KABUL, Afghanistan — Two American service members and an Afghan soldier were killed in an apparent insider attack in Afghanistan on Saturday, military officials from both countries said Sunday.

Staff Sgts. Javier Jaguar Gutierrez, of San Antonio, Texas, and Antonio Rey Rodriguez, of Las Cruces, N.M., both 28, were the Americans killed, the Pentagon said in a statement.

Six American and three Afghan troops were also said to be injured in the attack in the Sherzad district in eastern Nangarhar province. The conditions of those injured were not specified.

A joint U.S.-Afghan force came under fire after a meeting with local leaders in the district capital, according to a statement released Sunday by Col. Sonny Leggett, a spokesman for U.S. forces in Afghanistan.

“Current reports indicate an individual in an Afghan uniform opened fire on the combined U.S. and Afghan force with a machine gun,” Leggett said. “The wounded service members are receiving medical treatment at a U.S. facility.”

The motive behind the attack wasn’t initially known and an investigation has been launched, Leggett said.

Gutierrez and Rodriguez were both

SEE INSIDER ON PAGE 5
Administration ends automakers’ antitrust probe

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration has ended its antitrust probe into a deal between California and four of the world’s biggest automakers after failing to find that the companies’ conduct violated the law.

The Justice Department had aimed to determine whether antitrust laws were violated by Ford, Honda, Volkswagen and BMW in reaching the July deal with California. Under the deal, the automakers planned to comply with pollution and related mileage requirements that are tougher than the federal standards sought by President Donald Trump.

In September, the administration revoked California’s authority to set auto mileage standards, asserting that only the federal government can regulate greenhouse gas emissions and fuel economy. Democrats accused the administration of using antitrust powers to target political opponents with the investigation. A top Justice Department official defended the probe before Congress and denied any political motivation or influence from the White House.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom, a Democrat, said Friday that the Justice Department’s “trumped-up charges were always a sham — a blatant attempt by the Trump administration to prevent more automakers from joining California and agreeing to stronger emissions standards.”
By Cailltin Doornbos and Hana Kusumoto
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — A maritime ferry has carried 40 Japan Self-Defense Forces personnel from Yokosuka to Yokohama, where they are rendering aid to thousands of cruise-ship passengers quarantined for possible exposure to the new coronavirus.

The 17,000-ton Hakuo, chartered by the Ministry of Defense, was berthed at the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force base in Yokosuka and viable Thursday from the Yokosuka Naval Base pier less than a mile across the bay. The ferry has 94 rooms and is being used by the Self-Defense Forces as a base for those assisting passengers on the Diamond Princess cruise ship quarantined in Yokohama since Tuesday.

As of Friday morning, 61 people on the ship had tested positive for coronavirus, according to Kyodo News.

Reuters reported Thursday that the Hakuo could host Diamond Princess passengers, causing a commotion among some U.S. base residents. Some posted pictures on social media of the Hakuo, calling it the “SS Coronavirus.”

The defense ministry decided later to employ the ferry as sleeping quarters for its personnel, a joint staff spokesman told Stars and Stripes on Friday. Some Japanese officials customarily speak on condition of anonymity. The Self-Defense Forces personnel aboard the Hakuo, which is now berthed at Yokohama’s Hanomaku Pier near the Diamond Princess, began tending to the cruise ship’s passengers and crew Friday, the joint staff spokesman said. They are providing medical care and other assistance.

The Diamond Princess had been on a 16-day cruise from Yokohama that made stops in Hong Kong, Vietnam, Taiwan and other parts of Japan before returning to Yokohama on Tuesday, according to The Japan Times. The quarantine was extended after a guest tested positive for coronavirus six days after leaving the ship in Hong Kong on Jan. 25.

He added 2,666 guests and 1,045 crew aboard the Diamond Princess on Wednesday, according to Princess Cruise Lines.

The ship is to remain under quarantine until Feb. 19 at Yokohama’s Daikoku Pier, just across the bay from the city’s popular Red Brick Warehouse.

The coronavirus causes fever, cough and shortness of breath, sometimes with fatal outcomes. It was first reported in Wuhan, China on Dec. 31, and China’s National Health Commission on Friday said 636 of the more than 31,000 people infected in the country have died. To date, there are no treatments or vaccinations.

By Aya Ichihashi
Stars and Stripes

NAHA, Okinawa — A Marine Corps spouse who raised more than $11,000 through a GoFundMe campaign gave the money to Okinawa’s governor Thursday to help restore Shuri Castle, a landmark destroyed by fire Oct. 31.

More than 200 people, mostly U.S. military members and their families serving on Okinawa or who had served there previously, as well as Okinawans living in the U.S. gave to the fund, said Mari Gregory, 41. She and her husband, Maj. Indigo Gregory, 44, of Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., were stationed at Camp Courtney, Okinawa, until summer 2019.

“Through the fundraising, I’ve really felt how much people love Okinawa,” Mari Gregory told Stars and Stripes before the presentation. “And even if you don’t live in Okinawa, Okinawa still stays with you in your heart wherever you go in the world. And it’s been demonstrated through the fundraising that people literally from around the world donated because they want to see the castle to be rebuilt and they love Okinawa just as much as everybody else.

Shuri Castle, which dates to the 15th century, was destroyed during World War II and rebuilt in 1992. It was considered a symbol of Okinawa’s struggle to recover from World War II.

It was reported ablaze at 2:21 a.m. Oct. 31 and burned for more than 11 hours. A total of 171 firefighters responded, but the fire consumed several buildings, including the castle’s iconic main hall, called the Seiden.

The Naha City Fire Department finished its investigation at the end of January, a spokesman for the agency said Thursday. Its report is due soon, he said.

“We should be able to announce it by the end of February,” the spokesman said.

Some government officials in Japan customarily speak on condition of anonymity. An initial police investigation yielded little about the cause of the fire, the Okinawa police spokesman said.

“The fire was too strong, and everything was burned down,” he said.

On the day of the fire, Mari Gregory started a GoFundMe campaign to help restore the landmark, she said. She was not alone. As of Wednesday, the prefectural government has received nearly $10 million in donations toward restoring the castle.

“I feel happy that if we can contribute just a little bit for the restoration of Shuri Castle, maybe it won’t be in our lifetime that we’ll see it again,” Mari Gregory said, “but our children and grandchildren still will enjoy the castle.”

Minister Shinzo Abe vowed in November to rebuild Shuri Castle because of its importance to Okinawans.

“It is government’s responsibility to rebuild Shuri Castle as early as possible and support it financially,” he said.

Okinawa Gov. Denny Tamaki, accepting the donation from Mari Gregory, said: “We will do our best to rebuild the Shuri Castle as early as possible so you can show the castle to your daughters one day.”

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By Seth Robson
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA AIR BASE, Japan — An airman killed in a motorcycle accident Wednesday at the home of U.S. Forces Japan in western Tokyo served as a crew chief for C-130J Super Hercules aircraft, the Air Force said in a statement Friday.

Senior Airman Michael Spradlin, 28, of Yokosuka’s 374th Maintenance Squadron, was pronounced dead at approximately 8:25 a.m. Wednesday after being taken to the base medical facility, officials said. No other vehicles were involved in the accident, which was still under investigation Friday.

The statement, which said Spradlin had been stationed at Yokota since May, did not list his hometown.

“My heart goes out to Michael’s family, friends, and teammates,” 374th Maintenance Squadron commander Lt. Col. Kristina Laneothe said in the statement. “A loss of life is never easy to experience and the grieving process takes time. He will be missed.”

The last motorcycle fatality at Yokota happened in January 2014, when a rider was killed in a crash in front of the Yokota Community Center.

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Spradlin

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People watch as firefighters work a blaze at Shuri Castle in Naha, Okinawa, on Oct. 31, 2019.

Marine Corps spouse Mari Gregory presents Okinawa Gov. Denny Tamaki with donations for the restoration of Shuri Castle, on Thursday.

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2 towns vie for ‘national’ MOH museum

By Rose L. Thayer
Stars and Stripes
AUSTIN, Texas — In two cities more than a thousand miles apart, residents and council members are celebrating plans to build a museum honoring the 3,507 service members who have been awarded the Medal of Honor. Each needs to raise tens of millions of dollars, and both predict opening dates within a year of each other.

It’s no coincidence that the two projects, planned for Arlington, Texas, and Mount Pleasant, S.C., are humming along at the same time.

One was created in the wake of the other leaving town.

Mount Pleasant was five years and $20 million into planning and fundraising for its National Medal of Honor Museum when new leadership took charge. The vision changed, with a desire for a museum that would attract a broader audience and bigger tourism numbers and have more national impact than Mount Pleasant had envisioned.

While some in town believe the new leadership of the foundation lured the museum away from its roots, it contends the museum a way from its roots, it contends the leadership of the foundation lured the museum away from its roots.

Regardless of the reason for leaving, donors in South Carolina felt betrayed, and some believed the town council killed the project by not approving building plans. But another contingent decided to pick up where the previous foundation left off, rebuild trust and give the town of Mount Pleasant the museum it was promised.

“We feel like we have been taken advantage of because that foundation is from here, that money was given to build [a museum] here, and that designation as national — they don’t have any such designation,” said Will Haynie, mayor of Mount Pleasant. Though the foundation uses the word “national” when referring to itself, the descriptor is not included in its nonprofit paperwork.

There’s also a law passed by Congress that Haynie and those affiliated with the new Mount Pleasant museum efforts believe makes theirs worthy of the national designation.

In 1999 Congress passed the National Medal of Honor Memorial Act naming Riversville Chief, Indianapolis and Mount Pleasant “national Medal of Honor sites,” because the cities “honor recipients of the Medal of Honor.”

In November, two Texas congressmen introduced the similarly named National Medal of Honor Monument Act, which would task the Arlington foundation with building a monument in Washington and designate the Texas site as the National Medal of Honor Museum. The bill has not moved beyond introduction.

“They are using the name ‘national’ to raise money knowing they are not the national museum,” said Tom McQueeney, chairman of the Congressional Medal of Honor Museum Foundation, launched in July to build a museum in Mount Pleasant.

Haynie contends the town council didn’t push the foundation away, but instead offered numerous waivers and moved deadlines to help get the design of the museum approved.

The approval deadline in 2018 coincided with the hiring of Joseph Daniels as the foundation CEO — the fourth to take the job in five years. Daniels served as president of the 9/11 Memorial and Museum in New York City, joining the project in 2005 as general counsel. That museum opened about nine years later, and he left the organization at the end of 2016.

Around the time Daniels came on board for the Medal of Honor Museum, the foundation began to butt heads with Mount Pleasant over a design that did not meet the town’s strict building codes.

The group began to miss some important deadlines with Patriots Point. Based on its lease, which gave the foundation waterfront property for $1 a year for 99 years, the fundraising and design efforts had to meet certain progress deadlines, said Chris Hauff, spokesman for Patriots Point Development Authority, which is a state agency.

“We were really proud of the idea of having a much bigger presence of the Medal of Honor Museum here at Patriots Point — having the National Medal of Honor Museum here,” Hauff said. “I did speaking engagements all over the state about what it means for us.

Local officials imagined Patriots Point becoming a “weekend destination for patriotism,” Hauff said, with the larger museum adding to the military-themed attractions in the harbor: three retired Naval ships, nearly two dozen aircraft, the Naval Aviation Museum and an outdoor Vietnam War exhibit.

Later in 2018, the foundation’s proposed design for the museum, created by celebrated architect and urban designer Moshe Safdie, who was hired for $3.5 million, was rejected by the Mount Pleasant council.

While some argued the building sharply contrasted with the look and feel of Charleston, the vote focused on the fact that it did not meet the building codes, Haynie said.

At 140 feet tall, the Pentagon-shaped design far exceeded the 50-foot limit of waterfront construction.

After months of public input and a waiver on design rules from the council, the foundation resubmitted nearly the same design, lowering the height to fit restrictions along the waterfront.

By then, it was too late. Haynie and Daniels had a meeting at city hall in September 2018, asking what could be done to reduce tension. Haynie’s question: If the council approved the design, would the foundation stay in town?

Starting over
Soon after the meeting, the foundation announced it would begin a national search for a city to host the museum.

Its lease with Patriots Point remained in place. By Nov. 30, 2018, the foundation was to have certain design aspects approved to allow for a city-owned road to be moved. That missed deadline triggered the can-

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cellation of the lease, Hauff said.

“The idea of trying to raise fundraising around that, too,” he said.

Mount Pleasant spent about $373,000 on engineers to map out its new museum,1 but by not replacing the funding in a timely way, assuming the foundation would meet its required deadlines. In December 2019, the town council voted to send a letter to the Medal of Honor Foundation asking for the funds to be reimbursed.

“We’re not trying to turn this into a legal battle, we’re just sending a letter saying we spent this on your behalf on good faith,” Haynie said. “We respectfully request you reimburse us for money spent on your behalf.

Notzon contends that “no money is owed the city of Mount Pleasant.”

Another local group is asking for the return of about $50,000 donated from funds raised at the now-defunct Medal of Honor Bowl, a college football all-star game. A handful of South Carolina residents also are requesting the foundation return tens of thousands of dollars donated with the intention of funding a local museum.

“The point is [Daniels] hasn’t responded,” McQueeney said. “These people are very upset because they thought to build a museum in Mount Pleasant where it was designated.

Notzon, president of the Texas foundation museum, acknowledged the receipt of letters from donors requesting their money back.

“We are handling the very limited requests from individual donors for refunds on an individual basis,” she said in a statement, though she did not answer whether any refunds had been sent to South Carolina donors.

The foundation returned $5 million to the state of South Carolina that was given in the project’s early stages to boost fundraising efforts.

Trying again in South Carolina

Because many in South Carolina lost trust in donating to a Medal of Honor Museum, McQueeney and the new Mount Pleasant foundation have promised a “museum or your money back.”

Anyone who donates toward the $45 million goal will get their funds returned should the foundation fail to make the museum a reality. It’s projected opening date is July 4, 2023.

So far, the new museum has raised more than $20 million since its July announce-

ment and has released a design concept of the building. Mount Pleasant council has pledged $3 million. Charleston County also approved $5 million over 10 years, contingent on city and state support, the latter of which is being discussed, McQueeney said.

“We’re working as a well-meaning, well-organized group with a wonderful purpose and with everyone pulling together,” he said. “We have some very, very generous people here.

However, the new foundation is still lacking a lease with the Patriots Point for a site; instead, according to Daniels, they will enter into a new lease for such a proj-

ect, Hauff said. They are working with the new foundation to meet that criteria.

Moving ahead in Texas

In Arlington, the National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation is moving forw-

ard with its $250 million fundraising goal, Notzon said. About $150 million will go to- 
ward a museum project to open in 2024, and the remainder is for a monument.
**Severe storms head near US bases in Germany**

By Jennifer H. Svan  
Stars and Stripes

KAIERSLAUTERN, Germany – Violent thunderstorms and near-hurricane-force winds were forecast to strike in the vicinity of Ramstein Air Base and other U.S. installations beginning Sunday night, with severe weather expected to continue into Tuesday for much of Germany.

The storm, known as Ciara in the United Kingdom and Sabine in Germany, could bring gusts of up to 72 mph through Monday morning, along with hail and local flooding in large parts of the country, the German Meteorological Service said on its website.

The Army’s A2Hoc notification system issued an advisory to affected personnel Sunday afternoon, citing the German weather service’s warning.

The storm could bring sustained winds of up to 52 mph through 6 p.m. Tuesday, U.S. Army Garrison Rheinland-Pfalz said on its Facebook page Sunday, citing German forecasts.

Water splashes on the pier of the ferry pier in Dagebuell, northern Germany, on Sunday. The storms and high winds in Germany are moving toward US bases.

Germany issued its second-highest storm warning level for parts of the country extending from Hamburg in the north to the Bavarian Alps in the south.

U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden delayed opening for schools and all nonessential installation activities until 10 a.m. Monday, it said on its Facebook page Sunday afternoon.

Ramstein and USAG Rheinland-Pfalz hadn’t declared any delays by Sunday evening for the Kaiserslautern and Baumholder areas, where tens of thousands of service members and their families live.

Decisions on delays or cancellations could be made in the early morning if warranted, officials said Sunday on the USAG Rheinland-Pfalz Facebook page.

Garrison officials urged community members Sunday to stay inside and secure outdoor items. Kaiserslautern closed several public areas Sunday, including the city forest and cemetery, the Wochenblatt newspaper reported.

City officials advised against visiting public parks with tall trees during the storm.

Flight and train delays were also expected throughout the country.

Germany’s national railroad operator, Deutsche Bahn, said it was canceling long-distance trains to destinations most at risk from the storm, including Emden and Norddeich in Germany’s northwestern corner, the northern city of Kiel and the North Sea island of Sylt, according to The Associated Press.

The storm was expected to bring winds up to 80 mph to parts of England, where several flights and trains were canceled, AP reported.

**US airman convicted of drunk driving at over 3 times the limit**

By Christopher Dennis  
Stars and Stripes

MIDLENDHAL, England — An RAF Lakenheath airman was convicted in a U.K. court of drunk driving at more than three times the legal alcohol limit.

Staff Sgt. Justin Alexander, an aircraft mechanic for the 48th Fighter Wing, was ordered to pay 175 pounds in court costs and was banned from driving for 26 months on Jan. 31, according to the Ipswich Magistrates Court.

Alexander was found drunk behind the wheel of a rented Honda Accord in Mildenhall, the East Anglian Daily Times reported.

Police found the crashed vehicle on the opposite side of the road, with three tires destroyed, damage to the wheel well and front bumper, the local newspaper reported.

A test registered 115 micrograms of alcohol content per 100 milliliters of breath, which is equivalent to a .26% blood alcohol content under English law.

The legal limit for drinking and driving in England is 8‰, or .05% in Scotland.

The 48th Fighter Wing declined to comment on any further disciplinary actions.

U.S. driving habits came under scrutiny in the U.K. in August, when Anne Sacoolas, the wife of a U.S. diplomat, drove on the wrong side of the road near RAF Croughton and struck motorcyclist Harry Dunn, 19, who died from his injuries.

Sacoolas claimed diplomatic immunity and flew to the U.S., which has spurred continuing protests near the base.

Drunk driving among U.S. service members was significantly down last year at Lakenheath, which hosts about 4,000 U.S. service members, according to military figures.

There were five on-base and 15 off-base cases of Lakenheath U.S. service members drinking and driving in 2019, which is down from eight on base and 28 off base in 2018, 48th Fighter Wing spokeswoman Capt. Miranda Simmons said.

“We take driving safety very seriously and continue to emphasize to our Airmen the importance of having a plan on how to get home when consuming alcohol,” Col. Will Marshall, 48th Fighter Wing commander, said in an email to Stars and Stripes.

**Museum: Two cities battle for national honor to feature recipients**

FROM PAGE 4

in Washington, which is pending Congressional approval.

The land offered for the museum is owned by the city of Arlington and currently leased to the Texas Rangers baseball team, said Susan Schrok, city spokeswoman.

A lease with the museum foundation is currently under development and expected to be formalized in early 2020.

The foundation is officially working from offices in the Globe Life Park — part of the former Rangers’ stadium — and hired seven new employees, according to a January news release.

“2020 is off to an amazing start,” Daniels, the foundation CEO, said in a statement. “Between a world-class site and unparalleled support in Arlington, Texas, our new chief architect and our tremendous new hires and board members, we have amazing partners in our mission to preserve the stories of Medal of Honor recipients and give all Americans a place to honor and learn from their courage, sacrifice and love of country. These national heroes gave everything they could to protect our nation.

It’s incumbent on all of us to come together as a country to now give back.”

When asked about current fundraising, Notzon said they have more than 25,000 donors in all 50 states and are “making good headway” toward their goal. She did not disclose how much of the $20 million raised in South Carolina was still on the books when the foundation moved to Texas, and those financial records were not available online.

Caught in the middle of these two museum endeavors is the National Medal of Honor Museum, a nonprofit chartered by Congress in 1990 and dedicated to caring for the 71 living recipients of the medal and conducting programs that inspire and educate based on their legacy. Like the current Medal of Honor Museum, the society’s administrative offices and climate-controlled archival storage sit aboard the USS Yorktown.

Because of the flurry of museum announcements, the society released a statement in October reiterating that it planned to remain on the ship.

“We support any organization that desires to highlight the Medal of Honor recipients, especially the 71 living recipients, and the legacy of the Medal of Honor,” Drew D. Dix, Medal of Honor recipient and president of the society, said in the statement. “We assist in many ways — through character development programs in schools nationwide and outreach programs with our recipients into the veteran and military communities. There can never be too many locations honoring the Medal of Honor.”

Its programs are funded through yet another similarly named foundation, the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation, established in 1999.

“Both of those museums, the one in Mount Pleasant and the one in Arlington, Texas, both are not off the ground,” said John Falkenbury, vice president of the Medal of Honor Society. However, because each project has recipients on their boards, “they keep us out of each other’s programs.”

Falkenbury agrees with Dix that the more opportunities available for Americans to learn about the legacy of the Medal of Honor and its recipients, the better off the country would be.

“The more people ought to be about education, inspiration and patriotism,” he said. “We want to protect the sanctity of the medal itself.”

Twitter: @Rose_Lori

**T A R S  A N D  S T R I P E S**

Monday, February 10, 2020
Syrian army continues campaign against rebels

**By Albert Ai**
Associated Press

DAMASCUS, Syria — Syria’s military vowed Sunday to keep up its campaign to regain control of the whole country, days after capturing large chunks of territory from the last rebel holdout in northwestern Syria.

Russia has heavily backed the Syrian government’s offensive. The fighting led to the collapse of a fragile cease-fire that was negotiated with Turkey in 2018. The advance of forces supporting Syrian President Bashar Assad into rebel-held areas of Idlib and Aleppo province has also sparked a largescale humanitarian crisis.

Nearly 600,000 people have fled the fighting since December. Most of the displaced are living in open-air shelters and temporary homes in freezing winter conditions closer to the Turkish border.

Half of the displaced are believed to be children.

A main backer of the armed Syrian opposition, Turkey, has sent in large military reinforcements into the rebel-held areas. But the buildup has not stopped the Syrian government advance.

Syrian military spokesman Gen. Ali Mayhoub said that government forces had gained a strategic advantage in recent days, according to a statement carried by Syria’s state news agency. He said that Syrian troops advancing from around Aleppo’s southern countryside had linked up with those coming from eastern Idlib.

The Syrian army had seized a geographical area of more than 230 square miles and captured dozens of towns and villages, he added.

But the government campaign appears to be aimed at securing a strategic foothold in rebel-held territory for now, rather than seizing the entire province and its the densely populated capital, Damascus.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said government troops were only a few miles from seizing full control of the strategic highway, known as M5. The highway links the national capital of Damascus with the country’s north, which has for years been divided between gov- ernment and opposition forces.

Turkey sent hundreds of military vehicles and troops into Idlib in recent weeks, for a buildup and the continued gov- ernment advances sparked a rare clash on Feb. 3 between Turkish and Syrian soldiers that killed eight Turkish military personnel and 13 Syrian troops.

On Sunday, Mayhoub said the efforts to back the armed opposition “will not succeed in preventing the fast collapse” of the rebel groups. Damascus considers all armed opposition as “terrorist organizations.”

Rebels, including some of the most radical militant groups, control much of Idlib province and parts of the neighboring Aleppo region. These areas are home to some 3 million people — many of them displaced from other parts of Syria.

On Friday, Turkey’s Defense Ministry warned its army would respond “even more forcefully” to any attack on Turkish observation posts in northern Syria, adding: “Our observation posts will continue carrying out duties.”

Iranian space program fails to put satellite into orbit

**By Amir Vahdat**
Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — An Iranian rocket failed to put a satellite into orbit on Sunday, state television reported, the latest setback for a program the U.S. claims helps Tehran advance its ballistic missile program.

The launch happened at Imam Khomeini Spaceport in Iran’s Semnan province, some 145 miles southeast of Iran’s capital, Tehran. A Simorgh, or “Phoenix,” rocket couldn’t put the Zafar 1 communications satellite into orbit, however, due to a low speed, Iranian state TV reported.

“Stage-1 and stage-2 motors of the carrier functioned properly and the satellite was successfully detached from its carrier, but at the end of its path it did not reach the required speed for being put in the orbit,” Defense Ministry space program spokesman Ahmad Hosseini told state TV.

Hosseini still sought to portray the failure as a “remark- able” achievement for its space program.

In the days leading up to the launch, Iranian officials had been promoting the mission, including the country’s Information and Communications Technology Minister Mohammad Javad Azari Jahromi. His quick rise through the Islamic Republic’s carefully managed political system already is generating speculation he could be a candidate for Iran’s 2021 presidential campaign.

The U.S. alleges such satellite launches defy a U.N. Security Council resolution calling on Iran to undertake no activity related to ballistic missiles capable of deliv- ering nuclear weapons.

Iran, which long has said it does not seek nuclear weapons, maintains its satellite launches and rocket tests do not have a military component. Tehran also says it hasn’t violated the U.N. resolution as it only “called upon” Tehran not to conduct such tests.

The launch comes amid height- ened tensions between Iran and the U.S. since Trump unilaterally withdrew America from Tehran’s 2015 nuclear deal with world powers in May 2018. Iran since has begun breaking terms of the deal limiting its enrichment of uranium.

Meanwhile, a series of attacks across the Persian Gulf culmi- nated with a U.S. drone strike in January that killed Iran’s Revolu- tionary Guard Gen. Qassem Soleimani and a retaliatory ballistic missile strike by Iran on Iraqi bases housing American troops earlier this month. Iran also ac- cidentally shot down a Ukrainian commercial airliner taking off from Tehran amid the tensions, killing all 176 people on board.

Roadside bomb kills 1 soldier, wounds 5 in Pakistan

**Associated Press**

QUETTA, Pakistan — A road- side bomb exploded near a Paki- stani paramilitary vehicle in the restive southwestern Baluchistan province, killing one soldier and wounding five others, a local gov- ernment official said Sunday.

The paramilitary troops were attacked while on patrol near the Shargai coal mines, according to Azeem Jan Damir, a deputy com- missioner in Harnai district. He said the wounded were taken to a nearby medical facility.

Baluchistan province has been the scene of a low-level insur- gency by separatists demanding more autonomy and a greater share in the region’s natural re- sources, such as gas and oil. The province shares a long border with Afghanistan and Iran.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the blast, but such attacks on security forces in the past have been claimed by Baluch separatist groups.
Last chance for some struggling 2020 Dems in NH

By Michael Casey
Associated Press

PLYMOUTH, N.H. — Bound onto a stage at a conference center in New Hampshire, tech entrepreneur Andrew Yang beamed a smile to a cheering crowd and launched into his pitch for votes heading into Tuesday’s first-in-the-nation primary. Yang didn’t mention his poor showing in Iowa, his back-of-the-pack polling in New Hampshire or the fact his campaign recently laid off an undisclosed number of people. Instead, he recalled a conversation he had in Washington in which he was told that he needed to “create a wave in other parts of the country and bring that wave crashing down on our heads in D.C.”

“I said, ‘Challenge accepted,’” Yang said of his decision to run for president. “Here we are, Plymouth, and you are that wave.”

Yang is among a handful of candidates who are polling in the single digits as New Hampshire’s primary nears. He joins Colorado Sen. Michael Bennet, former Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick, billionaire activist Tom Steyer and Hawaii Rep. Tulsi Gabbard near the bottom of most surveys. For most of them, a poor showing on Tuesday could force them to rethink their campaigns.

Only Yang and Steyer qualified for Friday’s presidential debate.

Rather than dwelling on potential disappointment, these candidates are soldiering on with scores of town halls and house parties, as well as breakfasts and dinners with supporters. It’s all in service to the idea that New Hampshire voters might surprise the pundits.

Speaking on the sidelines of a University of New Hampshire event on college costs, Bennet claimed that he had spent more time in New Hampshire than any other candidate and was hoping to finish third or fourth. He was in the midst of a tour that included 50 town halls and a rally Saturday in Manchester with Democratic operative James Carville.

He also picked up an endorsement from Democratic Rep. Jared Golden of Maine, the first member of Congress to endorse Bennet in his campaign for president.

“There is the opportunity in New Hampshire, especially after such a muddled result in Iowa, to sort of start the race anew,” Bennet told reporters. “It’s very important, very important to do well in New Hampshire. It’s vital for me.”

Patrick, who entered the race late, said that a six-day, 1,000-mile bus tour demonstrated that there were plenty of undecided voters up for grabs. He reached a wider audience with a CNN town hall Thursday night, where he acknowledged that he needed “to create a wave that will carry us.”

“When all the people I meet are still undecided, and I think what that means is that people aren’t satisfied with the result of the field,” Patrick said. “I’m not surprised by that. When they hear someone who has actually delivered on an agenda that others are just talking about or that they have plans for, when they hear what it takes to deliver those progressive outcomes, we are winning support.”

For Steyer, getting his message out meant braving a snowstorm and freezing rain to greet UPS workers arriving to a Manchester warehouse Thursday. He was asked how long he would remain in the race.

“I’m going stay in the race because I think I’m going to win,” he said.

Asked what he was doing to stay competitive in New Hampshire when he barely registers in polls, Steyer didn’t mention New Hampshire in his answer, instead focusing on his support in other states where he’s doing better.

“I don’t know what that poll is, but I know I’m South Carolina, Louisiana, Nevada, that I’m doing really well,” he said. “I’m going to put together the kind of diverse coalition it’s going to take both to win this nomination, to represent this country and to beat Donald Trump in November.”

Gabbard has devoted much of her time to campaigning in New Hampshire, but was unable to say recently exactly how many staff she has in the state.

Her unconventional approach has the feel of an insurgent as the top tier largely skipped New Hampshire last month. She was planning scores of town halls over the weekend, but was a no-show at the UNH event Thursday.

“I don’t know the pundity of...
COLUMBIA, S.C. — Joe Biden is facing increasingly formidable competition in South Carolina, a state his campaign has long assumed was safely in his column and one that he repeatedly described as a “firewall” in his bid for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders and billionaire activist Tom Steyer are challenging the former vice president’s standing in the state. Steyer, who is black. “I don’t think he’s electrifying enough people ... who will go to the polls,” said Myers, who is black. “I don’t think honestly that Joe Biden can electrify the 400,000 African Americans in the state of South Carolina.”

Steyer, meanwhile, is flooding the airwaves with millions of dollars in ads, making numerous visits and building a robust organizing staff. It was their Illinois addresses, states and in Congress.

The lawsuit — one of more than multiple lawsuits filed in 2015. The Illinois' strict biometric privacy law in 2008 requiring companies to get consent before collecting biometric information and to create a policy specifying how that information will be retained and when it will be destroyed.

For years, “literally nothing happened,” said John Fitzgerald, a Chicago attorney and author of a book on the law that is due out this year. He couldn’t find any record of a case filed before 2015.

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House fire claims lives of 7 Mississippi family members

Associated Press

CLINTON, Miss. — A mother and her six children died when a fire destroyed their home early Saturday in central Mississippi, authorities said.

The father was the lone survivor of the 12:30 a.m. blaze in Clinton, a city of about 26,500 people just outside the capital city of Jackson. He tried unsuccessfully to save family members and suffered smoke inhalation, burns, cuts and bruises, city spokesman Mark Jones told The Associated Press.

He was taken to a local hospital but “wanted to stay at the scene,” Jones said.

Officials later released a list of those killed: Brittany Presley, 33, and her children Landon Brookshire, 15; Lane Presley, 13; Lawton Presley, 12; Grayson Presley, 6; Malcom Presley, 4; and Felicity Presley, 1.

Brittany Presley was an elementary school teacher, the Canton Public School District said in a statement on Facebook. “Mrs. Presley was a team leader who was a good, nurturing, and loving teacher who gave her all for her students. Her compassion, heart and giving spirit will forever live on in the hearts of the countless lives she touched,” the district wrote.

The scene at the house later in the day was one of devastation. The charred remains of the single-story wood frame house partially covered with melted siding could be seen along with the remains of an SUV in the burned-out garage.

Clothes, toys and furniture were strewn on the yard in the aftermath of firefighters’ fighting the blaze. Burglar bars could be seen in the windows or, in some cases, on the lawn. It was not immediately known if they had hindered escapes from the fire.

Same gunman implicated in two attacks on NYPD officers

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A gunman walked into a police station in the Bronx and started shooting early Sunday, wounding an officer just hours after he shot a different officer in a patrol van.

The same gunman was responsible for the back-to-back shootings, New York City Police Commissioner Dermot Shea said Sunday at a press conference.

“For the second time in less than 12 hours, NYPD officers have been targeted specifically,” Shea said.

Shea said the gunman walked into the headquarters of the 41st Precinct shortly before 8 a.m., firing off bullets. A male officer was shot once in the upper left arm. That officer returned fire, but did not hit the suspect.

Shea, who described the suspect as a “coward,” said the gunman laid down once he ran out of bullets. The suspect, whose name has not been released, was taken into custody.

He has a lengthy rap sheet and was paroled from prison in 2017 after an attempted murder conviction, Shea said.

The shooting inside the precinct headquarters came just hours after another attack in the same section of the Bronx, involving officers.

Two officers narrowly escaped with their lives when a gunman fired into their patrol van just before 8:30 p.m. Saturday.

The officer at the wheel of the van was grazed in the chin and neck, but he avoided serious injury. He was expected to released from the hospital Sunday. Police Commissioner Dermot Shea said at a late night news conference that the attack “should outrage all New Yorkers.”

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said in a tweet Sunday he was “horrified by the multiple attacks” on police.

“NY’s law enforcement officers put their lives on the line every day to keep us safe. These attacks are heinous,” Cuomo wrote.

Mayor Bill de Blasio, a Democrat, condemned the back-to-back attacks.

“This was an attempt to assassinate police officers. We need to use that word,” de Blasio said at the Sunday press conference.

The two uniformed officers, partners for eight years and friends since middle school, were sitting in their van with emergency lights activated when a man approached them and engaged them in conversation, Shea said.

The man asked the officers for directions, then pulled out a gun “without provocation,” the commissioner said. The man fired multiple shots, striking the officer behind the wheel. Shea said the officer’s carotid artery narrowly avoided injury.

Neither officer returned fire. The officer’s partner drove him to a hospital nearby. Shea called both officers “heroic” for their composure and said their long association made for “an amazing story.”
Marijuana tour buses are rolling through Chicago

BY ROBERT MCCOPPIN
Chicago Tribune

CHICAGO — For her birthday, one of Mary Biekert’s daughters asked for something she’d never gotten before: a marijuana tour of Chicago.

So there was Biekert on a recent Saturday night, with her two adult daughters in a private smoking lounge in the city where a tour bus had dropped them off, getting lessons in how to roll a joint and smoke a bong. The daughters, who live near St. Louis, had brought their own pot after spending three hours in line to buy from a licensed store in downtown Collinsville.

Their mother had never gotten high before, and neither has the desire to try. But she recently had enjoyed using CBD, a component of marijuana that doesn’t get users high, for pain and anxiety. “Things are so different now since they legalized it,” she said, “so I figured I might as well.”

The tour guide, a rapper named Infinite, showed the ladies the proper way to smoke a bong, which resembles a large, vertical glass pipe filled with water to cool the smoke. He warned that the high would be pretty intense, then congratulated them: “Now that’s how you hit a bong!”

Biekert inhaled a small amount, said, “I’m good,” when offered more, and cracked up when her daughter told a story about singeing off her eyebrows while smoking.

Such is the somewhat surreal new world of cannabis tourism in Chicago. Opponents of marijuana legalization dread the spread of pot buses, fearing they will provide guests on theindy and cause problems similar to those that have sometimes accompanied alcohol party buses. Downplaying such concerns, a business called Loopr operated its inaugural tour Jan. 25, transporting a limousine bus full of the pot enthusiasts and the weed curious through downtown for a short night of well-behaved partying.

The tour company eventually plans to offer visits to marijuana shops and grow houses in the Chicago area, but the lines at dispensaries are often too long with too little product, and state regulators said they had seen “very little access to cultivation centers.”

So far now, Loopr takes passengers on a short bus ride to a cannabis store in Springfield, not yet been approved. A competing Chicago business, Infinite, showed the ladies the “alcohol culture.” “Things are so different now since they legalized it,” she said, “I’m happy that this is offered in Chicago,” she said, “I don’t understand how alcohol has been legal all this time and cannabis hasn’t, when it’s so much safer.”

Once the passengers left the laid-back lounge and took the bus to the nearby Emporium Arcade Bar in Fulton Market, some felt a shock entering the noisy, crowded saloon, with one passenger remarking on the “alcohol culture.” Some passengers had a drink and left quickly, while others stayed and took the bus tour back to their starting point.

“It sounded like a good idea, to get high and not to have to deal with traffic,” said Alyssa Rhone, 28, of Oak Forest. “Everybody’s friendly, everybody’s high, and in a great mood.”

A competing Chicago business, Paint and Puff Class, also offers tours, as well as painting lessons at which patrons may bring their own marijuana to smoke and explore their artistic muse.

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Those who opposed marijuana legalization, such as Kevin Sabet, president of Smart Approaches to Marijuana, are generally dubious about pot tourism.

“The bus tours and smoking lounges are all part of the industry’s playbook to normalize a substance they want to make money from,” he wrote in an email. “It’s Big Tobacco all over again.”

Jennifer Taylor, spokeswoman for Opt Out in Naperville, which opposes marijuana commercialization, worried that the same kinds of problems that have at times plagued alcohol party buses in Chicago, including shootings, illegal drugs and lesser violations, could occur with weed tours.

“You’re creating this party culture,” she said. “Our kids have so many issues and vices facing them. This is another one.”

While marijuana bus tours are not specifically regulated, smoke lounges are. The state agency that regulates recreational cannabis sales, the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation, warned that such a smoking lounge may not comply with state law.

A spokesman issued this statement: “Any consumption of cannabis must follow the guidelines set out in the legislation—cannabis may not be consumed in public spaces, and any on-site consumption may only occur at licensed dispensaries and retail tobacco stores as authorized by local governments.”

A cannabis store in Springfield has been licensed to operate a consumption area, but other dispensaries and tobacco stores have not yet been approved.

City of Chicago spokesman Patrick Mullane said officials were trying to educate business operators on the law: “The city continues to work with the local elected officials, community representatives and industry experts to develop smart and effective regulations and education guidelines to address the issues facing cannabis tourism.”

As part of this process, we are committed to building more opportunities for new entrepreneurs while educating consumers and ensuring businesses follow the rules.”

When asked about marijuana consumption areas Friday, Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot said she was “worried” about pot buses. She proposed further crafting laws to address the issue, saying, “We’ve got to give people a safe place to consume.”

Loophole officials maintain they are following state law by allowing consumption only in a private dwelling, only by adults 21 and older, and not on the bus or in public.

They said they’d have their lawyer talk with state and city officials.

Bryan Spatz, co-founder of Loopr, grew up in north suburban Glencoe and is a 1996 graduate of New Trier High School. He hopes to start tours of dispensary operators and consumers while educating consumers and ensuring businesses follow the rules.

“We’ve got to give people a safe place to consume.”

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**AMERICAN ROUNDPUP**

Man finds urn filled with ashes at Goodwill

IL — A thrift-store customer in Illinois has discovered an urn containing ashes, stirring controversy over the proper disposal of cremated remains. According to the customer, the urn was labeled as a figurine in a Peoria Goodwill store. Upon closer inspection, the customer recognized it was an urn with ashes still inside. The urn was returned to the Goodwill store for further investigation.

Emergency services care for lost guinea pig

VT — A guinea pig found on a Vermont street was taken to the local police department for safekeeping. The furry creature was found by a pedestrian walking down Railroad Street, Cpl. George Johnson told the Caledonian Record.

The animal, dubbed Harvey by the local police, was given food, water and a box to stay in. Det. Daniele Kostruba also volunteered to take the creature home as a pet. The dog, named Harvey, has been located by its owner and returned home.

The puck stops here

People play street hockey on Pennsylvania Avenue near the White House in Washington, on Saturday.

**THE CENSUS**

800

The number of retweets it took for James Elmes, 21, to locate the owner of a purse he found sitting on a curb in New Orleans’s French Quarter. The Michael Kors purse, which Saarah Yob, 23, of Florida lost on her trip to the city, contained no wallet or identification but instead some money, a necklace, and her GoPro camera. Elmes posted photos from the camera on Twitter in the hope that someone might recognize its owner. Before returning the purse, he even took time to snap some new photos for her.

THE CENSUS

800

Plaque marking site of slave auctions missing

VA — A plaque marking the site of slave auctions was reported missing and vandalism was found nearby in a Virginia city where a deadly white nationalist rally was held in 2017.

An employee with WVRV-TV told police that one of the two markers in Charlottesville’s Court Square had been removed, and the city confirmed the disappearance.

A light pole nearby was marked with “1619,” which was written with what appears to be dirt from beneath the location of the marker, a news release said. The number signifies the first year Africans were brought to Virginia as slaves.

Man finds missing ashes at bus stop

NV — A man was shot and killed in his apartment by a crossbow bolt that a neighbor had fired at dogs who were attacking the man, authorities in Massachusetts said. The death occurred at the apartment in the city earlier in the month, The Las-Vegas Review-Journal reported.

The family left their luggage with the bell desk at the hotel before deciding to pass the time before their flight home with a walk down The Strip, they said. The family lost the baggage tag along the walk and they returned to the hotel to discover the luggage and ashes were missing. Colton Dalton said.

The ashes were found on a bus stop bench by Eric Maxwell, a Medford, Ore., boutique shop owner.

Neighbor kills man while trying to save him

MA — A man was shot and killed in his apartment by a crossbow bolt that a neighbor had fired at dogs who were attacking the man, authorities in Massachusetts said. The death occurred at the apartment in the city earlier in the month, The Las-Vegas Review-Journal reported.

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The ashes were found on a bus stop bench by Eric Maxwell, a Medford, Ore., boutique shop owner.

Brother, sister charged for weed conspiracy

MO — A brother and sister were charged for their roles in a marijuana distribution ring that involved mailing marijuana from Colorado to Missouri.

Natalie McNeil, 34, of Lee’s Summit and Tanner McNeil, 30, of Denver, were in federal court in Missouri.

Natalie McNeil was sentenced to four years and three months without parole and ordered to forfeit $121,000 to the government. Tanner McNeil was sentenced to 2.5 years and ordered to forfeit just over $1 million.

Tanner McNeil and Benjamin Parker, 28, of Denver, shipped the marijuana to co-conspirators in Missouri in sealed packages inside plastic protein containers, prosecutors said.

Natalie McNeil deposited cash in the bank accounts of Tanner McNeil and Parker in Missouri. The men then withdrew the money from Colorado banks.

From wire reports
As new cases fall, virus death toll surpasses SARS

By Joe McDonald
Associated Press

BEIJING — China’s virus death toll rose by 89 on Sunday to 811, passing the number of fatalities in the 2002-2003 SARS epidemic, but fewer new cases were reported in a possible sign its spread may be slowing as other nations stepped up efforts to track the disease.

Some 2,656 new coronavirus cases were reported in the 24 hours ending at midnight Saturday, most of them in the central province of Hubei, where the first patients fell sick in December. That was down by about 20% from the 3,399 new cases reported in the previous 24-hour period.

“That means the joint control mechanism of different regions and the strict prevention and control measures have worked,” a spokesman for the National Health Commission, Mi Feng, said at a news conference.

Also Sunday, new cases were reported in Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia and Spain. More than 360 cases have been confirmed outside mainland China.

“Dramatic reductions” in the spread should begin this month if containment works, said Dr. Ian Lipkin, director of Columbia University’s Center for Infection and Immunity. He assisted the World Health Organization and Chinese authorities during the outbreak of SARS, or severe acute respiratory syndrome.

Warmer weather will reduce the virus’s ability to spread and bring people out of enclosed spaces where it is transmitted more easily, Lipkin said in an online news conference. However, he said, if people return to work after the Lunar New Year holiday, which was extended to reduce the risk of spreading the virus, then “we’ll know we’re in trouble.”

The fatality toll passed the 774 people believed to have died of SARS, another viral outbreak that originated in China. The total of 37,196 confirmed cases of the new virus vastly exceeds the 8,098 sickened by SARS.

The latest developments:
- Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia and Spain report new cases: Six more cases were reported in Japan among 3,700 passengers and crew aboard the quarantined cruise ship Diamond Princess.
- South Korea reported a new case in a 73-year-old woman whose relatives visited Guangdong province in southern China, raising its total to 27. The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said the family members, a 51-year-old South Korean man and a 37-year-old Chinese woman, were confirmed infected later Sunday.
- Vietnam reported its 14th case. The Health Ministry said she is a 55-year-old woman in Vinh Phuc province, northwest of Hanoi, where six earlier patients were found to be infected.
- Malaysia reported its 17th case. The 65-year-old woman’s son-in-law was diagnosed earlier with the virus.
- Spain confirmed its second case in Mallorca, a popular vacation island in the Mediterranean. The first case was a German tourist diagnosed a week ago in the Canary Islands off northwest Africa.
- Hong Kong releases quarantined cruise ship: The 1,800 passengers and 1,800 crew members of the cruise ship Dream World were released from quarantine after Hong Kong authorities said tests of the crew found no infections.
- The ship was isolated after eight mainland Chinese passengers were diagnosed with the disease last month.
- Port official Leung Yiu-hon said some passengers with symptoms tested negative but there was no need to test all of them because they had no contact with the infected Chinese passengers.
- Wuhan opens new hospital, farmers promised support: A 1,500-bed hospital built in two weeks in Wuhan, the city at the center of the outbreak, accepted its first patients on Saturday, the government announced. Another 1,000-bed hospital built in 10 days opened last week.
- The government of the city of 11 million people said it would begin carrying out twice-daily disinfection of hospitals, markets, public toilets and other facilities starting Sunday.
- The government of the surrounding province of Hubei it will pay subsidies to farmers, other food producers and supermarkets and give tax breaks to companies that donate to anti-virus work, the official Xinhua news agency said. It said the government will subsidize overtime for employees of companies making medical supplies.
- China’s leaders are trying to keep food flowing to crowded cities despite anti-disease controls and to quell fears of possible shortages and price spikes following panic buying after most access to Wuhan and nearby cities was cut off.
- Two more flights from Wuhan carrying American citizens, permanent residents and close relatives landed in the United States, the State Department said. A spokesman said more than 800 Americans have been evacuated from Wuhan.
- A charter flight carrying Filipinos from Wuhan arrived in the Philippines. The 29 adults and one infant will be quarantined for 14 days.
- World Health Organization sending experts: The WHO director-general said he will send experts to China starting Monday or Tuesday.

As new cases fall, virus death toll surpasses SARS

By Barry Hatton
Associated Press

LISBON, Portugal — The U.K. confirmed its fourth case of the new virus from China and Spain reported its second case as European authorities pressed Sunday to contain the spread of the coronavirus by hunting down those who came into contact with infected people.

Both the new cases were acquired during trips to France, officials said.

French medical authorities were zeroing in on a ski resort in the Alps where five British citizens, including a 9-year-old child, contracted the virus. Officials were testing hundreds of children and their families in Contamines-Montjoie.

Italian health authorities in Tuscany, meanwhile, were trying to re-trace the steps of a Taiwanese couple who stayed four days in a Florence hotel. They flew to Hong Kong and then to Taiwan on Feb. 1 and were later confirmed to have the virus.

The new U.K. case is a known contact of a previously confirmed case there, the country’s Chief Medical Officer Professor Chris Whitty said, adding that “experts ... continue to work hard tracing patient contacts.”

In Britain, a plane evacuating more than 200 people from the Chinese city at the center of the epidemic landed Sunday at RAF Brize Norton. British officials said it brought back 105 British citizens and family members, as well as 95 European citizens and family members. In a carefully coordinated ballet of secure planes and buses, those passengers were distributed around Europe.

The British passengers were taken to a hotel-conference center in Milton Keys, where they will be quarantined for 14 days.

Some 20 people from Germany on the British flight were taken to Berlin, to be tested and quarantined at a hospital for two weeks.

Another 17 European evacuees were flown to Berlin and were being transported to on Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria and Romania on special flights.

Thirty-five French citizens on the British flight were flown to southern France and were immediately taken into quarantine.

Eight Italians on the British flight were flown to Italy by the Italian air force and were transferred to an Italian military hospital in Rome to be quarantined. The same flight to Italy were also seven Danes, three Swedes and two Greeks.
NAKHON RATCHASIMA, Thailand — A soldier angry about a land dispute went on a 16-hour shooting rampage in northeastern Thailand, killing at least 26 people and wounding dozens more.

Police and military personnel hunted the gunman overnight in a shopping mall where he had holed up and shot him dead Sunday morning. It was Thailand's biggest mass shooting carried out by a single gunman.

Officials said the soldier was angry over a financial dispute, first killing two people on a military base and then going on a far bloodier rampage Saturday, shooting as he drove to the mall where shoppers fled in terror.

Authorities said Sgt. Maj. Jakrapanth Thomma was behind the attack in Nakhon Ratchasima, a hub for Thailand’s relatively poorer and rural northeastern region. Much of the shooting took place at Terminal 21 Korat, an airport-themed mall filled with colorful Lego sculptures, a merry-go-round and huge replicas of landmarks from around the world.

“This incident was unprecedented in Thailand,” Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha told reporters as he gave the final tally Sunday morning after visiting the wounded in hospitals.

“I hope this is the only one and the last incident, and that it never happens again. No one wants this to happen. It could be because of this person’s mental health in this particular moment,” he said.

Prayuth said he was worried that people inside the mall could be accidentally hit by bullets fired by police, but added, “I have checked, that didn’t happen.”

Defense Ministry spokesman Kongcheep told Thai media the first person killed was the commanding officer of the 22nd Ammunition Battalion, in which the suspect also served. He said the gunman fired at others at his base and took guns and ammunition before fleeing in an army Humvee.

City and neighborhood police officers, who asked not to be identified because they were not authorized to release information, said the man fired shots as he drove to the mall. Thai Rath television aired mall security camera footage showing a man with what appeared to be an assault rifle. The man also posted updates to his Facebook page during the rampage. “No one can escape death,” read one post. Another asked, “Should I give up?” In a later post, he wrote, “I have stopped already.”
FACES

Judge rules that Kesha defamed producer in text

From wire reports

Less than a week after Kesha released her latest album, the pop star received bad news in her legal battle with the music producer she accused of sexual assault.

In 2014, Kesha, whose full name is Kesha Rose Sebert, sued her producer over verbal abuse and an alleged sexual assault. He countersued the singer for defamation.

On Thursday, the dispute took a turn as a New York judge delivered a powerful blow to the 32-year-old musician, who recently released “High Road” to glowing reviews for its party anthems. New York Supreme Court Judge Jennifer G. Schecter ruled that Kesha defamed her producer, Lukasz “Dr. Luke” Gottwald, in a private text message to Lady Gaga. The 2016 text said Kesha and fellow pop star Katy Perry had been raped by Gottwald, even though the false statement appeared only in a private text, the judge still ruled it defamatory.

There is no evidence whatsoever that Gottwald raped Katy Perry or that Katy Perry, whose sworn testimony is unrefuted, must not be believed,” Schecter wrote in her decision. “Moreover, publication of a false statement to even one person here Lady Gaga, is sufficient to impose liability.”

The decision resolved only a small part of the case. Kesha’s other allegations about 46-year-old Gottwald, including that he drugged her at a party in 2005 and sexually assaulted her, will be evaluated by a jury as the case moves forward.

“We disagree with the Court’s ruling,” Kesha’s legal team said in a statement to E! News in response to Thursday’s decision. “We plan to immediately appeal.”

Stones taking tour to some neglected cities

The Rolling Stones are returning to North American cities where they haven’t played in years.

The band announced Thursday that it will kick off a 15-city leg of its No Filter tour in San Diego on May 8. Other cities where the band will perform for the first time in a while include Cleveland; St. Louis; Austin, Texas; Louisville, Ky.; Charlotte, N.C.; Tampa, Fla.; and Vancouver, British Columbia. The band will also perform in Minneapolis; Dallas; Detroit; Pittsburgh; Nashville and Buffalo, N.Y. The shows will end July 9 with a concert in Atlanta.

The Stones’ tour through North America last year was postponed after Mick Jagger had heart surgery, but the band rescheduled those dates and returned to the road with a show in Chicago. Another of the rescheduled shows featured the announcement that NASA had named a tiny tumbling stone spotted on the Martian surface after the band.

Keegan-Michael Key still making people laugh but focusing on drama

BY GARY GERARD HAMILTON

Associated Press

Keegan-Michael Key is transitioning out of over-the-top comedies to focus more on dramatic films, and for him, it’s no laughing matter.

“We’ve been moving in a little bit of a new direction, where it’s Keegan with a little more gravitas and a Keegan that still does humor, but it’s not as slap-sticky or goofy,” said the former “Key & Peele” star. “Keegan that’s trying to have a career that’s a bit more nuanced or maybe a little more dangerous or a little more scary. So I can flex those old muscles.”

His acting physique was first worked out at the University of Detroit Mercy, where he earned a bachelor’s in 1993 followed by a master’s at the University of Pennsylvania State in 1996. He describes his comedic career as a detour from his original path, but now he’s back on the road again.

“I had a little bit of anxiety when I did a production of Hamlet with Oscar Isaac off Broadway a couple of years ago here in New York City. And there was a little bit of trepidation to begin with. And then it was like riding a bike — it was like being back in drama school,” said the Emmy winner. “So it’s full steam ahead in this new direction.”

During the past few years, he’s worked himself back into drama shape, culminating in a huge 2019: he starred in the hit Netflix series “Friends from College,” provided extensive voice-over work for huge animated and live action films such as “Toy Story 4” (playing Ducky alongside his “Key & Peele” partner, Jordan Peele, as Bunny) and “The Lion King” (as Kamari the hyena). But his standout moment was for his role as Jerry in 2019’s acclaimed “Dolemite Is My Name” starring Eddie Murphy.

“Getting to work with Eddie Murphy has been one of the greatest one experiences of my career, because it’s very surreal to have an opportunity to work with a hero — to work with a person who got you into the business. And what you do is you find yourself on set going like, ‘OK, is today the day that I’m going to tell Eddie that he changed my life?’” he said with a smile. “What do you tell a person other than you inspired me to do what I do? You could just as easily say you inspired me to be here today with you. My career took this path, and now I’m here with you.”

Although Key is focused more on serious roles, he’s still making folks laugh on Netflix’s rebooted “Brain Games.” It’s a fun show that explores how the human brain processes and interprets information through challenges and games in front of a live audience. Celebrity guests such as Tiffany Haddish and married couple Kristen Bell and Dax Shepard join him throughout the season, along with cameos from stars such as his former TV partner Peele and legend Tom Hanks.

“I am a self-proclaimed blerd,” as in black nerd, Key said. “I am one of those guys who sits around and reads books on neurobiology, something that I just find fascinating. I am legitimately fascinated by how the brain works and why we do the things we do, and also things that we do that we don’t know. We’re doing on a subconscious level — fascinating to me, and I can’t get enough of it.”

He cautions viewers not to worry — although they’ll be learning, they’ll definitely be laughing as well.

“It’s another one of these things where it’s like the eternal task of trying to make science fun — we did it. We did it on Brain Games,” he said with a laugh. “Entertained is one thing (but) I also want to make sure that people understand that they’ll be fascinated and I think that’s an aspect of entertainment and being entertained.”

In the meantime, as Key pursues dramatic roles, he’s refusing to limit himself.

“Let’s do action. I want to be the next Jason Bourne. I’ll be a villain in a Bond movie — I’d be more than happy to. And as an action movie or three action movies or 10 action movies or a franchise? You know, got to dream big. Gotta dream big.”

‘I had a little bit of anxiety when I did a production of Hamlet with Oscar Isaac off Broadway a couple of years ago ... And there was a little bit of trepidation to begin with. And then it was like riding a bike — it was like being back in drama school.”

Keegan-Michael Key
Actor and former co-star of “Key & Peele” on his return to drama

Serious business
Is it local journalism, or just local propaganda?

The Stars and Stripes, a newspaper for the US military community, has been criticized for its political bias and lack of accountability. The paper has been accused of publishing misinformation and ignoring complaints from readers. The Stars and Stripes' ombudsman, Ernie Gates, has written about the challenges of maintaining journalistic integrity in a military environment.

By Bobby Ghosh

Bloomberg Opinion

Putin learns the pain of being Erdogan's pal

The Kremlin’s denizens could be forgiven for thinking they’re hearing some muffled chuckling coming from Washington these days. Because Trump administration officials must be feeling some schadenfreude as they watch their Turkish ally dig itself into a quagmire in the annals of world politics.

The United States and Turkey have moved closer to distraction over a regional dispute — the crisis in Syria. But they haven’t done so for the right reason. The Trump administration’s posture toward the Kurds in Syria serves the interests of neither the United States nor Turkey, and the resulting mess threatens to undo the progress in America and Europe’s relationship that has been painstakingly built over the past few years.

The US president and his allies have told America’s Kurdish allies that they will be treated like any other American ally. But the Kurds have good reason to doubt that promise. They have suffered a significant blow to their hopes for a future in a free and democratic Syria. And they have lost a friend in the White House.

The Kurds in Syria are not the only ones who have cause for concern. The Trump administration’s decision to withdraw American forces from the border area in northeastern Syria has left a vacuum that is being filled by Turkey, which has launched a military operation against Kurdish forces in the region.

The operation is not just a threat to Kurdish interests, but also to American interests. The US military has worked with the Kurds to take out ISIS, and they have provided crucial support to the US-led coalition fighting terrorism.

The Kurds are not alone in their concerns. The Syrian Democratic Forces, a coalition of Kurdish and Arab fighters, have expressed their concern over the operation. They have called on the US to intervene to prevent the operation and to protect their territory.

The US administration has not responded to these concerns, and it has failed to provide any clear plan for protecting the Kurds in Syria. This is a failure of leadership that will have serious consequences for the future of the region.

In conclusion, the US administration’s decision to withdraw forces from Syria has been a mistake. It has left a vacuum that is being filled by Turkey, and it has failed to protect the interests of the Kurds in Syria. The US administration must take action to prevent the operation and to protect the Kurds from harm.

By Gabby Deutch

Special to The Washington Post

Mored midrising medical costs and proclamations by Democratic presidential candidates that America’s health care system needs an overhaul, a website called Courier Newspapers published a story last year with a rare positive spin on the problem. The article suggested that Rep. Abby Finkenauer, an Iowa Democrat who was in a competitive Redistricting incumbent in 2018, had succeeded in bringing federal dollars to a community health clinic in her district.

Courier Newspapers was created in November with the goal of finding restoring trust in the media by building a website that would deliver a different kind of story from the usual media narrative in states across the U.S. Courier Newspaper Editor in Chief Lindsay Schrupp wrote in a column that the news organization wants to unite Americans over shared truths: "If local news disappears, so does our democracy.

A new organization in American journalism seems like a welcome development — right? Maybe not. In reality, Courier Newspapers is a clandestine political operation, publishing, among other things, positive stories about moderate Democrats who face difficult reelections in November.

Courier’s main backer is Acronym, a liberal think tank, to which it is heavily in Democratic digital advertising and campaign technology — including Shadwww.com, Inc., the tech company behind the story that the organizations will make last month’s Idaho caucuses. Its failed app aside, Acronym has already laid the groundwork to have an outsized impact on the 2020 elections.

Through a $25 million investment in Courier and its sister sites in six battleground states, Acronym aims to reshape the digital media ecosystem by taking advantage of Americans’ trust in local journalism. Unlike some sources of partisan disinformation, Courier stories are generally fact-based. Courier discloses its connection to Acronym but provides no information about the group or its donors, who remain undisclosed. However, there is some evidence of the group’s influence, including its ability to direct the kinds of stories published on its site.

Acronym’s founder, Tara McGowan — a campaign strategist and former digital director of Democratic super PAC Priorities USA — has made her goals clear: “Democrats are losing politically because they have been vulnerable to the flow of information. We’re not there yet. If we do get to that point, the U.S. would have to deploy diplomatic measures in a high-ranking official — higher than it has demonstrated in recent years to bring this challenge into the open.

For now, though, American officials can quietly revel in Putin’s discovery of what it means to be Erdogan’s friend. ص divulged that the Russian leader has even grinned from the direction of Washington. The Kremlin’s denizens could be for-
Go to the American Forces Network website for the most up-to-date TV schedules.

Minnesota St. 1, N. Michigan 0
Michigan 5, Wisconsin 3
Bowling Green 4, Alaska Anchorage 1
Cornell 4, Colgate 1

Purse: $7.8 million
Victoria Open

Saturday's men's scores

EAST

New Mexico 97, Georgia 88
North Carolina 85, Ohio State 74
Purdue 84, Illinois 72
Iowa 83, Illinois State 69

WEST

Arizona 79, Colorado State 67
Colorado 79, Utah 75
Oklahoma 75, Iowa State 65
Mississippi St. 74, Vanderbilt 68

College basketball

Saturday’s women’s scores

EAST

American 68, St. John’s 62
VT 67, Miami 54
Boston College 64, Duke 58
Syracuse 70, Wake Forest 55

WEST

Oregon 84, Colorado 72
Arizona State 75, Oregon State 71
Michigan St. 73, Oregon 67
Colorado State 77, Arizona 65

Women’s scores

EAST

American 68, St. John’s 62
VT 67, Miami 54
Boston College 64, Duke 58
Syracuse 70, Wake Forest 55

WEST

Oregon 84, Colorado 72
Arizona State 75, Oregon State 71
Michigan St. 73, Oregon 67
Colorado State 77, Arizona 65

College baseball

Saturday’s scores

SOUTH

Millerville 11, Barton 5
Gillette St. 8-5 Mid-Atlantic Christian
Lutheran 9-6, Macon 5

Saturday’s scores

SOUTH

Millerville 11, Barton 5
Gillette St. 8-5 Mid-Atlantic Christian
Lutheran 9-6, Macon 5

Win-win: Adversity valuable for Royals

By Gregory Broom
Stars and Stripes

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — The regular season in DODEA Europe basketball will be about preparing for the tournament. In that sense, the Ramstein girls won in more ways than one on Friday.

The host Royals earned a conclusive victory with a 34-30 triumph over upset-minded rival Kaiserslautern. But they also picked up some valuable experience playing through adversity in a game with tournament-style intensity.

“We kept our composure. That was the big thing,” Ramstein coach Nathan Breder said. “Nobody freaked out and lost.”

Kaiserslautern did everything it could to hand the Royals the loss. The Raiders pushed out to a five-point lead at the end of the first quarter, but Ramstein recovered in the fourth before put them away with a couple of late offensive threes.

That back-and-forth finish was far more competitive than the Royals’ opening-round win over Detrick, a 54-27 Ramstein rout on Dec. 17, requiring a disproportionate response from the favored Royals.

While the Royals are a completely different game,” Ramstein senior Linda Naglack said. “They were coming off a loss, determined. I was sure scared for a little bit there. But we ended up pulling it together and really playing as a team.”

“We had to keep our cool,” Naglack finished, who finished with eight rebounds and five steals. “Our comeback was kind of cliché and went down the court and did our thing.”

The Royals couldn’t sustain that level of savvy throughout Friday’s game. Brewer was happy to see it make enough in-game appearances to earn the win.

“Execution isn’t always there,” Brewer said. “But sometimes it is and it’s beautiful.”

If the Royals are to successfully navigate the Division I bracket, they will need to continue building the kind of offense and defense that characterized a 54-27 win over Detrick.

The “we want to work to do,” Brewer said. “We’re not there yet.”

Rebecca Moon scored a game-high 14 points for the Raiders, making all 11 of Kaiserslautern’s first-quarter points. Teammate Ashley Eisonado posted 12 points, including seven of their nine points in the game’s first 11 minutes.

Alexi Tri led a balanced Royals offense with 10 points, while Kaitlyn Borek contributed nine points and a game-high 11 rebounds.

broome.gregory@stripes.com
DODEA Europe wrestling

Similar storylines set up finals

Stuttgart, Ramstein come out of sectionals looking like favorites

By Norman Llamas
Stars and Stripes

AVIANO AIR BASE, Italy — Right from the start, fans cheered loudly Saturday for their respective wrestlers in the southern section wrestling meet.

More than half of the first 20 matches were won by pin.

But despite the quick wins that got the day started, most of the matches were pretty competitive.

Wrestlers from seven DODEA Europe schools competed in 14 weight classes. The top qualifiers in each class advanced to the European championships in Wiesbaden, Germany on Feb. 14-15.

“We’re winning a lot more matches than we expected,” Xavier Diaz, Aviano’s wrestling coach, said during the meet’s lunch break. “We’re finally clicking, and it feels good to see it all working how it’s supposed to.”

Diaz, a staff sergeant who is an F-16 maintenance instructor with the 372nd Training Squadron, has been with the Saints for the past four years and played a part in Aviano winning the Division II championship in 2017 and 2018 and a third-place finish in 2019.

Seniors Nick Smith qualified, though he fell to Sigonella’s Amari Pyatt in the qualified, though he fell to and a third-place finish in 2019.

But we’re just happy to be able to continue competing,” Spencer said.

Some of the storylines from last year’s season came back around as well. That included tiny Ankara’s one-person program: 160-pounder Robert Swart.

“Wrestling is growing at Rota and we’re just happy to be able to continue competing,” Spencer said.

Rota won the division a year ago and the team’s motto is “Process over Product.”

Some of the storylines from last year’s season came back around as well. That included tiny Ankara’s one-person program: 160-pounder Robert Swart.

“I was good competition,” Swart said. “I had fun. The hardest match for me today was my second one against a wrestler from Rota, but I was able to get the technical win.”

Swart said that he’s feeling great about next weekend’s championship.

“It’s going to be stiff competition, but I believe I have a legitimate shot at first place,” he said.

“I think that competition in my weight class has gotten notably easier and my fitness has gotten better too.”

“Roberts has been pretty dominant this season,” coach Walt Dodds said. “He’s 11-0 going into the European championship.”

Aviano senior Michael Hauser, who won at 145 pounds, plans to enlist in the Air Force. But for the next week, he said, it was all about wrestling.

“This was my last home meet,” he said. “I’m very proud of all the wrestlers, but only the ones of them worked and today, it showed.”

Like others who qualified Saturday, Hauser — the quarterback on the Saints’ second straight D-II football championship in the fall — closed his season for another week.

“Everyone wants to place first at the Euros, but only the ones who put in the most work will get it done,” Hauser said. “I know how much work I have put in this season, so I’m hopeful.”

Ramstein runs northern sectional

Saturday at Brussel, the Royals qualified the bulk of the wrestlers and their coaches expected a strong showing Saturday for the Division I crown.

Ramstein finished first in 10 weight classes, including senior leaders Conner Mackie, Christian Griffin, Matthew Overwich and Teddy Ward. Seven more finished second in their brackets.

The Royals figure to add even more qualifiers this week when wildcard entries are added to the field.

Wrestlers from Lakenheath and host Brussels also earned weight-class victors.

Ethan Bell of the host school won the 106-pound bracket, while 145-pounder Philip Severance and 170-pounder Nick Scifo notched wins for the Lancers.

Stuttgart in good shape for tournament

Saturday, reigning Division I dynasty Stuttgart fared well in the central sectional qualifier it hosted.

Close to 20 Panthers earned automatic berths in next weekend’s European tournament, a number that will expand when wildcard berths are announced this week.

While Stuttgart will have the necessary depth to boost its chances of extending its DODEA Europe title reign, the Panthers were limited in terms of bracket victories Saturday.

But the Eagles, which has no incumbent European champions, had five wrestlers take first place, including Carter Hanes at 138 and Jack Engelke at 145.

Division I rival Wiesbaden played a big part in mitigating Stuttgart’s success. Three Warriors, including former European champion Aretyu Allen at 132, earned first-place finishes.

Spangdahlem, meanwhile, enjoyed an outstanding performance, especially considering its Division III status. Three Sentinels — Skylter Hickman at 106 pounds, Carson Hicks at 120 and Brenden Castillo at 126 — earned first-place finishes, automatic bids and a good start on a small-school championship run.

Naples’ Nick Luminarias works to pin Vilseck’s Thorin Bridges in the 195-pound weight class of Saturday’s wrestling sectional held at Aviano, Italy. Luminarias won by pin and won the weight class.

NORMAN LLAMAS/Stars and Stripes

Nemesis (168) and James Williams (135) also won their classes, helping the Samurai rack up 73 points, outdistancing Kinnick and Yokota, which tied for second with 61 apiece.

“I’m excited for our kids,” Perry coach Chris Munnell said.

“They worked really hard all year. Hopefully, it’s a big stepping stone into next week’s Far East, scheduled for Feb. 13-15 at Osan.

Dave Ornauer/dave@stripes.com

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DODEA Japan tournaments

Kinnick, Zama split titles; Perry takes wrestling

By Dave Ornauer
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — A major worry for coach Robert Stovall entering the DODEA Japan basketball tournament was getting past a Zama team that had already beaten his Kinnick team twice during the regular season.

Darryl Williams scored 24 points and the Red Devils outlasted the Trojans in a seesaw battle edging the Trojans 77-75 at Yokota High School for the tournament title Saturday after edging them 69-67 in Thursday’s opener.

“We had to do it twice against them. Zama played their hearts out all season against us,” Stovall said after Kinnick repeated as DODEA Japan champions.

The Trojans grabbed the lead 10 times, seven in the first quarter alone, and the contest was tied six times. Corey Hollingsworth and Tristan Venturina combined for 18 fourth-quarter points to erase a six-point Zama lead after three quarters.

It was the play of the bench late in the game, Stovall said, that rescued the Red Devils, particularly reserve guard Yuri Delacruz, who converted a three-pointer to shoot 3-for-4 from the foul line and grab three rebounds.

He did what he was supposed to do,” Stovall said of the bench players. “And for the first time in a long while, the team was able to answer yes to the two questions,” he said of what he asks his teams after every game: Are you proud of the way you played and did you play as hard as you could?

After that back-and-forth first quarter, the Trojans’ Chandler Platt scored seven points by himself to spark a 9-0 run that put Zama ahead 36-23 with 3:55 left in the first half.

But Kinnick responded with 11 straight, and while the Trojans led much of the middle two quarters, the Red Devils hung close before springing a fourth-quarter rally. Hollingsworth put Kinnick ahead to stay 74-73 on two foul shots with 41.8 seconds left.

Platt led all scorers with 32 points, 16 in the second quarter, for the Trojans.

Stirling leads Zama girls to second straight title

The Zama girls also repeated as DODEA Japan champs but with little of the drama of the boys final. The Trojans broke it open with a 15-0 first-half run after a slow start, en route to a 62-32 romp over Kinnick.

Sophomore guard Chloe Sterling averaged more than 27 points during the tournament and fueled the Trojans’ offense, finishing with 28 points while adding nine assists and seven steals.

Unlike last year’s final against Yokota, in which Zama started fast but struggled at the end, the Trojans were more consistent from start to finish on Saturday, coach Daisy Whittaker-Hayes said.

“We worked harder, we were better defensively, and we were in shape because we played man-to-man throughout,” she said. “And we had the mindset, that we could come in believing we could do it, and we did.”

Jessica Atkinson finished with 20 points and Smith 10. Amiya Jones paced the Red Devils with 12 points.

Perry matmen grab first DODEA Japan title

CAMP ZAMA, Japan — Seizure three individual titles, including heavyweight by senior and two-time Far East champion Marshall China. M.C. Perry surprised the field Saturday by capturing its first DODEA Japan wrestling title.

Nemo Matthews (168) and James Williams (135) also won their classes, helping the Samurai rack up 73 points, outdistancing Kinnick and Yokota, which tied for second with 61 apiece.

“I’m excited for our kids,” Perry coach Chris Munnell said.

“They worked really hard all year. Hopefully, it’s a big stepping stone into next week’s Far East, scheduled for Feb. 13-15 at Osan.

Dave Ornauer/dave@stripes.com

Twitter: @daveornauer
### Eastern Conference

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### Scoreboard

**Associated Press**

**Eastern Conference**

- **Philadelphia Flyers** center Sean Couturier (14) scores past Washington Capitals goaltender Braden Holtby during the Flyers' three-goal second period in a 7-2 win Saturday in Washington.

**Western Conference**

- **Austin** at **Florida**
  - The Flyers snapped a 0-for-9 slump on the power play when Couturier scored nine seconds into their first chance of the game, and then they poured on four straight games after a five-game losing streak.

**Goalie**

- **Ilya Samsonov**, 2.19
- **Anton Khudobin**, 2.32
- **Jaroslav Halak**, 3.00
- **Elvis Merzlikins**, 3.50

**All-Star break**

- The Flyers are 3-0-3 since returning from the All-Star break.

**Brayden Point**

- The Lightning extended their winning streak to six games with a 5-on-3 power-play goal.

**Devils**

- MacKenzie Blackwood stopped a penalty shot and made 37 saves in posting his second straight shutout and host New Jersey beat Los Angeles.

**Evans & Culp**

- Vancouver Canucks center Niall Quinn scored his first career NHL goal.

**Daily**

- The Flyers are 3-0-3 since returning from the All-Star break.

**Energy**

- The Flyers are 3-0-3 since returning from the All-Star break.

**Leagues**

- The Flyers are 3-0-3 since returning from the All-Star break.

**Oilers**

- Connor McDavid scored his fifth straight game-winner.

**Predators**

- The Flyers allowed a season-high 15 shots in the first period.

**Stars & Stripes**

- The Flyers allowed a season-high 15 shots in the first period.

**Shots**

- The Flyers allowed a season-high 15 shots in the first period.

**Success**

- The Flyers allowed a season-high 15 shots in the first period.

**Tie**

- The Flyers allowed a season-high 15 shots in the first period.

**Winning**

- The Flyers allowed a season-high 15 shots in the first period.

**Winston**

- The Flyers allowed a season-high 15 shots in the first period.

**Wood**

- The Flyers allowed a season-high 15 shots in the first period.

**World**

- The Flyers allowed a season-high 15 shots in the first period.

**X**

- The Flyers allowed a season-high 15 shots in the first period.

**Y**

- The Flyers allowed a season-high 15 shots in the first period.

**Z**

- The Flyers allowed a season-high 15 shots in the first period.

**Zurich**

- The Flyers allowed a season-high 15 shots in the first period.
By Stephen Whyno
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The debut of the new XFL has a punk blocked for a touchdown, a juiced-up crowd roaring for big plays and a player swearing during an in-game television interview.

The actual football was hit and miss. College national championship-winning former Ohio State quarterback Cardale Jones was the biggest star on the field and took the microphone to address fans before the start of a brand-new football league.

“This is for the love of football,” Jones said. “Enjoy.”

Jones’ D.C. Defenders beat the Seattle Dragons 31-19 Saturday afternoon in the opener of the new XFL that provided plenty of entertainment in person and on TV. It’s far too early to tell if the XFL can take a foothold where its previous incarnation and the recently unsuccessful Alliance of American Football failed, but executives are willing to wait and see.

“For us, if the fans who attend and watch at home feel as though it was a good football game and they had a fun time either watching or being in this awesome venue with us, that’s success,” XFL chief operating officer Jeffrey Pollack said. “We’re taking a long-term view in this. Success ultimately will not be measured in the first game or the first weekend or the first season.”

The first weekend is a chance for football fans to catch a glimpse of some of the few players they might recognize. There’s former Oklahoma quarterback Landry Jones with Dallas, former NFL QB Josh Johnson with San Diego and ex-Navy standout Keenan Reynolds playing for Seattle.

It’s not the star power of the NFL, but billionaire Vince McMahon’s latest venture is an attempt to capture the attention of hardcore football fans in the attempt to generate some interest. Jones and Reynolds are two of the few players they had a fun time either watching or being in this awesome venue with us, that’s success,” XFL chief operating officer Jeffrey Pollack said. “We’re taking a long-term view in this. Success ultimately will not be measured in the first game or the first weekend or the first season.”

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Moore effort: Duke stuns North Carolina

Associated Press


They did it with a pair of plays sure to live on in replays and the lore of the fierce rivalry, too.

Jones hit a jumper at the horn to force the extra period, then Moore scored on a putback of Jones’ air-balled jumper as time expired in overtime to help the No. 5 Blue Devils top the Tar Heels 98-96 in overtime to help the No. 7 Blue Devils bounce back from the most out of sequence.


The Blue Devils outlasted the Tar Heels in the final 11.2 seconds of overtime when Moore scored on a putaway of an offensive rebound of his own missed free throw.

It was the third consecutive overtime win for Duke (21-3, 12-0 ACC), which earned its sixth win in seven games.

Duke Blue Devil forward Wendell Moore Jr., center, celebrates after hitting the game-winning shot in overtime to beat the Tar Heels.

UCLA 65, No. 23 Arizona 52: Chris Smith had 15 points, and the visiting Bruins shut down the Wildcats from behind the arc.

No. 15 Kentucky 77, Tennessee 64: Immanuel Quickley scored 18 points, and the visiting Wildcats won for the sixth time in seven games.

Kentucky (18-5, 8-2 SEC) beat the Volunteers in Knoxville for the first time in Rick Barnes’ 19 years as the Volunteers’ coach.

Michigan 77, No. 16 Michigan State 66: Jaxson Hayes scored 14 points in his return to the lineup, leading the host Wolverines.

Hayes hit a career-high 30 points and Luka Garza added 22, helping the host Wildcats bounce back from their worst loss of the season.

Wisconsin’s previous career high was 34 points in 1998-99 over Maryland on Jan. 10. It was the ninth consecutive Big Ten game of 20 or more points for Garza, who leads the conference in scoring.

No. 21 Creighton 94, St. John’s 70: Marcus Zegarowski scored 23 points to lead six Bluejays in double figures for the win at home.

Creighton shot a season-best 60% from the field and matched its season high with 13 three-pointers. Denzel Mahoney scored 18 points for the Bluejays (18-5, 7-4 Big East), and Ty-Shon Alexander added 16 apiece.

Marcellus Earlington scored a career-high 25 points for the Red Storm.

No. 22 Penn State 83, Minnesota 77: Lamar Stevens scored 12 points as the Nittany Lions beat visiting the host Nittany Lions to their sixth straight win.

Izayah Brockington added 10 points (18-5, 8-4 Big Ten) who snapped a five-game losing streak to the Golden Gophers.

Daniel Oturu had a career-high 32 points and grabbed 16 rebounds for the Golden Gophers (12-11, 6-7), who lost their second straight game. Mike Carr added 20 points.

UCLA 65, No. 23 Arizona 52: Chris Smith had 15 points, and the visiting Bruins shut down the Wildcats from behind the arc.

UCLA (13-12, 6-5 Pac-12) bounced back from an ugly loss to Arizona State with a superb defensive game and 9-FOR-19 shooting from three-point range.

No. 24 Colorado 81, Stanford 71: McKinley Wright IV scored 21 points, and the host Buffaloes overcame a cold start and a 16-point second-half deficit on their way to the win.

All of Tyler Bey’s 11 points and nine of his dozen boards came in the second half when Colorado shot 70% from the floor and 100% from behind the arc.

Denny was one of five players in double figures for the Bluejays.

Moore effort: Duke stuns North Carolina


Guards forward Wendell Moore Jr., center, celebrates with guard Jordan Goldwire, left, and forward Joey Baker, right, following Moore’s game-winning putback in a 98-96 overtime win over North Carolina.

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Raptors extend win streak to 14 games

By Ian Harrison

TORONTO — Overcoming the absence of injured stars is becoming a regular occurrence for the Toronto Raptors. So is winning games.

Fred VanVleet hit 10 of his 12 shots and scored 20 points as the struggling Hornets, who have won 18 of 19 in the series, including six straight.

Deandre Ayton had 28 points and 19 rebounds as the Kings won for the sixth time in eight games overall.

Antetokounmpo just shy of triple-double in Bucks’ win

Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — Giannis Antetokounmpo had 18 points, 18 rebounds and nine assists Saturday, helping the NBA-best Milwaukee Bucks to a 111-95 defeat of the Orlando Magic.

Milwaukee won for the 13th time in 14 games, improving the league’s best record to 45-7 and remaining on course to become the first team to top 70 wins in a regular season.

“Just that we played pretty good defense,” they played pretty good defense on it,” Antetokounmpo said. “It’s game after game.”

Antetokounmpo, meanwhile, fell short in a personal bid to become the first player with at least 30 points, 15 rebounds and five assists in six consecutive games.

Nikola Vucevic led Orlando with 21 points, eight rebounds and nine assists for the struggling Hornets, who won for the first time since Jan. 9.

McLaurin added a career-high 11 assists as the Timberwolves scored their highest point total of the season thanks to a franchise-record 26 three-pointers.

Spencer Dinwiddie had 21 points and 11 assists and DeAndre Jordan had 15 points and 14 rebounds, Brooklyn lost for the first time in three games without injured guard Kyrie Irving (sprained right knee).

Self-coached Toronto’s loss to the Golden State Warriors on Saturday was the first time since 2009 that it failed to score 100 points in a game.

The Knicks led 91-89 when Randle scored 17 points, including a bank shot with 7.3 seconds left for the final margin.

The Pacers dropped their fifth straight.

The Nuggets’ 128-115 victory over the Timberwolves on Saturday was their eighth straight against a team from the Northwest Conference.

The Pelicans played without Brandon Ingram and Zion Williamson due to injuries. Ingram has a right ankle sprain, and Williamson is dealing with a left ankle sprain.

LeVert said of the final play. “I tried to get a good shot up but they played pretty good defense on it!”

LeVert has scored 20 or more in three straight games, the longest such streak of his career.

“He caught his rhythm and he’s doing it consistently now,” Atkinson said. “It’s game after game.”

FREDRICK FRANKLIN II

Associated Press

Toronto Raptors guard Fred VanVleet, right, goes for a layup as Brooklyn Nets guard Timothe Luwawu-Cabarrot defends. VanVleet scored 10 of his 29 points in the fourth quarter in a 119-118 win.

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Press on roll heading into Tokyo Olympics

Forward is 5th U.S. woman to score in 6 straight games

By ANNE M. PETERSON  Associated Press

CASRO, Calif. — Christen Press is on a tear with goals in her past six games, focused on the U.S. national team's next big task: the Olympics.

A long scoring drought, often as a spark off the bench, Press is making a case for a starting role with her latest outburst.

She is just the fifth U.S. woman to score in six straight games, joining Mia Hamm, Michelle Akers, April Heinrichs and Carli Lloyd. It's the longest such streak for the U.S. since Lloyd scored in seven straight in 2014.

Press says she's hasn't changed a thing.

"I think the way I approach football always, and it's been this way for a while, is just that my job is to strive to be my best when I'm on the field, and that's every training and every game," she said. "I'm happy to be helping the team and to be on the field, and that's every training and doing what I love. It is as simple as that.

"The United States is looking to become the first team to grab gold at the Olympics the year after winning the World Cup."

Four years ago in Brazil, the reigning World Cup champs looked unstoppable before they were knocked out by Sweden in the quarterfinals. It was the U.S. team's earliest ever Olympic exit.

"We have to let go of the World Cup and we have to go into this like, you know, this is our big tournament for the next three years. And so I think that's a good lesson to have learned," Press said. "But, you know, all of our eyes and all of our focus are on bringing home the gold."

The United States qualified for the Tokyo Games on Friday night when it beat Mexico 4-0 in the semifinals of the CONCACAF Women's Olympic Qualifying tournament. Press scored the final goal, a well-executed chip shot in the 73rd minute.

Canada claimed the region's other Olympic berth with a 1-0 semifinal win over Costa Rica. With the Olympic spots secured, the United States will play Canada on Sunday in an essentially inconsequential title game. The U.S. has defeated Canada in the past three qualifying tournament finals.

Press has received more opportunities on the field as of late with the absence of Alex Morgan, who is on maternity leave. Morgan has said she's going to try to be back in time for Tokyo.

Press also gets to make her case for a new start. Vladko An donovski took over as coach after Jill Ellis stepped down last fall.

"I am still a part of the program," An donovski said. "I think she's going to try to be back in time for Tokyo."

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"I think the way I approach football always, and it's been this way for a while, is just that my job is to strive to be my best when I'm on the field, and that's every training and every game," she said. "I'm happy to be helping the team and to be on the field, and that's every training and doing what I love. It is as simple as that.

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Press made her national team debut in 2013. She has 56 goals in 134 appearances. A standout at Stanford who won the MAC Hermann Trophy as the nation's best college player as a senior, Press went on to play for clubs in Sweden in addition to the NWSL.

She has played in two World Cups, and Tokyo will be her second Olympics.

"My mindset is always is that there's always more. So when people say 'Oh, you're at the top of your game,' I don't really like that expression, because it implies that from here you go down,' Press said.

"What I want for myself and this team is to continue to ascend."
Jon Jones retained his title at UFC 247, beating Dominick Reyes by unanimous decision. The unanimous decision of 48-47, 48-47, 49-46 was met with scattered applause and loud boos from the crowd, as many felt the challenger had proven enough to take the title.

UFC President Dana White addressed the controversial outcome, stating, "I think it was a great fight, and I think everyone should be proud of what they accomplished." 

By Jordan Godwin
Associated Press

Jones retained his light heavyweight belt Saturday night following a surprisingly strong opening by Reyes. The unanimous decision of 48-47, 48-47, 49-46 was met with scattered applause and loud boos from the crowd, as many felt the challenger had proven enough to take the title.

UFC President Dana White addressed the controversial outcome, stating, "I think it was a great fight, and I think everyone should be proud of what they accomplished." 

Top: Jon Jones, left, lands a punch on Dominick Reyes during Saturday's light heavyweight championship bout in Houston. Jones retained via a controversial 48-47, 48-47, 49-46 unanimous decision. Left: UFC women's flyweight champion Valentina Shevchenko celebrates her TKO win over Katlyn Chookagian.

Photos by Michael Wyke/AP

SEE DISPUTED ON PAGE 23