

STARS AND STRIPES®

Monday, June 22, 2020

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Study: Soldiers with underlying illnesses hit harder by virus

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY
Stars and Stripes

Most of the small number of active-duty soldiers who became seriously ill after contracting the coronavirus had underlying health conditions such as obesity and high blood pressure, the first study to look at that group of service members has found.

The findings, which mirror what has been found among civilians, were “kind of a relief,” said Dr. John Ambrose, a senior epidemiologist with the Army Public Health Center.

“It tells us there’s no factor that’s changing outcomes in the military population. And so we know we can effect public health mitigation measures and interventions” that have been proven to work, he said, such as social distancing, mask-wearing and good hygiene.

More than 200 active-duty soldiers who were diagnosed with the coronavirus between Feb. 11 and April 6 took part in the study, the results of which were published in the current issue of the military’s Medical Surveillance Monthly Report.

Only 12 of the 219 soldiers in the study — just over 5% — were hospitalized, and of those, four were treated in intensive care units. None required a ventilator and none died. No active-duty soldiers had died of the disease as of June 21, Ambrose said.

In the general U.S. population, 14% of people who became ill with the coronavirus

required hospitalization, 2% were admitted to an ICU, and 5% died, data gathered through the end of May and published last week by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show.

Nearly half of patients with an underlying condition were hospitalized, compared with just under 8% without, and deaths were 12 times higher among patients with underlying conditions than those without, the CDC report said.

The lower rate of infection and death from coronavirus in the active-duty population likely has to do mainly with youth and “the healthy soldier effect,” Ambrose said. Active-duty troops are younger than the general population and tend to be fitter than civilians of similar age.

But a quarter of the 12 soldiers who had to be hospitalized had high blood pressure, nearly 60% were obese and half had a neurological disorder such as migraines or traumatic brain injury.

All four soldiers who required intensive care had three or more underlying health conditions, the study found.

Of the eight soldiers who were hospitalized but not admitted to an ICU, two had three or more underlying conditions and three had none at all, it said.

All but one of the hospitalized soldiers were men, six were between 35 and 44 years old, four were at least 45 and two were under 25, the study said.

Aircraft carriers launch drills in Philippine Sea

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — Two aircraft carriers sailed in unison Sunday in the Western Pacific to kick off combined flight operations this week.

The USS Theodore Roosevelt and USS Nimitz teamed up for drills in the Philippine Sea to demonstrate “the United States’ unique capability to operate multiple carrier strike groups in close proximity,” according to a Navy statement issued over the weekend.

“By working together in this environment, we’re improving our tactical skills and readiness in the face of an increasingly pressurized region and COVID-19,” Roosevelt Strike Group commander Rear Adm. Doug Verissimo said in the statement, referring to the disease caused by the coronavirus.

Sunday’s drills were the first dual-carrier operations in the Western Pacific since November 2018 when the USS Ronald Reagan and USS John C. Stennis trained together in the Philippine Sea. They take place as China is also flexing its naval muscle with two carriers scheduled for exercises in the region.

The Navy has beefed up its presence in June after more than two months without a carrier operating in the Indo-Pacific region other than the USS America, an amphibious assault ship with F-35B Lightning II multirole aircraft on board.

The Roosevelt had been patrolling the region since January when a coronavirus outbreak on the ship forced the carrier to stop in Guam in late March to sanitize the ship and

test, isolate and treat ill sailors. More than 1,150 Roosevelt sailors ultimately tested positive for the virus, one of whom died.

The Roosevelt departed Guam on June 4, and the Nimitz left San Diego four days later. A third carrier, the Reagan, left Yokosuka on June 8 to start its patrol of the Western Pacific.

The Roosevelt and Nimitz strike groups plan to practice “air defense drills, sea surveillance, replenishments at sea, defense air combat training, long-range strikes, coordinated maneuvers and other exercises,” according to the statement.

The flight operations follow Roosevelt naval aviators’ ejection from an F/A-18F Super Hornet over the Philippine Sea on Thursday. A Roosevelt helicopter rescued the pair soon after, and onboard medical personnel deemed them to be in good condition, the Navy said at the time.

Dual-carrier operations act as “a powerful message of our commitment to regional security and stability as we protect the critically important rights, freedoms and lawful uses of the sea for the benefit all nations,” Nimitz Strike Group commander Rear Adm. James Kirk said in the statement.

“The United States Navy has a long history of operating multiple carrier strike groups as a combined force in the Pacific,” he said.

Still, such operations are relatively infrequent. Sunday marked only the sixth time since 2001 that two carriers have operated together in the Western Pacific, said 7th Fleet spokesman Lt. Joe Keiley.

Responders to Pensacola attack honored

By CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

More than two dozen Marines, sailors and civilians have been recognized for their response to a terrorist shooting that left three sailors dead at Florida's Naval Air Station Pensacola.

A ceremony last Tuesday recognized 13 security and emergency personnel who responded to the Dec. 6 attack in which Saudi Arabian 2nd Lt. Mohammed Alshamrani opened fire in a classroom, the Navy said in a statement. A second ceremony on Friday recognized 12 members of the Naval Aviation Schools Command and Marine Aviation Training Support Group 23, a separate statement said.

"Without hesitation, these brave men and women ran toward untold danger, not knowing if they would return," Capt. Tim Kinsella, the base's commanding officer, said of the 13 people honored from NAS Pensacola Navy Security Forces and Fire and Emergency Services Gulf Coast. "They stared pure evil in the face, they stood

their ground and they saved lives."

Rear Adm. Kyle Cozad, head of Naval Education and Training Command, still found it hard to comprehend how the attack, in which eight other people were wounded, could happen at the base, he said Friday, "but it did happen, and I remain in awe at how those we honored here today responded."

A New York Times review reported lapses at nearly every step of the screening, selection and monitoring program for foreign troops. Alshamrani had two years of contact with al-Qaida leading up to the fatal incident, during which the Saudi trainee was shot and killed by sheriff's deputies, the report said.

Saudi security services had failed to spot early clues of the shooter's ideology, the Times reported Sunday. State Department and Pentagon vetting failed to identify a "pattern of troubling social media activity" that linked him with extremist ideology, the newspaper said.

Later, an insider threat program set up by the Pentagon did not monitor his movements

and activities after he arrived in the U.S. because he was a foreign trainee, the Times report said.

In the wake of the shooting, Defense Secretary Mark Esper suspended operational training for more than 850 Saudi military students in the United States. The U.S. later expelled 21 Saudi cadets, and Esper ordered stronger vetting and monitoring procedures.

Amid the chaos, quick action by sailors, Marines and civilians saved "untold lives," said Vice Adm. Yancy Lindsey, head of Navy Installations Command, in recorded remarks during last Tuesday's ceremony. Awards included one Secretary of Defense Medal of Freedom, three Navy and Marine Corps medals, one Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, four Secretary of the Navy Distinguished Civilian medals for Valor and four Navy Installations Command lifesaving certificates.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Carl Daniel, a naval air crewman and instructor at Naval Aviation Candidate School, received a Purple Heart for his wounds

and a Marine Corps Commendation Medal on Friday for providing first aid, the Navy said.

"I joined the Navy to be a rescue swimmer knowing that one day my number might be called to save someone," Daniel said in the statement. "I wish it had not been under these circumstances. At the end of the day, I did what I did and I would do it again without skipping a beat."

Awards presented Friday included two Navy and Marine Corps medals, two Purple Heart medals, six Navy and Marine Corps Commendation medals, two Navy Superior Civilian medals for Valor and one Navy Civilian Service Commendation Medal.

"It's great that we are all being recognized for our actions, but I feel that we did what any other Marine or sailor would do when put in the same situation," said Staff Sgt. Andrew J. Pfannenstiel, an instructor at MATSG-23, who received the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal for delivering medical supplies and helping others treat the wounded.

Cause of fire at Kadena hazmat facility unknown

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

KADENA AIR BASE, Okinawa — Approximately 45 people were "affected by smoke and/or chlorine gas" after a fire tore through a hazardous materials facility Monday at the home of the 18th Wing on Okinawa.

The blaze, which began around 8:40 a.m. at a building south of Kadena's airfield in the central part of the base, was extinguished at approximately 2 p.m., according to statements and Facebook posts from the 18th Wing. Thick plumes of smoke smothered areas near the fire and closed off roads as firefighters worked to get it

under control.

Authorities evacuated an area 500 feet upwind and 2,000 feet downwind of the site.

Later, the wing announced that the fire had released chlorine gas particles, prompting medical authorities to encourage anyone who experienced breathing or vision problems to seek treatment.

"Those individuals experiencing eye irritation, runny nose or throat irritation should report to the Kadena Medical Group," a statement said. "Those with shortness of breath or coughing should call 098-934-5911 or proceed directly to the [U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa] Emergency Department."

Japanese citizens were instructed to seek medical care at the nearest off-base medical facility.

Those traveling on base were told to keep their windows rolled up and air conditioning off.

Most of the approximately 45 people affected by the smoke and gas experienced "mild symptoms" and were treated and returned to duty, the wing announced Monday evening.

"At this time, the cause of the fire is unknown," that statement said. "Bioenvironmental personnel and emergency responders remain on the scene to monitor the situation and ensure there's no safety risk to

the community."

Officials from the Okinawa Defense Bureau declined to comment on the fire Monday evening, saying they are still "gathering the necessary information."

Prefectural officials went to the base to observe the fire from outside the fence line, a spokesman said.

Kadena town officials said Monday afternoon that they had been fielding calls from nervous residents.

"It's normal for people to feel concerned after hearing that a chemical facility is on fire," a spokesman said. "We have not heard anyone experiencing any health issues at this moment."

Surge in cases at Guam base sparks probe into violations

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

The Air Force is investigating whether any of the 35 airmen who tested positive for the coronavirus in less than two weeks at Guam's Andersen Air Force Base violated mandatory protection measures, a general said Monday.

All 35 belong to the same unit whose members arrived on the island May 25, according to a statement attributed to Brig. Gen. Gentry Boswell, commander of Andersen's 36th Wing. Base health authorities discovered the unit's first virus case June 12 and had tested all its members by Saturday.

"All military members are subject to the established public health emergency protocols," Boswell said. "If the ensuing investigation determines that members did not follow these directives in a disciplined man-

ner, they will be held accountable for their actions under the Uniform Code of Military Justice."

Boswell did not identify the unit, citing concern for operational security.

The group had been staying at the Guam Reef Hotel in Tumon, the island's main entertainment and shopping district, until the first case was discovered, according to an Air Force statement Wednesday. They were then moved to base lodging.

"Our primary focus is to care for these airmen and ensure the safety of both our military and civilian community," Boswell said in the statement. "We have and will continue to work with the governor and Guam Public Health as we move forward."

Though it is unclear whether the airmen contracted the coronavirus on Guam or at a previous location, "preliminary evidence in a public

health investigation revealed the possibility that some of these members may not have adhered to Andersen and local Public Health directives," Boswell said.

Military bases on Guam have been under multiple restrictions — including a ban on nonessential activities — since entering Health Protection Condition-Charlie in March. Charlie indicates sustained transmission of a disease.

Another two airmen not associated with the incoming unit also tested positive Saturday at Andersen, according to Boswell's statement.

The pair arrived April 9 as part of the medical response to a major coronavirus outbreak on the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt, but "did not have contact with the unit lodged at Guam Reef and the cases are unrelated," the announcement said.

Marine accused of assault in Okinawa

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — An Okinawa-based Marine who apparently broke coronavirus restrictions was arrested by Japanese police Sunday after reportedly punching a local college student at a Naha nightclub.

Cpl. John William Thomas III, 24, of the 3rd Marine Logistics Group at Camp Hansen, was taken into custody outside the establishment in Naha's Kumoji neighborhood, shortly after police were called at 4:50 a.m., a Naha Police spokesman said Monday.

Thomas reportedly first pushed the 21-year-old unnamed man on the dance floor, telling him not to come closer, the spokesman said. The student responded by saying he would call the police if Thomas did not leave him alone, and Thomas struck the man in the lower jaw.

The student called police and exited the building, the spokesman said. Police arrested Thomas on suspicion of assault.

Thomas denied the charges, the spokesman said. No injuries were reported.

It's customary in Japan for some government spokespeople not to give their names to the media.

A spokesman for the 3rd Marine Logistics Group, 1st Lt. Jonathan Coronel, confirmed Thomas' arrest in an email Monday and said the unit is "fully committed to working with local authorities to assist with their investigation."

Bars and nightclubs remain off limits for Marines in Japan because of anti-coronavirus measures.

American in Kaiserslautern tests positive

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN
AND MARCUS KLOECKNER
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — A member of the U.S. military community in Kaiserslautern has tested positive for the coronavirus, marking the first confirmed case among defense personnel in the area in more than a month.

The American is a resident of Ramstein-Miesenbach, said Georgia Matt-Haen, a spokeswoman for the Kaiserslautern landkreis, which is roughly equivalent to a district or a U.S. county.

No other details were releasable, including whether the person is a military member or a civilian, per district health department policy and at the request of local U.S. military officials, she said.

A base official at Ramstein on Monday declined to say whether the new infection involved a member of the 86th Airlift Wing, saying that "the Air Force and other military services will only provide total numbers of service members with COVID-19 at the service level," a measure intended to "protect operational security."

The 21st Theater Sustainment Command, which is responsible for Army personnel, said Monday that they had not reported any additional positive coronavirus cases in the area.

Ramstein's lack of disclosure differs from some other commands, which have notified military communities of individual cases while continuing to follow a Pentagon order issued in March that prevents commands from discussing local coronavirus infection totals.

At the Army's garrison in Stuttgart, leaders in virtual town hall meetings still keep members informed when new cases arise, as do commands in Japan and South Korea, without providing aggregate figures or the number of people in quarantine, in line with operational security.

The new infection within the military community was reported as the number of active net coronavirus cases in Kaiserslautern continues to fall.

The cases are reported by the district health office and part of a daily Facebook post from Kaiserslautern district commissioner Ralf Lessmeister. It lists coronavirus totals, including new cases and recoveries, for the city and district, and one category for "armed forces."

Virus screening for visitors to White House is lessened

Bloomberg

The White House is cutting back on screening visitors for the coronavirus as President Donald Trump pushes to re-open the country.

“In conjunction with Washington, D.C., entering Phase Two today, the White House is scaling back complex-wide temperature checks,” White House spokesman Judd Deere said in a statement on Monday.

The White House had been conducting temperature checks in a makeshift medical tent at the press entrance since March. The tent was gone on Monday, as Washington entered its second phase of reopening, allowing the businesses such as restaurants and gyms to open

under limited conditions.

“In addition to social distancing, hand sanitizer, regular deep cleaning of all work spaces, and voluntary facial coverings, every staff member and guest in close proximity to the president and vice president is still being temperature checked, asked symptom histories, and tested for COVID-19,” Deere said.

A notice posted in the briefing room lists symptoms of the virus and recommends social distancing.

The U.S. reported 33,894 new cases on Saturday, its highest total since May 1. About 120,000 people have died from the virus in the U.S.

Did TikTok teens, K-Pop fans punk Trump rally?

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Did teens, TikTok users and fans of Korean pop music troll the president of the United States?

For more than a week before Donald Trump’s first campaign rally in three months on Saturday in Tulsa, Okla., these tech-savvy groups opposing the president mobilized to reserve tickets for an event they had no intention of attending. While it’s unlikely they were responsible for the low turnout, their antics may have inflated the campaign’s expectations for attendance numbers that led to Saturday’s disappointing show.

“My 16 year old daughter and her friends in Park City Utah have hundreds of tickets. You have been rolled by America’s teens,” veteran Republican campaign strategist Steve Schmidt tweeted on Saturday. The tweet garnered more than 100,000 likes and many responses from people who say they or their kids did the same.

Reached by telephone Sunday, Schmidt called the rally an “unmitigated disaster” — days after Trump campaign chair-

man Brad Parscale tweeted that more than a million people requested tickets for the rally through Trump’s campaign website.

In a statement, the Trump campaign blamed the “fake news media” for “warning people away from the rally” over COVID-19 and protests against racial injustice around the country.

“Leftists and online trolls doing a victory lap, thinking they somehow impacted rally attendance, don’t know what they’re talking about or how our rallies work,” Parscale wrote. “Reporters who wrote gleefully about TikTok and K-Pop fans — without contacting the campaign for comment — behaved unprofessionally and were willing dupes to the charade.”

Inside Tulsa’s 19,000-seat BOK Center, where Trump thundered that “the silent majority is stronger than ever before,” numerous seats were empty. Tulsa Fire Department spokesperson Andy Little said the city fire marshal’s office reported a crowd of less than 6,200 in the arena.

FDA under fire as errors grow with rapid virus test

Kaiser Health News

In mid-May, the Food and Drug Administration issued a rare public warning about an Abbott Laboratories COVID-19 test that for weeks had received high praise from the White House because of its speed: Test results could be wrong.

The agency at that point had received 15 “adverse event reports” about Abbott’s ID NOW rapid COVID test suggesting that infected patients were wrongly told they did not have the coronavirus. The warning followed multiple academic studies showing higher “false negative” rates from the Abbott device, including one from New York University researchers who found it missed close to half of the positive samples detected by a rival company’s test.

But then, in a move that confounded lab officials and other public health experts, a senior FDA official later that month said coronavirus tests provided outside lab settings would be considered useful in fighting the pandemic even if they miss 1 in 5 positive cases — a worrisome failure rate.

The FDA has now received a total of 106 reports of adverse events for the Abbott test, a staggering increase. The agency has not received a single adverse event report for any other point-of-care tests meant to diagnose COVID-19, an agency spokesperson said.

In a statement, Abbott Laboratories said the NYU research was “flawed” and “an outlier,” citing studies with higher accuracy rates. Though the Abbott rapid test is one of more than 100 COVID-19 diagnostic tests to receive FDA emergency use authorization during the pandemic, President Donald Trump has featured the prod-

uct in the White House Rose Garden and the Health and Human Services Department’s preparedness and response division has issued more than \$205 million worth of contracts to buy the test, according to federal contract records.

“Everybody was raving about it,” a former administration official said, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations. “It’s an amazing test, but it has limitations which are now being better understood.”

In its own COVID-19 testing policy for labs and commercial manufacturers, the FDA says a diagnostic test should correctly identify at least 95% of positive samples. But medical professionals are split over the lower 80% threshold for the Abbott and other point-of-care tests’ “sensitivity” — a metric showing how often a test correctly generates a positive result. They are debating whether it’s sufficient, given the risks that an infected person unwittingly spreads COVID-19 after receiving a negative result.

False negatives increase the risk that patients will not self-isolate or exercise other precautions, such as wearing a mask, and make more people sick than if they had had an accurate diagnosis. Evaluations of the Abbott test have been among the most mixed. Some researchers find that the test has bigger accuracy problems, but others say it isn’t likely to miss sicker patients.

In a statement, Abbott said when its test is used as intended it “is delivering reliable results and is helping to reduce the spread of infection in society by detecting more positive results than would otherwise be found.”

Police stop removal of Confederate statue in Va.

Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. — Police in Virginia's capital declared an unlawful assembly and broke up a gathering of protesters accused of attempting to pull down another Confederate monument along a prominent avenue Sunday night.

Richmond police declared the gathering near the statue of Confederate Gen. J.E.B. Stuart unlawful and ordered demonstrators to leave the area along Monument Avenue at around 9:30 p.m., news outlets reported.

Protesters had climbed atop the statue and tied ropes around it before authorities intervened, Virginia State Police said in a statement. The agency said it responded to dispel the protesters after some began throwing bottles at officers.

Photos obtained by news outlets showed a line of police in riot gear blocking the monument. Some demonstrators and news outlets reported that officers deployed chemical agents on them, including pepper spray and tear gas.

Multiple Confederate monuments in Richmond have been rallying points and sites of confrontations with police during demonstrations in the weeks since George Floyd died in Minneapolis police custody.

Statues of Confederate President Jefferson Davis and Confederate Gen. Williams Carter Wickham as well as of Christopher Columbus were toppled. A massive statue to Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee remains on its pedestal along Monument Avenue for now, as lawsuits seek to block its removal.

Sunday night's encounter came less than a week after Mayor Levar Stoney accepted the resignation of the city's police chief, saying Richmond needed "a new approach" to public safety after repeated violent clashes between police and protesters.

During interview, Bolton calls Trump 'danger for the republic'

The Washington Post

Former national security adviser John Bolton, a self-described "lifelong conservative," said he will not vote for President Donald Trump in November, calling Trump a "danger for the republic" during a televised interview with ABC News that aired Sunday night.

"I hope [history] will remember him as a one-term president who didn't plunge the country irretrievably into a downward spiral we can't recall from," Bolton told ABC News' Martha Raddatz. "We can get over one term. I have absolute confidence. ... Two terms, I'm more troubled about."

Bolton's public excoriation of his former boss comes as part of a media tour to promote his new book, "The Room Where It Happened: A White House Memoir," which has drawn in-

tense criticism from both Democrats and Republicans since excerpts and advance copies began circulating earlier this month.

The damning 592-page account of Bolton's 17 months in the White House, decried by Trump as a "compilation of lies and made up stories," is set to be released Tuesday, despite the Trump administration's last-ditch attempt to block its publication over allegations that it contains classified information.

In Sunday's interview, Bolton expanded on revelations in the book, which he argued supports his claims that Trump is "unfit for office" and lacks the "competence to carry out the job." Describing the president as "erratic and impulsive," Bolton slammed Trump's handling of U.S. foreign policy, accusing him of prioritizing reelection and personal relationships over

the country's national security — highlighting his dealings with North Korea, Russia, China and Ukraine as prime examples.

Bolton said his book shows "a pattern quite contrary to the image [Trump] would like to convey, of a decisive president who knows something about what he's doing." He noted that Trump "very rarely read much" during intelligence briefings and also said Trump was unwilling "to do systematic learning so that he could make the most informed decisions."

"There really isn't any guiding principle, that I was able to discern, other than what's good for Donald Trump's reelection," Bolton said.

He added, "Decisions are made in a very scatter shot fashion, especially in the potentially mortal field of national security policy. This is a danger for the republic."

UK town mourns possible terrorist act

Associated Press

LONDON — The English town of Reading mourned Monday for three people stabbed to death in what is being treated as a terrorist attack, gathering for a moment of silence as police questioned the suspected lone attacker.

More than 100 students lit candles and laid flowers in memory of history teacher James Furlong, who was named as one of the victims. A flag in the courtyard of the Holt School, where he taught in nearby Wokingham, had been lowered to half-staff.

"He was so passionate and enthusiastic about history and about learning, and anything that was boring, anything you didn't find interesting, he would make it interesting," former student Molly Collins told the BBC. "He would spend time with you, he got to know people individually, and he just always went the extra mile for everyone."

Furlong's friend, Joe Ritchie-Bennett, 39, was named by his family in Philadelphia as the second victim. The identity of the third victim has not been released.

U.S. ambassador to Britain Woody Johnson offered his "deepest condolences" to the families

of those killed in the attack Saturday evening. A 25-year-old man who is believed to be the lone attacker is in custody but officials said the motive for the carnage was unclear.

"Our thoughts are with all those affected," Johnson said. "We condemn the attack absolutely and have offered our assistance to British law enforcement."

Three people were killed and three others seriously wounded in the stabbing attack in Forbury Gardens park in Reading, a town of 200,000 people 40 miles west of London.

Chief Constable John Campbell of Thames Valley Police said officers were called to reports of stabbings just before 7 p.m. and arrived to find a "horrific" scene. Unarmed officers detained a local man.

Police have not identified the suspect, but Britain's national news agency, Press Association, and other media outlets named him as Khairi Saadallah, a Libyan asylum-seeker living in Reading.

The BBC reported that Saadallah was investigated by British security services last year over concerns he planned to travel abroad to join a jihadist group, but that he was not determined to be a major threat.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Police say Army vet shot at woman's SUV

GA COLUMBUS — An Army veteran is in custody after he was accused of emptying his 9 mm pistol at another vehicle during a road rage incident in a Georgia parking lot.

Columbus police said Joe Harvey, 52, fired at least nine times in the parking lot of Dick's Sporting Goods, the Columbus Ledger-Enquirer reported. No one was hurt.

Aiming at a Chevy Trailblazer driven by Velisha Hearlson, whose 15-year-old daughter was in the passenger seat, Harvey's first five bullets hit the hood of his pickup before the next four struck the Trailblazer's hood, police said.

At a preliminary hearing in Columbus Recorder's Court, Officer Michael Clements testified that Harvey and Hearlson both were going east when Hearlson moved into Harvey's lane, and he felt she cut him off. He followed as she turned into the store's parking lot.

High water, erosion create floating island

MI MUSKEGON — A large mass of grasses and other vegetation was swept into a western Michigan lake, creating what one professor calls a "bizarre" floating island.

Norton Shores photographer Joe Gee shot video of the floating vegetation in Muskegon Lake using an aerial drone. His footage showed a pontoon boat circling the island and looking small by comparison. The floating vegetation is almost certainly the result of record-high water levels and resulting shoreline erosion, said Alan D. Steinman, director of the Annis Water Resources Institute at Grand Valley State University.

Man floats down river to flee traffic stop

MO UNION — Authorities arrested a man after he attempted to swim down a river while fleeing a traffic stop in eastern Missouri.

Maj. Trevor Wild of the Franklin County Sheriff's Office said the man drove through a hayfield and ditched his car before he attempted to swim down the Bourbeuse River.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported that the 38-year-old was initially stopped for driving without a license and failing to yield to law enforcement. He came out of the river and police arrested him. He was later released, Wild said.

Mountain lion may have killed zoo animals

CA SAN FRANCISCO — A mountain lion that was captured roaming the streets of San Francisco may have killed three animals at the city zoo, authorities said.

Two wallaroos and a red kangaroo were found dead in their outdoor exhibit at the San Francisco Zoo and it appears that a local wild carnivore was responsible, the zoo said in a statement, adding that it was investigating whether the cougar was responsible.

A 50-pound male cougar, believed to be under 2 years old, was spotted roaming downtown before being captured, officials said.

13 sickened by illness linked to bagged salads

MN ST. PAUL — The Minnesota Department of Health said 13 people in Minnesota have gotten sick with an intestinal illness linked to bagged salads.

The Minnesotans ranged in age from 24 to 79 and fell ill between June 1 and 9, the Health Department said.

State health officials are warning consumers not to eat ALDI Little Salad Bar brand Garden Salad or Hy-Vee brand Garden Salad. The Star Tribune reported the warning applies only to the store-brand salads labeled as "garden salads" and not for other kinds of store-brand packaged salads sold at those retailers. The Minnesotans are among people from six states who have gotten sick with Cyclospora infections linked to the bagged salads.

Man charged with blowing up ATM

PA PHILADELPHIA — A 24-year-old Philadelphia man was charged with using explosives to blow up a cash machine as demonstrations rocked the city this month.

The U.S. Attorney's Office said it would oppose bail for David Elmakayes at a hearing.

Elmakayes was charged with using an explosive device to damage property and being a felon in possession of a firearm. Authorities said he was carrying three additional explosive devices and other weapons when he was arrested shortly after a cash machine in North Philadelphia was damaged.

Fire started by improper disposal of fireworks

NV LAS VEGAS — Authorities in Las Vegas said improper disposal of a large number of used fireworks in a trash container caused a house fire that displaced a family of five.

A fire that started in the trash container next to a garage wall spread up the wall into the attic of the two-story home, fire of-

icials said. Spent fireworks can stay hot for a long time and should be soaked in a bucket of water for at least an hour before being put in a trash container, officials said.

Neighbors notified the house's occupants after seeing smoke coming from the roof.

Authorities say mom helped fugitive son flee

NJ HIGHLAND PARK — A New Jersey mother helped her adult son flee to Pennsylvania after he shot a man several times during a robbery, authorities said.

Felicia Terrell, 53, of Highland Park, was charged with three counts of hindering apprehension, according to New Jersey state police.

Terrell's son, James Ward, 21, was arrested at a hotel in Wilkes-Barre. He's facing counts of attempted murder, burglary and conspiracy that stem from a robbery in New Brunswick.

Woman held in \$21.6M real estate scam

CA LOS ANGELES — A Southern California woman was arrested on charges of swindling investors, mainly from China, out of \$21.6 million in a phony condominium and hotel complex project.

Ruixue "Serena" Shi, 36, of Arcadia, was taken into custody by FBI agents on a criminal complaint charging her with wire fraud, a statement from the U.S. attorney's office said.

From 2015 to 2018, Shi solicited investments for what she claimed would be a 207-unit luxury condo and hotel complex in the Coachella Valley, near Palm Springs, prosecutors said. Instead of building the project, she spent a large chunk of the money on a lavish lifestyle, prosecutors said.

From wire reports

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and Military News

Baseball talks stall, start date delayed

Associated Press

NEW YORK — An email from baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred to union head Tony Clark led to a balk in the drawn-out talks to start the pandemic-delayed season, which now won't begin by July 19.

The executive committee of the players' association was set to vote and reject Major League Baseball's latest offer for a 60-game season on Sunday.

"I really believe we are fighting over an impossibility on games," Manfred said in the email, a copy of which was obtained by The Associated Press. "The earliest we will be ready for players to report is a week from Monday, given the need to relocate teams from Florida. That leaves 66 days to play 60 games. Realistically, that is the outside of the envelope now."

Players want 70 games and \$275 million more than teams are offering. They are worried that if a resurgence of the new coronavirus causes the 2020 season to be cut short, the deal being negotiated would lock in innovations for 2021 and lessen the union's bargaining power.

"Tony, am writing to reiterate what I told you on the phone a few minutes ago," Manfred wrote. "Given the COVID developments, I understand that the players are concerned that the 2020 season will be truncated beyond the agreed upon number of games (for example, we agree to play 60 and can only play 40). If that were to happen, I would be prepared to eliminate the 2021 components of the deal. That would mean that we would not get the expanded playoffs in 2021 and the DH rule would revert to the current rule (DH in AL, no DH in NL)."

Players didn't take a vote and will consider their next move Monday.

'Heinous act': FBI investigating noose found in Wallace's garage

Associated Press

Federal authorities on Monday confirmed they are investigating the discovery of a noose found in the Talladega Superspeedway garage stall of Bubba Wallace, NASCAR's only Black full-time driver who successfully pushed the stock car series to ban the Confederate flag at its venues earlier this month.

U.S. Attorney Jay Town said his office, the FBI and the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division were reviewing the situation.

"Regardless of whether federal charges can be brought, this type of action has no place in our society," Town said.

The stock car series, founded in the South more than 70 years ago, has tried to distance itself from the flag for years at the risk of alienating a core group of its fan base. At Wallace's urging, it went ahead with the ban as the nation grapples with social unrest largely tied to George Floyd, an unarmed Black man who died in the custody of Minneapolis police.

NASCAR has not outlined how it will enforce the restriction and this week's race at Talladega, in the heart of the South, presented the series with its biggest test in the early going. Disgruntled fans with Confederate flags drove past the main entrance to the Alabama race track prior to Sunday's race, while a plane flew above the track pulling a banner of the flag that read "Defund NASCAR."

Hours after the race was postponed by rain, NASCAR said the noose had been found. The sanctioning body vowed to do everything possible to find who was responsible and "eliminate them from the sport."

"We are angry and outraged, and cannot state strongly enough how seriously we take this heinous act," the series said in a statement. "As we have stated unequivocally, there is no place for racism in NASCAR, and this act only strengthens

our resolve to make the sport open and welcoming to all."

Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey said she was "shocked and appalled" by the "vile act" against Wallace, an Alabama native.

"There is no place for this disgusting display of hatred in our state," Ivey said. "Bubba Wallace is one of us; he is a native of Mobile and on behalf of all Alabamians, I apologize to Bubba Wallace as well as to his family and friends for the hurt this has caused and regret the mark this leaves on our state."

Richard Petty, seven-time NASCAR champion and owner of Wallace's famed No. 43, was headed to Talladega to support his driver. Petty, who turns 83 next month, has not attended a race during the coronavirus pandemic and said in a statement he was "enraged by the act of someone placing a noose in the garage stall of my race team."

"There's absolutely no place in our sport or society for racism," wrote the Hall of Famer known simply as "The King." "This filthy act serves as a reminder of how far we still have to go to eradicate racial prejudice and it galvanizes my resolve to use the resources of Richard Petty Motorsports to create change. This sick person who perpetrated this act must be found, exposed and swiftly and immediately expelled from NASCAR."

"I believe in my heart this despicable act is not representative of the competitors I see each day in the NASCAR garage area. I stand shoulder to shoulder with Bubba, yesterday, today, tomorrow and every day forward."

Reaction from Wallace's fellow drivers was immediate as they prepared for the rescheduled race Monday afternoon. Retired four-time champion Jeff Gordon called it a "cowardly" act and Ryan Blaney, one of Wallace's closest friends, tweeted: "You're my brother and always will be. Don't let the people who are lower than life

to try and bring you down."

"God help us," NASCAR driver Michael McDowell tweeted. "The level of evil it takes to do something like this is disgusting. This is enraging and heartbreaking all at the same time."

The 26-year-old Wallace has not commented since a statement on social media late Sunday in which he said the "the despicable act of racism and hatred leaves me incredibly saddened and serves as a painful reminder of how much further we have to go as a society and how persistent we must be in the fight against racism."

"As my mother told me today, 'They are just trying to scare you,'" he wrote. "This will not break me, I will not give in nor will I back down. I will continue to proudly stand for what I believe in."

Wallace has worn a shirt that says "I Can't Breathe" over his firesuit and sported a Black Lives Matter paint scheme in a race last month in Martinsville, Virginia. Wallace has said NASCAR assigned him two sheriff's deputies for security at Martinsville after he called for the ban.

Wallace said he has found support among fellow drivers for his stance on the flag. He noted that in his tweet after the noose announcement.

"Over the last several weeks, I have been overwhelmed by the support from people across the NASCAR industry including other drivers and team members in the garage," he said. "Together, our sport has made a commitment to driving real change and championing a community that is accepting and welcoming of everyone. Nothing is more important and we will not be deterred by the reprehensible actions of those who seek to spread hate."

Five years ago, former NASCAR chairman Brian France tried to ban flying the flags at tracks, a proposal that was not enforced and largely ignored.

Simpson scorches his way to win

Associated Press

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C. — Nothing can top the first time Webb Simpson won on Father's Day, a U.S. Open title eight years ago at Olympic Club and hearing his father's laughter on the phone to share the joy.

Harbour Town was special in its own right.

Dressed in his Sunday yellow shirt — his late father's favorite color — Simpson emerged from a crowd of contenders with five birdies in a six-hole stretch on the back nine for a 7-under 64 to win the RBC Heritage by one shot over Abraham Ancer and set the tournament scoring record.

"Crazy day," Simpson said.

A three-hour storm delay nearly kept it from finishing. Nine players were still in the mix with an hour to go. Simpson was two shots behind and had only two birdies on his card when he dropped in a 10-footer at No. 12 and off he went.

"I think it's a good thing that guys were making birdies because they kind of forced me to be a little more aggressive and know that pars weren't going to cut it," said Simpson, who finished at 22-under 264 to break by two shots the tournament record Brian Gay set in 2009.

Father's Day has been the final round of the U.S. Open every year since 1976, but it was moved to September in this most unusual year because of the COVID-19 pandemic that shut down golf for three months. The RBC Heritage filled the spot on the schedule and Simpson, now a father of five, became a winner for the second time this year.

"I won The Players on Mother's Day after my dad passed away, and that was really special. That was an emotional win," Simpson said. "U.S. Open on Father's Day, I'll never forget calling my dad after on the way to the press conference, and when he picked up the phone, he just was laughing.

That's kind of what he did when he was happy, he would just laugh. So I'm going to miss that laugh today for sure.

"But I thought a lot about him," he said. "This morning I thought about him, and when I was on the golf course, I thought about him. ... He loved golf. He would have loved watching today."

It was quite a show.

Simpson, Ancer, Joaquin Niemann and Tyrrell Hatton were tied at 20 under at one point late in the round. It was a matter of who blinked first.

Ancer, who hit every green in regulation, pushed Simpson to the end in his bid to win his first PGA Tour title. He holed a birdie putt from 10 feet on the 17th to get within one, but his approach to the 18th was 40 feet away and his putt to force a playoff came up short. Ancer closed with a 65.

"That's just golf. You've just got to keep trying," Ancer said. "I'm not going to change anything or work on anything. I'm

just going to keep doing what I'm doing, and I think that will eventually happen."

Colonial winner Daniel Berger also stayed in the mix by chipping in for birdie on the 17th and closing with a 65. Hatton, whose last tournament was his victory in the Arnold Palmer Invitational, was leading until a poor tee shot led to bogey on the 13th, and bogeys were hard to recover from on this day. He shot 66 and tied for third.

Simpson, who won the Phoenix Open in February, moved to No. 5 in the world. He also moved to the top of the FedEx Cup.

Dylan Frittelli had the low score of a tournament filled with them, a 62 that put him in the lead before the final groups even teed off. Justin Thomas had a 63 and tied him. Both knew it wasn't going to hold up, especially after returning from a storm delay to still conditions and even softer conditions.

As athletes return, schools want them to sign waivers

Associated Press

Ohio State calls it the Buckeye Acknowledgment and Pledge, a two-page document the school asked its athletes to sign before they could begin using team facilities during the pandemic.

The document SMU is requiring its athletes to sign is much more direct: Acknowledgment of Risk for COVID-19 Summer 2020.

Across the country, universities have begun the process of getting ready to play through a public health crisis. As athletes return to campus, what are they signing up for?

Missouri also has a pledge and Ohio State's athletic director said the school got the idea for its document from Big Ten rival Indiana. Baylor's AD said athletes there are being given a waiver and awareness form to sign. How much legal protection any of these forms provide schools is up for debate, along with the ethics of requiring unpaid students to sign them.

"I worry that in some situations, athletes are being used sort of as guinea pigs to

demonstrate what we can and can't do as we bring regular students back to campus," said Karen Weaver, associate professor of sports management at Drexel University. "I just don't think that's right."

SMU has made it clear that at least in part the purpose of its document is to mitigate the school's liability if an athlete contracts COVID-19. Ohio State has said its document is not intended to provide liability protection, though it was crafted with the help of legal counsel.

For some experts, the two documents are not so dissimilar.

"I don't care what label they put on it," said Carla Varriale-Barker, an attorney in New York and chair of Segal McCambridge's sports, recreation and entertainment group. "They could call it a pledge, they could call it a waiver, they could call it a release, they could call it a cantaloupe. If you are signing away rights that you would otherwise have, it's a legally enforceable document and I would call it a waiver and release of claim."

If college football is to be played this season, schools will need to build pro-

TECTIVE bubbles around their teams, frequently testing players, tracing contacts of those who become infected and executing elaborate hygiene protocols. Athletes have already tested positive at more than a dozen schools from Boise State to Clemson, though some schools are not releasing details. On Saturday, Kansas State announced it was pausing voluntary workouts after 14 athletes tested positive.

Educating athletes about risk and how to mitigate it is vital. Tapping into their sense of duty and dedication is a sound strategy to get them to modify behavior. Have them sign a document acknowledging that risk, and now it can be argued the schools are using that commitment to the team as a legal shield.

"While on the surface the language in the SMU waiver may look more bothersome than the language in the Ohio State pledge, among the two I consider the Ohio State pledge to be the more morally wrong of the two documents," said Marc Edelman, a law professor at Baruch College in New York who specializes in sports law.