

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Coronavirus in close quarters on Navy ship

*ProPublica*

It wasn't a surprise when the U.S. Navy announced Sunday that the fast-spreading coronavirus had made its way on board one of its ships, infecting a sailor on the USS Boxer, docked in San Diego.

But what happened next raises questions about how the Navy will respond to the virus within the tight quarters of its seabound vessels.

On Monday morning, in response to the discovery of the infected sailor, the amphibious assault ship's leaders ordered dozens of senior enlisted sailors and officers into a cramped room on the ship to brief them on the crisis and proper social distancing, according to a sailor who attended the meeting.

That action, taken as the Navy is still evaluating who aboard the ship had come into contact with the infected sailor, runs counter to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines aimed at controlling the spread of the coronavirus.

According to the sailor, the meeting in the ship's wardroom lasted about 30 minutes and forced about 80 crew members to

stand roughly 2 to 4 feet from one another — far less than the 6-foot spacing called for by the CDC.

The meeting on the ship — which also has outdoor spaces that possibly could have been used instead — left some attendees feeling angry and worried that they'd been placed in unnecessary danger aboard the vessel, the sailor said.

"Definitely not enough room to maintain appropriate distance," said the sailor, who requested anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media. "People are wondering why we gathered in a room contradictory to CDC guidance."

A Navy spokesman confirmed that the meeting took place, but he would not comment on whether it was appropriate or violated federal infection control guidelines.

In a statement, the spokesman said that Navy commanders have been told "to the largest extent possible to implement social distancing," including avoiding large gatherings and maintaining a 6-foot space from other sailors when possible.

According to the Navy's statement Sunday, a sailor assigned to the Boxer, an

amphibious assault ship, had tested "presumptive positive" for the virus that causes COVID-19. It was the first case of a sailor on board a Navy ship apparently contracting the disease. The sailor, the statement said, is now quarantined at home, along with other members of the crew believed to have been in close contact, while the ship's crew conducts "a thorough cleaning" and takes "appropriate preventative measures."

According to the Navy website, ships like the Boxer have crews of roughly 1,200 sailors.

The Navy spokesman told ProPublica that the initial investigation into whether any other personnel came into close contact with the infected sailor was completed, but whether other sailors were infected is still being evaluated.

The case of the Boxer illustrates how challenging it may be for the Navy to avoid the spread of the highly infectious virus aboard ships and submarines that require sailors to work in close quarters, sometimes for monthslong missions.

## Trump looks to marshal private sector against virus

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON—Managing dual health and economic crises, President Donald Trump announced Wednesday that he will invoke a federal provision that allows the government to marshal the private sector in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Trump, now describing himself as a "wartime president," said he would sign the Defense Production Act "in case we need it" as the government bolsters resources for an expected surge in cases of the virus.

Trump also said that he will expand the nation's testing capacity and deploy a Navy hospital ship to New York City, which is rapidly becoming the epi-

center of a pandemic that has rattled the U.S. economy and rewritten the rules of American society. A second ship will be deployed to the West Coast. The president also said that the Housing and Urban Development Department will suspend foreclosures and evictions through April as a growing number of Americans face losing jobs and missing rent and mortgage payments.

The announcements came on a fast-moving day of developments. The Senate was taking up a financial aid package while the administration pushed forward its economic relief plan, which proposes \$500 billion in checks to millions of Americans, with the first checks to come April 6 if Congress ap-

proves the plan.

Trump and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau jointly announced that the U.S.-Canada border would be closed, except for essential personnel and for trade, as the nations try to reduce the spread of a virus afflicting both countries.

Trump dismissed talk from his own treasury secretary, Steven Mnuchin, who suggested that the nation could face 20% unemployment at least in the short term.

That's an "absolute total worst case scenario," Trump said. "We're no way near it."

The administration has told Americans to avoid groups of more than 10 people and the elderly to stay home while a pointed reminder was given to

millennials to follow the guidelines and avoid social gatherings. Trump likened the effort to the measures taken during World War II and said it would require national "sacrifice."

"It's a war," he said. "I view it as a, in a sense, a wartime president. It's a very tough situation."

The Defense Production Act gives the president a broad set of authorities to shape the domestic industrial base so that it is capable of providing essential materials and goods needed in a national security crisis.

The law allows the president to require businesses and corporations to prioritize and accept contracts for required materials and services.

# 5 Naval Base San Diego schools to close after 3 test positive

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The Navy closed five of the seven schools on Naval Base San Diego due to the coronavirus outbreak, including one school where three sailors tested positive for the virus within the last five days, an education and training official with the Navy said Tuesday.

A sailor assigned to the USS Essex, an amphibious assault ship, was attending a course at the base when the individual tested positive Saturday for the coronavirus, officially called COVID-19, the Navy said in a statement issued Tuesday. The infected sailor is quarantined at home and people with whom the sailor had close contact are also staying at their homes.

Naval Base San Diego is the homeport for Pacific Fleet and 220 commands are located there, including the headquarters for the commander of Navy Region Southwest, according to the base's website. About 20,000 active-duty sailors are assigned to the base, according to base

spokeswoman Krishna Jackson.

Two other sailors at the base tested positive Friday and Sunday and both are in isolation, according to the statement. The three sailors are an instructor and two students at the base, the San Diego Union-Tribune reported.

"All [five schools] were closed due to COVID-19, whether it be positive tests, precautionary measures, or the school [was] deemed 'non-essential,'" Cmdr. James Stockman, a spokesman for Naval Education and Training Command, wrote Tuesday in an email. He would not name the schools and he said the course that the USS Essex sailor was attending is postponed.

Training Support Command San Diego, which is located at Naval Base San Diego, provides management, technology and infrastructure support for students and staff at 22 Naval Education and Training Command schools located in Navy Region Southwest, which covers California, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, Colorado and New Mexico, Stockman said.

# Australian rotation to begin with isolation

BY SETH ROBSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

When the next rotation of Marines lands in Australia for a six-month rotation starting next month, the 2,500 Marines will stay in their barracks for 14 days to prevent the spread of coronavirus, according to a Marine Corps official.

"As of now we are continuing with the [Marine Rotational Force — Darwin] rotation as planned," 1st Lt. Bridget Glynn, a spokeswoman for the force, said in an email Wednesday.

The main body of Marines is projected to arrive in early April and additional personnel will arrive in early July, bringing the total force to 2,500 personnel, similar in size to last year's rotation, she said.

The force, which trains in Australia's Northern Territory during the southern hemisphere summer, has built up slowly since an initial contingent of 250 Marines hit the beach there in 2012. Last year the Marines rotational force had grown to 10 times that size, its target strength.

Australia this week began requiring anyone arriving in the country from overseas to self-isolate for two weeks to combat the global coronavirus pandemic, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation reported Monday. Health authorities have reported 512 confirmed cases in Australia, the broadcaster reported Wednesday.

Marines arriving with the rotational force will be restricted to their rooms with access to necessary supplies, until the isolation period has passed, Glynn said.

"Once we have ensured those quarantined are free of the virus, operations will proceed as scheduled," she said.

# Quarantined service members have financial relief options available

BY SETH ROBSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

Quarantined soldiers facing financial hardship can apply for emergency loans online, according to Army Emergency Relief, which, along with other military aid organizations, is letting troops know about financial help for those affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

Thirty-six U.S. service members worldwide had tested positive for the coronavirus as of Tuesday, a Pentagon spokesman said, confirming that the cases among troops had doubled in just one day.

Army Emergency Relief on Saturday posted instructions on its website for those affected by the virus to submit online assistance requests.

"Every request is unique and considered on an individual basis. Some categories

of assistance have dollar limits while others have requirements related to grants versus loans," the organization states on its website.

Soldiers in need of assistance are encouraged to meet with their local Army Emergency Relief officer but those unable to do so can apply for help online.

"During COVID-19 restrictions, Soldiers and Families may be separated from the general population and may not have 'face to face' contact with Leaders and AER Staff to process an assistance application," the website states.

The assistance is available for active-duty soldiers and eligible family members as well as retirees and reservists on continuous active duty for more than 30 days, according to the site.

For those in the Air Force,

Airman and Family Readiness Centers have emergency essential staff who can administer assistance from the service's Aid Society, the organization's CEO, John Hopper Jr., said in comments reported Tuesday by the Military Times.

Sailors or Marines stranded due to travel restrictions, whose spouses may have lost income or who have increased medical co-pays, can contact the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society for assistance.

Coast Guard Mutual Assistance posted details on its website Friday listing loans of up to \$6,000 for service members whose spouses lose jobs due to the virus or who require child care due to schools closing. Losses due to changed travel plans are not covered, the website states.

# Infections hit 200K worldwide; borders jammed in Europe

Associated Press

BERLIN — Desperate travelers choked European border crossings Wednesday after nations implemented strict controls in an attempt to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus, creating traffic jams miles long and slowing the passage of trucks carrying critical supplies.

The number of people infected worldwide crested the 200,000 mark and deaths topped 8,000, with the number of people now recovered at more than 82,000, according to a tally kept by Johns Hopkins University.

In an attempt to alleviate some of the pressure from eastern Europeans stuck in Austria trying to return home, Hungary opened its borders in phases overnight. Bulgarian citizens were first allowed to cross in carefully controlled convoys, then Romanians had a turn.

But by early Wednesday on the Austrian side of the border, trucks were backed up for 17 miles and cars for nearly 9 miles as rules allowing only Hungarians or transport trucks through the country's borders kicked back in.

European Union leaders have been working on how to make sure that food, medical supplies and other essential goods keep flowing, but borders have been

clogged so far. Looking ahead, they're also trying to figure out ways to allow seasonal agricultural workers, needed to keep the production of food going, to travel back and forth across essentially closed borders.

The border closings extended to North America, as the U.S. and Canada agreed to close their shared boundary to non-essential travel.

In Southeast Asia, the causeway between Malaysia and the financial hub of Singapore was eerily quiet after Malaysia shut its borders, while the Philippines backed down on an order giving foreigners 72 hours to leave from a large part of its main island.

Increasingly worried about the economic fallout of the global shutdown, the U.S., Britain and the Netherlands announced rescue packages totaling hundreds of billions of dollars, while longtime International Monetary Fund critic Venezuela asked the institution for a \$5 billion loan.

Major Asian stock markets fell back Wednesday after early gains after Wall Street jumped on President Donald Trump's promise of aid.

In Brussels, Ursula von der Leyen, European Commission president, said that there had been "a unanimous and united approach" to the decision to

## All 50 states now have confirmed virus cases

Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — All 50 U.S. states now have confirmed cases of the new coronavirus as West Virginia's governor announced the first positive test in his state Tuesday evening.

Gov. Jim Justice said the person with the virus is in the state's Eastern Panhandle, a region close to Washington, D.C., though he didn't disclose the county where it was reported. Health officials said later the person was not in a hospital.

Justice used a televised address to announce new restrictions, ordering bars, restaurants and casinos to close with the exception of carry-out food services. He did not address delivery

services.

"This is real and it's really concerning," the governor said.

Justice had warned earlier that it was only a matter of time before a confirmed case would be documented in the state. He and state health officials have repeatedly expressed frustration over limited testing nationwide.

Both Justice and U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin have noted the virus could be especially damaging in West Virginia because of the state's elderly population and high percentage of people with existing health problems. About 20 percent of West Virginia residents are age 65 and older.

prohibit most foreigners from entering the EU for 30 days.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said that European leaders agreed in a conference call to the commission's proposal for an entry ban to the bloc — along with Norway, Switzerland, Iceland and Britain — with "very, very limited exceptions." Germany planned to implement the decision immediately.

But so far, EU efforts to smooth the transition have failed. On Wednesday, thousands of trucks remained backed up in Lithuania on roads into Poland, after Warsaw ordered strict measures that include testing every driver for COVID-19 symptoms. The line

of trucks was 37 miles long on Tuesday night.

In Italy, the hardest hit nation after China, infections jumped to 27,980 on Tuesday. With 2,503 deaths, Italy accounts for a third of the global death toll.

Spain, the fourth-most infected country, saw its cases soar by more than 2,000 in one day to 11,178. Virus-related deaths jumped to 491, a toll that included 17 elderly residents of a Madrid nursing home.

Some bright spots emerged. Wuhan, the central Chinese city where the virus was first detected late last year and which has been under lockdown for weeks, reported just one new case for a second straight day Wednesday.

## Commissaries to check ID, limit shoppers, nix early hours

Stars and Stripes

Military commissaries worldwide will be checking the IDs of authorized customers at the entrance and revoking policies allowing visitors in response to coronavirus-related crowding concerns, commissary officials said Wednesday.

Stores will also eliminate the

"early bird" shopping hour in order to allow more time for cleaning and restocking, the Defense Commissary Agency said on its website.

The agency said that it believes the ID checks and visitor restrictions "will reduce the number of people in our stores and help with social distancing."

The agency also said that individual commissaries may also need to limit purchase quantities of some products.

"We are increasing deliveries to our overseas commissaries, including shipments of high demand items such as hand sanitizers and disinfectant wipes," the agency said on its website. "We have airlifted

multiple shipments to the Pacific on high-demand items to supplement the stock in our central distribution centers and support to our stores."

Shelves at a number of commissaries in Germany and elsewhere have run short on disinfectants and toilet paper, as well as some foods like rice and meat.

# Biden sweep places pressure on Sanders

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Joe Biden swept to victory in Florida, Illinois and Arizona, increasingly pulling away with a Democratic presidential primary upended by the coronavirus and building pressure on Bernie Sanders to abandon his campaign.

The former vice president's third big night in as many weeks came Tuesday amid tremendous uncertainty as the Democratic contest collides with efforts to slow the spread of the virus that has shut down large swaths of American life. Polls were shuttered in Ohio, and although balloting went ahead as scheduled in the three other states, election workers and voters reported problems.

Still, Biden's quest for his party's nomination now seems well within reach. His trio of wins doubled his delegate haul over Sanders, giving the former vice president a nearly insurmountable lead. Top Democratic leaders and donors have also increasingly lined up behind Biden as the best option to square off against President Donald Trump in November.

Using a livestream to address supporters from his home state of Delaware, Biden seemed ready to move past the primary. He paid tribute to the Vermont senator for advancing key issues like affordable health care and combating climate change.

"Sen. Sanders and his supporters have brought a remarkable passion and tenacity to all of these issues. Together they have

shifted the fundamental conversation in this country," Biden said. "So let me say, especially to the young voters who have been inspired by Sen. Sanders, I hear you. I know what's at stake. I know what we have to do."

With the exception of North Dakota and the Northern Mariana Islands, Sanders hasn't scored a victory since Super Tuesday on March 3. He made no immediate move on Tuesday to contact Biden, according to people familiar with the situation who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak for the candidates. During remarks early in the night, Sanders said little about the future of the race and instead focused on the coronavirus outbreak.

## Rockets hit Baghdad's Green Zone in latest attack

Associated Press

BAGHDAD — At least three rockets struck Baghdad's fortified Green Zone near the American Embassy late Tuesday in the fourth such attack in the span of a week.

The attack occurred a day after an attack on a training base south of Baghdad where U.S.-led coalition troops and NATO trainers were present, Iraqi security officials said.

At least three rockets struck the Green Zone, the seat of

Iraq's government and home to several foreign embassies, two Iraqi security officials said. Col. Myles Caggins, spokesman for the coalition, said the rockets fell at least 1.2 miles from the embassy.

There were no immediate reports of casualties.

The previous evening, rockets hit the Basmaya base near the Iraqi capital, an Iraqi army statement said. The projectiles landed in an area that includes agricultural land and a factory,

according to the statement. No more details were provided.

A Spanish contingent of the coalition and NATO trainers are present at the Basmaya site. There was no immediate confirmation of the attack from the coalition and no militant group claimed responsibility for the assault.

Last Wednesday, a barrage of over two dozen rockets struck Camp Taji, north of Baghdad, killing three coalition servicemen, including two Americans.

A British serviceman was also killed. It was the deadliest to target U.S. troops in Iraq since a late December rocket attack on an Iraqi base, which killed a U.S. contractor and set in motion a series of attacks that brought Iraq to the brink of war.

The March 11 barrage was followed by another attack, on Saturday at the same site, which wounded five soldiers — three coalition members and two Iraqi soldiers.

## Ex-Calif. lawmaker sentenced to 11 months in prison

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Former California Republican Rep. Duncan Hunter was sentenced Tuesday to 11 months in prison after pleading guilty to stealing campaign funds and spending the money on everything from outings with friends to his daughter's birthday party.

The ex-Marine's attorneys had asked for most or part of his sentence be spent in home confinement, citing his military service fighting the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and his nearly six terms in Congress. Hunter, 43, resigned from Congress in January after

representing one of Southern California's last solidly Republican districts.

But U.S. District Court Judge Thomas J. Whelan said given the amount of money Hunter mispent and the number of years he carried out the pilfering, home confinement was not an option.

Prosecutors ahead of Tuesday's sentencing submitted 87 pages to the judge that showed a corrupt congressman who intentionally and repeatedly stole from his campaign funds for a decade.

"Today's sentence reinforces the notion that the truth still

matters, that facts still matter," Assistant U.S. Attorney Phil Halpern said after the hearing.

Hunter's attorney, Devin Burstein, said the fact that Hunter was sentenced to less than a year instead of the 14 months prosecutors sought was because of his "years of service and dedication to our country."

"Congressman Hunter is ready to put this behind him and to continue helping veterans in every way possible," Burstein wrote in an email to The Associated Press.

Hunter and his wife, Margaret, who was his campaign manager, were accused in a

60-count indictment of stealing more than \$250,000 in campaign funds and trying to hide it on financial disclosure records, listing some personal expenses as contributions to wounded warriors.

The money bankrolled private school tuition for his children, his wife's shopping sprees, weekend trips with his mistress and parties in Washington, according to the indictment.

Each pleaded guilty to a single count in separate plea agreements last year, and each had faced up to five years in prison.

# Brothels closed, so sex workers in a bind

Associated Press

BERLIN — It's 7 p.m. on a Friday night, a time when Aurel Johannes Marx's three-room brothel on the edge of Berlin would normally be preparing for its first customers. Sex for sale has long been a staple part of the German capital's freewheeling nightlife. But amid concerns over the new coronavirus, even the world's supposedly oldest profession is suffering a sudden slump.

At the "Lankwitzer 7" brothel, with its soft red light and bawdy paintings on the wall, disinfectant dispensers had been installed next to the washbasins. Marx said he ordered staff to hot-wash all towels and sheets, and open the windows more often to let the warm, sticky air escape.

Still, customers just weren't showing up anymore.

"Over the past week, business has gone down by 50%," Marx said, blaming the decline on the general drop in nightlife that's occurred since the virus arrived in Berlin.

By Saturday, authorities had pulled the plug entirely, ordering the temporary closure of all entertainment venues, including brothels. The city has registered 332 confirmed cases of COVID-19 so far. Several dozen infections have been traced to bars and clubs.

Susanne Bleier Wilp, a German former sex worker and spokeswoman for the Association of Erotic and Sexual Services Providers, or BESD, said the virus has

caused fear and uncertainty among the estimated 100,000 to 200,000 sex workers in Germany, where prostitution was largely legalized almost 20 years ago.

"There are those who are withdrawing from the business entirely at the moment for safety reasons," Bleier Wilp told The Associated Press. Others are requiring that customers disinfect themselves, she added — a measure that medical experts say is unlikely to effectively stop the spread of the virus during close physical contact.

It wasn't clear how the closure of brothels would affect independent sex workers, and some have come under criticism for suggesting they will continue working.

Salome Balthus, a sex worker in Berlin, said that most of her colleagues would prefer to stay at home.

"But they know that nobody is going to compensate them for loss of income," she said on Twitter. "90% of all dates are being canceled anyway. As always, we're left to fend for ourselves."

Unlike regular employees, most sex workers won't benefit directly from the half-trillion-euro package of loans the German government is making available to companies facing ruin because of the coronavirus outbreak.

"Sex workers are usually self-employed, not employees," said Bleier Wilp. "That means, they bear all the risks themselves."

In the Netherlands, Amsterdam's famed red light district was similarly hard hit after the government on Sunday night ordered the closure of schools, bars and restaurants for three weeks and made a point of mentioning that sex clubs also were affected.

By Sunday night, the normally packed canal-side streets and narrow, cobbled alleys that are normally a tourist magnet were largely deserted. On Monday, the windows where scantily clad sex workers pose to attract customers were largely empty. Some had signs taped to the glass saying: "The office is closed" due to the coronavirus restrictions.

"There are almost no clients because there are no people on the street even. So the brothel owners decided to close down," an Amsterdam sex worker who goes by the pseudonym Foxy Angel, said in a telephone interview.

Angel said she had already spent her savings when she couldn't work for three weeks because she had a regular flu.

Amsterdam's Prostitution Information Center, which normally offers tours and provides information, has established an emergency fund for sex workers in financial trouble. It is aiming to raise 6,000 euros (\$6,590) and will disburse 40 euros each to people who apply, to cover basics such as shopping, medicines and phone credits.

## Distilleries using alcohol to make hand sanitizer

Associated Press

NEW TRIPOLI, Pa. — A Pennsylvania distillery owner who grew increasingly angry as he saw the skyrocketing price of hand sanitizer has decided to do something about it: He's temporarily converting his operation into a production line for the suddenly hard-to-find, gooey, alcohol-based disinfectant.

Eight Oaks Farm Distillery filled its first 20 bottles Monday, a batch destined for charitable groups that need hand sanitizer but haven't been able to get it due to the coronavirus pandemic. The family-owned distillery plans to dramatically boost production this week and distribute the bottles to charities as well as offer them at farmers' markets where it sells its spirits and through its website.

The price: whatever people decide to donate.

"We are in a national emergency," said brewery founder Chad Butters. "What's the right thing to do? The right thing to do is support this community by providing

something that is in desperate need. We'll flood the valley with hand sanitizer and drive that price right down."

Other distilleries are also putting their spirits to work to help fill the shortage of hand sanitizers. Green Mountain Distillers in Morrisville, Vt., is giving away a hand sanitizing solution and Durham Distillery in Durham, N.C., is donating one to hospitality colleagues, using high-proof alcohol and other ingredients. Patrons must bring their own containers.

"We wanted to do something that would be as positive as possible," said Harold Faircloth, an owner of Green Mountain Distillers.

Smugglers' Notch Distillery, also in Vermont, plans to launch a hand sanitizer later this week at its Waterbury and Jeffersonville sites. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to Vermont's efforts to respond to the virus outbreak.

"I know I have a unique opportunity to help out a little bit and keep my staff employed," said co-owner Jeremy Elliott, who said 40% of his business comes from bars

and restaurants, which are closing in some parts of the country.

The Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, a trade group, has been in touch with federal regulatory agencies as well as the Trump administration's coronavirus task force to clear red tape and "make sure we can be quick and nimble and fill a need in the marketplace," said Chief Executive Officer Chris Swonger. "We all want to do our part."

Swonger said government agencies have been very receptive.

Beyond the humanitarian impulses of individual distillers, the liquor industry also has a vested interest in seeing the virus threat dissipate quickly, given its economic reliance on bars, restaurants and other hospitality and entertainment venues that have been shuttered by the outbreak.

Brad Plummer, spokesman for the American Distilling Institute and editor of Distiller Magazine, said he's been seeing a lot of talk among distillers interested in converting part of their operations to hand sanitizer.

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Judge resigns after driving without license

**NY** ALBANY — An upstate New York judge resigned after it was revealed that he had been driving without a license for the last eight years.

Douglas Gardner agreed to never again hold judicial office after his blatant disregard for New York's driving laws were brought to light, the state Commission on Judicial Conduct announced.

Gardner, who served on the bench since January 2011 in Fulton and Herkimer counties, resigned from office Feb. 12.

The commission, a watchdog organization that imposes discipline on judges who engage in misconduct, laid out a series of charges against Gardner, including mishandling of court funds resulting in a deficit of nearly \$1,300 as well as operating a vehicle without a valid driver's license.

## AG: Gambler caught cheating at casino

**MA** SPRINGFIELD — Authorities charged a man with cheating a Massachusetts casino out of \$30,000 by distracting poker dealers, the state attorney general's office said.

Daniel Ruiz, 38, of Holyoke, was indicted by a Hampden County grand jury on charges of larceny and cheating or swindling, the office of Attorney General Maura Healey announced.

Ruiz went to the MGM Springfield casino several times over about three weeks in January and February where he played the four-card poker tables, Healey's office said. He devised a scheme to distract dealers in order to discreetly

bump up his wagers when he determined he had a winning hand, authorities said.

## Archaeologists: Donation could be a century old

**NC** RALEIGH — North Carolina's Office of State Archaeology received a donated piece of driftwood that was collected by a beachgoer decades ago and could date back to the Civil War-era, according to experts.

Someone brought the piece of timber to the agency, the archaeology office said in a Facebook post. Photos showed a thin, curved piece of weathered wood more than several feet long with multiple holes and markings.

It had been collected by the donor's friend more than 40 years ago, according to the post. Examiners determined the holes and other signs of wearing along the timber suggested it was part of a ship that "had a long working life" and could have been used as early as the 19th century, officials wrote.

## Return of cash sought after funeral theft

**ID** POCATELLO — Idaho authorities asked the public for help finding money and handwritten cards stolen from a funeral at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints building in the city of Preston.

A viewing was March 6 and the funeral was held March 7 for Jeff Green, 55, who died in late February following a six-year battle with cancer, the Idaho State Journal reported.

Someone during the viewing and funeral stole a substantial amount of money donated to the family and dozens of handwritten cards, his son Hayden Green, said. The cards were inscribed with memories the fam-

ily planned to share with Jeff Green's 4-year-old daughter.

The Preston Police Department asked anyone who noticed or saw anything to contact the department.

## Mountain lion that attacked 2 had rabies

**CO** LOVELAND — A mountain lion that attacked a person and bit a sheriff's deputy who was responding to help tested positive for rabies.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife officials said both bite victims have been notified, and Larimer County's health department is managing the response.

A man and a delivery driver were talking outside a home near an RV park along the Big Thompson River west of Loveland when the 91-pound male mountain lion attacked. A responding deputy also was attacked, prompting officers to kill the mountain lion.

## Kid-friendly computer coming to library

**NH** ROCHESTER — A library in New Hampshire is rolling out what it describes as a kid-friendly computer.

The director of the Rochester library, Brian Sylvester, said that it added an AWE Learning station so that youngsters can improve their reading skills. The Early Literacy Station is designed for children between the ages of 2 and 8 and features more than 4,000 learning activities. The system allows children to beef up their math, science, nature, social studies, geography, reading, art and music skills.

The library also offers AWE Learning's Afterschool Edge programming, which is geared to children ages 6-12 and offers

homework help.

AWE Learning is a maker of educational computer games and equipment for children.

## Man recovering after coyote attack

**AZ** SUN CITY — A southern Arizona man was recovering after authorities say a coyote bit him in the leg.

The Arizona Daily Star reported the Sun City man was attacked while he was working on a bike or motorcycle in his garage.

Arizona Game and Fish Department spokesman Mark Hart says the department is looking for a coyote with a hairless tail, likely caused by mange.

Hart says the victim is in the Oro Valley Hospital being treated for rabies as a precaution.

No further information was available.

This is the third coyote-related episode in the Tucson area since Feb. 13.

## World sailing race to stop in US in 2022

**RI** NEWPORT — An around-the-world sailing race is once again making its only North American stop in Rhode Island.

The Ocean Race announced that the Newport stop in the spring of 2022 will be one of 10 stops during the eight-month, 38,000 nautical-mile race, which begins in Alicante, Spain, in October 2021 and finishes in Genoa, Italy, in June 2022.

Sail Newport will organize the event.

The stopover generates millions of dollars for the state's economy. An economic impact report showed that the 2015 stopover generated an estimated \$47.7 million.

From wire reports

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Reporting  
World, National  
and Military News

# Source: Panthers sign Bridgewater

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — The Panthers have found a replacement for Cam Newton — and it didn't take long.

The Panthers have agreed to a three-year, \$63 million contract with free agent quarterback Teddy Bridgewater, a person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press.

The deal couldn't be announced until Wednesday.

The Panthers announced earlier Tuesday they were parting ways with Newton, their No. 1 overall pick in 2011.

The 27-year-old Bridgewater started five games last season for the Saints, going 5-0 while completing 68% of his passes with nine touchdowns and two interceptions. He has spent the last two seasons in New Orleans after four with the Vikings.

Bridgewater worked one season in New Orleans with Joe Brady, who is now Carolina's

offensive coordinator.

Carolina general manager Marty Hurney said Tuesday via Twitter the team is giving the 31-year-old Newtown permission to seek a trade — although the former league MVP responded by saying he never requested one.

"Every year difficult decisions are made and they are never easy," Hurney said. "We have been working with Cam and his agent to find the best fit for him moving forward and he will always be a Carolina Panther in our hearts."

Newton was quick to respond to the Panthers on social media, saying he didn't ask for a trade.

"Stop the word play!!" Newton tweeted. "I never asked for it!! There is no dodging this one; I love the Panthers to death and will always love you guys!! Please do not try and play me or manipulate the narrative and act like I wanted this: You forced me into this."

Newton has battled shoulder and foot injuries the last two seasons and lost his last eight starts for the Panthers.

Newton made the Pro Bowl three times and was the NFL's MVP in 2015 when he led the Panthers to the Super Bowl. He holds most of the franchise's passing records and has run for more touchdowns than any QB in league history.

But health questions have swirled around Newton. He is coming off a Lisfranc fracture in his left foot and there is still concern over his recovery from shoulder surgery prior to the 2019 season. The Panthers can also save \$19 million under the 2020 salary cap if they trade or release Newton.

Panthers owner David Tepper, who has been noncommittal on Newton's future with the team ever since last season, released what amounted to a goodbye statement Tuesday on Twitter saying "I wish him all

of the best."

"He's one of the all-time greats in Panthers history," Tepper said. "If you ask any of our fans for their most memorable moments, I'm willing to bet that most of them will include Cam — electrifying plays, giving away footballs after touchdowns, fun celebrations and big wins. His competitive and drive and rare. Off the field, you can't measure Cam's contributions. He has touched the lives of youths throughout the Carolinas and Atlanta."

The decision to part ways with Newton is the latest in a complete organizational overhaul.

The team fired two-time Associated Press NFL Coach of the Year Ron Rivera with four games left in last season and hired a college coach, Baylor's Matt Rhule, this offseason to take over. Nearly the entire coaching staff is new, including Brady.

## Report: Brady will sign deal with Buccaneers

The Washington Post

Tom Brady, who transformed himself from an NFL Draft afterthought into an all-time quarterbacking great during two dynastic decades with the New England Patriots, announced Tuesday that he would be leaving the team.

He wasted no time finding his next NFL home. Brady was set to sign with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, with a person familiar with the negotiations saying Tuesday evening it was "looking promising" that Brady would complete a deal with that team worth at least \$30 million per season. That person later said an agreement "essentially" was in place. The signing could not be official until Wednesday at 4 p.m. Eastern time, when the NFL's free-agent market officially opened.

Brady, 42, said via social media Tuesday morning he would make his exit from New England after teaming with Patriots Coach Bill Belichick for six Super Bowl victories. He wrote on Twitter that "it is time for me to open a new stage for my life and career."

He added that he didn't know what his "football future holds." Brady, a free agent

for the first time, suggested he would continue playing rather than retire, saying his "football journey will take place elsewhere."

The Buccaneers and Los Angeles Chargers were believed to have made contract offers to Brady worth \$30 million per season or more, according to a person with knowledge of the deliberations. But Brady apparently wanted to keep his family on the East Coast, and the Chargers were said by early Tuesday evening to have resigned themselves to losing the bidding. The Buccaneers were thought to be selling Brady on the prospect of playing for their well-regarded head coach, Bruce Arians.

Brady faces a potentially difficult transition, changing teams for the first time in the NFL during an offseason in which normal routines have been interrupted by coronavirus-related issues. The league has postponed teams' offseason workouts indefinitely, potentially affecting Brady's ability to adapt to Arians' offense and to his new teammates.

The Patriots' owner, Robert Kraft, said he met Monday night with Brady at the quarterback's behest. That meeting took

place at Kraft's home, he said Tuesday.

"I got a contact from Tommy last night, and he told me that he wanted to see me," Kraft said. "I was hoping we could do a deal. He came over. We had an amiable, loving conversation. He told me that he wanted to move on. I had given him that freedom. He earned that over 20 years and all that he has done. I figured he deserved that."

Brady worked out a contract extension with the Patriots last offseason that voided following the 2019 season.

"It was a very good discussion," Kraft said. "I love him like a son. I'm very sad. I wish it were right for him to stay here. I've known him for half his life. I told him that. I watched him come here as a kid with peach fuzz, and he told me that he'd be the best decision I ever made. I think he just wanted to move on."

Kraft said he did not believe Brady's decision to leave the Patriots was based on financial considerations.

"The important thing is I still love him like a son," Kraft said. "It makes me sad, but he's earned the right to do what he wants. It's not what I hoped for."

# IOC may adjust Olympic qualifying trials

Associated Press

Almost any athlete will concede that getting picked for an Olympic team is as much of a challenge as competing for one.

The IOC acknowledged on Tuesday just how frazzling the whole process could be this year, and a few leaders from the athlete community weighed in on how the uncertainty is plaguing them, as well.

While pushing forward for its planned July 24 start for the Tokyo Games, the IOC outlined how the invitations might be sorted out if the dozens of Olympic trials and qualifiers slated for this spring and summer around the globe get canceled or postponed due to the coronavirus.

There are still around 4,700 out of nearly 11,000 Olympic spots to be decided with four months remaining until opening night. And though the IOC insists its still too early to make “drastic decisions” about the Games themselves, it put out a communique acknowledging that there might need to be contingency plans for picking teams.

“Currently ... the athletes face significant challenges around securing the final qualification places for the Games,” the IOC said in its statement. “In some countries, athletes are even finding it hard to continue their regular training schedules.”

That’s not a good thing, according to a few high-profile athletes who spoke out on social media, suggesting they were getting differing messages from their countries (lay low) and the IOC (keep preparing).

“We’re trying to follow information with how to continue safely whilst reducing the risk to everyone around us and the information of the IOC and the local government are at odds with one another,” said Britain’s world champion heptathlete, Katarina Johnson-Thompson.

Canadian Olympic hockey and softball star Haley Wickenheiser called the IOC’s decision to keep pushing forward “insensitive and irresponsible.”

“The uncertainty of not knowing ... where you’re going to train tomorrow, as facilities close and qualification events are canceled all over the world, would be terrible if you’re train-

ing your whole life for this,” she said.

And the chair of the athlete council for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee offered a window into how the uncertainty hinders the athletes.

“As long as the Games are supposed to continue as planned, I don’t think athletes want to scale back their training,” said Han Xiao. “I’d like the IOC to give a little more insight into planning and when they might expect to make a final decision, but I don’t know if that’s forthcoming.”

Though 57% of the Olympic spots have been decided, virtually none of them come from the Olympics’ three headliner sports: track, swimming and gymnastics. In the United States and many other countries, those spots are determined at Olympic trials in June, which are in limbo. The track and gymnastics federations said they were busy this week considering alternatives in case trials can’t go forward.

In the U.S., track and swimming award spots to top finishers in each event — taking subjective measures and past performances out of consid-

eration in all but the rarest of circumstances.

But the IOC suggested that other methods might have to be used — including relying on historical performances and international rankings.

Making that more difficult is the continued withering of the pre-Olympic schedule. Two key international gymnastics meets have already been scrubbed, and on Tuesday, the Diamond League, which draws top track stars from across the globe, announced it was postponing three events in April and May.

As much as rankings, those events are considered crucial toward helping athletes get into top form as they approach the Olympics. Lack of events combined with limits on training that some athletes are being forced into under quarantine situations is adding to the uncertainty.

Still, the IOC made clear it would not be rushed into a decision. It said it was following the guidance of world health experts, and that because of insurance policies, the decision “will not be determined by financial interests.”

## Durant one of 4 Nets players to test positive for virus

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Four Brooklyn Nets players, including Kevin Durant, have tested positive for the new coronavirus, bringing the total to seven known players in the NBA.

The Nets did not name the players Tuesday, but Durant told *The Athletic* he was one of them, saying: “Everyone be careful, take care of yourself and quarantine. We’re going to get through this.”

The Nets announced that one player is exhibiting symptoms, while the other three are asymptomatic. All four players have been isolated and are under the care of team physicians.

“The health of our players and staff is of the highest pri-

ority to the organization and the team is doing everything within its power to ensure that those affected receive the best care possible,” the Nets said in a statement.

Brooklyn’s most recent game was March 10 in Los Angeles against the Lakers. After the Nets announced their test results, the Lakers — who have two of the game’s biggest stars in LeBron James and Anthony Davis — indicated that their team will now be tested.

“Given the exposure risks from our game against the Nets on March 10th, we are following the next steps of our COVID-19 procedures and protocol that are established in consultation with various health officials, the NBA and our UCLA Health doctors,” the Lakers said.

The Nets said that all players and members of their travel party are being asked to remain isolated and closely monitor their health, but the team’s ability to get testing that has been unavailable to so many others drew criticism from New York Mayor Bill de Blasio.

“We wish them a speedy recovery. But, with all due respect, an entire NBA team should NOT get tested for COVID-19 while there are critically ill patients waiting to be tested,” de Blasio wrote on Twitter. “Tests should not be for the wealthy, but for the sick.”

NBA spokesman Mike Bass later said that public health officials and team physicians had concerns that players — because of their direct contact with each other and interac-

tions with the general public — “could accelerate the spread of the virus.”

The NBA’s hope is that the platform its players have will raise awareness on the topic of taking precautions seriously. Several NBA players have taped messages in recent days on the topic; Portland’s Pau Gasol, for example, released one Tuesday thanking first responders for their work on the front lines of the crisis.

“Hopefully, by these players choosing to make their test results public, they have drawn attention to the critical need for young people to follow CDC recommendations in order to protect others, particularly those with underlying health conditions and the elderly,” Bass said.