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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Roosevelt back at sea after virus fight

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt has returned to sea after spending nearly two months sidelined at Guam to battle a coronavirus outbreak on board, the Navy announced Thursday.

The carrier left Naval Base Guam and entered the Philippine Sea on Thursday to conduct carrier qualification flights for Carrier Air Wing 11, a statement said.

“It feels great to be back at sea,” Rear Adm. Stu Baker, commander of Carrier Strike Group 9, said in the statement. “Getting Theodore Roosevelt and Carrier Air Wing 11 one

step closer to returning to their mission in the Indo-Pacific is a great achievement for the crew.”

To maintain social distancing on board, only crewmembers essential to the carrier flight qualifications set sail with the ship. The Navy in a statement Monday said that the remaining sailors would stay on Guam to support crewmembers still in quarantine.

“We are scaling our manning on board based on our mission requirement,” Roosevelt commander Capt. Carlos Sardiello said in the Thursday statement. “Carrier qualification requires fewer personnel than other missions, and bringing fewer sailors on board will enable enhanced social distancing while

underway.”

After qualification flights end, the remainder of the crew will re-embark, according to the Monday statement.

The Roosevelt had been deployed to the Western Pacific when it diverted to Guam on March 26 after several of its sailors tested positive for the virus. Since then, more than 1,150 Roosevelt sailors have tested positive, one of whom died, according to the Navy.

The carrier has been away from its San Diego homeport since it left for patrol Jan. 17.

The carrier took its first steps toward redeploying Sunday when sailors began a simulation called a “fast cruise” while moored at Naval Base Guam.

During a fast cruise, typical-

ly one of the final steps before a Navy vessel sets sail, crews “simulate normal underway conditions while testing the critical systems required to sustain the ship during its upcoming underway operations,” the Navy said in the Monday statement.

During the fast cruise, the crew also practiced new measures aimed at curbing a viral spread. They included adjusted meal hours, minimizing in-person meetings, sanitizing, wearing masks and “medical surveillance of 100% of the crew,” according to the Thursday statement.

Sardiello told CBS News on that crewmembers still in quarantine would be left behind when the ship returned to sea.

Millions more continue applying for US jobless aid

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — More than 2.4 million people applied for U.S. unemployment benefits last week in the latest wave of layoffs from the viral outbreak that triggered widespread business shutdowns two months ago and sent the economy into a deep recession.

Roughly 38.6 million people have now filed for jobless aid since the coronavirus forced millions of businesses to close their doors and shrink their workforces, the Labor Department said Thursday.

Another 2.2 million people sought aid under a new federal program for self-employed, contractor and gig workers, who are now eligible for jobless aid for the first time, up from 850,000 in the previous week.

The continuing stream of heavy job cuts reflects an econ-

omy that is sinking into the worst recession since the Great Depression. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimated this week that the economy is shrinking at a 38% annual rate in the April-June quarter. That would be by far the worst quarterly contraction on record.

Nearly half of Americans have said that their incomes have declined or they live with another adult who has lost pay through a job loss or reduced hours, the Census Bureau said in survey data released Wednesday. More than one-fifth of Americans said that they had little or no confidence in their ability to pay the next month’s rent or mortgage on time, the survey found.

During April, U.S. employers shed 20 million jobs, knocking out a decade’s worth of

job growth in a month. The unemployment rate reached 14.7%, the highest since the Depression.

Since then, 10 million more laid-off workers have applied for jobless benefits. Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell said in an interview Sunday that the unemployment rate could peak in May or June at 20% to 25%.

Across industries, major employers continue to announce job cuts. Uber said this week that it will lay off 3,000 employees, on top of 3,700 it has already cut, because demand for its ride-hailing services has plummeted. Vice, a TV and digital news organization tailored for younger people, announced 155 layoffs globally last week.

At the same time, some companies have begun to rehire a limited number of their laid-off

employees, as states have eased restrictions on movement and commerce.

One rehired worker, Norman Boughman, received an email last week from his boss at a secondhand clothing store in Richmond where he’d worked part time, asking him to return, one day before Virginia allowed most retailers to reopen.

Boughman, who had applied for unemployment benefits to no avail, was happy to be paid again. The job seems secure to him so far because the store has been busy, and the owner hasn’t expressed any concerns about business. But even while wearing a mask, Boughman worries about the potential threat to his health.

“We’re having to sort through people’s things, and I feel like that puts us at a higher risk,” he said.

US exiting Open Skies Treaty, says Russia in violation

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration notified international partners on Thursday that it is pulling out of a treaty that permits 30-plus nations to conduct unarmed, observation flights over each other's territory — overflights set up decades ago to promote trust and avert conflict.

The administration says it wants out of the Open Skies Treaty because Russia is violating the pact, and imagery collected during the flights can be obtained quickly at less cost from U.S. or commercial satellites. Exiting the treaty, however, is expected to strain relations with Moscow and upset European allies and some members of Congress.

President Dwight Eisenhower first proposed that the United States and the then-Soviet Union allow aerial reconnaissance flights over each other's territory in July 1955. At first, Moscow rejected the idea, but President George H.W. Bush revived it in May 1989, and the treaty entered into force in January 2002. Currently, 34 nations have signed it; Kyrgyzstan has signed but not ratified it yet.

More than 1,500 flights have been conducted under the treaty, aimed at fostering transparency about military activity and helping monitor arms control and other agreements. Each nation in the treaty agrees to make all its territory available for surveillance flights, yet Russia has restricted flights over areas.

Last month, top Democrats on the Foreign Affairs and Armed Services committees in both the House and the Senate wrote to Trump accusing the president of "ramming" a withdrawal from the treaty as the entire world grapples with COVID-19. They said it would undermine U.S. alliances with European allies who rely on the treaty to keep Russia accountable for its military activities in the region.

"The administration's effort to make a major change to our national security policy in the midst of a global health crisis is not only shortsighted, but also unconscionable," wrote Reps. Adam Smith, D-Wash., and Eliot Engel, D-N.Y., and Sens. Jack Reed, D-R.I., and Bob Menendez, D-N.J.

"This effort appears intended to limit appropriate congressional consultation on, and scrutiny of, the decision," they wrote.

Earlier this month, 16 former senior European military and defense officials signed a statement supporting the treaty, saying that a U.S. withdrawal from the treaty would be a blow to global security and further undermine the international arms control agreements.

Study: Female troops leave service sooner than males

BY COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Women make up a higher percentage of U.S. armed forces, but female troops are 28% more likely than men to leave the military early, the Government Accountability Office found in a study released Tuesday.

The percentage of women serving in the military services rose slightly from 15.1% of the active-duty force in 2004 to 16.5% in 2018, the GAO found. The Congress-mandated study looked at personnel data from the Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps for the 15-year period that ended in 2018, the most recent year for which they had complete data.

The report's authors found a variety of reasons that women are significantly more likely to leave the military earlier than their male counterparts, largely based on family-related and cultural issues, which the authors encouraged the Pentagon to address. Defense Department officials have for years indicated publicly that increasing female recruitment and retention rates are important to ensure diversity within the ranks, especially since the Pentagon opened all jobs and units, including front-line combat positions, to women in 2015. But the GAO found service leaders had not implemented plans with "goals, performance measures and timeframes" that would aid in assessing female recruiting and retention.

"DOD officials stated that retention goals have, in the past, been misconstrued as quotas and, as such, the department does not set goals or targets for gender," the GAO report states. "However, goals are not quotas and can help guide continued improvement. Without DOD guidance and service plans with goals, performance measures, and timeframes to monitor female recruitment and retention efforts, DOD may continue to miss opportunities to recruit and retain a valuable segment for its active-duty force."

As a result of its analysis, the GAO recommended the four military services implement such plans with "clearly defined goals" to monitor and improve female retention and recruiting. It also recommended the secretary of defense and his personnel chief provide the services clear guidance on the issue in the Pentagon's forthcoming diversity and inclusion strategic plan due in the fall.

Pentagon officials told the GAO that they agreed with those recommendations, ac-

ording to the authors.

The report's authors noted the lower retention rates among female troops has led to an even smaller percentage of women serving within the highest ranks of the military. They also found women reported six primary factors for their decision to leave the service before retirement eligibility, which included problems they perceived within the military's organizational culture such as a lack of female mentors.

"Study participants also noted that they often faced sexism and the existence of an 'old boys' network,' especially in career fields dominated by males," the GAO authors wrote. "As such, these female service members felt they had to work harder to prove themselves and also felt they were sometimes not treated equally because they were female."

Other factors that the GAO concluded largely led women to leave the military included uncertain work schedules, impacts of deployments on their family lives, family planning issues such as pregnancy, and issues with dependent care such as limited day care hours and long waitlists for child care services.

Women also listed sexual assault as a deciding factor for them to leave the military, the GAO reported. The authors noted female veterans expressed discouragement based on the occurrences of sexual assault and the military's handling of sexual assault investigations.

"For example, two females stated that the perpetrator was not punished, and another woman cited the lack of support from other service members as contributing to their decisions to separate from the military," the authors wrote.

Military officials have said for years that they take allegations of sexual assault seriously and are taking steps to address the problem within its ranks.

During the 15 years that the GAO studied, the agency found the Air Force consistently reported the highest percentage of female troops ranging from 14.4% of its force in 2009, its lowest percentage during the period analyzed, to a 2018 high of 16.5%. The Marine Corps consistently reported the lowest percentage of women among its ranks, ranging from a low of 6.1% in 2004 to a high in 2018 of 8.6%.

The Navy saw the largest jump in the percent of women within its ranks. It reported women made up 14.7% of its force in 2004, 2005 and 2006 before consistently increasing its percentage of female sailors to a high of 19.6% in 2018.

Blue Ridge breaks its record

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — Typically known for frequent port visits, the 7th Fleet flagship USS Blue Ridge broke its 48-year-old record of consecutive days underway by remaining at sea to avoid the coronavirus, the Navy said in a statement Thursday.

The amphibious command ship had been at sea for 69 days as of Thursday, passing its previous record of 64 days, which was set during the Vietnam War. The Blue Ridge is the Navy's oldest operational warship and has been in service for nearly 50 years.

"These times are uniquely challenging for the entire world, but it takes an extremely dedicated crew to maintain this old of a ship at sea for this long," Blue Ridge commander Capt. Craig Sicola said in the statement.

The 223-year-old USS Con-

stitution is the Navy's oldest ship, but it does not deploy.

Meanwhile, the Yokosuka-based aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan officially began its Indo-Pacific deployment this week. Its crew completed phased sequestrations before embarking the ship to mitigate the chance of bringing coronavirus-positive sailors on board, the Navy said in a separate statement Thursday.

Like the Blue Ridge, the Reagan is unlikely to make port visits so soon after the virus sidelined the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt for nearly two months this spring, according to an April 22 report in *The New York Times*. An outbreak among a few Roosevelt sailors in March led to over 1,150 of their shipmates testing positive for the coronavirus.

The Roosevelt returned to sea Thursday with a reduced crew.

As the 7th Fleet's flagship, the Blue Ridge typically makes

more port visits than other ships in the fleet. It visited 11 ports in nine Indo-Pacific nations during its 114-day deployment last spring.

During that deployment, the Blue Ridge hosted more than 30 foreign leaders and brought foreign navy representatives on board for professional exchanges, the Navy said when the ship returned to Yokosuka last May.

This year, however, the crew had to tweak its plans as the coronavirus — first reported in Wuhan, China, on Dec. 31 — grew from a regional outbreak into a global pandemic as the ship was out to sea.

The Blue Ridge's deployment this year began normally enough. After leaving Yokosuka in January, the crew made stops in Japan, South Korea and Thailand in its first month underway before port visits were canceled in response to the virus's spread.

Sailor hurt in shooting on US base

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A sailor was injured Thursday in a shooting at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas, Navy officials said.

Navy officials said the shooter was "neutralized," in an incident that shut down the base at about 6:15 a.m. after a report of an active shooter.

Naval Security Forces responded, and one security force member, a female sailor, was injured. She was taken to a local hospital, according to Steve Strickland, a spokesman with Navy Region Southeast. The sailor is in good condition and was expected to be released Thursday, according to the Navy.

An early post on the base's Facebook page stated the active shooter was in the vicinity of the North Gate.

The gates at the installations remained closed Thursday. Naval Criminal Investigative Service and local law enforcement were at the scene, according to the statement. However, the FBI is now the lead agency in the investigation, according to Strickland.

Naval Air Station Corpus Christi conducts pilot training, according to the base website.

The base had a similar lockdown in December when a man rammed his truck into a barricade, according to *The Associated Press*. He has pleaded guilty to destruction of U.S. government property and possession of a stolen firearm.

This is the third active-shooter incident at a naval base in five months. On Dec. 4, a junior enlisted sailor, Gabriel Antonio Romero, 22, shot three civilians at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, killing two of them before killing himself.

On Dec. 6, a Saudi Air Force officer, Mohammed Saeed Alshamrani, shot and killed three sailors and injured eight others at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla.

Impossible Burger coming to Okinawa

BY JAMES BOLINGER
Stars and Stripes

Marine dining facilities across Okinawa are adding the Impossible Burger, a plant-based alternative to ground beef, to their food lines.

Marines and sailors taste-tested the burger May 13 at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, Gunnery Sgt. Maurice Toole, the subsistence chief for Marine Corps Installations Pacific, told *Stars and Stripes* on Thursday. He said the Impossible Burger will be just one of the plant-based items the Marine Corps plans to roll out in its dining facilities on Okinawa this fall.

"We like to get as much input as we can from Marines: What new things do they want to see, and what things they want to get rid of?" Toole said. "Lots of Marines are asking to eat healthier. And we are looking to have plant-based items represented in every area we serve — the mainline, specialty items and the snack or 'fast-food' line."

Toole said his team initially wanted to add a black-bean or other vegetarian burger to the snack line but changed its mind after the vendor offered the Impossible Burger, which had a satisfying texture and appearance.

"It was a great burger," said Lance Cpl. Alexander Skelton, an air support operations offi-

cer with 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, in a Marine Corps press release May 13. "It's nice to see the [mess hall] committed to giving more choices to Marines with different diets and beliefs."

The taste test was sprung on patrons out of the blue to avoid preconceived notions about plant-based meat, Toole said. It was added to the mainline, where traditional entrees are offered, and servers asked the Marines to try it.

"We wanted to shock the audience," he said. "We knew if we caught everyone off guard, that we would get better real-time reactions. Even some of the people who were not interested initially tried it and liked it."

A menu review board last year identified Marines' desire for meatless protein options.

Impossible Burger, made of soy and potato protein, was approved by the Corps' lead dietician, who must review all new menu items before they are pushed out to troops, Toole said. The dietician will also review all the plant-based options that will be made available to Okinawa Marines in the future.

Toole's team will introduce the burger to the snack line first as part of the Marine Corps Fuel-to-Fight initiative. The service wants Marines to see a trip to the mess hall as a way to refuel their bodies and get healthier.

Officials assess Michigan flood damage

Associated Press

MIDLAND, Mich. — Authorities were assessing damage Thursday as floodwaters from heavy rains that overtook two dams retreated in some mid-Michigan communities and continued to threaten others further downriver.

The flooding forced the evacuation of about 11,000 people in the Midland area, about 140 miles north of Detroit. The floodwaters mixed Wednesday with containment ponds at a Dow Chemical Co. plant and could displace sediment from a downstream Superfund site, though the company said there was no risk to people or the environment.

Officials warned that the scope of the damage could take days to fully see. The nearly century-old Edenville Dam, which failed to hold back floodwaters, was the target of lengthy investigations by federal regulators, who revoked the facility's license over safety violations two years before the flooding. Wixom Lake, which had been held back by the dam, was left nearly empty.

"You can see houses with water up to the

roof line, you can see a lakebed that was drained out," Gov. Gretchen Whitmer said Thursday morning during an appearance on "CBS This Morning."

"There's no lake there anymore because it's all at the lower end of the river now. The water should start to recede now. But there's no question that this is a devastating event."

The National Weather Service said communities farther downstream were bracing for flooding in the coming days. A flood warning was in effect Thursday along the Tittabawassee River from Midland downstream into Saginaw, and flooding in that area was possible through the weekend.

Residents near the Tittabawassee River were urged this week to seek higher ground following what the National Weather Service described as "catastrophic dam failures" at the Edenville Dam, about 20 miles northwest of Midland, and the Sanford Dam. Officials have said the Sanford Dam was overflowing but that the extent of structural damage isn't yet known.

No injuries have been reported.

Dow said the containment ponds held only water, and it has detected no chemi-

cal releases from the plant in Midland where the company was founded, though the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said state officials would evaluate the plant when they're able. Once the flooding recedes, Dow will be required to assess the Superfund site — contaminated with dioxins the company dumped in the last century — to determine if any contamination was released, the EPA said.

Michigan has been a national hot spot for COVID-19, with more than 52,000 cases and 5,000 deaths, but Midland County has had fewer than 80 cases and under 10 deaths. Still, residents were advised to take precautions and schools set up as shelters spaced cots to adhere to social distancing guidelines.

The flooding washed away some roadways and left others impassable. Selina Tisdale, spokeswoman for the city of Midland, said roads must be inspected for damage that could make traveling along them hazardous.

"We're working to get information to folks on when they can return to their houses, but stress that a lot of infrastructure gets compromised," Tisdale said.

Europe's coronavirus app tracking plan faces setbacks

Associated Press

LONDON — Doubts were growing on Thursday over whether ambitious plans by European governments to use contact-tracing apps to fight the spread of the coronavirus will be able to be implemented with any real effectiveness soon.

In contrast, there appeared to be some movement forward in the sprint to find a vaccine against COVID-19, bolstered by a \$1 billion investment from the U.S. vaccine agency.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson pledged Wednesday to have a "test, track and trace" program for COVID-19 in place by June 1 as part of a strategy to persuade the country that it's safe to move on to the next stage of easing the lockdown and restarting the economy.

But the government also appeared to backtrack on an earlier pledge to make a smart phone app a pillar of that program.

Security minister James

Brokenshire told the BBC on Thursday that he remains "confident" that the tracing system will be in place by June 1, but acknowledged that an app intended to help track the virus was not ready. He suggested "technical issues" were the reason for its failure to be introduced as planned by mid-May.

Experts say that being able to quickly identify people exposed to the virus can help stop the spread of the contagious respiratory illness, but efforts to put apps in place have come up across technical problems and fears of privacy intrusions.

The French government has also been forced to delay deployment of its planned contact-tracing app. Initially expected last week as the country started lifting confinement measures, it won't be ready before next month due to technical issues and concerns over privacy.

Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte said Thursday that the country's contact-tracing app

would begin tests "in the coming days." But he made no mention of whether Italy had hired teams of contact-tracers to actually conduct interviews and get in touch with people who had been in contact with COVID-19 patients, as other European countries have done.

Spain's Economy Minister, Nadia Calvino, said Wednesday in parliament that Spain is making preparations to test a European Bluetooth-based app at the end of June in the Canary Islands.

But the adoption of the app has taken a back seat to the hiring of old-school human tracers in Spain. The government has said that the technology will be adopted only if it adds value to the tracing efforts that are being deployed by the country's 17 regional administrations.

Meanwhile, drug maker AstraZeneca said Thursday it has secured the first agreements for 400 million doses of a COVID-19 vaccine that is now being tested at the University

of Oxford, one of the most advanced projects in the search for a vaccine.

The Anglo-Swedish company reported it had received more than \$1 billion from the U.S. Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority for the development, production and delivery of the vaccine, starting this fall.

AstraZeneca CEO Pascal Soriot said the company "will do everything in our power to make this vaccine quickly and widely available."

In Italy, one of Europe's worst-hit countries, authorities warned that people are violating social distancing guidelines after a strict lockdown was lifted threatened the country's recovery.

"Now is not the time for parties, nightlife and getting together in crowds," Conte warned in parliament. "Be careful. Because exposing yourselves to contagion means exposing your loved ones to contagion."

Miss. church burnt after lawsuit filed

Associated Press

HOLLY SPRINGS — A church in Mississippi was destroyed by a suspected arson fire about a month after its pastor filed a lawsuit challenging the city of Holly Springs on gathering restrictions amid the coronavirus outbreak.

First Pentecostal Church in Holly Springs, Miss., burned down Wednesday morning, news outlets reported. When investigators from the Marshall County Sheriff's Office got to the scene, they found graffiti in the church parking lot that read: "Bet you stay home now you hypocrites."

Jerry Waldrop, pastor of the church, had filed a lawsuit against the city of Holly Springs last month, alleging that police officers had disrupted a church Bible study and Easter service. Holly Springs City Attorney Shirley Byers said that nearly 40 parishioners inside the church building were not practicing social distancing April 10 when a violation citation was issued for the church.

Churchgoers practiced social distancing while indoors and only held indoor services when bad weather would not allow them to gather outside, the lawsuit said. Waldrop's complaint also asked for a temporary restraining order to keep city officials from preventing church services.

Arizona

PHOENIX — Gov. Doug Ducey said Wednesday that people in Arizona are acting responsibly since he began loosening restrictions on businesses, but he's not yet ready to open new sectors of the economy.

Ducey said that he has an "aspirational" goal for schools to reopen on schedule in August, and he's hopeful that summer camps and youth activities will be open soon.

The Republican governor said he sees "zero evidence" that Arizona will have a surge in coronavirus infections as social distancing measures relax. But he suggested that he's will-

ing to re-impose restrictions if necessary. "I am going to use every tool that's available to a governor to do what's in the best interest of Arizona," Ducey said.

Indiana

INDIANAPOLIS — Indiana's coronavirus restrictions will ease in parts of the state Friday, two days ahead of schedule, to allow for more activity over the Memorial Day weekend, the governor said Wednesday.

A new state order will allow social gatherings of up to 100 people and retail stores and malls to operate at 75% capacity, Gov. Eric Holcomb said. Gatherings have been limited to 25 people and stores to 50% capacity under the state's first easing of restrictions that took effect May 4.

Gyms, fitness centers, community pools and campgrounds will also be allowed to open under rules limiting the number of people and for distancing and cleaning.

Holcomb pointed to a decline in the number of hospitalized people with the coronavirus, as well as the continued availability of intensive care unit beds to treat those of whom are the most seriously ill.

Kentucky

FRANKFORT — Looking to deflate resistance to wearing masks, Gov. Andy Beshear on Wednesday called it "basic public health guidance" to combat the coronavirus that shouldn't spark political divisions.

Kentucky's governor continued to stress mask wearing with more people venturing out as the state's economy gradually gets rebooted. Nonessential retail businesses reopened Wednesday, and restaurants can reopen dining rooms Friday.

"This is not a battle between political parties or ideologies," the Democratic governor said. "It's plain, basic public health guidance that's out there from the CDC and from everywhere else. It's the same guid-

ance on the federal and on the state level. And it's just smart, right?"

Montana

HAMILTON — Health officers in a western Montana county are investigating a cluster of COVID-19 cases as the state prepares to lift more restrictions meant to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

The initial Ravalli County case involved a man in his 50s who was believed to have caught the virus while traveling outside the county. He was hospitalized Sunday, said Karyn Johnston, director of public health. She declined to say if the man had traveled out of state.

Nine more people were tested because of contact with the man, and seven of them have tested positive for COVID-19. All are male and are isolated at home.

Three nurses doing contact tracing have located more than 30 contacts with those who are infected, and the investigation continues.

New York

NEW YORK — New York will allow small religious gatherings starting Thursday as the state gradually loosens pandemic restrictions, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said.

Religious gatherings of up to 10 people will be allowed statewide as long as participants wear masks and practice social distancing. The state is also allowing drive-in and parking lot services.

The state will work with an Interfaith Advisory Council to discuss proposals to safely bring back religious services. The council consists of dozens of religious leaders, including Cardinal Timothy Dolan and the Rev. Dr. Calvin Butts.

"I understand their desire to get to religious ceremonies as soon as possible. As a former altar boy, I get it," Cuomo said. "But we need to find out how to do it and do it safely and do it smartly. The last thing we want to do is have a religious

ceremony that winds up having more people infected."

Pennsylvania

HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania is working on guidelines to allow sporting events, exhibitions and leagues, both professional and amateur, to get back to "some semblance of normalcy" after practically everything shut down to help stem the spread of the coronavirus, Gov. Tom Wolf said Wednesday.

In a conference call with reporters, Wolf said that he has been in touch with major professional organizations including NASCAR, the NFL, NHL, Major League Baseball and others to figure out how they can resume.

He said he expected that his administration will, in the coming days, produce guidelines for the various venues, sports and activities to resume. But, he said, the ultimate success of the events and leagues will rest on whether people feel safe enough to attend and participate.

South Carolina

COLUMBIA — Clemson University plans to hold in-person classes in the fall but synchronize them with online instruction so that if a student is infected with COVID-19 — or a second wave of infections closes campus — learning won't be disrupted.

Clemson leaders did not provide specifics on their plans in an online presentation to university trustees Wednesday. But everyone who spoke — from Clemson University President Jim Clements to campus safety, academic and financial leaders — all gave a rosy outlook for the future.

"Clemson was ahead of the curve and will stay ahead of the curve. There are a lot of challenges ahead of us, but we will stay Clemson," said Executive Vice President for Finance and Operations Tony Wagner, who told trustees that Clemson was in good shape from a financial perspective.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Stolen baby goat reunited with owners

MD BALTIMORE — A stolen baby goat was returned home to its community garden in Baltimore late Tuesday night, police said.

Baltimore police were notified just before 10 p.m. that the young Nigerian Dwarf goat named Ed had been “anonymously returned” to his owners, according to a statement from the department.

Ed was reported missing from the Filbert Street Garden on Monday night. His caretakers alleged in a Facebook post that two teenagers tore through a fence, cut off a lock and broke into a barn to steal the animal, which weighs just 20 pounds and depends on its mother’s milk to survive.

In an update, the garden celebrated Ed’s safe return and thanked police.

Boaters rescue 4 after kayaks capsize

CT STAMFORD — Two adults and two children were rescued from their capsized kayaks off the Connecticut coast in a spot where a man drowned three weeks prior.

Civilian boaters rescued a group of people Monday night off Wallacks Point in Stamford after hearing a radio distress call, the Stamford Advocate reported Tuesday.

A resident on the point, between Cummings Beach and Cove Island Park, called 911 after seeing people in the water next to their capsized kayaks, Deputy Fire Chief Tom Gloersen said. Joe Hoyt, 27, was on his way out of the channel when the distress call was picked up by one of his passengers, Joey Romaniello, 30, a volunteer firefighter. Hoyt found the four people, including a 9-year-old

girl and 6-year-old boy, with life preservers on the east side of Wallacks Point.

Police: Body found after man jumps in river

PA LEHIGHTON — Authorities said the body of a man has been recovered from an eastern Pennsylvania river in the area searchers were looking for a man who went into the river while fleeing from police the night before.

The (Allentown) Morning Call reported that the Carbon County coroner pronounced a 32-year-old man dead Wednesday afternoon along the Lehigh River near a railroad trestle that straddles Franklin Township and Lehigh.

Police haven’t said whether they believe the man is the same person who went into the river shortly after 7:30 p.m. Tuesday after fleeing from Franklin Township police.

Robbery suspect hit by car, yet still escapes

OH AKRON — A robbery suspect who jumped from a moving car was run over by the vehicle but still managed to flee from police, authorities said.

Akron police saw the man jump from the rear of the car Monday night, authorities said. He was then struck when the car spun around, but he ran off. Authorities said the man has been identified, but they did not release his name.

Two other men who were in the vehicle were arrested on weapons charges. Authorities said three loaded handguns were found in the car. The driver told police that the man who jumped from the vehicle had been trying to rob him and the other passenger. The matter remains under investigation, authorities said.

Bison put down after injuring park visitor

ND MEDORA — A bison had to be put down after injuring a woman visiting the North Unit of Theodore Roosevelt National Park in North Dakota, the National Park Service said.

Officials said the 55-year-old woman from Watford City was hiking around a bend on the Buckhorn Trail on Monday afternoon when she encountered a bull bison on the trail. The bull charged, striking the woman in the face and knocking her down.

The woman called 911 while on the ground, and a U.S. park ranger responded and found the bull still standing near the woman. The bison was showing increasing signs of aggression, so the ranger shot the animal.

The woman was flown to Minot and treated for broken vertebrae and facial fractures.

Suits: Security worker spied on customers

TX DALLAS — Two federal class-action lawsuits have been filed against ADT, one of the largest security companies in the country, alleging that an employee spied on customers and children over a seven-year period through their home security cameras.

The lawsuits, filed Monday, allege ADT showed negligence and breached contracts by failing to provide security, among other concerns. Both lawsuits say the employee was able to view customers’ intimate and private moments, including when they were nude or partially dressed.

The breach was discovered in March after an ADT customer in DeSoto, Texas, reported an unauthorized email address on her account. An internal investigation discovered

the employee’s personal email address was added on 220 ADT customers’ accounts in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

ADT has fired the employee since discovering the breach.

Small plane lands on road after engine fails

MO LEE’S SUMMIT — A small plane was forced to land on an interstate in suburban Kansas City Tuesday afternoon when one of the aircraft’s two engines apparently failed, authorities said.

The pilot was the only one aboard and was not injured when the twin-engine Bonanza landed on eastbound Interstate 470 in Lee’s Summit, police said. The plane hit a few signs but no other serious damage was reported.

Trooper brings moose calves, mom together

UT HEBER CITY — A Utah state trooper has helped a pair of newborn moose calves reunite safely with their mother after spotting them on a mountain road.

The trooper noticed the hours-old calves without their mother on the road as he drove home from work, about 45 miles east of Salt Lake City on Monday, said Utah Highway Patrol Sgt. Nick Street. It’s not clear how they became separated. Worried they could be hit by a car, trooper Alexander Agin stopped and put up a traffic barrier. Once he was walking, the baby moose began to follow him. So Agin guided them away from the traffic danger.

Just as he led them off the road, the calves’ mother arrived and began to charge him. Agin retreated to his car and recorded a video of the moose family reuniting and departing.

From wire reports

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NFL working on face shield for helmet

Associated Press

ATLANTA — With an eye toward getting back on the field during a pandemic, the NFL is working on a helmet face guard that might provide the same sort of protection as a surgical mask.

Atlanta Falcons president Rich McKay, who heads up the league's competition committee, said the issue was raised during a conference call about a month ago.

"A lot of players have played with a clear shield to protect their eyes," McKay said Tuesday during a video conference call with Atlanta media. "This would be extended even further."

Thom Mayer, the medical director of the NFL Players Association, said league engineers and sports equipment company Oakley are testing prototypes of a modified face mask that might contain surgical or N95 material.

"I had suggested that we

should consider novel and emerging ways to handle the helmets and the face masks and the spread of the virus," Mayer said on a podcast with ESPN's Adam Schefter. "These guys got the bit between their teeth."

Work on the face mask is far enough along that "there will probably be a recommendation" to use it when the league begins its preseason schedule in August, according to Mayer.

Cleveland Browns center JC Tretter, who also serves as president of the NFLPA, welcomed any attempt to improve player safety.

"There are no bad ideas at this point," he said. "You kind of have to think outside the box. Just because it is an idea does not mean things are definitely going to happen, but you need to explore it and you need to understand it."

Falcons cornerback Isaiah Oliver withheld judgment until he's able to check out a prototype.

"I haven't seen anything like that," Oliver said Wednesday. "I would have to look into it to see what it looks like."

Oakley is already contracted by the NFL to provide visors that some players use on their face masks. The company also has developed durable eyeglasses for the military that are designed not to fog up — technology that may prove useful in its latest project.

The new coverings would likely have to cover the entire face mask.

"They've got some prototypes," Mayer told Schefter. "Some of them, when you first look at them, you think, 'Gosh, no' because you're not used to seeing it. You're just not used to seeing it. But they're looking at every issue you can imagine, including when it fogs up. What do we do with that? But these guys are used to dealing with this stuff."

McKay said he expects the new face masks would quickly gain acceptance, assuming

they meet two main standards.

"They've got to be comfortable for the players," he said. "And they've got to be safe."

While McKay has never been a fan on the tinted visors that some players already use, he's learned to accept that look.

"I understood that some players needed it because of their eyes," McKay said. "In this instance, if this is what the doctors in the medical field think is needed, then we should look into it."

Tretter said the NFL is "probably going to look a little different this year," and modified face masks might be part of the changes.

"You have to focus on fitting football inside of this world of coronavirus and not get caught up in trying to fit coronavirus inside of this world," he said. "You can't expect just to throw football back in and think that the virus is going to kneel down to football. You have to look through different ways of making sure people stay healthy."

Utah's Conley, like rest of NBA, waiting on decision

Associated Press

Mike Conley is waiting for further instructions. So is the rest of the NBA.

The league is continuing to work through multiple return-to-play scenarios, with two people with knowledge of the situation saying Wednesday that Orlando — which has been talked about for several weeks — along with Las Vegas and Houston remain under consideration. The people spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the league has made no final decisions.

More than half of the league's teams have opened facilities for voluntary player workouts, with Minnesota expected to be the next to do so on Thursday. Utah is among the teams that has opened, but Conley is still at his home in Ohio and has yet to return to Salt Lake City

for those sessions at the Jazz facility.

"I've been working as if we're coming back," Conley said Wednesday. "If anything, I'd like to know a direction, just to know whether to keep putting the foot on the pedal or, you know, back off a little bit and rest easier if we're not playing until the following year and following season. So, I think it just is going to be a wait-and-see kind of game. I'll be ready, one way or another."

Also Wednesday, Jared Dudley of the Los Angeles Lakers said he is "90% confident" that the NBA is coming back this season and that he believes players owe it to the fans to try to finish the season.

But Dudley also said that the notion of the league resuming in a "bubble" has been misguided, and that players will be allowed to leave the NBA campus, wherever it is — knowing

they'll be running a risk by doing that.

"If you come back with corona, you can't play," Dudley said. "So we're going to be tested all the time, and so it would be smart of teams ... all the top guys that we have, we'll be wrapping them in bubble and not letting them go anywhere. Let's just be honest, they can't leave. And so, you would want that to be a team rule."

Wednesday marked the end of the 10th week since the NBA shut down on March 11, a move that came once it was known that Jazz center Rudy Gobert tested positive for the coronavirus. The pandemic halted a season that had 259 games left to play, but none of those games have been officially canceled yet.

Ordinarily, the NBA would be into the conference-finals portion of the playoff schedule at this point. Players who were

paid May 15 saw 25% of those checks withheld in anticipation of some games being canceled, and if no more regular-season games are played they could lose a total of about \$850 million in gross salary.

The league remains hopeful that some sort of decision on whether the season can resume can be made in the coming weeks. Commissioner Adam Silver detailed a two-to-four-week window when he met with members of the National Basketball Players Association electronically on May 8, and that window would theoretically end June 5.

The next steps would likely include additional guidance from the league on when teams can expand their voluntary workouts; at this point, no more than four players are allowed in a facility at a given time, and some have enacted even stricter policies on their own.

Hamlin earns second victory

Associated Press

DARLINGTON, S.C. — Denny Hamlin won NASCAR's first Wednesday race since 1984 when rain stopped the event with 20 laps remaining at Darlington Raceway.

The Daytona 500 winner was out front but out of fresh tires and trying to hang on when he got unintended help from Joe Gibbs Racing teammate Kyle Busch. The reigning Cup champion caused Chase Elliott to crash eight laps earlier to bring out the caution.

A furious Elliott waited for Busch on the apron of the track and flipped Busch the middle finger as he passed. As NASCAR cleaned the track, it started to rain and the cars were called to pit road under red flag.

It was an already active evening at "The Track Too Tough To Tame" as drivers were rac-

ing against the field and the weather. As the drivers sat in their cars waiting for NASCAR to pull the plug, a handful of Elliott's crew members sat on the pit wall staring down Busch.

One of Busch's crew members sat between them on the wall and NASCAR eventually ordered everyone back over the wall. Eight minutes later, the race was called and Busch was greeted by Alan Gustafson, Elliott's crew chief and Busch's former crew chief when he drove for Hendrick Motorsports, for a conversation between two masked competitors.

Busch immediately copped to the error.

"There's no question I made a mistake and just misjudged the gap," Busch said. "They're upset, they're mad. I'm not just going to fix it and we're going to go have ice cream tomor-

row. They're going to dwell on it and I'm sure there are repercussions of it I'm going to have down the road."

Meanwhile, a fox was scampering across the deserted track and Hamlin, wearing a mask that depicted his actual smile, was having a muted celebration in the rain.

He walked to victory lane under a large black umbrella. It was a 1-2 finish for Joe Gibbs Racing and Toyota. Hamlin has won three times at Darlington and has two wins this season.

"I got my happy face on. Made sure I brought it with me," Hamlin said of his mask. He said he also had masks made with a "sad face" but only brought the smiling masks to a track he counts among his favorites.

Hamlin thought he was in good shape when he made his last pit stop but a caution by

Clint Bowyer, who won the first two stages of the race, jumbled the strategy with 34 laps remaining.

Hamlin had no choice but to stay out on the track, and his crew chief Chris Gabehart told him over the radio, "you ain't going to like it, but we're going to have to eat our vegetables here."

Hamlin, the leader because he didn't pit on the restart with 29 to go, only had to hold off traffic for one lap before the Busch and Elliott collision. The rain then came and Hamlin earned the trophy.

"It's a driver's race track," he said. "You can do different things to make (the car) handle. We got it right."

The race marked the first time in NASCAR history that the Cup Series had two points-paying races at the same track in one week.

NCAA to lift ban on football, basketball workouts

Associated Press

The NCAA Division I Council voted Wednesday to lift a moratorium on voluntary workouts by football and basketball players effective June 1 as a growing number of college leaders expressed confidence that fall sports will be possible in some form despite concerns about the coronavirus pandemic.

This decision clears the way for individual workouts by athletes, mostly on their own, subject to safety and health protocols decided by their schools or local health officials.

NCAA officials noted that the workouts could go on as long as all local, state and federal regulations are followed. The status of voluntary workouts for other sports will be determined later.

"We encourage each school to use its discretion to make the best decisions possible for football and basketball student-athletes within the appropriate resocialization framework," Penn athletic director and council chair M. Grace Calhoun said in a statement. "Allowing for voluntary athletics activity acknowledges that reopening our campuses will be an individual decision but should be based on advice from

medical experts."

From Notre Dame to LSU and more, a number of schools have announced plans to reopen campuses for the fall semester and conferences have begun setting up plans for how to play football amid the pandemic. The latest came this week with the Florida State system announcing plans for its 12 schools and more than 420,000 students.

Many questions remain, including specific safety protocols and whether fans would be allowed if games proceed.

Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith said in conference call Wednesday that he believes the Buckeyes could safely play home games with 20,000 to 30,000 fans in its 105,000-seat stadium.

Smith said he hadn't figured out yet how those 20,000 to 30,000 spectators would be chosen. He said masks and other precautions would be required.

Smith added that Ohio State is ready to open the 15,000-square-foot Woody Hayes Athletic Center to athletes starting June 8 if the NCAA allows it. About 10 players at a time would be allowed to work out on staggered schedules with social-distancing and other hygiene precautions in place. Some coaches returned to the complex on a lim-

ited basis this week.

Middle Tennessee athletic director Chris Massaro said his school plans to take the temperature of players daily and make sure they are wearing masks. Massaro has even discussed moving some equipment from the weight room to the Red Floyd Stadium concourse to make sure workouts allow social distancing.

The presidents of Miami and Notre Dame said in separate interviews they expect the football season to be played.

Notre Dame President Rev. John Jenkins told MSNBC he expects to have clarity on how — or if — the football season can happen in the next few weeks.

"The team itself, I feel we can manage that one," Jenkins said. "Then the question is people in the stands. We have an 85,000-person stadium. Can we get 85,000 people in there? That will be a big challenge to do that. But could we get a smaller number — 10,000, 15,000, 20,000? I don't know."

Miami President Julio Frenk told CNN he hopes the Hurricanes can play this fall and that safety would be the top priority.

"They will probably play in empty stadiums, like so many other sports," Frenk said.