

# STARS AND STRIPES<sup>®</sup>

Saturday, May 16, 2020

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## Navy recruits quarantine at closed park

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The Navy is spending roughly \$1.1 million to send about 500 recruits each week to the Great Wolf Lodge Water Park near Chicago for two weeks of quarantine before they are shipped to basic training, service officials said.

Recruit Training Command Great Lakes in Illinois, the Navy's sole boot camp, had previously delayed accepting new recruits for a week in March after one recruit tested positive March 29 and was treated at a nearby medical center.

New recruits have been under a restriction of movement for two weeks at the closed indoor water park resort in Gurnee, Ill., Cmdr. Dave Hecht, a spokesman for the Chief of Naval Personnel, wrote in an email.

"By moving the [restriction of movement] to an off-site facility, they are able to provide rooms with a small number of recruits, which will reduce the likelihood of spreading of the illness between recruits, protect the recruits and staff already at [recruit training command], and increase the space

available at [recruit training command] for physical distancing procedures," he said.

The facility was picked because it is about 10 miles from Great Lakes and can easily accept the flow of recruits each week, according to Hecht.

Nearly 3,900 recruits are now with Recruit Training Command Great Lakes, including those staying at the lodge, according to a Navy official who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Prior to arrival, the recruits should have completed a voluntary 14-day restriction of movement at their homes and be screened at their Military Entrance Processing Station.

The Marine Corps is also quarantining recruits at The Citadel in Charleston, S.C., for two weeks before they travel to basic training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island. The first group of recruits arrived at the college campus May 4. The Marines requested use of the college because the Parris Island staging operation for new recruits uses tents that will become impractical once hurricane season starts in June, according to a Citadel statement.

The one-month contract with the water

park expires Tuesday and the Navy "will continue to evaluate requirements for additional contracts" as required, Hecht said. The lodge is closed until June 15, according to its website.

During their 14-day stay at the water park, the recruits will have course work and training during the day run by the recruit division commanders, according to Hecht. Recruits also have designated times for light physical activity, such as stretching, in their rooms.

They can bring two books and one handheld gaming device to use during their quarantine, Hecht said, and none of the "resort-type" amenities are available for use.

The quarantine and health measures needed to protect personnel and recruits has increased their time at boot camp by a week to nine weeks, according to Hecht.

Once the 14 days have passed, recruits will be transported to Great Lakes to start their training, but they will be required to wear masks and adhere to physical distancing protocols during the trip, according to Hecht.

## States reopening despite inadequate testing

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — As businesses reopened Friday in more of the U.S., an overwhelming majority of states still fall short of the COVID-19 testing levels that public health experts say are necessary to safely ease lockdowns and avoid another deadly wave of outbreaks, according to an Associated Press analysis.

Rapid, widespread testing is considered essential to tracking and containing the coronavirus. But 41 of the nation's 50 states fail to test widely enough to drive their infections below a key benchmark, according to an AP analysis of metrics developed by Harvard's Global Health Institute.

Among the states falling short are Texas and Georgia, which recently moved aggressively to reopen stores, malls, barber-shops and other businesses.

As health authorities expand testing to more people, the number of positive results should shrink compared with the total number of people tested. The World Health Organization and other health researchers have said a percentage above 10% indicates inadequate testing. South Korea, a country praised for its rapid response, quickly pushed its positive cases to below 3%.

Most governors are moving ahead with unlocking their states, even in cases where they are not meeting broad guidelines recommended by the

White House.

Harvard University researchers have calculated that the U.S. needs to test at least 900,000 people daily to safely reopen the economy, based on the 10% positivity rate and other key metrics. That goal is nearly three times the country's current daily testing tally of about 360,000, according to figures compiled by the COVID Tracking Project website.

"The fact that testing has become the Achilles' heel that has made it hard for us to have a great national response to this pandemic is a tragedy," said Dr. Ashish Jha, director of Harvard's Global Health Institute.

President Donald Trump insisted again this week that his administration "met the

moment" and "prevailed" on testing, even as he continued shifting responsibility for the effort to the governors. Administration officials said they will provide states with enough testing supplies to conduct about 400,000 tests per day in May and June. That's less than half the total recommended by the Harvard team.

Volume of testing isn't the only concern. The Food and Drug Administration said late Thursday that it was investigating preliminary data suggesting a rapid COVID-19 test used daily to test Trump and key members of his staff can miss infections. Trump has, however, expressed confidence in the test from Abbott Laboratories.

# Virus may force cuts to DOD budget

*The Washington Post*

As the novel coronavirus has swept the globe, Pentagon officials have scrambled to adjust everything from basic training to submarine deployments to prevent the pandemic from taking a lasting toll on the military's ability to respond to adversaries.

But the COVID-19 crisis could yield a different sort of long-term impact on the military, one outside the Pentagon's ability to control: a possible reduction in military spending resulting from the country's emerging economic meltdown.

Pentagon leaders are requesting a defense budget of \$705 billion for fiscal 2021, representing half of the federal government's discretionary spending and probably once again ensuring that U.S. military spending is far greater than that of any other country.

But current and former officials say a sustained reduction, even if modest, could make it harder for the Pentagon to achieve its long-deferred goals of modernizing military operations and competing more effectively with China at a time when the United States remains tied down in insurgent conflicts in Afghanistan and the Middle East.

Already, lawmakers have approved more than \$2 trillion in emergency stimulus spending in measures that are designed to provide a lifeline to revenue-starved states and that have generated debt concerns among fiscal conservatives.

Robert Hale, who served as Pentagon comptroller during the Obama administra-

tion and is now an adjunct senior fellow at the Center for a New American Security, said widespread forecasting of a severe economic downturn — including high deficits and high unemployment — could result in a “modest decline” in defense spending in the order of 2% to 3% in real terms.

The Pentagon spending cuts are expected to be far smaller than those that followed the triggering of automatic budget caps in 2013, called sequestration. But even reductions of a smaller scale could disrupt the department's plans to implement a 2018 strategy that prioritizes retaining dominance over “great power” competitors.

Even before the pandemic, Pentagon leaders had warned of difficulties ahead as they projected a flattened budget following an increase of about 20% between fiscal years 2016 and 2020.

Now, the situation looks far more dire. Speaking in a briefing hosted by the Brookings Institution last week, Esper said he was concerned that the stimulus spending would exacerbate the United States' debt problem and potentially “throw us off course” at the Defense Department.

“So there is concern there that that may lead to smaller defense budgets in the future at the critical time at which we need to continue making this adjustment, where we look at China, then Russia, as our long-term strategic competitors,” he said.

Reduced spending could represent what experts called a “double whammy” at a time when the military may also be fac-

ing a challenge to readiness resulting from the virus, which has delayed or precluded trainings worldwide and reduced the number of recruits.

According to Todd Harrison, director of defense budget analysis at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, fiscal patterns since the 1970s show that periods of high deficits have been followed by cuts to defense budgets, from big reductions during President Ronald Reagan's second term in office to the deep declines resulting from sequestration beginning in 2013.

“If we see 2 to 3% [cuts] a year over five years, then DOD is going to have to go back and take a new look at its strategy,” Harrison said. While China and Russia would remain top priorities, secondary missions in Africa or Latin America could face more significant cuts, he said.

Counting on a flattened budget, Esper in 2019 ordered a review to identify ways to streamline global military operations and make room for expanded emphasis on China. But potential trimming of U.S. activities in Africa have already raised objections on Capitol Hill, an indication that future attempts to cut missions or weapons programs are likely to encounter congressional resistance.

With less money, those trade-offs could become more dramatic. “They just have to be more ruthless,” Harrison said.

## DOD aiding effort to develop vaccine

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON— The Defense Department is helping to develop and distribute a vaccine for the coronavirus by the end of the year as part of the White House's Operation Warp Speed, Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Friday.

The White House program is a public-private partnership meant to accelerate the development, manufacturing, and distribution of vaccines, therapeutics, and medical countermeasures for the coronavirus,

according to the Pentagon. Several government agencies are involved in the program, including Health and Human Services, the Energy Department, and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The aim is to have “substantial quantities of a safe and effective vaccine” ready for Americans by January 2021.

“We will win this fight,” Esper said about the Defense Department's role during a news conference at the White House. “We will deliver on time, bringing ... to bear the full weight of the Department

of Defense, all of our first-class, world-class researchers and scientists, our ability to manage logistics at scale and our great distributional capabilities.”

Once a vaccine or therapy is ready, the Defense Department will be able to distribute it faster than if only private medical infrastructure was used, according to the Pentagon statement.

Gen. Gustavo Perna, the commander of the U.S. Army Materiel Command, has been appointed as the program's chief operating officer. The Pentagon has also identified five subject-matter experts to

lead the department's support in the areas of diagnostics, therapeutics, vaccines, production and distribution, and security and assistance.

Hoffman defended Esper's confidence and optimism that the vaccine can be delivered by the end of the year.

What Esper and President Donald Trump “are saying is that we have a goal; we've got the team together; we've committed to putting the resources to it. And we're going to attain that goal,” Hoffman said.

# House Democrats pass new \$3T relief bill

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Democrats have powered a massive \$3 trillion coronavirus relief bill through the House, an election-year measure designed to brace a U.S. economy in free fall and a health care system struggling to contain a pandemic still pummeling the country.

Friday's 208-199 vote, with all but one Republican opposed, advances what boils down to a campaign-season display of Democratic economic and health-care priorities. It has no chance of becoming law as written, but will likely spark difficult negotiations with the White House and Senate Republicans. Any product would probably be the last major COVID-19 response bill before November's presidential and congressional elections.

The enormous Democratic measure would cost more than the prior four coronavirus bills combined. It would deliver almost \$1 trillion for state and local governments, another round of \$1,200 direct payments to individuals and help for the unemployed, renters and homeowners, college debt holders and the struggling Postal Service.

"Not to act now is not only irresponsible in a humanitarian way, it is irresponsible because it's only going to cost more," warned House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-

Calif. "More in terms of lives, livelihood, cost to the budget, cost to our democracy."

Republicans mocked the bill as a bloated Democratic wish-list that was dead on arrival in the GOP-led Senate and, for good measure, faced a White House veto threat. Party leaders say they want to assess how \$3 trillion approved earlier is working and see if some states' partial business reopenings would spark an economic revival that would ease the need for more safety net programs.

Republicans are also sorting through internal divisions and awaiting stronger signals from President Donald Trump about what he will support.

"Phase Four is going to happen," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office, using Washington insider-speak for the measure. "But it's going to happen in a much better way for the American people."

Trump and top Republicans like Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., are insisting the next measure should protect reopening businesses from liability lawsuits. The president is also demanding a cut to payroll taxes, but GOP leaders are not yet on board.

The daylong debate painted a Capitol scene that's become common in the era of coronavirus, even as it remains disconcerting. The sparsely populated House

floor was dotted with lawmakers and aides wearing protective masks and even gloves, though some Republicans lacked them.

Many members looked shaggier and sported beards they had not worn weeks ago. Roll call votes lasted over an hour each because lawmakers were voting in small groups to limit crowding.

To enhance the bill's political impact, Democrats named their measure "The Heroes Act" for the payments it would provide front-line emergency workers. With more than 86,000 Americans dead, 1.4 million confirmed infections and 36 million filing unemployment claims in a frozen economy, Democrats saw GOP opposition as an easy campaign-season target.

"Are you kidding me?" said Rep. Tim Ryan, D-Ohio, of Republican assertions that it was time to stop spending more money. "Where do you guys live? Food lines at our food banks around the block? In the United States of America?"

Republicans saw the bill as a Democratic political blunder. They said overly generous unemployment benefits discouraged people from returning to work and attacked language helping immigrants in the U.S. illegally get federal benefits. They also singled out provisions helping states set up voting by mail and easing the marijuana industry's access to banks.

## Caution urged as businesses, cities ease restrictions

Associated Press

VENICE, Italy — Venice geared up to receive tourists, Milan's pizzerias prepared to open and Australians headed out to eat for the first time in weeks Saturday, but the reopening of restaurants, pubs and cafes came with a warning: Don't overdo it.

Public health experts are urging caution as governments ease restrictions on eateries, shops and parks in many countries and roll out measures to restart dormant factories. The coronavirus pandemic, which has killed more than 300,000 people, has slowed in many places but could pick up again if precautions aren't taken or officials move too quickly to get people back to work.

"The message is, yes, appreciate all the efforts, appreciate the opportunity to release some of those measures, but let's not have a party, let's not go to town," said Tony Bartone, president of the Australian Medical Association.

Most restaurants are limited to 10 customers at a time, and Bartone said people must maintain social distance, follow coughing etiquette, wash their hands regu-

larly and stay away from others if they are ill.

In New Zealand, even Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and her fiance, Clarke Gayford, were initially turned away for Saturday brunch by a restaurant in the capital city, Wellington, because it was too full under coronavirus guidelines.

Gayford took responsibility, saying he hadn't made reservations. There was a happy ending, as a spot freed up and staff chased down the street to call the couple back. "A+ service," Gayford tweeted.

Italy's tourism industry is focused firmly on June 3, when both regional and international borders reopen, allowing the first prospect of tourists since Europe's first lockdown went into place in early March. In tourist-reliant Venice, occupancy of the city's 50,000 hotel beds has hovered around zero ever since.

"Venice lives on tourism, period," said Claudio Scarpa, head of the city's hotel association. "All the economic structures that operate in the city, including the port, are tied to tourism."

While Venice hopes for some kind of re-

start, it may have to wait a while yet. Germany — its border about a four-hour drive from Venice — is instructing citizens not to travel abroad for tourism until at least June 15.

France was also being cautious, calling for a coordinated European effort on opening. At the same time, it could make decisions "that protect the French" regarding countries "where the virus is still active," Interior Minister Christophe Castaner said Saturday.

In Milan, Italy's financial capital, 3,400 restaurants plan to open Monday, along with 4,800 bars, 2,900 hairdressers, 2,200 clothing stores and 700 shoe shops.

"After a long period at home, we will all want to go out and have a good coffee in a bar, eat a pizza in a pizzeria, buy a pair of jeans, or go to the hairdressers," Milan Mayor Giuseppe Sala said in a Facebook video Saturday.

Many restaurant owners, however, complained that the new rules for reopening were unclear and that the entire sector — including suppliers and food producers — was suffering.

# RI beach town weighs ignoring lockdown

Associated Press

A popular Rhode Island beach town is considering openly ignoring the state's coronavirus restrictions as the traditional Memorial Day start of the summer season approaches, but Gov. Gina Raimondo warns the move would be "selfish" and "reckless."

Narragansett Town Council President Matthew Mannix has proposed a resolution allowing the police department and other local law enforcement agencies to "exercise their discretion" and not assess fines or violations to Raimondo's virus-related executive orders, which include limiting gatherings to no more than five people.

The non-partisan town council is slated to vote Monday on the proposal, which says the governor's social and economic mandates have had a negative impact on "the First Amendment right to worship, the constitutionally recognized right to travel" and "our free enterprise economy."

Raimondo, a Democrat, warned Friday that the proposal was a "huge mistake" and isn't based on science or any public health recommendations.

## Arizona

FLAGSTAFF — Residents of the Navajo Nation will be under the strictest weekend lockdown yet, with grocery stores and gas stations closed, and even essential workers ordered to stay home.

Navajo President Jonathan Nez made the announcement after a spike in deaths that he attributed to shifting traffic patterns after the city of Gallup recently shut down to outside visitors. That lockdown in northwestern New Mexico has since ended.

On the Navajo Nation, residents will face citations, with potential fines and jail time, if they leave their homes during the lockdown, which started Friday night and ends Monday around dawn. Nez urged people to listen and not pack their bags to head out of town during the lockdown.

## Georgia

GAINESVILLE — "No Mask! No Service! No Mascara! No Servicio!" say the stickers, posters and T-shirts going up across northeast Georgia, as community leaders try to rally people to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, which recently flared up in the region and threatened to level the state's huge poultry processing industry.

At La Flor de Jalisco #2 supermarket in the heart of Gainesville's large Spanish-speaking community, hundreds of people drove up or walked up Friday to be tested for COVID-19. Shoppers wearing masks trickled in and out of the store.

It's part of an effort aimed at tamping down the spread of disease in an area where an outbreak alarmed officials.

## Kansas

MISSION — Data on COVID-19 infections that had been trending downward, leading Kansas to begin reopening its economy, is beginning to fluctuate and flatten, Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly said Friday.

"It demonstrates that the disease is still spreading in our communities," Kelly said one day after slowing the reopening of the state's economy by ordering bars and bowling alleys to remain closed at least through the end of the month.

She said she hoped to stick with the state's reopening plan as much as possible.

"But," she added, "I have always said that until a COVID-19 vaccine is developed, manufactured and widely distributed, our future remains subject to the whims of this virus."

## Kentucky

FRANKFORT — State parks will start reopening soon as Kentucky continues to ease restrictions amid the coronavirus outbreak, Gov. Andy Beshear said Friday.

The parks will reopen June 1 in an effort to revive tourism revenue, Beshear said at his

daily briefing. People can make park reservations starting May 19, he said.

Visitors will be expected to follow social distancing and health guidelines, he said.

Reopening to the public will be state resort parks, recreational parks, lodges and cabins beginning June 1, he said.

## Missouri

ST. LOUIS — Three Catholic elementary schools that were already struggling financially will close because of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, as the outbreak continues to impact businesses and institutions across the state.

The Archdiocese of St. Louis announced Friday that Most Holy Trinity Catholic School and Academy, Christ Light of the Nations School and St. Joseph School in Manchester will close at the end of the school year.

The archdiocese said it had provided financial help for all three schools but the support was hurt by the suspension of public Masses and the resulting loss of contributions.

## North Carolina

RALEIGH — North Carolina health officials greatly expanded the scope of COVID-19 testing in the state Friday, encouraging doctors to order tests for higher-risk individuals even when they show no symptoms.

The new protocol from the public health leaders comes as North Carolina has shown a significant jump in completed tests in recent weeks thanks to more laboratory capacity and materials. More than 231,500 tests have been completed in North Carolina since the pandemic began, according to state health data. That marks an increase of more than 12,000 tests compared to Thursday, smashing the previous day-over-day record.

## Nebraska

OMAHA — Nebraska will require long-term care centers to develop formal plans outlining

how they'll keep the coronavirus from spreading among the vulnerable residents who live in those facilities, Gov. Pete Ricketts said Friday.

Facilities such as nursing homes and assisted living centers will have to submit plans to state regulators explaining how they intend to identify ill people and deal with visitors for the rest of the year. They'll also have to discuss their disinfection protocols.

## Vermont

MARSHFIELD — Gov. Phil Scott relaxed his order for Vermonters to stay home and announced Friday that lodging and campgrounds may open May 22 if they abide by safety guidelines, cleaning requirements and limit the number of people allowed in.

At the same time, the Republican governor extended a state of emergency until June 15 to continue to fight the spread — albeit at one of the slowest rates in the country — of the coronavirus pandemic in Vermont.

"Because of the success we've had, we're now asking Vermonters to be smart and stay safe," he said at a news briefing, adding that "staying close to home and limiting the number of people you're in contact with is still really important."

## Washington

SEATTLE — Two people in Washington state who recall being sick in December have since had blood tests showing they developed antibodies for the coronavirus, but health officials aren't counting them in their official case counts.

The positive serology tests can't determine whether the people had the coronavirus in December, weeks before the disease was officially detected in the United States. They may have been exposed after the first recorded case. One of the people had lunch with a hospital nurse in Kirkland, for example, the site of a large outbreak in a nursing home.

# Trump fires State Department IG

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump fired the State Department's inspector general, an Obama administration appointee whose office was critical of alleged political bias in the agency's management.

The ouster is the latest in a series of moves against independent executive branch watchdogs who have found fault with the Trump administration.

A senior department official said Trump removed Steve Linick from his job on Friday but gave no reason for his ouster. In a letter to Congress, Trump said Linick, who had held the job since 2013, no longer had his full confidence and that his removal would take effect in 30 days. Trump did not mention Linick by name in his letter.

Democrats in Congress immediately cried foul, with the chairman of the House Foreign

Affairs Committee suggesting that Linick was fired in part in retaliation for opening an unspecified investigation into Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

"This firing is the outrageous act of a president trying to protect one of his most loyal supporters, the secretary of state, from accountability," Eliot Engel, D-N.Y., said in a statement. "I have learned that the Office of the Inspector General had opened an investigation into Secretary Pompeo. Mr. Linick's firing amid such a probe strongly suggests that this is an unlawful act of retaliation."

Engel offered no details of the alleged investigation into Pompeo, although two congressional aides said the probe involved allegations that Pompeo may have improperly treated staff. Linick's office has issued several reports critical of the department's handling of

personnel matters during the Trump administration, including accusing some political appointees of retaliating against career officials.

"If Inspector General Linick was fired because he was conducting an investigation of conduct by Secretary Pompeo, the Senate cannot let this stand," said Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn. "The Senate Foreign Relations Committee must get to the bottom of what happened here."

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi also condemned Linick's ouster, saying he had been "punished for honorably performing his duty to protect the Constitution and our national security."

"The president must cease his pattern of reprisal and retaliation against the public servants who are working to keep Americans safe, particularly during this time of global emergency."

# US adds new sanctions on firm Huawei

Associated Press

BOSTON — The U.S. government has imposed new restrictions on Chinese tech giant Huawei's ability to use American technology, stepping up a conflict with Beijing over industry development and security.

Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross said Friday that Washington wants to prevent Huawei from evading sanctions imposed earlier on its use of American technology to design and produce semiconductors abroad.

"There has been a very highly technical loophole through which Huawei has been able to in effect use U.S. technology," Ross told Fox Business. "We never intended that loophole to be there."

Huawei Technologies Ltd., China's first global tech brand and a maker of network equipment and smartphones, is at the center of U.S.-Chinese conflict over Beijing's technology ambitions. American officials say Huawei is a security risk, which the company denies. China's government has accused Washington of misusing security warnings to harm a rising competitor to U.S. technology companies.

Under the new rules, foreign semiconductor makers must obtain a U.S. license to ship Huawei-designed semiconductors to the Chinese company that were produced using U.S. technology.

The move "looks like a victory for the people who really want to drive the nail, or what they think will be the nail, in Huawei's coffin," said Adam Segal, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.

China threatened retaliation against U.S. companies.

Chip design and manufacturing equipment used in the world's semiconductor plants is mostly U.S.-made, so the new rule affects foreign producers that sell to Huawei and affiliates including HiSilicon.

# Intelligence official submits Russia report

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Richard Burr on Friday submitted the final report in the panel's three-year Russia investigation to the intelligence community for a declassification review. The move came hours before he was to temporarily step aside as chairman of the panel.

The report on the panel's counterintelligence findings — including whether President Donald Trump's campaign coordinated with Russia — marks the conclusion of its Russia probe, which it first launched in January 2017. But the panel did not immediately release any of the findings and instead asked the intelligence community to quickly allow the release of a declassified version of the report.

Burr said Thursday that he would temporarily give up his chairmanship after federal agents examining his recent stock sales showed up at his home Wednesday with a warrant to search his cellphone. Friday was his last day in the position.

The Justice Department is investigating whether Burr exploited advance information when he unloaded as much as \$1.7 million in stocks in February, days before the coronavirus pandemic caused markets to plummet. Burr has denied any wrongdoing.

The final submission brought an unceremo-

nious end to the yearslong investigation that occasionally landed Burr, a North Carolina Republican, in trouble with his own party. It had been the final known investigation of Trump's 2016 campaign and Russia that was still active.

Burr worked closely with the top Democrat on the panel, Virginia Sen. Mark Warner, on a bipartisan basis to uncover Russia's attempts to sow chaos in American elections. The committee had particular success in pushing social media companies to publicly reveal that Russia had used their platforms for misinformation and to make subsequent reforms to prevent such interference in the future.

Committee members have remained quiet on the panel's conclusion on whether Trump's campaign coordinated with Russia. But Burr has said several times that he has seen no evidence of such collusion, a conclusion that would be in line with the House Intelligence Committee's own Russia report in 2018. It is unclear if the panel's Democrats would endorse such a determination, even though the first four reports from the Senate committee were bipartisan.

Burr will continue to serve on the committee, and the panel's work will continue as usual, including a vote next week to approve the nomination of Texas Rep. John Ratcliffe as director of national intelligence.

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Girl challenges postal worker to tic-tac-toe

**OH** HILLARD — An Ohio fifth-grader challenged her mail carrier to a game of tic-tac-toe as an outlet for her boredom during the coronavirus pandemic.

Julia Hughes, 11, got the idea to challenge Postal Service employee LaTeasha Wright after seeing people online leave treats and notes for delivery drivers, the Columbus Dispatch reported.

“Me and my friends had been playing tic-tac-toe on Zoom, so I decided to play with the mail lady,” Julia said.

Julia taped a tic-tac-toe board inside her mailbox on April 30 with a key that read “O (equals) you X (equals) me.”

## State lottery now offering online games

**RI** CRANSTON — Some Rhode Island Lottery games can now be played online.

The lottery in a statement said players can register at RILOT.com or on the lottery’s new mobile app to play Keno and some instant games anywhere in the state.

“This will be a great convenience for players and will generate additional revenue for our state,” lottery Director Gerald Aubin said in the statement.

The Keno game is the same game currently available at retail locations.

## Man charged after 7 officers hurt in tussle

**IL** CHICAGO — A man is facing multiple charges after seven Chicago police officers were injured in an altercation at a storage center on the city’s near South Side.

Nathan Arrington, 57, was charged with aggravated battery against a police officer, resisting arrest, assault and trespassing.

Officers were called to a storage facility on reports of a man causing a disturbance in the lobby. He allegedly refused to leave the property, prompting an altercation with the officers.

## University keeps plant species from extinction

**HI** HONOLULU — Researchers from the Hawaiian Rare Plant Program have established small operations that could hold enormous benefits by helping to save many of the state’s plant species from extinction.

The scientists store and maintain hundreds of threatened and endangered native species at the University of Hawaii Manoa’s Lyon Arboretum, The Honolulu Star-Advertiser reported.

The Seed Conservation Laboratory is a bank that holds about 27 million seeds. Cooled or frozen in the lab’s handful of refrigerators, the seeds represent 600 plant groups.

## Residents lift spirits with costumed parades

**MI** FERNDALE — Sarah Ignash spent her days looking after dogs in normal times. With her business temporarily shuttered because of the coronavirus, she’s taken to walks on the wild side through her Detroit suburb with dancing bears, bipedal zebras and the like.

Ignash, 42, is one of the roughly two dozen members of the Ferndale T-Rex Walking Club who have been donning inflatable costumes for feel-good jaunts during these stressful times.

The members’ full-body inflatable costumes run the gamut from dancing hippos, sharks and bears to a cheerful Pikachu, And, of course, there’s a T-Rex.

## Man pleads guilty to prescription fraud

**AL** BIRMINGHAM — A Florida man pleaded guilty in neighboring Alabama to a prescription drug-billing scheme that fraudulently charged health insurers over \$200 million, officials said.

John Jeremy Adams, 39, of Panama City Beach, Fla., was the former co-owner and chief executive officer of Northside Pharmacy in Haleyville.

According to the plea agreement, Adams told employees to get medically unnecessary drugs for themselves and family members. He also told employees to add non-prescribed drugs to prescriptions, automatically refill prescriptions regardless of patients’ needs, waive and discount co-pays, and to bill healthcare providers for drugs without patients’ knowledge.

## Petroglyph National Monument vandalized

**NM** ALBUQUERQUE — Vandalism at one of the largest petroglyph sites in North America appears to be on the rise as the area experiences a jump in visitors, officials said.

Petroglyph National Monument Superintendent Nancy Hendricks said last week crews have reported three episodes of vandalism this year at the monument in Albuquerque, KRQE-TV reported.

Those acts include spray paint on the rocks at Boca Negra Canyon, vandalism at headquarters and carved rocks at the Rinconada Canyon Trail.

## Man in face mask found after escaping jail

**IL** CHICAGO — Authorities captured a man who escaped from a Chicago jail by wearing a coronavirus protective face mask and pretending to be another detainee who was set for release, officials said.

Jahquez Scott, 21, was captured by the Cook County Sheriff’s Department and the FBI in Chicago’s northwest side, the sheriff’s department said.

Scott, who was being held at the Cook County Jail on a weapons charge while on parole for a battery of an officer conviction, allegedly promised to pay another detainee, Quintin Henderson, so that he could pretend to be him.

The sheriff’s department said Scott, who was wearing a mask that concealed tattoos on both sides of his face, stepped forward when Henderson’s name was called.

## Officer shot suspect who stabbed him

**RI** CUMBERLAND — A Rhode Island man shot in the thigh by a police officer after allegedly stabbing the officer during an altercation outside a school faces assault and weapons charges.

Brennan Matthew Cronin, 24, of Lincoln was held on \$30,000 bail in connection with the confrontation with Officer Michael Petrarca outside Cumberland High School, police said.

Petrarca approached Cronin when he saw him going through trash cans at the school, police said.

Cronin ran away and fell, allowing Petrarca to catch up, at which point the suspect stabbed the officer in the thigh, according to police. Petrarca then shot Cronin in the thigh.

From wire reports

# STARS AND STRIPES

On a mission to provide credible reporting and daily news to America’s military, wherever they serve.

Mobile apps available: [www.stripes.com/apps](http://www.stripes.com/apps).

# Darlington adding to NASCAR legacy

Associated Press

DARLINGTON, S.C. — Harold Brasington III recalls riding around the infield at Darlington Raceway as a youngster with his late grandfather, track builder Harold Brasington, watching as his granddad said hello to the likes of Richard Petty, David Pearson, Cale Yarborough and Dale Earnhardt.

The younger Brasington, 52, will see history once more on Sunday: The 70-year-old raceway will host the return of NASCAR Cup Series racing, among the biggest events so far as sports makes a halting comeback from a global shutdown forced by the coronavirus pandemic.

The Xfinity Series will then fire up for the first time since March on Tuesday night at the 1.366-mile, egg-shaped oval. Cup racers come back Wednesday for a weeknight, primetime race — the kind fans have urged NASCAR to try — to cap a busy time for the “Lady in Black.”

“I think Darlington is the poster child for inspiration and

luck kind of linking up together,” Brasington said.

It’s hard to argue.

The track hosted two NASCAR races every year from 1950-2003, including the Southern 500 on Labor Day weekend, an event considered a marquee race for the stock car series. But a push for bigger TV ratings and fancier, modern raceways — and some neglect in upkeep at the old country track — had some wondering if Darlington might join the list of shuttered, defunct Southern tracks like Rockingham and North Wilkesboro.

Instead, it has held on as NASCAR embraced its history as the oldest paved superspeedway. Since 2015, Darlington has held the circuit’s throwback weekend — back on Labor Day — with a popular celebration of NASCAR’s colorful past.

Come Sunday, that legacy will be one of hope as NASCAR powers back up.

“For us, it’s exciting that we have our chance to go out there and compete,” Kurt Busch said.

Busch was involved in one of Darlington’s most memorable moments, a last-lap, metal-crunching duel to the finish with Ricky Craven at the 2003 spring race. The two racers slid past the finish line locked together with Craven winning by two-thousandths of a second, tied for the closest finish in NASCAR history.

Darlington is perhaps best known as “The Track Too Tough To Tame” and, like all the old speedways, has its quirks. Brasington had envisioned a standard oval, but he had a problem: A local landowner didn’t want to give up his minnow pond, so Darlington was built with what is now turn four tighter than the other end of the track.

Speak with almost any driver and it won’t be long before they say of Darlington that “you have to race the racetrack.” The asymmetrical corners mean drivers who spend too much time focused on their foes will undoubtedly hit the wall — and often do,

That’s why Darlington’s list of

champions reads like the NASCAR Hall of Fame. Pearson heads things with 10 victories, with Earnhardt right behind at nine. Jeff Gordon has seven.

Bill Elliott won the “Winston Million” bonus prize at Darlington in 1985 for the driver to capture three of NASCAR’s four crown jewel races. Yarborough famously went over the wall here in 1965 in a horrific-looking crash. He holds the track record with five Southern 500 wins.

It is a long, storied history Darlington Raceway President Kerry Tharp has gladly brought to the forefront since taking the job in 2016. This year’s throwback celebration, still scheduled for Sept. 6 as the series’ opening playoff race, honors NASCAR champions.

First, though, comes NASCAR’s return to the track this weekend. Tharp can’t imagine a more fitting or daunting mission for his Darlington crew.

“We’re proud of that,” he said. “We know it comes with a great responsibility, but we’re up to the task.”

## Germany’s Bundesliga resumes play without fans

Associated Press

BERLIN — Germany’s Bundesliga soccer season resumed Saturday after a two-month break caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

Borussia Dortmund defeated Schalke 4-0 in the first Ruhr derby to be played in an empty stadium. All the games began amid strict hygiene measures. Calls and shouts from coaching staff and players, and the thud of the ball being kicked, reverberated around the mainly deserted stands.

Erling Haaland scored the league’s first goal since the enforced break. The 19-year-old celebrated with a restrained dance while his teammates stayed well away.

Players had been warned to keep their emotions in check,

and to desist from spitting, handshakes and hugging.

Julian Brandt set up Raphael Guerreiro for the second goal before the break and Thorgan Hazard for the third after it. Hazard celebrated alone in front of Dortmund’s south terrace, where normally the club’s “Yellow Wall” of almost 25,000 fervent fans would be standing.

Haaland created the fourth by Guerreiro as Dortmund cut the gap on leader Bayern Munich to a point. Bayern is due to play at Union Berlin on Sunday.

Team staff, and players who didn’t start, wore masks. Substitutes took their positions in the stands, rather than beside the field as customary, while balls and seats were disinfected.

Pre-game television interviews were conducted with

long poles holding microphones and participants keeping their distance.

“It’s quite surreal,” Dortmund chief executive Hans Joachim Watzke told Sky TV. “I’ve received messages from all over the world in the last couple of hours that everybody is watching and then you go through the city and there’s nothing going on.”

Also, Hertha Berlin won 3-0 at Hoffenheim in coach Bruno Labbadia’s first game in charge, Freiburg drew at Leipzig 1-1, Paderborn drew at Fortuna Dusseldorf 0-0, and Wolfsburg won 2-1 at Augsburg.

Augsburg’s new coach Heiko Herrlich was forced to watch from the stands after breaking strict quarantine conditions to buy toiletries. He will only return after twice testing nega-

tive for the virus.

They were the first games to be played in the league since March 11.

Earlier Saturday, the second division resumed with four games, also without fans present and amid strict distancing measures.

South Korea midfielder Lee Jae-sung scored the division’s first goal for Holstein Kiel in a 2-2 draw at Jahn Regensburg. He celebrated by giving teammates fist bumps.

Goal celebrations in other games were also marked by fist bumps and elbow-to-elbow touching.

The game’s authorities were keen to restart the country’s top two divisions with several clubs, including Schalke, facing severe financial difficulties because of the suspension in play.

## Sports briefs

# Bryant's pilot wasn't under influence

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The pilot flying Kobe Bryant and seven others to a youth basketball tournament did not have alcohol or drugs in his system, and all nine sustained immediately fatal injuries when their helicopter crashed outside Los Angeles in January, according to autopsies released Friday.

The reports by the Los Angeles County coroner's office provide a clinical but unvarnished look at just how brutal the crash was, describing broken bones, dismembered body parts and a stench of fuel on what remained of clothing that burned.

One of the most popular sports figures in Los Angeles and a celebrity around the globe, Bryant was broken beyond recognition when his body was found in the dirt outside the wreckage of the chopper. His remains had to be identified by his fingerprints.

The graphic report made it clear: Bryant and the passengers almost certainly were dead in an instant due to blunt trauma.

"These injuries are rapidly if not instantly fatal," wrote Juan Carrillo, senior deputy medical examiner, in Bryant's report.

The horrific crash that killed

the 41-year-old retired Los Angeles Lakers star, his 13-year-old daughter Gianna — wearing the jersey she would have worn to play that morning, with the word "Mamba" on the front and her last name on the back — pilot Ara Zobayan and the others is considered accidental.

Bryant was headed from Orange County to his daughter's tournament at his Mamba Sports Academy in Thousand Oaks on the morning of Jan. 26. The group, including one of his daughter's coaches, and two of her teammates, encountered thick fog in the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles.

Ara Zobayan, an experienced pilot who often flew Bryant, climbed sharply and had nearly succeeded breaking through the clouds when the craft took an abrupt left turn and plunged into the grassy, oak studded hills below.

When it struck the ground, it was flying at about 184 mph and descending at a rate of more than 4,000 feet per minute. The impact caused a crater and scattered debris over an area the size of a football field in the Calabasas hills. Flames engulfed the wreckage, but burns on the bodies were determined to have occurred after death.

Bryant's body was found on one side of the wreckage and his daughter was found in a ravine on the opposite side.

The autopsy noted a tattoo of a crown on his right shoulder, above where his wife's name, Vanessa, was imprinted.

## Ex-Stanford star Hoffpauir, 26, dead

Zach Hoffpauir, a two-sport standout at Stanford who played two seasons in the Arizona Diamondbacks' minor league system, has died at age 26.

The University of Northern Colorado, where Hoffpauir was an assistant football coach in charge of the safeties, said Hoffpauir died in his sleep Thursday, providing no further details.

Hoffpauir was a safety for four seasons, winning three Pac-12 titles and two Rose Bowls. He also starred as an outfielder for the Cardinal and was drafted by the Diamondbacks in 2015.

## Tagovailoa's brother transferring to Terps

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — Taulia Tagovailoa, a backup quarterback at Alabama behind

star brother Tua Tagovailoa, is transferring to Maryland.

He announced the decision Friday on Twitter.

The 5-foot-11 quarterback will need a waiver to be eligible this season. He played five games last season as a freshman, completing 9 of 12 passes for 100 yards and a touchdown.

Maryland coach Mike Locksley coached Tua, selected fifth overall in the NFL Draft by Miami, as Alabama's offensive coordinator.

## Attorney: Affidavits clear Seattle's Dunbar

MIAMI — Michael Grieco, attorney for Seattle Seahawks cornerback Quinton Dunbar, says he has five signed affidavits from witnesses that exonerate his client in an armed robbery.

Grieco claimed Friday that the five witnesses attested Dunbar was not involved in the robbery earlier this week. Grieco said he has been in contact with authorities regarding Dunbar's surrender but declined to give a date.

"Law enforcement and the state attorney's office are both now aware that my client is innocent," Grieco said.

# NFL to begin gradual reopening if local rules permit

Associated Press

NFL teams can begin reopening their facilities on Tuesday if state and local governments will allow it.

In a memo sent to the 32 teams Friday by Commissioner Roger Goodell and obtained by The Associated Press, he stressed that the clubs must be "in compliance with any additional public health requirements in their jurisdiction, and have implemented the protocols that were developed by (league medical officer) Dr. (Allen)

Sills and distributed to all clubs on May 6."

Facilities have been closed since late March due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Each team was required to submit a plan to the league for reopening its training/practice facility this week.

"Clubs unable to meet these criteria on May 19 may reopen their facilities on the earliest date thereafter on which they are able to meet the criteria," Goodell added.

Sills will conduct a training

program for club infection control officers (ICO) on Monday night that is required.

Naturally, any incidence of COVID-19 in the facility must be reported immediately to Sills and the team's ICO. Clubs also must report any change in government regulations to the league.

"After we implement this first phase," Goodell told the teams, "and as more states and localities enact policies that allow more club facilities to reopen, I expect that additional

staff, likely including coaching staff, will be allowed to return to club facilities in a relatively short time.

"In the meantime, we are continuing to work with the NFLPA and our medical teams on developing protocols that could permit a certain number of players to return to club facilities as early as next month."

NFL teams normally would be holding organized team activities (OTAs) during May, followed by June minicamps. Due to the pandemic, such activities have been done remotely.