

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## Calif., NY residents told to stay home

Associated Press

California and New York ordered their residents to stay home. More than 30 states called National Guardsmen to active duty. And Miami closed its beaches as Americans grappled with the coronavirus pandemic.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom on Thursday restricted nonessential movements.

"This is a moment we need to make tough decisions," Newsom said. "We need to recognize reality."

His move came after counties and communities covering about half the state's population already had issued similar orders.

People may still leave their homes for walks and exercise and for essential needs such as food and medical care. Restaurant meals can still be delivered to homes.

In a letter to President Donald Trump dated Wednesday, Newsom requested that the Navy's USNS Mercy, the world's largest hospital ship, be deployed to the Port of Los Angeles for use through Sept. 1. California has disproportionately aided people returning to the U.S. from

foreign countries and needs the ship to help "decompress" its health care delivery system as infection rates climb, Newsom wrote. The ship is based in San Diego.

He said infection rates are doubling every four days in some parts of the state and issued the dire prediction that 56% of California's population could contract the virus over the next eight weeks.

On Friday, New York state moved to join California.

"We're going to close the valve, because the rate of increase in the number of cases portends a total overwhelming of our hospital system," New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said as cases in the state climbed to more than 7,000 and the death toll reached at least 38.

Cuomo said that starting Sunday, all workers in nonessential businesses must stay home and all gatherings of any size will be banned in the state of more than 19 million people. The move came after California all but confined its 40 million residents in the biggest lockdown in the nation.

On Friday morning, Defense Secretary Mark Esper said that more than 4,000 National

Guard reservists have been deployed in 31 states to help battle the coronavirus.

Esper told Fox News that the Army Corps of Engineers were in New York three days ago working to help identify sites, such as college dorms or hotels, that it could renovate for hospital beds. Esper said the military also is preparing Army units to assemble field hospitals.

Esper, who has spoken with Cuomo, says the USNS Comfort hospital ship will be in New York. He says the Mercy will be deployed early next week on the West Coast.

He added that 67 U.S. service members are infected with coronavirus and that 1,500 Americans are quarantined on four U.S. bases in an effort to lighten the burden on the nation's civilian medical facilities.

On Thursday, Florida's largest county inched closer to economic shutdown as Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Gimenez ordered all beaches, parks and "non-essential" commercial and retail businesses closed because of the new coronavirus pandemic.

"We must all act as if we are infected and take every precau-

tionary step to prevent transmitting this virus," Gimenez said in his announcement of the closures, which appear to go beyond other state and local orders.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis already had ordered bars closed and restaurants to limit seating, while some municipal governments have limited eateries to takeout and delivery.

Gimenez's order allows several businesses to remain open, including health care providers, grocery stores, gas stations, restaurants and banks.

Barbershops, hair salons, tattoo and piercing parlors and nail salons in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Pennsylvania must close by 8 p.m. Saturday to slow the spread of the coronavirus, the governors of the four states said.

"These temporary closures are not going to be easy, but they are necessary to protecting the health and safety of New Yorkers and all Americans," Cuomo said in a statement.

New York state has more than 5,000 confirmed cases of the coronavirus and 38 deaths, according to figures from Johns Hopkins University.

## Navy suspends promotion boards to limit virus exposure

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON— The Navy is suspending its selection and promotion boards to limit travel to help stop the spread of the coronavirus, according to the service.

The boards that decide promotions for thousands of officers and enlisted sailors scheduled to convene Tuesday and after are being postponed until further notice, according

to a Navy announcement by Vice Adm. John Nowell, chief of naval personnel.

Other panels impacted include advancement for enlisted sailors and milestone boards, according to the Navy.

The decision is meant to prevent sailors from having to travel to Millington, Tenn., to sit on these boards, and to limit the number of sailors who would be working closely with one another, according to the Navy.

As of Friday, the military has had 70 service members test positive for the coronavirus.

When the boards resume, they will mostly follow the original board schedule, according to the announcement, and the Navy will adjust the schedule process depending on the coronavirus situation so that no sailor is negatively affected by the delay.

No additional officer or enlisted candidates will be added to the original eligibility list for

these boards.

The Navy is working to ensure sailors who are eventually approved by a board or the Senate will have their rank and pay backdated.

"I want to reassure every affected sailor that we are committed to maintaining the sanctity of the selection board process and every precaution is being taken to ensure fairness and minimize impact to you and your family," Nowell wrote.

# Negotiations begin on \$1T economic rescue

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Trump administration officials descended Friday on Capitol Hill to launch high-stakes negotiations with Senate Republicans and Democrats racing to draft a \$1 trillion-plus economic rescue package amid the coronavirus outbreak.

The closed-door convening is the biggest effort yet from Washington to shore up households and the U.S. economy as the pandemic and its nationwide shutdown hurtles the country toward a likely recession. Mnuchin wants Congress to vote by Monday.

“We want to lay out the need for urgency and quick action,” said Eric Ueland, the White House director of legislative affairs, entering the morning session. “The American people expect action.”

With Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell on one side and Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer on the other, Mnuchin took the center seat for the rare high-level talks.

Despite the urgency to act, talks are likely to hit challenges over different opinions on how best to swiftly push out aid.

McConnell laid out the Republican offer Thursday of direct payments to Ameri-

cans, businesses and industry loans but Democrats said it does not go far enough to help ordinary workers and shore up the healthcare system.

Schumer vowed Friday as he entered the session that Democrats will “fight hard” for their priorities. “We need to work together quickly and do something big and bold to help the American people,” Schumer said.

The GOP leader’s effort builds on Trump’s request for Congress to “go big.”

“We need to take bold and swift action as soon as possible,” McConnell said Thursday, announcing his plan on the Senate floor.

The 247-page McConnell CARES Act puts the leader’s imprint on opening talks with Democrats in Congress as lawmakers prepare to work through the weekend to fast-track perhaps the most urgent legislative undertaking since the 2008 financial crisis.

McConnell’s plan proposes \$1,200 direct checks to taxpayers, \$300 billion for small businesses to keep idled workers on payroll and \$208 billion in loans to airlines and other industries.

The negotiations are certain to encounter difficulties ahead, despite the pressure on Washington to act.

“We are beginning to review Senator

McConnell’s proposal and on first reading, it is not at all pro-worker and instead puts corporations way ahead of workers,” said a joint statement from Schumer and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

The GOP leader’s plan aims to shore up households, businesses and the healthcare industry, which is bracing for an expected onslaught of patients falling ill from the virus that causes COVID-19.

The one-time \$1,200 stipends would be sent to individuals — \$2,400 for couples — phased out at income thresholds of \$75,000 for individuals and \$150,000 per couple. Additionally, there would be \$500 payments for each child.

Additionally, the McConnell bill would provide \$300 billion to small businesses, with loans that would eventually be forgiven for employers who use them to meet payroll expenses.

To shore up industry, McConnell’s plan would provide \$208 billion in loans and loan guarantees to distressed sectors, including \$50 billion for commercial airlines, \$8 billion for air cargo carriers and \$150 billion for other eligible businesses, but those loans would have to be paid back.

Businesses would also be allowed to defer payment of the 6.2% employer payroll tax.

## Europe struggles under stress of response to virus

Associated Press

PARIS — Southern Europe buckled under the strain of the coronavirus pandemic on Friday, with gasping patients filling the wards of hospitals in Spain and Italy as the global death toll surpassed 10,000 people worldwide.

The World Health Organization noted the dramatic speed of the virus’ spread.

“It took over three months to reach the first 10,000 confirmed cases, and only 12 days to reach the next 100,000,” the U.N. health agency said Friday.

WHO released new protocols to help countries identify the extent of COVID-19 infection among their populations, which age groups are most affected and the percentage of people who are infected without any symptoms.

In Bergamo, the epicenter of the virus in Italy, cemeteries were overwhelmed. Sky News video from inside the city’s main hospital showed patients lined up in a narrow ward, struggling for breath as doctors and nurses moved swiftly from one beeping machine to the next.

“When the virus arrived here, there was no containment and it spread through the valleys very quickly... Some said it was the normal flu. We doctors knew it was not,” said Dr. Luca Lorini, head of intensive care at the hospital, where nearly 500 beds are dedicated to people suffering severe symptoms of the virus, 80 of those in intensive care.

In the farm town of Fondi that has the largest wholesale produce market serving Rome and Naples, a new ordinance banned all but essential people from entering or leaving after 40 elderly residents all became infected. At a convent on the outskirts of Rome, 19 of 21 nuns were infected, according to the Italian daily *Il Messaggero*.

Wuhan, China, where the outbreak began, offered a ray of hope with no new infections reported for a second day in a row and only 39 cases reported nationwide — all of them brought from the outside, the government said.

The effects of a global economy grinding to a halt were also taking a toll, from millions of unsold flowers rotting in piles in Kenya to the slow emptying of the world’s

skies. The U.N. chief warned of a looming global recession “perhaps of record dimensions.”

Scientists advising the British government warned that restrictions on daily life imposed to combat the coronavirus outbreak may have to be in place for a year, with periods of less stringent and more stringent measures.

In a measure of how the fortunes of East and West have shifted, a Chinese Red Cross official heading an aid delegation to Milan castigated Italians for failing to take their national lockdown seriously. Sun Shuopeng said he was shocked to see so many people walking around, using public transportation and eating out in hotels, adding: “All people should be staying at home in quarantine.” China also sent medical equipment to the Czech capital, Prague.

Governments are trying to balance locking down residents with the need to keep food, medicine and other essentials flowing. In Britain, the category of vital workers includes doctors, nurses and paramedics — and also vicars, truckers, garbage collectors and journalists.

# Military child care and youth programs facing cancellations

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The Navy has canceled all part-time child care programs and services for children up to age 12. This includes hourly child care unless it is deemed “emergency/mission essential,” according to a Navy statement.

The Navy has 4,500 day care slots across the service, acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly said earlier this month.

Visitors to facilities will be limited to special circumstances, such as workers addressing noncritical maintenance. Sanitation practices — which include cleaning doors and hard surfaces, as well as increasing handwashing — are also being implemented, the statement said.

Navy-operated child care pro-

grams will also not allow new enrollees unless deemed emergency or mission essential.

Parents who are told to telework full-time must care for their children at home, according to the statement. Their child care fees will be waived and their child’s space in child care programs saved during the closures.

“Teleworking includes parents or guardians who work from home, regardless of the employer or who participate in a virtual learning environment. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis,” Coleen San Nicolas-Perez, spokeswoman for Navy Installations Command, said in an email Thursday.

Fees will also be waived and spaces in programs saved for parents who voluntarily remove their child from care

for at least two weeks, or until May 1, according to the Navy statement. Navy installations may also receive waivers to reduce their child care operating hours.

The Marine Corps is limiting child care to essential personnel only, said Marine Corps spokeswoman Desirée Chavis in an email.

The Marine Corps guidance includes conducting health screenings for children, staff and other visitors in facility lobbies before entering classrooms, limiting classrooms to no more than 10 individuals including staff and suspending new child care enrollees.

For the Air Force, decisions on child care programs are being left to local installation commanders, Air Force spokeswoman Lynn Kirby said in an email Thursday.

## EUCOM chief prepares for a ‘worst-case scenerio’

By JOHN VANDIVER  
*Stars and Stripes*

STUTT GART, Germany — The top military officer in Europe said his command is preparing for a “worst-case scenario” that would require troop reinforcement in connection with the fast-spreading coronavirus, which he said has infected 35 U.S. troops on the Continent.

About 2,600 U.S. personnel fall into the category of “concern,” meaning that they are self-isolating because of travel or illness, U.S. European Command’s Gen. Tod Wolters told reporters Friday in a news conference.

“We don’t know exactly what the future holds,” Wolters said. “Can we do this in perpetuity? We would be challenged. But we are preparing for worst-case scenarios with respect to the potential spread.”

Such a scenario would mean that EUCOM could no longer maintain its current level of combat readiness because of infections and would need U.S. military reinforcements from elsewhere, Wolters said.

“At this point, we don’t forecast that to occur. But conditions in the environment will dictate that in the future,” Wolters said.

In all, about 60 personnel, including service members, military civilians and family members have tested positive for the coronavirus, EUCOM said.

Europe is emerging as the epicenter of the coronavirus as cases surge in Italy, Germany and beyond. The increases also are felt inside the military communities in these countries.

It wasn’t immediately clear if the 35 cases in Europe that Wolters cited included civilian personnel.

The Army garrison in Stuttgart, which also hosts Wolters’ EUCOM headquarters, had 21 confirmed infections as of Friday.

## US troops deploying to CENTCOM will be put under quarantine first

By CHAD GARLAND  
*Stars and Stripes*

U.S. and coalition troops deploying to the Middle East will be put under a 14-day pre-deployment quarantine at their home stations to prevent potential strain on medical facilities amid the coronavirus pandemic, U.S. Central Command said Friday.

“This will reduce the need for quarantine in a combat environment and potentially reduce stress on limited medical facilities and resources at their respective bases in the region,” the Tampa, Fla.-based command said in a statement.

CENTCOM will also work with U.S. Transportation Command to make sure that the troops are quarantined while headed to the region, the statement said. The new restrictions will be required for all U.S. and coalition service members.

It will mean that some units and troops will be delayed in rotating home while their replacements are in quarantine, the command said.

“This policy is not intended to otherwise delay or prevent the flow of service members or units

out of the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility,” CENTCOM said. “This policy is also not expected to delay the drawdown in forces from Afghanistan as part of the U.S. agreement with the Taliban.”

The NATO Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan began withdrawing from some bases earlier this month as it works to drawdown from about 13,000 troops to 8,600 by mid-July, as part of the deal reached with the Taliban last month, aimed at ending more than 18 years of war.

The CENTCOM announcement comes a day after the Afghanistan mission announced measures to slow the spread of the coronavirus, including holding newly arrived personnel in screening facilities and temporarily blocking the entry of other inbound personnel.

The British military also planned to bring home some of its troops from Iraq, the U.K. Defense Ministry said on Thursday. Troops from other countries participating in the anti-Islamic State coalition in Iraq would also be sent home after the Iraqi security forces put a halt on training due to the virus outbreak, the U.S.-led coalition in Iraq and Syria said in a statement Friday.

# Senators sold stocks before market drop

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Richard Burr, R-N.C., sold as much as \$1.7 million in stocks just before the market dropped in February amid fears about the coronavirus epidemic.

Senate records show that Burr and his wife sold between roughly \$600,000 and \$1.7 million in more than 30 separate transactions in late January and mid-February, just before the market began to fall and as government health officials began to issue stark warnings about the effects of the virus.

Several of the stocks were in companies that own hotels.

The stock sales were first reported by ProPublica and The Center for Responsive Politics. Most of them came on Feb. 13, just before Burr made a speech in North Carolina in which he predicted severe consequences from the virus, including closed schools and cutbacks in company travel, according to audio obtained by NPR and released Thursday.

Burr's remarks were much more dire than remarks he had made publicly, and came as President Donald Trump was still downplaying the severity

of the virus.

There is no indication that Burr had any inside information as he sold the stocks and issued the private warnings. The intelligence panel did not have any briefings on the pandemic the week when most of the stocks were sold, according to a person familiar with the matter. The person declined to be identified to discuss confidential committee activity.

The North Carolina senator was not the only lawmaker to sell off stocks just before the steep decline due to the global pandemic. Georgia Sen. Kelly Loeffler, a new senator who

is up for re-election this year, sold off hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of stock in late January, as senators began to get briefings on the virus, also according to Senate records.

In the weeks that followed, Loeffler urged her constituents to have faith in the Trump administration's efforts to prepare the nation. The Daily Beast first reported that Loeffler dropped the stock in late January. The senator is married to Jeffrey Sprecher, the chairman and CEO of Intercontinental Exchange, which owns the New York Stock Exchange.

# Biden in waiting game to become nominee

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In the three weeks since his blowout win in the South Carolina primary, Joe Biden has emerged as the Democratic presidential nominee-in-waiting. But, amid the uncertainty of the coronavirus pandemic, put the emphasis on waiting.

Biden holds an essentially insurmountable delegate lead over his last remaining rival, Bernie Sanders, yet the Vermont senator remains in the race. And with several states delaying their primaries to avoid the spread of the COVID-19 virus, Biden can't reach the required majority of pledged convention delegates until May or June.

The former vice president, who proudly calls himself a "tactile politician," can't chase

those votes in public because he's essentially confined to his Delaware home like any other American in a quasi-national quarantine. His new campaign manager and her staff are working from home, too.

For now, Biden's campaign has little choice but to embrace an unprecedented political purgatory.

"Three weeks ago, we were on the verge of collapse as a campaign, so this is a very recent phenomenon," said Biden senior adviser Anita Dunn, insisting that the 77-year-old candidate remains focused on playing a productive role in the coronavirus response and sewing up a nominating fight that he doesn't see as finished.

"We will figure out how to put together a general election campaign for this difficult

time," Dunn said.

Biden is confident enough in his position, campaign co-chairman Cedric Richmond said, that he's started to consider possibilities for a running mate. But Richmond said no vetting process has begun in earnest.

Biden announced Jen O'Malley Dillon, a veteran Democratic operative, as his new campaign manager on March 12, two days after another round of primary victories widened his lead over Sanders. But in the same gathering where O'Malley Dillon was introduced, she and Dunn told the staff they were shuttering the Philadelphia headquarters and all other Biden offices. With social distancing already taking hold nationally, Biden and his wife, Jill, addressed the

group by telephone from their Wilmington home.

Digital fundraising efforts continue, with the campaign pushing the usual texts and emails asking for small-dollar contributions. But high-dollar fundraising events are on hold, including any possibility of a joint fundraising agreement with the Democratic National Committee. The hooks of that fundraising approach are swanky in-person events that allow donors close contact with a would-be president. No one knows when those can happen again.

Meanwhile, Biden and his aides must also continue to react to President Donald Trump and developments in the coronavirus outbreak and response.

# Body of Navy dive student found in Florida

Stars and Stripes

The body of a Navy dive student who went missing Thursday while training off Panama City, Fla., has been recovered, according to local

news reports.

The Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center student went missing around 11:30 a.m. during a "surface swim" in St. Andrew Bay, said NBC affiliate WHJG. The training area

is marked by buoys and has a maximum depth of 20 feet.

The body was recovered around 4:30 p.m., according to ABC affiliate WMBB.

The identity of the diver will not be released until after his

family is notified, Navy officials told WMBB.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with the student's family during this difficult time," they added.

# Shaming those who go outside is new normal

Associated Press

The chairman of Arizona's Asian Chamber of Commerce didn't see much downside to attending a small dinner at a local restaurant to bolster the business and bring together other leaders to discuss how to help Asian-American eateries devastated by the coronavirus.

That was, at least, until he posted about it on Instagram. The feedback was swift from people who were appalled that Ryan Winkle would promote a gathering — even a small one — as COVID-19 raged and entire cities were urged to self-isolate.

"I started getting some messages saying, 'Hey, why are you trying to spread the virus?' I was like, 'It's a small event, and everyone had washed their hands, and they had sanitizer on the tables,'" Winkle said of the dinner held Saturday in Mesa, Ariz. "My thinking is always about the economics. Imagine when all these businesses shut down. That's a whole different problem."

"Quarantine shaming" — calling out those not abiding by social distancing rules — is part of a new and startling reality for Americans who must navigate a world of rapidly evolving social norms in the age of

COVID-19. As schools close and shelter-in-place orders sweep across the U.S., the divide between those who are stringently practicing self-isolation and those who are still trying to go about some semblance of a normal life has never been more clear. Complicating matters: What was socially acceptable even 48 hours ago may now be taboo, as government officials race to contain the virus with ever-expanding circles of social isolation.

"The time matrix seems to be shifting. I've never known several days to go by so slowly and watching the collective conscience move more and more in one direction day by day," said Paula Flakser, who lost her bartending job when California's Mammoth Mountain ski resort closed this week.

For those who must go to work, the divide is widening too.

Steve Diehl, who is considered an essential employee at his job at a warehouse near Chicago, wears a mask to work because a family member has a compromised immune system. He's terrified of catching the new coronavirus or transmitting it to his loved one at home.

Diehl posted a sign at the warehouse entrance asking people to put on masks that were provided "to protect immunocompromised family," but several co-workers didn't wear them, he said. One of them coughed into his hand while standing by Diehl's desk — and then began to touch things on his desk with the same hand.

"That angered me greatly," said Diehl, who posted a photo of himself in a mask on Twitter. "And when I made a comment about it, they shrugged it off."

Others who are trying to juggle working from home while caring for kids who are also home are making smaller and more mundane choices that nevertheless bring shocked responses — or even rebukes — from co-workers, friends and even family. Is it OK to run out for a coffee? Can you allow your children to go to the playground? What about sending kids to day care centers, which remain the only lifeline in many states that have closed schools?

Those appalled by the behavior of some of their fellow Americans have welcomed a crackdown this week from many state and local governments that are adding daily to lists of closures and bans.

# Price gouging complaints on rise across country

Associated Press

One store advertised hand sanitizer at \$60 a bottle. Another was accused of hawking it at \$1 a squirt. Chain stores offered \$26 thermometers and face masks at the "everyday low price" of \$39.95 a pair, while a convenience store touted toilet paper at \$10 a roll next to a sign reading: "This is not a joke."

Across a country where lines are long, some shelves are empty and patience is thin, authorities are receiving a surge of

reports about merchants trying to cash in on the coronavirus crisis with outrageous prices, phony cures and other scams. An Associated Press survey of attorneys general or consumer protection agencies nationwide found reports already exceeded 5,000, with hundreds more arriving daily.

"Greed is a powerful motivator for some people," said Josh Stein, the attorney general of North Carolina, where the number of reports jumped from 72 to 131 one day earlier this week.

"It is inexcusable to prey on people in a

vulnerable time to make a quick buck."

AP's 50-state survey is the most comprehensive look so far at the emerging problem.

In all, 41 states responded with numbers that included both tips and formally filed complaints against mom-and-pop stores and big-box retailers alike.

AP's count is certainly low also because it only includes cases in which someone went online or called to register a grievance.

Many others went to the court of social media to vent their outrage.

# Businesses ask customers to avoid using paper money

Associated Press

NEW YORK — In a world suffering a pandemic, cash is no longer king.

A growing number of businesses and individuals worldwide have stopped using banknotes in fear that physical currency, handled by tens of thousands of people over their useful life, could be a vector for the spreading coronavirus.

Public officials and health experts have said that the risk of transferring the virus person-to-person through the use of banknotes is small. But that has not stopped businesses from refusing to accept

currency and some countries from urging their citizens to stop using banknotes altogether.

Open Books, a non-profit bookstore in Chicago, sent an email to customers last week asking individuals not to use cash. A chain of diners in Washington State has also stopped accepting cash. And delivery services like Grubhub, Door Dash, and others have instituted "no contact" deliveries, and have either stopped offering cash as a payment option or are actively discouraging it.

Experts say cash does carry a risk of

transmitting the virus, but the risk from cash so far is small compared with other transmission routes. A scientific paper published early in the outbreak found the virus can live on cardboard for up to 24 hours and up to three days on plastic and stainless steel. The researchers, however, did not test whether it can live on banknote paper.

The presence of live virus particles on banknotes does not mean they are a health hazard, public health experts said. Virus particles are unlikely to return to the air, or aerosolize, once on a surface.

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## 'Sea calf' born to cow that swam to shore

**NC** BEAUFORT — A pregnant cow who swam 4 miles to shore after being swept away by Hurricane Dorian in September has given birth to a "miracle" calf.

A photo of the "sea calf" was posted Monday on Facebook by Ranch Solutions, a group hired to return the pregnant cow back home to North Carolina's Cedar Island, 350 miles east of Charlotte. The cow, Dori, was one of three swept away by Dorian that were found in the state's Outer Banks, The Charlotte Observer reported.

When Hurricane Dorian generated an 8-foot "mini tsunami," it washed the calf's mother and dozens of other animals away, including 28 wild horses that died.

## Aquarium releases seal back into habitat

**MD** TOWSON — The National Aquarium has released a harp seal rescued from Ocean City after severe dehydration.

The seal, Amelia Bedelia, has been part of a cast of storybook characters undergoing rehabilitation at the aquarium in Baltimore. She was one of three seals to be rescued by the Aquarium's Animal Rescue team this season and the first seal to be released, the aquarium wrote in a Facebook post.

During her nearly three weeks of rehabilitation at the aquarium, Amelia was regularly interacting with enrichment items and puzzle feeders helping to sharpen up foraging skills before her release to a natural habitat, the aquarium said. Two other seals — Huckleberry Finn, a gray seal rescued from Assateague State Park, and Pippi Longstocking, a gray seal pup rescued from

Dewey Beach, Del., — will remain with the aquarium until they are healthy enough to return to the ocean.

## Police: Intoxicated man threatens bar shooting

**SD** SIOUX FALLS — A Sioux Falls man is facing numerous felony charges after police say he threatened to shoot people in a bar and revealed he was armed.

Police are recommending charges of making terrorist threats, possessing a gun in a bar, possessing a gun while intoxicated and disorderly conduct.

The 38-year-old man had a blood alcohol level of 0.30 when he was arrested Tuesday night, the Argus Leader reported. That's more than three times the legal limit to drive.

## Former aide charged with embezzlement

**MS** MENDENHALL — A former aide in a Mississippi sheriff's office has been indicted on an embezzlement charge after officials say she improperly took cash that people paid as bond to be released from jail.

Stephanie Cuellar was an administrative assistant in the Simpson County Sheriff's Department. State Auditor Shad White said in a news release Thursday that Simpson County officials said Cuellar failed to deposit payments into a bank account for several months. White said investigators found cash and check bond payments in her desk, and records showed more than \$16,000 missing from January 2017 to October 2018.

Cuellar on Tuesday voluntarily surrendered to agents at the Simpson County Jail. She has been released on \$30,000 bond.

## Two men arrested for illegal harvest of opihi

**HI** HONOLULU — Two Hawaii men were arrested for illegally harvesting hundreds of opihi, a pricey local delicacy.

The two men from Oahu's famed North Shore were allegedly caught picking the limpets in the Pupukea Marine Life Conservation District, state officials said Wednesday.

It is illegal to remove any marine life from a marine life conservation district.

Raymond Agsalda, 53, of Waiialua, and Ronsin Rosa, 53, of Haleiwa, were caught with 784 opihi, the state said.

A pound of opihi — about 15 to 30 pieces depending on their size — sells for about \$20. The 784 opihi weighed about 15 pounds, said Dan Dennison, a spokesman for the state Department of Land and Natural Resources.

## Man threatens people, flees in stolen vehicle

**ND** FARGO — A 30-year-old man is facing numerous felony charges after police say he threatened multiple people with a knife, stole a vehicle and crashed in Fargo.

Officers responded to a report of a man threatening to stab a driver as he carjacked a vehicle Tuesday afternoon.

The man drove away in the stolen vehicle and crashed into another vehicle, KFGO reported.

He threatened the occupants of that vehicle and drove away in the stolen vehicle, authorities said. An officer tried to pull the man over but he fled.

A Clay County sheriff's deputy used a tactical maneuver to stop the suspect on Interstate 94 where he subsequently crashed and was arrested.

## 2 charged in scheme to smuggle drugs by drone

**NJ** TRENTON — A second man charged in a scheme to use drones to smuggle drugs and other contraband to inmates at a federal prison in New Jersey has turned himself in, authorities said.

Adrian Goolcharran, 35, of Union City, was freed on a \$100,000 secured bond after making his initial court appearance on Tuesday, federal prosecutors said. Goolcharran and Nicolo Denichilo, 38, of Jersey City, are both charged with conspiracy and smuggling contraband. Denichilo was also released on a \$100,000 bond after making his initial court appearance on March 13.

Authorities have said they discovered at least seven deliveries of contraband using drones dating back to last July. The shipments to inmates at Fort Dix included marijuana, steroids, dozens of cellphones, 35 syringes and two metal saw blades, authorities said.

## Dog from Florida found way up in Michigan

**MI** MOUNT MORRIS TOWNSHIP — A dog from Florida, missing for more than two months, has been found 1,400 miles away in Michigan.

Kris Gibson told MLive.com she discovered Simba last week standing at her fence in Mount Morris Township, north of Flint. She lured him with a snack and took him to an animal clinic, which confirmed the dog's identity through his microchip.

Kassidy Gruno, a veterinary assistant at Mayfair Animal Hospital, believes the Canary mastiff might have been abducted with the intent of selling him. Simba is from Miami.

From wire reports

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# RB Gurley switches to Atlanta

Associated Press

ATLANTA — A person familiar with the deal said Friday the Atlanta Falcons have agreed to a one-year deal with three-time Pro Bowl running back Todd Gurley,

The person told The Associated Press about the agreement on condition of anonymity because the deal will not be official until Gurley passes a physical. The league isn't allowing players to report to new teams immediately for those physicals during the coronavirus pandemic.

Gurley will be making a return to the state of Georgia. He was a standout at the University of Georgia, rushing for more than 3,000 yards in three seasons.

The agreement with the 25-year-old Gurley comes less than a week after the Falcons released running back Devonta Freeman. Atlanta ranked only 30th in the NFL in rushing in 2019 and are hoping for a significant boost from Gurley.

Gurley was released by the

Los Angeles Rams on Thursday, minutes before \$10.5 million in his contract became fully guaranteed.

Gurley has rushed for more than 1,000 yards in three of his five seasons with the Rams. He ran for a career-low 857 yards with the Rams last season. His average of 3.8 yards per carry was the second-lowest of his career.

Gurley's physical will be especially important. He had a persistent left knee injury that limited his effectiveness down the stretch in 2018. The issue remained last season, even though he played in 15 games.

In other news:

■ The Buffalo Bills officially announced acquiring receiver Stefon Diggs in a multi-draft-pick trade with the Minnesota Vikings.

The Vikings acquired four draft picks, including Buffalo's first-round choice (22nd overall), giving them five of the top 105 picks in this year's draft. Minnesota also acquired Buffalo's fourth- and fifth-round picks this year, and a fourth-

round selection in 2021.

■ The Dallas Cowboys agreed to a deal with safety Ha Ha Clinton-Dix, adding a familiar name for new coach Mike McCarthy.

McCarthy was the 27-year-old's coach in Green Bay when the Packers drafted Clinton-Dix 21st overall in 2014. The Packers traded him to Washington during the 2018 season, and Clinton-Dix spent last year in Chicago.

■ The Cleveland Browns have added another veteran safety to their secondary, agreeing to terms with Andrew Sendejo on a one-year, \$2.25 million contract.

■ The Denver Broncos waived 2013 Super Bowl MVP Joe Flacco. He had lost his job to rookie Drew Lock and also has neck issues that could affect him if he continues playing.

■ The Vikings added defensive tackle Michael Pierce, formerly of the Ravens, and brought back kicker Dan Bailey and backup quarterback Sean Mannion.

# Brady joins Buccaneers for 2 years

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — A new look for the NFL: Tom Brady in Tampa Bay pewter and red rather than Patriots red, white and blue.

The six-time Super Bowl champion quarterback signed a two-year, \$60 million contract in free agency Friday, embarking on a "new football journey" with the Buccaneers.

The 42-year-old quarterback who spent the first 20 years of his career with the Patriots announced his decision in an Instagram post, adding he's thankful for the opportunity.

"Excited, humble and hungry ... If there is one thing I have learned about football, it's that nobody cares what you did last year or the year before that," Brady wrote.

"I look forward to meeting all my new teammates and coaches and proving to them that they can believe and trust in me," the four-time Super Bowl MVP added. "I have always believed that well done is better than well said, so I'm not gonna say much more. I'm just gonna get to work!"

The signing comes three days after Brady announced on social media that he would not return to New England, ending his historic run with the Patriots.

He joins an offense that led the NFL in passing yards last season, featuring a pair of 1,000-yard receivers in Mike Evans and Chris Godwin, tight ends O.J. Howard and Cameron Brate, and a young, developing running back in Ronald Jones.

What the Bucs didn't have in 2019, when they went 7-9 and missed the playoffs for the 12th straight season, was a quarterback who protected the football.

Brady, who turns 43 in August, will be counted on to change that. His career 1.79 interception percentage is the second-best ever behind Aaron Rodgers among players with at least 2,500 career pass attempts.

# Saints coach Payton tests positive

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — New Orleans Saints head coach Sean Payton says he has tested positive for the coronavirus, is resting comfortably at home and is making his test result public in hopes he can motivate people to do more to fight the pandemic.

Payton learned Thursday that he has tested positive for the coronavirus, he told ESPN before posting a photo of himself smiling as he sat on a couch next to his dog.

"Appreciate the well wishes," Payton wrote on his Twitter page. "I'm feeling better and fortunate to not have any of the respiratory symptoms. 4 more days at home."

Payton, 56, is the first employee of either an NFL team or the league to make such a diagnosis public.

Payton told ESPN that he was tested Monday for coronavirus after he began to feel ill a day earlier. He added that he has not been admitted to a hospital and does not have a fever or cough.

"I was fortunate to be in the minority, without the serious side effects that some have. I'm lucky," Payton told ESPN. "Younger people feel like they can handle this, but they can be a carri-

er to someone who can't handle it. So we all need to do our part. It's important for every one of us to do our part."

Payton said he felt it was important to be particularly vigilant in Louisiana and the New Orleans area because of international tourist traffic, especially around recently concluded Mardi Gras festivities.

"So our parents, and those that are more susceptible to this virus, deserve everyone doing their best to combat it," Payton said. "There are hundreds of people right now in tough predicaments, fighting for their lives. Let's be part of the solution, not the problem. We can easily help reduce the numbers of those impacted. We have to do our best to beat this."

"This is not just about social distancing," Payton said. "It's shutting down here for a week to two weeks. If people understand the curve, and understand the bump, we can easily work together as a country to reduce it."

"Take a minute to understand what the experts are saying. It's not complicated to do what they're asking of us. Just that type of small investment by every one of us will have a dramatic impact."

# Flame arrives amid calls to delay Games

Associated Press

MATSUSHIMA AIR BASE, Japan — The Olympic flame on Friday completed its difficult journey from Greece to Japan.

That signified a small, symbolic victory for the IOC and local organizers, who maintain the Tokyo Olympics will open on July 24 amid a chorus of doubters who believe they should be postponed or canceled because of the coronavirus pandemic.

“For the first time in 56 years, the Olympic torch is heading to Tokyo and I hope that the Olympic torch will illuminate the path of hope for many people,” organizing committee President Yoshiro Mori said at a scaled-down arrival ceremony at an air base in northern Japan.

Mori of course was referring to Tokyo’s famous 1964 Olympics. Tokyo was also to have been the venue for the 1940

Olympics, which were canceled by World War II.

“We will work closely with the International Olympic Committee, the Japanese government, and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government,” he said, and based on the World Health Organization’s advice, “we will ensure a safe and secure games.”

The flame, carried in a tiny canister from Greece, reached Japan aboard a white aircraft painted with the inscription “Tokyo 2020 Olympic Torch Relay” along its side. The tail section was adorned with the refrain “Hope Lights our Way.”

The aircraft was welcomed on the tarmac by a small contingent of organizing committee officials. Two of Japan’s most famous Olympians — three-time wrestling gold medalist Saori Yoshida and three-time judo gold medalist Tadahiro Nomura — received the flame

for the lighting ceremony.

The two climbed portable stairs and entered the aircraft before emerging holding the cradle-like canister with a flame burning inside. They handed it over at the base of the stairs to Mori, who delivered a brief acceptance speech in a gusting wind.

Yoshida and Nomura then took the torch and ignited a large cauldron on the tarmac of the air base.

Mori referred to the “difficult situation” with the virus, and then thanked the IOC and Greek officials that the “hand-over ceremony was able to be held” with the Olympics set to open in just over four months.

The flame arrived in the northeastern part of Japan, roughly 150 miles from Tokyo, that was devastated by the 2011 earthquake, tsunami and meltdown of three nuclear reactors that has left many still living in temporary quarters.

The flame will stay in northern Japan for almost a week until the torch relay begins officially on March 26 from Fukushima prefecture. It will be put on public display in the three prefectures most affected by the disaster — Miyagi, Iwate and Fukushima,

In a conference call on Wednesday, IOC President Thomas Bach got support for holding course, but is also getting push back from athletes who can’t train, are confused about the qualification process, and worry about their health. Critics are also complaining about the unfairness of qualifying, which might give some athletes advantages over others.

Worldwide the death toll surpassed 10,000 and infections topped 240,000.

The Japanese news agency Kyodo released a survey on Monday showing 69.9% of those questioned did not believe the Olympics will open on time.

## MLB may use doubleheaders to make up missed games

Associated Press

Let’s play two? Colorado Rockies manager Bud Black would be down for doubleheaders.

Maybe even a couple a week.

That might be a necessity to make up games once a baseball season delayed by the new coronavirus gets underway.

“In theory, yeah, I think all of us would be up for some sort of doubleheader situation,” Black said during a conference call Thursday. “The thing that’s going to be in front of all of us is it’s going to be the same for everybody. It’s got to make sense for the clubs and the players.”

Opening day has been pushed back from March 26 to mid-May at the earliest, and both sides are committed to playing as many games as possible.

Translation: Doubleheaders could be on the docket.

“I know that when we’re able to safely play, we’re going to have to think of creative ways to get in as many games as possible given all the time that’s

going to be lost,” said Farhan Zaidi, the president of baseball operations for the San Francisco Giants. “I don’t really have any specific thoughts on that, but I know everybody’s going to be thinking through ways to do that.”

Two pitchers announced they are having Tommy John surgery and will miss the season whenever it starts: Boston ace left-hander Chris Sale and San Francisco right-hander Tyler Beede.

More than anything, Black wants his players to treat this time away like it’s December and the season is still in the distance.

Don’t ramp up.

Black said that when a timetable is known, the teams will be given approximately three weeks to get back in shape as part of a second spring training. That’s plenty of time for a starting pitcher to work his way into form.

Seattle shuttered its facility

in Peoria, Ariz. The Mariners had initially planned to keep the facility open and work with players in small, staggered groups of 10, but general manager Jerry Dipoto said most of the 40-man roster had gone home.

“As we got to the point yesterday where we pulled the plug there were about 10 or 12 guys that were actually coming down and taking advantage of the workout time,” Dipoto said. “And frankly, we were concerned with the idea of group gatherings of any sort, particularly after we got the news yesterday there was a positive test of a baseball staffer down here in Arizona with another club.”

On Wednesday, the Cincinnati Reds, whose training facility is in Goodyear, Ariz., said an employee who works year-round at the complex tested positive for COVID-19. All Reds employees who were in contact with the employee during spring training are being

tested and have self-quarantined. Dipoto said no Mariners players or staff have reported showing any symptoms of coronavirus.

In Dallas, there about five major leaguers working out at the Texas Rangers’ youth academy. It’s closed to public and has been sanitized.

At their facility in Bradenton, Fla., the Pittsburgh Pirates have a small contingent of players that work out on an informal basis, rotating in and out to make sure there’s not more than a handful at a time.

Opening day would’ve been next week. That’s hard for Black to fathom in light of what’s happening around the world.

“I miss the build-up to opening day. I miss what that’s all about. I love our sport. I love the people in it,” Black said. “I’m probably as practical as they come and a realist, and aware of what’s going on and that takes a precedence over our sport and our jobs.”