett in Virginia, Fort Rucker in Alabama and Fort Hood in Texas. The installations were named primarily during the south's Jim Crow era in the 1910s and 1940s.

Navy, CDC release study of Roosevelt sailors

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A coronavirus study of USS Theodore Roosevelt sailors released Tuesday indicated the potential for some immunity to the disease based on antibodies found in the blood of positive cases.

An investigation into the virus outbreak on the Roosevelt started in April by the Navy and the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to learn more about the coronavirus and determine how it spread among the crew of the aircraft carrier and infected 1,273 of the nearly 4,800 crew members, the service said.

The study included a serology test, which looks for antibodies in the blood left in the body after it has fought off a virus. The test is used to deter-

mine who has been infected, especially if they had few or no symptoms, according to the CDC. The study found that 60% of the volunteers had antibodies for the coronavirus, and of those, 59% also had neutralizing antibodies at the time their blood was drawn.

"This finding may give us an early glimpse into actual immune protection against [the coronavirus] in young adults having these intense viral exposures aboard the ship," Payne said. "These are actually important in that they could be indicators of some degree of immunity. But we don't necessarily know how long because this was a time-constrained investigation."

The study asked for 1,000 volunteers to provide blood and swab samples and answer a survey, but only 382 Roosevelt

sailors participated. The volunteers were not a representative sample of the crew population, Daniel Payne, an epidemiologist with the CDC, told reporters Tuesday. He is the lead author of the CDC study.

The study was the first look at the coronavirus among healthy young people who were in close quarters, Payne said. Most of the current knowledge about how the virus affects people is based on older adults with underlying health conditions.

Another finding from the study was that sailors who were infected were 10 times more likely to report having a symptom of loss of taste or smell compared to those who were not infected, Payne said.

This could develop into a good screening tool for the virus, said Capt. Robert Hawkins, with the Navy and Marine

Corps Public Health Center.

The other most common symptoms after loss of taste and smell were muscle pains, fever and chills, according to Payne. These are different from studies with older adults who were likely to have symptoms like a cough or shortness of breath.

The tests also indicated among the sailors who had been exposed — 18.5% were asymptomatic, or almost 1 in 5.

The entire crew of the nuclear-powered Roosevelt was tested for the coronavirus while the ship was in port in Guam for almost two months. Most of the crew was taken off the aircraft carrier and put into isolation on Guam to try to prevent the spread of the virus. Several sailors were hospitalized in Guam and one died due to complications from the virus.

Senate subpanel supports 3% pay raise for troops

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A subcommittee of senators voiced support Tuesday for a 3% raise next year for U.S. military troops as the lawmakers began drafting the 2021 bill that sets Pentagon policy and spending.

The Senate's early version of the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act includes the boost in pay for all service members, Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., said during a hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee's subpanel on personnel. It was the only subpanel hearing of the Senate committee to consider the 2021 NDAA that was open to the public.

Senate Armed Services Committee staffers said the other six subcommittees met Monday and Tuesday in classified sessions. The full committee is set to consider the bill on Wednesday and Thursday in sessions that will also be closed to the public.

Senators said specific details about what is included in early drafts of the bill could not be made public Tuesday. The House Armed Services Committee is expected to consider its version of the bill July 1, the committee announced last week. That hearing will be open to the public.

The final version of the NDAA is not expected to be passed until the fall. Lawmakers have until Sept. 30 to approve it on time for the new fiscal year. The bill was not passed last year until December as lawmakers wrangled over funding for wall construction on the U.S.-Mexico border.

The 3% pay raise, which if approved would go

into effect in January, matches what the White House proposed in its budget recommendation submitted in February. Troops received a 3.1% boost in pay last year.

Sen. Thom Tillis, R-N.C., the subcommittee's chairman, said the current version of the NDAA supports similar end-strength numbers to the White House proposed budget. That \$705.4 billion budget request for the Pentagon proposed adding about 5,600 new troops, bringing the total force to 2,153,500 troops, including active duty, reservists and National Guard members.

Members of the subpanel unanimously voted to forward their version of the bill to the full Senate Armed Services Committee, however several Democratic senators said they opposed leaving out measures meant to address sexual harassment.

Gillibrand, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., and Sen. Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill., questioned why the subcommittee did not include a measure known as the Safe to Report policy, which would strip military leaders of the power to punish sexual assault victims for infractions such as underage drinking or breaking curfews.

Gillibrand said victims often feel unsafe in reporting attacks for fear of punishment. The Air Force Academy implemented a Safe to Report policy in 2018, which the senator said has been successful.

A version of Safe to Report was included in versions of the 2020 NDAA passed last year by the House and Senate, but it was stripped from the final bill.

Retired Navy officials plead guilty in bribery case

The San Diego Union-Tribune

Two retired Navy officials admitted Tuesday to corrupt conduct in the "Fat Leonard" bribery scandal, adding to the nearly two dozen guilty pleas already entered in the long-running San Diego-based prosecution.

Retired Capt. David Williams Haas and retired Chief Petty Officer Brooks Alonzo Parks were indicted separately on the same day in 2018, accused of accepting the now-familiar bribes of lavish hotel rooms, high-roller parties and pricey booze from Malaysian contractor Leonard Glenn Francis. In return, the service members helped route Navy ships to Southeast Asia ports controlled by Francis, a charismatic figure nicknamed for his girth.

Each pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit bribery in San Diego federal court in sessions conducted via teleconference due to the pandemic.

They are among a long string of Navy officials — ranking as high as rear admiral — who have been charged in the military's worst corruption scandal in history. Francis, who has been in poor health, has yet to be sentenced five years after entering his guilty plea, indicating continued cooperation in the far-reaching probe.

Haas was a captain on the Blue Ridge, a 7th Fleet command ship from which Francis heavily recruited allies.

Parks was a 7th Fleet logistics officer who admitted in an email to a Francis associate that he'd been bitten by the GDMA "bug," according to the plea agreement, a reference to Glenn Defense Marine Asia, Francis' ship-support company. The relationship lasted from 2006 to 2010, during which Parks used his official position to leak insider information, including tips about competitors and pricing, to help Francis bid for upcoming port visit contracts.

US military to loosen Guam restrictions

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

The U.S. military on Guam plans to loosen certain base restrictions for service members, civilians and their families and resume limited services early next week due to the success of coronavirus mitigation measures.

Joint Region Marianas, which has installation management authority over Naval Base Guam and Andersen Air Force Base, made the announcement

in a statement Wednesday afternoon.

It also plans to modify access to the bases, which imposed restrictions on things like shopping, restaurants, fitness and teen centers on March 17.

A spokesman for the command said details of the loosened restrictions are still being worked out.

"There's going to be a couple more meetings in the coming days," Navy Lt. Cmdr. Rick Moore said by phone Wednes-

day. "We're just giving everybody a heads up to make sure people are looking at the Andersen Air Force Base, Naval Base Guam and [Joint Region Marianas] social media sites because changes are expected early next week."

The government of Guam, a U.S. territory, is also preparing to dial back pandemic restrictions from moderate to minimum, according to a report Wednesday in the Pacific Daily News.

USAF's Brown 1st black service chief

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Air Force Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr. was confirmed Tuesday as the 22nd Air Force chief and the first African American to be the top officer of a military service.

In announcing the unanimous Senate vote of 98-0, Vice President Mike Pence called Brown's nomination, and now confirmation, historic.

Brown, known as C.Q., is now the commander of U.S. Air Forces Pacific. He is replacing Gen. David Goldfein, who is expected to retire in the summer.

The confirmation comes as demonstrators across the United States have held protests against systemic racism and police brutality. Protests in all 50 states and in Washington, D.C., were sparked by the May 25 death of a handcuffed black man, George Floyd, by a Minneapolis police officer, who has since been fired and charged with second-degree murder.

In a video posted to Facebook on Friday, Brown poignantly described his thoughts about the recent events following the death of Floyd. He described how he was often the only African American in his squadron, and as a senior officer the only African American in the room.

"I'm thinking about how my nomination provides some hope but also comes with a heavy burden. I can't fix centuries of

racism in our country, nor can I fix decades of discrimination that may have impacted members of our Air Force," he said in the video.

Sen. Jim Inhofe, R-Okla., the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, praised Brown's confirmation soon after the Senate vote.

"Gen. Brown's experience as commander of Pacific Air Forces and the air component commander of the Indo-Pacific Command will be an asset as we turn our focus even more to this priority theater," he said in a prepared statement. "Not only is Gen. Brown accomplished in his military career, but he is an inspiring leader — brave, authentic, and unifying. I congratulate him on his historic promotion, and look forward to seeing his continued leadership in action."

Brown is a battle-tested fighter pilot who commanded air forces operating in the Middle East — against Islamic State in Iraq and Syria — and Afghanistan. He has served for 34 years in the military and piloted other aircraft including bombers and helicopters, according to his official biography.

President Donald Trump praised Brown's confirmation ahead of the vote in a tweet, saying it is "a historic day for America! Excited to work even more closely with Gen. Brown, who is a Patriot and Great Leader!"

Air Force will examine opportunities, discipline for service's black airmen

BY WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

Top Air Force officials announced on Tuesday they had ordered independent reviews of the Air Force's record on both military discipline and opportunities for black airmen in response to sustained national protests over race.

The review, to be conducted by the Air Force Inspector General, will "assess and capture existing racial disparities, assess Air Force-specific causal factors, like culture and policies, assimilate the analysis and conclusions of previous racial disparity studies by external organizations and make concrete recommendations resulting in impactful and lasting change," the Air Force said in a news release.

The service vowed in the news release that the "full results of both reviews, good or bad," will be made fully public.

The reviews were ordered by Air Force Secretary Barbara Barrett, Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein and Chief of Space Operations Gen. Jay Raymond.

The reviews follow up on a memo Goldfein sent to senior Air Force leaders on June 1 in the wake of the death in Minneapolis of George Floyd, an African American who died when a police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes on May 25. Video of Floyd pleading for his life sparked outrage, protests and confrontations with police across the country.

"We are not immune to the spectrum of racial prejudice, systemic discrimination and unconscious bias," Goldfein said in the memo. "We see this in the apparent inequity in our application of military justice. We will not shy away from this; as leaders and as Airmen, we will own our part, and confront it head on."

The inspector general reviews, which will include input from airmen and members of the newly formed Space Force, will include interviews, group discussions and targeted and anonymous surveys, the news release said.

The inspector general has already formed an advisory group that includes 10 general officers, 10 chiefs and four senior executive service airmen — all of whom are African American, the news release said.

"In addition, a number of Airmen from all major commands will be selected to join the IG review team," the news release said. "While other disparities also need to be reviewed, this phase will focus on African American racial disparities."

Last week, Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Rockwell, the Air Force judge advocate general, said in a letter to the Judge Advocate General Corps that the service must address racial inequality in its legal system. Rockwell provided statistics indicating that black enlisted airmen were punished more frequently than their nonblack counterparts.

Pandemic spurs strong DeCA sales, but exchanges slump

BY KENT HARRIS
Stars and Stripes

Sales at Defense Commissary Agency locations reached record highs in recent months as coronavirus restrictions sent shoppers dashing to stock up on essentials, while military exchanges generally saw sales plummet following store clo-

sures and other limits.

March 13 was DeCA's biggest sales day ever worldwide, and two other days that week ranked in the top 15 all time for the agency, which was established in 1990 in an effort to consolidate stores run separately by the services, in some cases for more than a century.

"It was crazy," said Christine

Davinich, commissary officer at Great Lakes Naval Station in Illinois. "It was an all-hands-on-deck experience."

DeCA's sales in March reached almost \$500 million, a 30% increase from 2019, Virginia Penrod, acting assistant defense secretary for manpower and reserve affairs, said in a statement.

The pandemic has been a lot tougher on AAFES. Many exchanges were shuttered or sales were limited during various restrictions imposed by state or host country governments.

Sales fell 7% in March and 20% in April from 2019, spokeswoman Julie Mitchell said. Online sales, however, are up 92% so far this year, she said.

Floyd's brother to lawmakers: 'Stop the pain'

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Philonise Floyd, a brother of George Floyd, said that he's testifying to Congress because he wants his brother's death to be "more than another name" on a growing list of those killed during interactions with police.

Floyd's appearance before a House hearing Wednesday comes a day after funeral services for George Floyd, who has become a worldwide symbol in demonstrations calling for changes to police practices and an end to racial prejudices.

"If his death ends up changing the world for the better, and I think it will, I think it

has, then he died as he lived," Philonise Floyd said, according to an advance copy of his remarks.

He said that he wants to make sure his brother is "more than another face on a t-shirt. More than another name on a list that won't stop growing.

"I'm tired. I'm tired of the pain I'm feeling now and I'm tired of the pain I feel every time another black person is killed for no reason," Floyd said. "I'm here today to ask you to make it stop. Stop the pain. Stop us from being tired."

Floyd said, "The people marching in the streets are telling you enough is enough.

Be the leaders that this country, this world, needs. Do the right thing."

House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler gavelled in the session as Democrats review the Justice in Policing Act, a far-ranging package of proposals amid a national debate on policing and racial inequity in the United States.

Lawmakers will also hear testimony from civil rights and law enforcement leaders at the congressional hearing on proposed changes to police practices and accountability after the Minnesota man's death in police custody and the worldwide protests that followed.

DC National Guard members test positive for virus

McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Members of the D.C. National Guard who were responding to protests in the nation's capital over the death of George Floyd have tested positive for COVID-19, a spokeswoman said Tuesday.

The service members were part of the 1,300 D.C. National Guard members called up to help law enforcement respond initially to rioting May 31 that was followed by days of peaceful protests. A Guard spokeswoman did not identify how many positive tests the unit has recorded.

"We can confirm that we have had COVID-19 positive tests with the DCNG," said D.C. National Guard spokeswoman Air Force Lt. Col. Brooke Davis. "The safety and security of our personnel is always a concern, especially in light of the COVID-19 era."

The news follows reports that two members of the Nebraska National Guard who were activated in response to protests in Lincoln, Neb., have also tested positive.

The D.C. National Guard was supported by approximately 3,900 additional Guardsmen from Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Maryland, Missouri, Mississippi, New Jersey, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee and Utah to protect national monuments and ensure peaceful demonstrations as tens of thousands of protesters took to D.C. streets last week.

In the largest protest Saturday, participants squeezed past each other, some with masks, some not, as they chanted and sang near the White House.

Members of two National Guard units from Missouri and Mississippi on Saturday were not wearing masks, and while they tried to maintain social distance, it was not

possible at times as the crowds swelled or engaged with them.

Almost all of the National Guard units were expected to leave the city by Wednesday, Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy told reporters Sunday.

Any Guardsman who has tested positive for the coronavirus, however, will be held back until they are no longer sick or contagious, Davis said.

"All Guardsmen who are suspected to be at high risk of infection or have tested positive for COVID-19 during demobilization will not be released from Title 32 orders until risk of infection or illness has passed," Davis said.

"Members of the Air and Army National Guard with no or low risk of exposure who present symptoms of infection one to 14 days after release from orders will contact their unit," she said.

Administration against extending unemployment plan

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration opposes a Democratic proposal to extend a \$600 per week federal unemployment benefit approved in response to the coronavirus pandemic, Labor Secretary Eugene Scalia said Tuesday.

The \$600 payment, which is in addition to normal unemployment benefits, "was the right thing to do," Scalia said, but is no longer needed as the economy begins to recover.

The money, included in a government relief package enacted in late March, has helped millions of workers stay in their homes and pay bills even as the unemploy-

ment rate surged to its highest levels since World War II.

The payments are set to expire July 31, and Democrats have pushed a plan that would extend the enhanced benefit through January. The Democratic-led House approved the proposal last month, but it is considered unlikely to advance in the Republican-controlled Senate.

Scalia pointed to an unexpectedly rosy jobs report released last Friday. By the end of July, "we expect the economy to be deep into the process of reopening, with shutdown orders ended and millions of Americans freed to return to work," he told the Senate Finance Committee.

Unemployment benefits will still be needed in August and beyond, "but the circumstances that originally called for the \$600 plus-up will have changed," Scalia said. "Policy will need to change as well."

Democrats challenged that view, saying that the unemployment rate is likely to remain at historically high levels through the summer at least.

Friday's jobs report showed that unemployment dropped unexpectedly in May to 13.3% as reopened businesses began recalling millions of workers faster than economists had predicted, but the jobless rate is still on par with what the nation witnessed during the Great Depression.

Pacific allies wary of housing US missiles

Los Angeles Times

The governor of a Japanese territory where the Pentagon is thinking about basing missiles capable of threatening China has a message for the United States: Not on my island.

“I firmly oppose the idea,” said Denny Tamaki, the governor of Okinawa, in an email to *The Times*.

Officials in other Asian countries are also signaling they don’t want them.

But Pentagon planners aren’t backing down after the Trump administration withdrew last year from a 33-year-old arms-control treaty that barred U.S. land-based intermediate range missiles in Asia.

Senior officials now say that putting hundreds of American missiles with non-nuclear warheads in Asia would quickly and cheaply shift the balance of power in the western Pacific back in the United States’ favor amid growing Pentagon concern that China’s own expanding arsenal of missiles and other military capabilities threaten U.S. bases in the region and have emboldened Beijing to menace U.S. allies in Asia.

The missile plan is the centerpiece of a planned buildup of U.S. military power in Asia projected to consume tens of billions of dollars in the defense budget over the next decade, a major shift in Pentagon spending priorities away from the Middle East.

But it also highlights the complex relationship between the U.S. and its Asian

allies, many of whom feel increasingly threatened by China but are reluctant to back new U.S. military measures that might provoke Beijing, which has built the biggest navy in the world in the last decade.

Australia and the Philippines publicly ruled out hosting American missiles when the Trump administration first floated the idea last year. South Korea is also considered an unlikely location, current and former officials say.

In Japan, the decision on whether to allow U.S. missiles on its territory will be made by the central government in Tokyo. Tamaki said officials at the Pentagon and in Tokyo have told him there are no definite plans to put missiles on Okinawa. But Tamaki isn’t reassured.

With a Japanese mother and an American father who served with the Marines on Okinawa before abandoning the family, Tamaki personifies the complex relationship between the U.S. and its allies in Asia. He was elected two years ago after pledging to oppose expansion of the already-substantial U.S. military presence on the island.

More than half of the 50,000 U.S. military personnel stationed in Japan are on Okinawa, most concentrated at a Marine base surrounded by residential areas in the largest city. Opposition to the 70-year-old U.S. military presence has sparked local protests for years, which would likely intensify if there were a move to base mis-

siles there.

“If there is such a plan, I can easily imagine fierce opposition from Okinawa residents,” Tamaki said.

For the last year, the Pentagon has been testing several new types of short and intermediate range missiles — those with ranges up to 3,400 miles — including a ballistic missile that could be placed in Guam, and mobile missiles carried on trucks.

The first of the new weapons could be in operation within two years, though no decision has been announced about where they will be based. Similar missiles are now carried on U.S. warships and planes based in Asia, but there are no land-based systems.

U.S. officials say that many allies are privately supportive of the missile plan and may come around to permitting them on their territory but don’t want to provoke opposition from Beijing and their own public before decisions are on the table.

The U.S. has a defense treaty with Japan, as it does with South Korea, the Philippines and Australia. Taiwan is not a formal ally but has close, unofficial defense ties with Washington.

“We are very attentive to our allies’ concerns, and we recognized their political challenges,” said a senior defense official, who agreed to discuss Pentagon planning if he was not identified. “Everything that’s said in the media is not necessarily what’s said behind closed doors.”

GOP lawmakers warn against Germany troop plan

BY JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — More than 20 Republican lawmakers urged President Donald Trump to reject a plan that calls for pulling nearly 10,000 troops from Germany, saying the move would weaken the NATO alliance and encourage Russian aggression.

Rep. Mac Thornberry, the minority leader of the House Armed Services Committee, along with 21 other House Republicans, said maintaining force levels in Europe is directly connected to American security.

“In Europe, the threats posed by Russia have not lessened, and we believe that signs of a weakened U.S. commitment to NATO will encourage further Russian aggression and opportunism,” Thornberry’s letter stated Tuesday.

Last week, media reports emerged that the White House signed off on a plan to sharply cut the number of forces in Ger-

many. On Monday, the White House declined to confirm the reports, but also did not reject their validity.

“We have no announcements at this time,” White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany said.

The Pentagon also has not commented publicly on the plan, which if carried out would be the largest force reduction in Europe in nearly a decade and come at a time when the military has sought to build up on the Continent to focus on countering Russia.

The cutback, first reported by *The Wall Street Journal* on Friday, set a September deadline for the drawdown and took allies by surprise.

Trump has long made threats about pulling back in Europe and expressed dissatisfaction with allies in Europe, especially Germany, over lackluster military spending. Berlin has long fallen short of NATO benchmarks that call for all allies to dedicate 2% of GDP to their own militaries. Germany’s military shortcomings have

dominated Trump’s outlook on NATO.

Still, numerous former military officials and conservative security analysts aligned with Trump on other matters have taken issue with the White House on the plan to scale back in Europe.

The conservative Heritage Foundation on Tuesday stated that any plan to reduce troops in Germany misunderstands the role of U.S. forces in Europe, which exist not to protect Germany but to advance U.S. interests. “Some believe that the U.S. should not have a robust military presence in Europe because the Europeans should defend themselves, and that the U.S. should not be providing a security umbrella at the expense of the American taxpayer,” the Heritage Foundation said in a statement. “However, the primary objective of U.S. forces in Europe is to provide a forward based military capability that gives U.S. decision makers timely and flexible military options for defending America and promoting American interests in the broader European region.”

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Police: Man let girl, 12, drive Jeep 85 mph

FL JUPITER — A Florida man faces felony charges after police said he let a 12-year-old girl drive his SUV and told her to speed because he wanted to be a “cool father” — even though he is not her dad.

Shaun Michaelsen, 41, told the arresting officer he is friends with the girl’s mother and the girl and her friend were staying with him for a few days, according to court records.

Jupiter Officer Craig Yochum said in his arrest report that he spotted the Jeep make an illegal U-turn and then speed away. He followed and the Jeep reached speeds of 85 mph in a 45 mph zone before he was able to pull it over.

Michaelsen is charged with child neglect, allowing an unauthorized person to drive and causing a minor to become a delinquent for buying the girls vape pens — he said they asked.

Spring snowstorm leaves many without power

WY LARAMIE — A late spring snowstorm closed an interstate highway and sent tree limbs crashing onto power lines in southeastern Wyoming.

Almost 10,000 Rocky Mountain Power customers in the Laramie area were without power Tuesday morning, KTWO Radio reported.

Interstate 80 between Cheyenne and Laramie, which was closed Monday night, reopened the next morning.

Over 6 inches of snow fell in the high country of the Laramie Range and Medicine Bow Mountains.

2 survive after whale capsizes boat

NJ SEASIDE PARK — Two people survived after they were tossed into the ocean when a breaching whale capsized their boat along the New Jersey shore.

The occupants of the 25-foot boat were fishing close to the shore when the whale surfaced and knocked the vessel out of the water. They managed to swim to shore and the boat eventually washed up on the beach.

There were no reports of injuries. The whale swam away.

Lincoln Birthplace boosts visitor access

KY HODGENVILLE — The Abraham Lincoln Birthplace in Kentucky increased visitor access and services with guidance from government health officials about the coronavirus pandemic.

The park at Hodgenville reopened access to its visitors center, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Access will remain closed to the visitors center bookstore, the Memorial Building and in-person, ranger-led interpretive programs.

The National Park Service is phasing in increased access on a park-by-park basis, it said in a news release.

Boat parade to honor Trump’s birthday

MI HARRISON TOWNSHIP — President Donald Trump’s 74th birthday will be celebrated with a boat parade in southeastern Michigan.

The Michigan Conservative Coalition and Michigan Trump Republicans 2020 will host the “Make American Great Again”

parade Saturday. It will start at MacRay Harbor marina in Macomb County’s Harrison Township and end near the Ambassador Bridge in Detroit, the Detroit Free Press reported. Trump’s birthday is June 14.

Matt Seely, spokesman for the coalition, said organizers are anticipating that nearly 1,000 people will attend.

Flamethrower found in car after traffic stop

MA SPRINGFIELD — Officers conducting a traffic stop in Massachusetts found what they described as a flamethrower in the vehicle, police said.

Police were conducting an anti-drag racing detail in Springfield at about 1 a.m. Sunday when officers saw a man standing up and recording video through an open sunroof, according to a Tweet from Springfield police spokesman Ryan Walsh.

Officers approached the car and spotted what appeared to be the grip of a rifle under the front passenger seat, he said. The occupants stated it was not a gun but a flamethrower.

A passenger, Brandon McGee, 33, was arrested and charged with carrying a dangerous weapon with an active warrant and possession of an infernal machine, Walsh said.

Army Navy surplus store closes after 83 years

RI NEWPORT — Citing declining sales, an Army-Navy surplus store that’s been around for more than 80 years is closing its doors.

The Army Navy Surplus store in Newport has experienced a steady decrease in business for years, the Newport Daily News reported. The store was opened in 1937 by Allie Horwitz in a building across the street from

its current location. Since then the store has changed owners twice and has only closed once, in 2008.

Owner Jay Patel says that for the past four years business has gone down by 15%-20% each year.

Productive year for eel fishermen, but price low

ME PORTLAND — Maine’s baby eel fishermen had a productive year in the state’s rivers and streams, but the price for the eels was much lower than usual.

Fishermen caught at least 9,650 pounds of the eels, which are called elvers, during a season in which they were limited to 9,688. The elvers are valuable because they’re used as seed stock by Asian aquaculture companies that raise them to maturity for use as food. They were worth \$525 per pound at the docks this year. That’s much more than most fish species, but a steep decline from last year’s average of \$2,091.

Theft of police car leads to pursuit, 2 crashes

NM ROSWELL — A person pulled over for a traffic stop stole a police car, setting off a pursuit into the next county in southeastern New Mexico and resulted in two crashes that left two people injured, authorities said.

The person who stole the police car fled from the scene of a head-on crash with a pickup but was arrested nearby, the Roswell Daily Record reported.

Chaves County Sheriff Mike Herrington said a deputy was injured during the chase when the deputy’s vehicle hit a utility pole after swerving to avoid another vehicle. The second crash occurred when the stolen police car collided with a pickup.

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College football taking cautious steps

Associated Press

College football is scheduled to kick off in less than three months and there are plenty of reasons to be hopeful that games will be played Labor Day weekend.

Universities across the country are taking the first cautious, detailed steps toward playing football in a pandemic, attempting to build COVID-19-free bubbles around their teams as players begin voluntary workouts.

"I think the start of the race has a lot to do with how you finish it," Baylor athletic director Mack Rhoades said.

Thousands of athletes will be tested for COVID-19, though not all. Masks will need to be worn — most of the time. Some schools will have players pumping iron this week. Others are waiting a few more weeks.

"There's an element of this that's kind of like building an airplane as you fly in it that we're learning so much more really every week," Notre Dame football team Dr. Matt Leiszler said. "But it's a moving target at times."

For months, health officials including the NCAA's chief medical officer have said widespread and efficient COVID-19 testing is pivotal to bringing back sports. Now that exists, and at many schools every player will be tested before he is permitted to enter a team facility.

Texas A&M athletic director Ross Bjork said the school has conducted just under 500 tests on coaches, staff and athletes since May 18. The Pac-12 is the only major college football conference in which all the members have agreed to test all returning athletes for COVID-19.

Athletes testing positive for the disease have already been reported at Arkansas State, Marshall, Alabama, Oklahoma State and elsewhere.

Expect that list to grow, and there is no standardized protocol for testing under the most recent NCAA guidelines, which is why plans are different from school to school. Missouri initially announced it would not test all athletes for COVID-19, then said it would. Michigan

State will give its athletes two PRC tests (often done with a nasal swab), with a seven-day quarantine in between, before they use team facilities. Tulane will be giving every football player PRC and antibody tests.

"You know, there's nothing that says my testing is going to protect my guys any better than their screening is going to. We don't know," said Dr. Greg Stewart, team physician for Tulane's athletic department. "And probably for most of the schools across the country, you know athletic departments are the canary in the coal mine."

Defending national champion LSU is testing each athlete for coronavirus antibodies upon arrival to campus; some will also get a PCR test to check for an active infection. A positive antibody test at LSU will trigger a PCR test and a positive PCR test means that player will have to isolate for a period of time.

Shelly Mullenix, LSU senior associate athletic director and director of wellness, said some players who test positive for antibodies but negative for active infection will also be iso-

lated depending on symptoms or risk of previous exposure. All players were prescribed a seven-day "quasi-quarantine," Mullenix said, after receiving their antibody tests.

Having players return to campus infected is worrisome but inevitable. The protocols being put in place are designed to catch and address that. The real challenge is keeping the players from getting infected after they return.

Notre Dame is planning to structure workout groups by academic schedules. Other schools are using a mix of factors such as keeping friends, roommates or position groups together.

As the small groups avoid infection they can be merged to form bigger groups.

Of course, there is only so much schools can do to manage 18- to 22-year-old football players.

"What you worry about is this is two hours a day, right?" Rhoades said. "And so what are student athletes, what are young men as it pertains to football, doing the other 22 hours?"

MLS to resume play July 8 with Orlando tournament

Associated Press

Major League Soccer announced Wednesday that its season will resume starting July 8 with a tournament in Florida.

The league's 26 teams will be divided into six groups for the opening round of the tournament played without fans at ESPN's Wide World of Sports complex at Walt Disney World.

Teams had played just two games to start the season when the league suspended play on March 12 because of the coronavirus outbreak.

While in Florida, players will be sequestered in a resort with a rigorous testing protocol. Each team will have three group matches, played over 16 consecutive days with multiple games a day. The group match-

es will count toward the regular season.

Sixteen teams will advance to the knockout round, with the winner earning a spot in the 2021 CONCACAF Champions League.

"From the very beginning we said anything we do has to ensure that we're going to protect the health and safety of our players, all of the staff that will be accompanying them and those that are going to be working the tournament," MLS Commissioner Don Garber said in a statement. "There will be testing for those who are traveling down to Orlando before they leave and when they arrive. There will be testing regularly during the competition in the training that will precede it. And staff will be

tested as well."

The prize pool for the MLS Is Back Tournament is \$1.1 million, the league said. The title match will be played on Aug. 11.

Following the tournament, teams will resume the season in their home markets. It was unclear whether those games would be played with fans in the stadiums.

The announcement comes a week after the league and its players reached an agreement on a contract that runs through 2025.

Teams can begin arriving in Florida for training on June 24. Those that have already been training in market must arrive no later than seven days before their first match.

The draw for the group stage

was set for Thursday. As hosts, Orlando City will be the top seed in Group A.

"When we first put together the tournament concept at Disney, we just were very uncertain about when we'd be able to return to our stadiums in our own markets," Garber said. "We thought, why don't we get them all together, get 26 teams together in one neutral site, play games every day and get our players back on the field for our fans? But very importantly doing it with games of consequence — a total prize pool of a million dollars and the winner getting a spot in the CONCACAF Champions League. All of this is our best foot forward to do what we can in an exciting, compelling and meaningful way to return to play for 2020."

NASCAR ready to bring spectators back

Associated Press

NASCAR is ready to reopen to fans.

One of the few sports to run in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, NASCAR is now the largest to allow fans to return as more states relax their business shutdowns.

NASCAR decided a limited number of fans can attend races this month at Homestead-Miami Speedway and Talladega Superspeedway. NASCAR says all fans will be screened before entering, required to wear face coverings, mandated to social distance at six feet, and will not have access to the infield, among other revised operational protocols.

NASCAR will allow up to 1,000 Florida service members, representing the Homestead Air Reserve Base and U.S. Southern Command in Doral, to attend the Cup Series race Sunday as honorary

guests and view the race from the grandstands.

Talladega Superspeedway in Alabama will allow up to 5,000 guests in the frontstretch grandstands/towers for the June 21 Cup race. There will be limited motorhome/camping spots available outside the track.

"It's a cautious, conservative approach," said Daryl Wolfe, NASCAR executive vice president and chief sales and operations officer. "We feel confident in our plan. Also it doesn't mean that we won't also have additional learnings and adapt our plan going forward. That's the whole purpose of being very slow, methodical in phasing this in."

NASCAR has returned to racing, but had not allowed fans inside the tracks in North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia.

"We're going to have a lot of hand sanitizing, hand wash-

ing," said John Bobo, NASCAR vice president of racing operations. "One of the things that I'm kind of proud of to see is we're going to have a clean team that's at track constantly cleaning everything very visibly for every guest that's there to know we're doing everything we can to keep them safe. We feel confident in the plan."

Bobo declined to reveal if NASCAR has had anyone test positive for COVID-19 since racing resumed May 17 at Darlington Raceway. Supercross said earlier this month no one tested positive for the virus when it resumed with 705 riders, team members and race officials on site.

The Cup Series race Wednesday night at Martinsville Speedway and a doubleheader weekend June 27 and 28 at Pocono Raceway will be held without fans.

NASCAR said it was prepared to handle the increased

crowds. Wolfe said there could be limited hospitality at Talladega.

"We're going to have PPE there for fans if they didn't bring their own," Bobo said. "We're going to instruct fans to do it. Then staff is also going to make sure that we do have compliance in that area when needed politely."

Talladega tickets will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis to fans who purchased tickets or reserved camping for the originally scheduled April 26 race. There will be limited menus and limited food preparation onsite. NASCAR had set guidelines to safely hold the events using CDC guidelines on social distancing and personal protective equipment. The venues were completely used to maintain distancing in garage stalls and where the haulers are parked, while drivers self-isolate in their motorhomes as they prepare to compete.

Sources: MLB players offer 89 games, prorated salaries

Associated Press

NEW YORK—Baseball players moved toward teams but remained far apart economically in their latest proposal for starting the pandemic-delayed season, adamant they receive full prorated salaries while offering to cut the regular season to 89 games.

The proposal by the players' association, given to Major League Baseball electronically Tuesday evening without a negotiating session, was detailed by a pair of people familiar with the negotiations. They spoke on condition of anonymity.

MLB did not appear to view the proposal as productive but made no comment. MLB has said that absent an agreement, it could go ahead with a shorter schedule of perhaps 50 games.

Players made their move one day after management cut its proposed schedule from 82 games to 76. The union proposed the regular season start

July 10 and end Oct. 11 — the day before a possible Game 7 of the NBA Finals.

The union accepted MLB's plan to expand the postseason from 10 teams to as many as 16. However, if management announces a schedule without an agreement, it would not be able to alter the established postseason format.

The players' plan would have the World Series end in mid-to-late November, and players said they would accept MLB's proposal to have the ability to shift postseason games to neutral sites.

Teams say they fear a second wave of the coronavirus and do not want to extend the World Series past October. Deputy Commissioner Dan Halem told the union a 76-game schedule could not be staged unless players agreed to a deal by Wednesday.

Players continue to insist on full prorated salaries as speci-

fied in the March 26 agreement between the perpetually feuding sides. The deal gave players service time in the event no games are played this year along with a \$170 million salary advance.

MLB says that because the season likely would be played in empty ballparks without fans, the absence of gate-related revenue would lead to a loss of \$640,000 for each additional game played, a figure the union questions. MLB's proposal would guarantee players 50% of prorated salaries and another 20% if the postseason is completed, and teams would fund a \$50 million pool for players' postseason shares.

Players had been set to earn about \$4 billion in salaries this year before opening day was pushed back from March 26 due to the new coronavirus, and the union's initial economic proposal on May 31 called for a 114-game schedule running

through October and salaries totaling \$2.8 billion. The schedule in the new plan lowered that to about \$2.2 billion.

MLB's offer Monday was for just under \$1.3 billion in salaries, but only about \$1 billion would be guaranteed. The rest is contingent on the postseason's completion.

Mike Trout and Gerrit Cole, the highest-paid players with \$36 million salaries, would get \$19,777,778 each under the union's plan. MLB's offer would guarantee each \$8,723,967 with the chance to increase to \$12,190,633 apiece if the postseason is completed.

A player at the \$563,500 minimum would earn \$309,577 under the union plan and up to \$244,492 from MLB's offer. Those at \$1 million — about half those on current active rosters — would get \$549,383 under the union proposal and up to \$389,496 in the MLB formula.