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# Billings Gazette

## Back to the ballpark

Legion AA baseball kicks off  
Wednesday **SPORTS, PAGE B1**

## Sheet pan skeptic no more

Chicken-veggie combo's ease convinces **MONTANA FOOD, B6**



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LARRY MAVER, BILLINGS GAZETTE

### CUDDLING KITS

A trio of fox kits warms in the morning sun near Shiloh Road on Tuesday.

# Phase 2 reopening to begin on June 1

Restrictions loosen;  
travel quarantine  
order to end

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People will be able to gather in groups of up to 50 and capacity will increase to 75% at restaurants, bars, breweries and other businesses as Montana moves into the next phase of a gradual reopening June 1.

That same day the state will also lift a 14-day travel quarantine that applied to those coming into Montana for non-work purposes, Gov. Steve Bullock said in a call with local reporters Tuesday.

Since the lifting of a stay-at-home order April 26, the state has added 22 new cases of the



THOM BRIDGE, INDEPENDENT RECORD

Gov. Steve Bullock tours Montana's commodities warehouse Tuesday where the stockpile of personal protective equipment, including the 500,000 N95 masks that arrived Monday from FEMA are stored.

novel coronavirus. Bullock said Montana has continued to meet metrics to lift restrictions, including a downward trajectory in the number of tests that come back positive for the virus,

the ability to quickly trace the contacts of known cases to stop the further spread of the virus, sufficient capacity in the health

Please see **RESTRICTIONS**, Page A7

# Officials differ on top goal

**CHRISTOPHER RUGABER, LISA MASCARO AND MARTIN CRUTSINGER**  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Facing the gravest U.S. economic crisis in decades, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell offered Congress contrasting views Tuesday of what the government's most urgent priority should be.

Striking a theme frequently pushed by President Donald Trump, Mnuchin warned that prolonged business shutdowns would pose long-term threats to the economy, from widespread bankruptcies for small businesses to long-term unemployment for millions of Americans.

"There is risk of permanent damage," Mnuchin said.

Powell, by contrast, stressed,

as he has in recent weeks, that the nation is gripped by an economic shock "without modern precedent" and that Congress must consider providing further financial aid soon to support states, localities, businesses and individuals to prevent an even deeper recession.

"What Congress has done to date has been remarkably timely and forceful," Powell said. "But we need to step back and ask, 'Is it enough?'"

Their points of emphasis reflect the contours of a debate occurring across the country, among individuals, business people and political leaders, about when and under what circumstances the economy should reopen and what further help the

Please see **OFFICIALS**, Page A7

# Murder suspect made threats

Charges state man  
talked about killing  
ex-girlfriend, her kids

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The Ballantine man accused of killing his ex-girlfriend in an assault early Friday morning had threatened her and others in the days before her death, according to charges.

Steven Craig Phillips, 37, pleaded not guilty Tuesday morning in Yellowstone County District Court to deliberate homicide in the death of 34-year-old Jennifer L. McCollum. Judge

Michael Moses set bail at \$1 million, as requested by prosecutors. The defense did not contest the amount.

Phillips had been harassing McCollum since they broke up a month ago, and eventually threatened her, saying he'd thought about breaking into her house at night and killing her and her children, according to McCollum's boyfriend at the time of her death, who spoke with sheriff's deputies.

Phillips lived with his mother in the home next door to McCollum in the trailer court at 2135 West Arrow Creek Road.

Please see **SUSPECT**, Page A7

# Details of COVID-19 aid to farmers unveiled

**ELLYN FERGUSON**  
Tribune News Service

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration unveiled the ground rules Tuesday for distributing \$16 billion in direct payments to farmers and ranchers feeling financial pain from COVID-19, but several agriculture groups say producers may need more federal aid in the future.

The Agriculture Department will use \$9.5 billion provided by Congress to pay farmers and

ranchers facing price declines and \$6.5 billion from the Commodity Credit Corp. to make direct payments to farmers hurt by market disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The department also adjusted the limits for payments to individual recipients.

The details come a month after Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue broadly outlined a total aid package of up to \$16 billion in payments and up to \$3 billion in com-

modity purchases for food banks and other nonprofit organizations. The department has moved ahead with awarding \$1.2 billion in contracts for the Farmers to Families Food Box purchase program.

President Donald Trump hosted Perdue, several farmers and American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall as he announced that signup at local Farm Service Agency offices for payments will start May 26.

The USDA provided more de-

tails in an announcement.

The \$9.5 billion in payments, using funds provided in a March economic relief bill, will go to farmers and ranchers hit by

price declines of at least 5% from mid-January 2020 to mid-April 2020. Growers of crops

Please see **FARMERS**, Page A7



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