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coming up next on NewsDepth...

We're visiting the U.S. Virgin islands to see what's next in a paradise pulled apart by hurricane Irma.

And we'll look back on some heroic efforts to protect Florida's animals from the storm.

See why some parents are upset about new tardy fees at school - and weigh in yourself on finding a solution to arriving *after the bell*.

Plus, we celebrate citizenship with some of the nation's newest members.

NewsDepth is now!

Picking up the pieces in paradise won't be an easy task.

Hello everyone, I'm Rick Jackson. Thanks for joining us.

The US Virgin Islands are struggling after hurricane Irma sideswiped them last week.

The Virgin Islands are an archipelago in the Caribbean, between north and south America.

Archipelago means a group of islands. These territories are held by America and the people who live here are considered U.S. Citizens, though they don't have the right to vote for our nation's president.

St. John, the smallest of the US Virgin Islands, is expected to take years to rebuild. Reporter Isa Soares visited the popular vacation destination.

Isa: once a lush island, covered in rolling green hills and pristine beaches... Now a battered wasteland -- whipped by the ferocious power of Irma.

On the ground -- trees have been shaken... Naked to their bark.

Power lines have been toppled.

And homes -- are left teetering on the edge of this land -- now stripped bare.

Steve Smith was one of the lucky ones.

His home partially unscathed.

The next-door neighbor's house -- a reminder of what could have been.

Reporter: completely destroyed...

Steve smith, resident of St. John: this is completely destroyed. And this is the kind of way the one above us is also. You see the refrigerator is in the living room, the sliding glass doors are in his kitchen.

Despite the change in scenery and the destruction in every corner... Steve smith isn't budging. This is island perseverance.

Steve smith, resident of St. John: it used to be a little bit better. That's greenery. The destruction I'm seeing is horrible. But I'm not leaving.

The reality may not sustain this optimism.

Here there's no water, power and cellular service... The only signal... This building in the entire island.

By the dock, volunteers delivering supplies are their only connection to the outside world.

They were also their first helping hand... Arriving on shore days after hurricane Irma hit with water, perishable goods and food.

Megan -- a resident of St. John is staying put for now.

Megan, resident of St. John: it's hard, I mean, a lot of families have been here for generations and this is their whole world. And if you leave, the question is where do you go. And not knowing what you're going to come back to is also a big concern.

A catch 22 only further exacerbated by looting and lawlessness... Which according to locals has eased somewhat since the navy and coastguard have been patrolling these streets.

A much needed presence for an island that has always feared being forgotten.

Isa Soares, St. John, in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Rick: Thanks Isa. Florida's residents are also cleaning up from hurricane Irma. President trump made his way to Naples, to help dish out a welcome meal to survivors of the storm.

He had this to say to them.

Trump: "*I just want to tell you, 'we are there for you, 100 percent.' I'll be back here numerous times. This is a state that I know very well, as you understand, and these are special, special people, and we love them. Thank you.*"

the efforts of some of *these* special people helped to save animals in need across the state.

Like these two manatees that were stranded along Florida's gulf coast.

Hurricane Irma caused a dangerously low tide near Bradenton and the manatees got stuck in what appeared to be knee-deep mud.

But a caring group of people managed to roll the manatees onto a tarp, so they could be moved to

deeper water. Manatees are considered a threatened species that face the risk of future endangerment.

This couple in key west braved the hurricane to stay behind with eight dolphins at the facility they run. Their nonprofit brings joy to veterans and people with developmental problems by introducing them to the dolphins.

Island dolphin care director of zoology Philip admire and his wife Michele Crosetto, explain why they just had to stay.

Philip: *"leaving these dolphins to me - it would equate it to tying your dog up in the yard and just evacuating. We couldn't leave these dolphins. You don't know what's going to happen. You don't know what kind of danger is going to present itself."*

wow - and check out these little guys taking cover before the storm hit. The workers at Busch gardens in Tampa made sure to lead the flock of flamingos and the rest of their 12-thousand some animals to shelters before hurricane Irma.

Hut, 2 ,3, 4, keep a straight line guys!

Sometimes, keeping animals and people safe during a storm means heading right into it.

Scientists, and special military pilots known as hurricane hunters use their bravery to collect important data from within a hurricane. It is information that can help us figure out where the storm is heading and just how bad it might get.

When hurricane Irma rolled around, a team of hunters from Biloxi, Mississippi headed into the storm. Reporter Cameron Edgeworth rode along with them... and has more on the daring flight.

Wc130j took off Saturday at midnight for hurricane Irma.

--nats--

It's one of the many hurricanes the aircraft has flown into to gather important data.

But even veteran hurricane hunter pilot, major Steve Patook with the air force reserve had his concerns flying into hurricane Irma.

Major Steve Pituch: "Irma's the biggest, well not size wise, but strength. You know she's the biggest they got in the Atlantic. So it'll be interesting to see from my personal perspective how that feels, how violent it's going to be on the aircraft."

At one point those concerns became reality

Cameron Edgeworth: "as we are nearing the storm right now we're experiencing a lot of turbulence. The pilot just told us to sit down and strap up."

And when we got off the flight we learned the plane had been struck by lightning. Fortunately, no one was hurt.

--nats--

Despite the risk the mission is essential to gather lifesaving data about the storm.

The team gathers it all by using a device called a dropsonde.

Meteorologist lieutenant colonel Kayla woods explains why it's so important.

Lt. Colonel Kayla woods: "it's a really good indicator of how strong the storm is, and whether or not it's intensifying, or weakening, and that actually comes from that little instrument we release."

Cameron Edgeworth: "as we're in Cuban airspace right now, we are getting closer and closer to the eye of hurricane Irma."

As we flew into the eye of Irma, crews dropped several dropsondes from the air craft.

--nats--

The data was used to determine the direction Irma shifted as well as the storm weakening to a category 3 hurricane.

Lieutenant woods says hurricane Irma still has the potential to strengthen again.

But that won't stop lieutenant major woods or major patook from getting back in the dangerous conditions.

Lt. Colonel Kayla woods: "I lived through hurricane Katrina. I saw the devastation from that. I would rather fly through these storms any day, than be on the ground."

Maj. Steve pituch: "I can save more lives by being in the plane, getting the data, getting sent off to gargus so they can process the warnings and get people out of the way."

Flying with the hurricane hunters into hurricane Irma, I'm Cameron Edgeworth

Rick: whoa! Talk about bravery!

If you want to find out more about what it's like to be a hurricane hunter, head to our website NewsDepth dot ideastream dot org. Beneath the hurricane hunter story, you'll find links with more info.

We can't all fly into the storms to collect important data, but we can all do our part to help when disaster strikes. Even though Ohioans didn't feel the impact of hurricane Harvey that struck Texas at the start of September, a group of Cincinnati residents made sure to lend a helping hand from far away.

T.j. Parker has the story.

T.j. Parker, reporting / on-camera intro:

"more than 400 volunteers spent several hours to make 150-thousand meals at "a child's hope international" to send to those in Texas and Louisiana..

Another way the tri-state is helping those in need."

Bill Wegman, volunteer:

"we talk about changing the world and these people here are doing it one pack at a time one person at a time."

Making a big difference, hundreds of volunteers got together at "a child's hope international" to prepare and send high protein meals, water, hygiene packets and blankets to the victims of hurricane Harvey, many of whom are still displaced- weeks after the storm hit.

Larry Bergeron, a child's hope international:

"we obviously want to help our fellow American citizens and we responded through the work of volunteers"

"a child's hope international" executive director - Larry Bergeron - says they put the call out for volunteers through their website and social media and those folks answered.

Bill Wegman, volunteer:

"it's a great way to serve."

Bill Wegman is volunteering with his church.

Bill Wegman, volunteer:

"this is just a great way to try to help those that are going to be in need and those that are in need."

The organization will fill a 53-foot tractor trailer with the prepared meals, water and items and send it to organizations who are helping the people in Texas and Louisiana.

Bill wegman, volunteer:

"we're never going to again never going to see the people that this foods going to go to who it's going to impact but we know where it's going we know how what it's going to and we know what the purpose of it."

And as these people fill a truck to send to the victims of hurricane Harvey, they are also thinking about what's to come with hurricane Irma..

Bill wegman, volunteer:

"we've actually got friends that are down in Miami right now that are serving down and they're working at an orphanage and so yeah we're just praying for them and keeping them in mind."

T.j. Parker, reporting:

"the truck with supplies is expected to head to Texas and Louisiana early next week."

Rick: thanks, T.J. I wonder if any of those meals included a good ol' pb and j sandwich? Peanut butter can be a yummy lunch option, unless you have an allergy to it.

An allergy is a negative response by your body to a specific substance. You might have someone in your class who is allergic to peanut butter - eating it could make them very sick.

The food and drug administration is the part of our government that makes sure food is safe for us to eat. The department just announced that they've got some new guidelines about peanuts. They found that introducing peanuts to babies between four and ten months old can *reduce* their chance of being allergic to peanut products, when they grow up.

The food and drug administration said they will soon label which peanut foods are okay for infants.

In this week's poll we want to know: what are you allergic to? You can answer: specific foods, plants, animals or insects or.... I'm not allergic to anything.

It's good to know who around you has allergies, so maybe you can leave the peanut butter at home.

While we're here, let's take a look at last week's first-of-the-season poll results. We asked: did you watch the solar eclipse this summer. And 54 percent of you said you saw the big event in person, 28 percent of you watched on screen and 18 percent of you missed it.

Well don't let staring at the sun or packing your lunch make you late for school - especially if you attend a high school in Utah, where students are being charged a fine for being tardy.

It's got some parents pretty upset. Reporter Tamara Vaifanua tells us why.

Julie Rae/ parent:

"we received an email from the school district that outlined the policy."

Julie Rae's son attends Stansbury high where a new policy has been put in place to curb tardiness.

Students who are chronically late will be required to pay a fine.

The first offense is a warning.

If they're caught a second time they'll have to pay a \$3 dollar fine and after that the fee goes up to \$5.

Only administrators, not teachers, will issue the tickets.

Julie Rae/ parent:

"I feel like it's flawed logic on behalf of the school."

Rae agrees the fines can teach students personal accountability and responsibility but she says administrators should have consulted with parents beforehand to get their input.

Julie Rae/ parent:

"I think it's just going to be a Band-Aid to an actual problem that could be resolved with different methods."

Stansbury high's principal Gailynn Warr and assistant principal Cody Reutzel tell me they're already seeing a big improvement.

Gailynn Warr/ principal:

"we just implemented it on Tuesday and this week we've handed out just warnings, no fines at all."

Cody Reutzel/ asst. Principal:

"what we're really trying to target is those periods between classes where really it's a choice. It's a personal decision of whether you're going to walk from class a to class b and be on time."

But some parents like Brett Dennison thinks the school is just trying to nickel and dime students.

Brett Dennison/ parent:

"there's a lot of families out there that are economically stressed. They're not gonna be able to pay these fines."

If students can't pay the fees they can take lunch detention or show a clean tardy attendance for a few weeks.

The money collected from the fines will go towards a school fund that will go directly back to students for incentives.

Gailynn Warr/ principal:

"we're not after the money. We just want our kids to be in class."

In Tooele county, Tamara Vaifanua

RICK: Thanks, Tamara. Being punctual is a good habit to learn through school. But of course sometimes things get in our way and make us late. Do you think there should be a consequence for being late to school or class?

Write to us and let us know. If you think yes, there should be a consequence - tell us why and what should it be? And if you don't think there should be a consequence, tell us why not?

Send your emails to NewsDepth and ideastream dot org or fill out the inbox section on our website.

Maybe you can come up with a creative solution - like these librarians in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

They hosted a day to let kids read off their library fines at the L.E. Phillips library. Every fifteen minutes

of reading knocked a dollar of fines off a kid's bill.

Shelly Collins-Fuerbringer, library youth services coordinator *"the parents love it. I just had a couple of parents in on Thursday -- and their kids were able to completely take care of their fines."*

summer jobs are another good way for teens to earn money to pay for library fines; or back to school shopping, but when the summer ends and those teens do go back to school, it can leave businesses in need of workers.

Reporter Jay Korff has details on some Maryland pools that are hiring hard workers to fill in, when the teens head back to class.

Summer pool pkg:

If there's something you can count on as the summer season winds down...

Nats

It's that workers are in short supply at neighborhood pools.

If they aren't on vacation they're heading off to college.

Scott Vincent, RSV pools owner

"hiring lifeguards is definitely a difficult process."

To solve this problem RSV pools owner Scott Vincent ...

Nats

Partnered with Tom Liniak to create an innovative,

Tom Liniak, JSSA

"the results are overwhelming positive."

First of its kind program involving teenagers on the autism spectrum.

...is a prime example of how this program is succeeding.

Nasir Abdur-Rahim, 18-year-old

"it takes a lot of work but it pays off really great."

Nasir, and 15 other students with special needs, work as gate guards for RSV managed pools in Maryland...

Nats

Checking patron's passes.

Nasir Abdur-Rahim, 18-year-old

It's teaching you how to do things in the real world: communicate with others, self-advocate if you need the help and also learning a lot of new things, making new friends."

Jessa, a Montgomery county based non-profit that finds employment for people with special needs, spearheaded this overwhelming successful program.

Madison Pizer, RSV pools

"it's good for the company because we have people we can rely on."

Madison Pizer with RSV pools hired the gate guards who, after extensive training, have far and away outperformed their counterparts.

Madison Pizer, RSV pools

"16. 16 students working for us and I can tell you, not a complaint. Always on time. Always in uniform. Super happy to be there."

In fact, this product has done so well that RSV pools hopes to double the number of hires next summer.

But for Pizer this is about more than positive employee evaluations.

Her younger brother mason is on the spectrum.

"for my family it was terrifying to think that mason might not be able to be on his own."

Last summer Pizer arranged for mason to work as a gate guard.

He performed beyond expectations.

Madison Pizer, RSV pools

"for me, mason can do this. He's going to be okay. He can have a job. He can have a life of his own. Just because he has autism it's not going to limit him."

Tom Liniak

"to me this is the new way. This is the reality. I'm not sure I discovered this. I don't think I did. I think it's been there. I think it's for all of us to discover.

Rick: thanks jay. It's cool to see people of all types being included in our neighborhoods and in our nation.

This weekend we celebrate citizenship day on September 17th. On this day in 1787 the leaders of our country signed the U.S. Constitution that formed our government and outlines our rights as citizens.

If you aren't born a us citizen you *can* apply to become one. This process is called naturalization.

In this week's buckeye beat, we're going to see some of America's newest citizens who finished the naturalization process this summer - in Cleveland.

Alt line: September is library card month - a fun time to check out what events your local library has in store. It's also an important month for being an American. This weekend we celebrate citizenship on September 17th. On this day in 1787 the leaders of our country signed the U.S. Constitution that formed our government and outlines our rights as citizens.

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[buckeye beat: new citizens]

rick: what better way to celebrate being an American, than to play a game of America's favorite pastime - baseball! Here in Cleveland the Indians know how to do it right - last week they broke the record for the most consecutive wins in the American league with their 22nd straight victory!

To celebrate along with them, Mary Fecteau's got some baseball history, in this week's know Ohio.

Mary: hi! I'm just getting ready to knock this know Ohio out of the park, because I'm talkin' baseball today – and it's a pretty big deal here in the buckeye state. Not only do we boast two major league teams – but we also have a bunch of minor league teams from the Toledo mud hens to the Columbus clippers.

And, historically, Ohio has seen many more teams – in fact, professional baseball began here. In 1869, ten men in Cincinnati were the first to earn a salary for playing baseball as part of the Cincinnati red stockings. The manager of the team, Harry Wright, also played on the team as a center fielder – and the red stockings went undefeated in the 1869 season, but just a year later the team disbanded and Harry and many of his teammates moved to Boston to start the Boston red stockings – which laid the groundwork for a couple teams you may have heard of: The Boston red sox and the Atlanta braves.

But baseball was alive and well in Ohio! Up in Cleveland, the Forest Citys were another early professional team. And early Cleveland baseball boasted some big stars like legendary pitcher – and Ohioan – Cy Young...of course, there were also some rough patches, like, for instance, the 1899 Cleveland Spiders -- who, to this day, hold the unfortunate distinction of "worst team in baseball history," after a record 134 losses.

But the sport known as America's pastime was not open to all Americans – for instance, African Americans, although excellent ballplayers, were not usually included in these early professional teams. One notable exception was Moses Fleetwood Walker, a talented catcher from Mount Pleasant, Ohio who became the first African American to play major league baseball. Walker played for the Toledo Blue Stockings 63 years before Jackie Robinson is credited with breaking baseball's color barrier. Unfortunately, Walker was only able to play a few seasons before an official rule was passed banning African Americans from professional baseball.

In response, some enterprising African Americans set up their own leagues – and Ohio had many teams in the so-called negro leagues such as the Dayton Marcos and the Cleveland Buckeyes.

Obviously, baseball has come a long way since the Cincinnati red stockings, but if you're interested in seeing how the game used to be played, there are teams that play vintage baseball – like the Ohio village muffins in Columbus, whose version is a bit more gentlemanly than what we're used to today.

Rick: thanks, Mary. Some of you guys have been hitting home runs in your home towns. Last week we asked you to tell us how you are helping in your community. Let's find out what you're up to by checking out our inbox!

Riley from e.g. Shaw elementary seems to be doing a lot of good work! She wrote:

"hi! I'm Riley and I'm in fifth grade and one way I help my community is I am a girl scout and I clean up parks and help put up decorations. I also go camping and clean up the cabin and the camp. I also foster dogs our organization is called puppy pals. Remember don't shop, adopt!

Carly from Westwood likes to keep it clean outside too.

"I help my community by not littering. This helps my community because the more you litter the dirtier and less safe your community becomes. When I finish my food or drink I dispose of it properly. I recycle, reduce and reuse instead of littering. It is good to keep your community clean - that is what I try to do - and to encourage people to not litter. That is how I help my community. "

Ruby from Maryland elementary shared how she helps the people in her life.

"I don't exactly do this in my community, but when I go to my grandparent's house, we go to a nursing home and push the residents' wheelchairs to the church section of the building. We go around the nursing home and ask the person whose door we stop at if they would like to go to church. If they say 'yes,' we push them to worship. After we are done, we sit in the church and sometimes I play the piano."

Finally Abbie from Rock Creek elementary wrote to us

"we watch news depth every week and it's awesome! My answer for this week is that I am a cross walker at my school, which means I help kids walk across the street so they don't get hurt by cars. By this, I help the Rock Creek community so their kids, grandchildren, and more don't get hit by a car or get injured by a car. I am in sixth grade so I get to help all of the younger kids behind me. I walk out with my partner who helps me with the job. Parker and I hold out flags to cars so they know there is a child walking. I feel this is important because I help children and their parents be safe. In conclusion, this is my answer for this week's poll on how I help people be safe."

Wow you are making us all so proud.

Thanks for writing Riley, Carly, Ruby, and Abbie. I'm sure your community is grateful too!

I've got another do-gooder to inspire you this week.

11-year-old Frank Giaccio wrote to President Trump, offering to cut the White House lawn. Last week his wish was granted.

Frank said he started his own lawn mowing business in falls church, Virginia. Usually he said he charges about \$8 to mow a lawn, but this one he did for free.

Frank: "well, I always wanted to do something big. And so, I was like, why not we just start here? And this seemed like it got the perfect example."

president trump took a break from work to meet with him, and thank him for a job well done.

For dreaming big and wanting to serve, frank gets this week's NewsDepth a plus!

If I remember correctly -- NewsCat had a story about do-gooders too. Let's check in with her for this week's petting zoo!

Hey NewsCat, I thought you were hard at work not just lounging in the sun! Get a move on. Wow she's really typing fast this week! Looks like she knows right where she's headed.

Ohh! I see she's found some folks taking care of the pets impacted by the hurricane. Find out where these furry friends are headed in the full video by clicking the petting zoo button on our website.

Thank you NewsCat!

I have one more extra assignment for all of you this week - check out the map on our website and let us know where you're watching from. Last year we had more than 450 different classrooms check in with us! But we're wiping the map clean.

We've also got a new NewsCat poster for each classroom that fills out our map - so teachers - be sure to add your school address when checking in!

Alright I'll leave you too it! As always we want to hear from you. Write to us at NewsDepth at 1375 Euclid avenue, Cleveland, Ohio, 44115 or email us at NewsDepth at ideastream dot org. You can also tweet us at newsdepth-ohio.

Get those letters in so we can feature you on next week's show!

Till then. I'm rick Jackson. Thanks for watching!