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Marine Raider pleads guilty in death of Green Beret
By Corey Dickstein
Stars and Stripes

NAVAL STATION NORFOLK, Va. — Marine Raider Staff Sgt. Kevin Maxwell Jr., one of four special operators charged in the 2017 strangling death of a Green Beret in Africa, pleaded guilty Thursday to negligent homicide, admitting his role in a plot to embarrass the soldier.

Maxwell accepted a plea deal from prosecutors to avoid more serious charges, including murder, in the June 4, 2017, death of Army Staff Sgt. Logan Melgar. Maxwell, an Afghanistan War veteran who has served more than a decade in uniform, is the second servicemember to plead guilty to charges in Melgar’s death, which they described as the result of a juvenile hazing attempt gone bad.

“We created a plan and acted out that plan — a ridiculous and harmful, abusive trick ... [designed] to humiliate Melgar,” Maxwell told the military judge, Marine Col. Glen Hines.

Maxwell agreed to plead guilty to charges of negligent homicide, conspiracy, hazing, burglary, obstruction of justice and making false official statements.

Negligent homicide is the lowest charge of criminal homicide within military law, but it carries a maximum penalty that includes three years in prison and a dishonorable discharge.

Hines will sentence Maxwell after hearing testimony during a sentencing trial expected to begin Thursday afternoon.

SEE GUILTY ON PAGE 5

‘Our debt to you is everlasting’
Trump, Macron thank veterans on 75th anniversary of D-Day
By John Vandiver
Stars and Stripes

COLLEVILLE-SUR-MER, France — President Donald Trump honored the American and Allied troops who stormed the beaches on D-Day 75 years ago to free Europe from Nazi domination, telling the veterans at Normandy American Cemetery on Thursday that “our debt to you is everlasting.”

Standing before a contingent of D-Day veterans, Trump recounted the heroics of the survivors and the thousands of Americans buried beneath the white crosses and Stars of David that stretch for acres on a bluff overlooking Omaha Beach.

“For the men who sit behind me, and for the boys who rest in the field before me, your example will never ever grow old,” Trump said. “The blood that they spilled, the tears that they shed, the lives that they made, the sacrifices that they made will not just roll on. Those who fought here won the future for our nation.”

Trump described the many thousands of servicemembers who participated in the invasion as “the pride of our nation … the glory of our republic.”

SEE D-DAY ON PAGE 6

President Donald Trump salutes World War II veterans at the beginning of Thursday’s ceremony commemorating the 75th anniversary of D-Day at Normandy American Cemetery in Colleville-sur-Mer, France.

Photos by Michael Abrams/Stars and Stripes
Pentagon says no more penalties as Niger reviews end

By Caitlin M. Kenney
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Acting Defense Secretary Pat Shanahan will not pursue additional punishments for military personnel involved in the 2017 ambush in Niger that led to the deaths of four American soldiers following a review of the initial probes into the attack, the Pentagon announced Wednesday.

Pentagon officials also announced they would award nine valor medals for heroic actions undertaken during the six-hour firefight following the Oct. 4 ambush in a remote area of southwestern Niger. The families of each of the four soldiers from Fort Bragg, N.C.’s 3rd Special Forces Group killed in the attack will receive valor awards for their soldiers’ actions that day.

Shanahan requested a new review earlier this year of the investigations into the ambush “to ensure every aspect of this case,” he said.

During the investigation, “our primary concern has been the families of the fallen,” Shanahan said in a prepared statement Wednesday. “We knew we had to do thorough investigations and three reviews that accountability measures were rendered in this case,” he said.

The team of some 40 American Green Berets and support soldiers and Nigerien forces was attacked by more than 100 “well-trained and well-equipped fighters” in Tongo Tongo, according to the report. Two U.S. soldiers were wounded and four were killed during the attack. Staff Sgts. Bryan Black and Dustin Wright, both Green Berets, and Sgt. 1st Class Jeremiah Johnson and Sgt. La David Johnson were killed in the ambush. Jeremiah Johnson was posthumously promoted to sergeant first class.

Four Nigerien soldiers also died in the attack.

Nine valor awards were approved for actions during the ambush, and the investigation found the Special Forces team “served gallantly under fire,” West said.

“If not for the courageous actions of several soldiers, additional loss of life likely would have occurred,” he said.

Wright and La David Johnson will be posthumously awarded the Silver Star, and Black and Jeremiah Johnson will be posthumously awarded the Bronze Star with “V” device for valor. A defense official said no one had been nominated for the Medal of Honor.

The awards will be officially announced and presented in accordance with the families’ wishes, and at a time that is appropriate to honor the actions and sacrifice associated with the valor awards,” according to the Pentagon.

The only information the Pentagon gave regarding the other five valor awards was that two additional team members will receive the Silver Star and the other medals to be awarded are a Bronze Star Medal with “V” device, the Army Commendation Medal with “V” device, and the Army Commendation Medal with “C” device for combat.

Investigators, who spent months conducting interviews and reviewing the site of the ambush, determined the Special Forces team was improperly trained for its mission and inadequately prepared to face the deadly ambush in which they found themselves outnumbered three-to-one against a heavily armed enemy force.

Senior AFRICOM officials were not aware that the team set out on a mission Oct. 3, 2017, with Nigerien troops to find a local Islamic State leader. The mission should have included a rehearsal of the operation, further planning and high-level approval, according to the investigation.

Once the team was ambushed, fighting raged on for nearly an hour before headquarters learned the troops needed help. At that point, it took more than 45 minutes for the help to arrive, in the form of two French fighter jets that conducted four shows of force, which eventually persuaded the ISIS force to retreat.

West said the Pentagon had implemented changes as a result of the investigation for the special operations community, which included mandating mission rehearsals and streamlining mission approval procedures.

Nine disciplinary actions were taken across the chain of command, he said, including a general officer.

While the investigation into the ambush highlighted errors in training and planning, lower-level officers were singled out for missteps rather than senior AFRICOM and SOCOM leaders, an issue that captured the attention of then-Defense Secretary Jim Mattis.

Mattis launched a review of the initial report’s findings in the months after it was completed over concerns junior troops were shouldering too much blame. That review in December 2018 resulted in the overturning of a reprimand for one of the Green Berets who survived the ambush, Army Capt. Michael Perozoni, who was the team’s leader.

The Defense Department on Wednesday declined to name the nine people who were punished for their roles in the ambush.

The only information provided by a defense official was the general officer was a two-star Air Force general.

Stars and Stripes staff writer Corey Dickstein contributed to this story.
US, allies test air and missile defense in Southern Europe

By Norman Llamas
Stars and Stripes

AVIANO AIR BASE, Italy — The U.S. military and several European allies this week conducted the first of what officials expect will be many air and missile defense exercises aimed at projecting power to thwart potential threats in the region.

Dubiied Astral Knight 2019 and led by Naval Investigative Service employees — demonstrated its intent to commit the crimes.

On Tuesday the court found Dorrbecker guilty of attempted bank robbery.

Also, the special agent, acting as the girl, told Dorrbecker that she thought about kissing him and asked if he wanted to kiss her. He said he did.

As the NCIS operation progressed, the agent initiated sex-related discussions at an increasing rate, according to court documents.

Meanwhile, Dorrbecker gave her his email address, which he called "tales of the bizarre." He did not solicit sex or ask for photos of the girl, according to court documents.

Dorrbecker's defense lawyer, Cpt. Alan Dorrbecker, stresses that his client only solicited sex-related discussions. He said Dorrbecker's intent was to get to know the girl better, and he prepared her for sex.

"As a sexual predator, Dorrbecker was well aware of his ability to use his position of power to control and manipulate the young girl," said Dorrbecker's lawyer.

The jury was satisfied with the evidence presented and found Dorrbecker guilty of attempted bank robbery.

"We are happy with the verdict, but we will not rest until justice is served," said Dorrbecker's lawyer. "We will appeal the decision."
Navy recovers C-2A wreckage from 2017 crash

**By Caitlin Doornbos**
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The Navy has recovered the C-2A Greyhound that crashed in 2017 in the Philippine Sea while en route to the USS Ronald Reagan, killing three sailors, according to the U.S. Pacific Fleet.

A Navy salvage team on May 21 used a contracted vessel to recover the aircraft, Pacific Fleet spokesman Cmdr. Nate Christensen said in an email to Stars and Stripes Thursday.

The aircraft had been submerged since the Nov. 22, 2017, crash that killed its pilot, Lt. Steven Combs; Seaman Matthew Chialastri, an aviation boatswain’s mate; and Seaman Apprentice Ven Combs, 21, according to an email to Stars and Stripes.

The Navy in January 2018 said the C-2A Greyhound like the one shown above has been recovered by a U.S. Navy salvage team. The plane crashed into the Philippine Sea in 2017, killing three sailors.

The wreckage of a C-2A Greyhound like the one shown above has been recovered by a U.S. Navy salvage team. The plane crashed into the Philippine Sea in 2017, killing three sailors.

The Navy in January 2018 said the Greyhound had sunk to a depth of about 18,500 feet, making the recovery operation the deepest ever attempted.

The team identified “two major pieces” of the aircraft and its black box on Feb. 5, leading to the May recovery, the Navy official said.

The Navy has not announced an official cause of the crash, but two Navy officials told Stars and Stripes in 2017 that the Greyhound may have been subject to a rare double-engine failure — though the cause of that was unclear. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss an ongoing investigation.

Combs’ flight skills were heralded as the reason most of those on board survived the crash.

Cmdr. Ronald Flanders, a Naval Air Forces spokesman, said soon after the crash that Combs’ surviving co-pilot reported that Combs “flew the hell out of that plane.”

“Our thoughts and prayers remain with the families, friends and shipmates of our three fallen sailors,” Christensen said in an email to Stars and Stripes Thursday.

The 2017 Greyhound crash ended a deadly year for the Navy in the Pacific.

In June 2017, seven sailors were killed aboard the USS Fitzgerald during a collision with a merchant ship south of Japan. Another 10 sailors died aboard the USS John S. McCain in August 2017 in a collision with an oil tanker near the Strait of Malacca.

The story was first reported by U.S. Naval Institute News.

A Navy official said the service is “not publicly discussing disposition of remains out of consideration for the families,” adding that the sailors’ families were notified of the findings.

The Greyhound, which was assigned to the Reagan strike group’s Carrier Air Wing 5, was carrying cargo and the 11 passengers and crew from Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan, to the aircraft carrier when it crashed. The Navy spent two days searching for the three missing sailors across nearly 1,000 square nautical miles.

The Yokosuka-based Ronald Reagan was participating in an annual field training exercise with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force at the time of the crash.

Recovery efforts began in December 2017 using towed pinger-locator operations. A year later, a team of deep-water salvage experts found the Greyhound near the crash site on Dec. 29, 2018, a Navy official told Stars and Stripes.

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La. soldier sentenced to life for killing pregnant wife

Associated Press

LAKE CHARLES, La. — A 22-year-old soldier at a Louisiana Army base has been sentenced to life in prison for killing his 22-year-old pregnant wife found last October in the trunk of a car. Logan Kyle, of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division at Fort Polk, pleaded guilty to premeditated murder and one specification of death of a unborn child during a general court-martial convened at the military base Wednesday, news outlets reported. His wife, Shelena, was also a member of the 3rd Brigade.

A military judge also ordered Kyle's rank reduced and for him to forfeit all pay and allowances. He was dishonorably discharged.

Kyle joined the Army in 2014 and had been assigned to Fort Polk since February 2017, said Fort Polk spokeswoman Kim Reischling.

Kyle and his girlfriend, Sarah Parker, were arrested in Lake Charles last October after law enforcement learned they were driving around with a body in the trunk.

Calciasu Parish Sheriff Tony Mancuso said at that time investigators believed Kyle killed his wife at their home on Fort Polk, put her in the trunk and met up with Parker.

Kyle and Parker drove around, with Parker's two toddler-aged children in the car, looking for a place to dump the body.

Parker, 24, of Moss Bluff, remains jailed on counts of failure to report a homicide, obstruction of justice and contributing to the delinquency of juveniles during the commission of a felony.

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**D-Day: Veterans of invasion reflect on losses and sacrifices**

**FROM FRONT PAGE**

Trump joined other world leaders and surviving veterans to remember those who died in the greatest amphibious invasion in history, which led to the liberation of Western Europe after four years of Nazi occupation.

"On June 6, 1944, they joined a liberation force of awesome power and breathtaking scale," Trump told the gathering at the military cemetery. "After months of planning, the Allies had chosen this ancient coastline to mount their campaign to vanquish the wicked tyranny of the Nazi empire from the face of the earth."

"We thank you from the bottom of our hearts," he said.

Trump also praised all of the Allies who took part in the landings, including the British, Canadians, Poles and French.

French President Emmanuel Macron arrived by helicopter at the cemetery, where he and his wife greeted the president and first lady Melania Trump. France has not forgotten "what we owe to the United States of America," Macron said.

"We know what we owe to you veterans — our freedom," Macron told the veterans lining the stage. "On behalf of my nation, I want to say thank you." The lessons of Colleville-sur-Mer are that liberty and democracy are inseparable.”

The French president also spoke of the value of alliances that grew out of World War II, such as NATO, and the need for continued American leadership today.

"The U.S. is never greater than when it is fighting for the freedom of others," Macron said.

**Veteran memories**

The D-Day battle came at a terrible cost, especially for the first wave of American troops landing at Omaha Beach. In all, more than 4,400 troops died during D-Day and some 10,000 were injured. The casualties increased in the days after the beach landings as the Allies fought their way inland.

About 50 D-Day veterans gathered in Normandy to mark the anniversary of the allied invasion of France, which helped turn the tide of the war.

Warren Goss, 94, said that for years he suffered nightmares from the fighting. "It was terrible and they didn't have anything for it in those days, for (post-traumatic stress disorder)," Goss said.

Goss was among the first soldiers to land on Utah Beach. His job was to secure the beachhead so engineers could clear the beaches for landing supplies. When he went home after the war, having also fought at the Battle of the Bulge, there wasn't a lot of sympathy for what he had endured.

"The day I came home my father told me to go out and get a job. 'No one is going to feel sorry for you,' he said. And he was right," Goss said during a visit to the American cemetery.

Goss moved on with life, starting a family and homebuilding business, but the nightmares continued. Years ago, however, he traveled to the American cemetery with his children and grandchildren, which he said began the healing process.

"It changed my whole life," Goss said. "I came with my whole family and I watched the kids play on the beach and it changed everything for me. Once in a great while I still have dreams, but not many.

Carl Felton, 93, also made the trip to Normandy. During the invasion, he served as a signal man in a communication ship 100 yards off Omaha Beach. The USS Susan B. Anthony sank right next to his ship after hitting a mine. While those sailors were saved, dead bodies from the invasion force were floating everywhere.

"It feels very solemn to be here," Felton said. "I am thinking about all the loss of life. For those that were once alive, walking around, hoping for the future. I am also thinking about all the wives, mothers, fathers, children, left behind."

More than 9,380 American war dead, mostly from the D-Day invasion and ensuing battles, are buried at the cemetery.

William Galbraith, 95, said the commemoration of the battle has motivated him to live.

"It's what's keeping me alive — to come back here," said Galbraith, who was a paratrooper with the 101st Airborne on D-Day and landed behind enemy lines.

One of the things that surprised him that day were the German tracers in the night sky.

"Every calibar must have had a different color," he said. "Green, blue, all different. I just didn't expect that."

"This is our history"

As the ceremony began, Gen. Dwight D Eisenhower's voice carried over the speakers as screens flashed images from the battlefield. "Your task will not be an easy one," Eisenhower said in his message to the troops that day. Then the audience, stretching into the distance, arose in sustained applause as the faces of the D-Day vets in attendance panned across the screens.

Thousands of U.S. troops also were on hand for the ceremony, which was punctuated by volleys of ceremonial cannon fire and flyovers by allied fighter planes.

"This is our history, especially for us in U.S. Army Europe," said USAREUR chief Lt. Gen. Christopher Cavoli, whose command wears the patch of Eisenhower's Army. "It was a great allied endeavor and it was a hard allied endeavor."

For Cavoli, the boldness of the D-Day invasion still shocks.

From his hotel in Normandy, Cavoli said he looked up at the night sky, which in northern France sets late.

"It was about 12:30 a.m. I was looking out the window and it was still nearly light out. It was like twilight. That's just a little before the Pathfinder started jumping," he said. "Holy smokes, it wasn't as dark as you think. They could be seen."

On a previous visit, Cavoli said he walked in the footsteps of the troops who landed at Omaha Beach.

"I walked down to the water. It's about 400 yards out," Cavoli recalled. "You get to the water line and turn around and look across a quarter-mile of flat, rock-hard sand and open expanse."

After making the run, D-Day troops were rewarded with "a little shingle of rock about 3-feet high" to hide behind.

"The next thing you have to do is climb up a 200-foot cliff that is full of machine guns," Cavoli said. "The audacity to do that."

Today, at the top of the bluff are the grave markers.

"You are just overwhelmed because walking up you try to experience what these guys did and you see the result, the sacrifices."

Trump also recounted numerous examples of troops traversing the beach.

The GIs that boarded landing craft carried "on their shoulders the fate of the world," Trump said.

One of the vets singled out by Trump was former Army medic Ray Lambert, 98, who was in the first wave of troops to land at Omaha. Trump recounted the heroics of the former soldier, who was wounded twice in the invasion and is credited with saving more than a dozen lives as he rescued drowning men while shielding and treated others.

"Ray, the free world salutes you," Trump told Lambert.

**A visitor takes a photo of a grave at Normandy American Cemetery on Thursday before the ceremony commemorating the 75th anniversary of D-Day.**

**Michael Abrams/Stars and Stripes**
U.S. frogmen slogged through choppy waves to the Normandy beaches on D-Day, demolishing mines and removing other obstacles as German soldiers fired at them from hilltop perches.

Those underwater demolition teams cleared the way for the largest amphibious assault in history on June 6, 1944, which led to the liberation of Western Europe and contributed to the defeat of Nazi Germany a year later.

The frogmen were among the first to step ashore and die. They carried out their mission despite having little defense against relentless machine gun and artillery fire.

They were among the Normandy war dead honored Thursday during a dedication of a Lone Sailor statue on a plaza overlooking Utah Beach. It was one of several ceremonies in the region commemorating the 75th anniversary of D-Day.

“The Lone Sailor monument represents all these sailors and Marines that lost their lives at sea — and what they have given to us,” said Adm. James Foggo, head of the Navy’s Europe and Africa command, according to a statement. “Victory in Europe would not have been possible without the determination and sacrifice of those sailors, soldiers and Marines here on Utah Beach, 75 years ago today.”

The statue is one of 17 Lone Sailor monuments and is the first to be placed outside the United States.

Foggo noted that the frogmen were the forerunners of the Navy SEALs and a crucial part of the invasion force.

The frogmen swam and waded through waters in a combat zone with no wetsuits or diving gear, submerging only as long as they could hold their breaths. The Navy adopted scuba gear in 1948 and started the SEALs in 1962.

An explosive technician named Dennis Shyrock described how the Germans cut down many who were landing, Foggo said, according to the statement.

“The ocean water around him looked like pure blood. That was sickening.’ But he added, ‘We couldn’t stop doing our job.’”

Elisabeth Wright, the granddaughter of one of the first frogmen to come ashore, attended the ceremony.

“We are all honored to live your grandfather’s story through you and hope to measure up to his sacrifice when our service is complete,” Foggo said, according to the statement.

Foggo, whose father landed in Normandy with the Canadian forces, stood with German Command Sgt. Major Juergen Stark, whose grandfather was a German soldier in World War II.

“(Stark) believes as I do,” Foggo said. “That although we will never forget D-Day and World War II, we will constantly learn from the mistakes of the past to become stronger friends and Allies.”
"A special place at a special time"

Alumni reflect on past 60 years as Seoul American school complex closes

By Dave Ornauer
Stars and Stripes
YONGSAN GARRISON, South Korea — Mary Swecker and her three roommates had finished studying, were dimming the lights, and were getting ready for bed when they heard a loud noise outside.

"It was the curfew between midnight and 6 a.m.," Swecker said Wednesday evening. "But we were always antsy about the situation, so we always had our earphones on to listen for anything unusual."

"And I was always thinking about Korea," added her roommate, Arline O'Brien, who felt the same way as Swecker, her landlord and her three roommates.

O'Brien and her friends lived in Seoul American High School dormitories for three years of war when Seoul American started to educate students living in Army and Air Force installations stretching from Sinwon to Busan. Students would commute between their homes and Seoul each weekend via train.

As Korea's economy burgeoned in the mid- to late-1980s, infrastructure improvements, such as widening the country's main Yongyu Expressway, construction slowed what had been nominally a one-hour ride between Osan Air Base and Yongsan to as many as four hours in either direction.

More schools opened as time went by — in 1967 the Taegu and Pusan American schools, and in Osan an elementary school in 1980 and a high school in 1995.

Until 2005, Seoul American students lived in dormitories, watched over by dorm dads and mons like Michael and Arlene O'Brien, who met as Seoul American teachers in 1963 and married five years later. At first, they said, they were antsy about the situation on the peninsula, but they adjusted over time.

"People used to ask, how could we stay here?" said Arline, who with Michael now lives in Hilo, Hawaii. "It wasn't that scary. Once you figure it out; OK, do I want to be here? Yes. Am I willing to take the chances? Yes. Don't worry about it and get all nervous and jerky.""Dorm parents took on the same responsibility as real parents," the O'Briens said.

"You had to be thinking constantly to avoid problems," Arline said. "You did what you could; if you knew something was going on, you'd work it so the kids wouldn't be in trouble, but they wouldn't feel cheated."

George May, class of 1976, started out at Seoul American living in the dorms during his elementary years and then moved to metropolitan Seoul.

"I had 'Brub O for my second-grade art teacher" in fall 1964, May said, referring to Michael O'Brien.

O'Brien taught May tie-dye in middle school and photography in high school. May happened to be on one of his biannual visits to Seoul when O'Brien and his wife prepared to retire to Hawaii in 1997.

"We're still in touch with so many of those people," Michael O'Brien said. "They've even been here to visit us in Hawaii."

Unique school
Michelle Pell, who taught at Seoul American from 1993 to 2005 and now teaches at Daegu Middle-High School, offered three reasons Seoul American stands out: its student achievement, its heart and its generosity.

"In a class of 125 seniors, 75 would be in [advanced placement literature]," the rest in regular English," Pell said.

In times of need, the students at Seoul American stepped up, Pell said.

After 9/11, "my kids were feeling helpless and lost," she said.
Taiwan confirms request for US arms sale

By Paul Sonne
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The U.S. military may be close to falling victim to a “deliberate, patient and robustly resourced” Chinese strategy to blunt the technological edge of the American military, according to a new report by a think tank with critical insights.

In their report, Work and Grant detail five lines of effort they say China’s rising military might use to disrupt the U.S. military’s technological dominance. In their report, Work and Grant detail five lines of effort they say China’s rising military might use to disrupt the U.S. military’s technological dominance. In their report, Work and Grant detail five lines of effort they say China’s rising military might use to disrupt the U.S. military’s technological dominance.

The U.S. is the main supplier of weapons to Taiwan, and earlier reports have said Taiwan is also seeking 66 F-16 fighter jets in the most advanced configuration. President Tsai Ing-wen said in March that Taiwan was seeking tanks and jet fighters but didn’t provide any details. At a public appearance Thursday, she pledged continued support for a strengthened military and said the island’s efforts were winning it more international support.

“We will keep on strengthening our self-defense capabilities (and) will also keep on being a contributor to regional peace,” Tsai said.

The M1 Abrams would mark a significant upgrade from the aging tanks Taiwan’s army now uses, while the TOW and Javelin systems would upgrade Taiwan’s ability to repel a challenge from China.

Taiwan, which split from China amid civil war in 1949, has had no formal diplomatic ties with the U.S. since Washington recognized Beijing in 1979.

However, U.S. law requires it to take threats to the island seriously and to “make available to Taiwan such defense articles and defense services in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability.”

Tsai has made beefing up Taiwan’s armed forces a central task of her administration amid increasing Chinese military threats and a campaign to increase Taiwan’s diplomatic isolation and weaken its economy.

Report details risks that US military faces from China

By Paul Sonne
The Washington Post

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Tsai has made beefing up Taiwan’s armed forces a central task of her administration amid increasing Chinese military threats and a campaign to increase Taiwan’s diplomatic isolation and weaken its economy.

Report details risks that US military faces from China

By Paul Sonne
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The U.S. military may be close to falling victim to a “deliberate, patient and robustly resourced” Chinese strategy to blunt the technological edge of the American military, according to a new report by a think tank with critical insights.

In their report, Work and Grant detail five lines of effort they say China’s rising military might use to disrupt the U.S. military’s technological dominance. In their report, Work and Grant detail five lines of effort they say China’s rising military might use to disrupt the U.S. military’s technological dominance. In their report, Work and Grant detail five lines of effort they say China’s rising military might use to disrupt the U.S. military’s technological dominance.

The U.S. is the main supplier of weapons to Taiwan, and earlier reports have said Taiwan is also seeking 66 F-16 fighter jets in the most advanced configuration. President Tsai Ing-wen said in March that Taiwan was seeking tanks and jet fighters but didn’t provide any details. At a public appearance Thursday, she pledged continued support for a strengthened military and said the island’s efforts were winning it more international support.

“We will keep on strengthening our self-defense capabilities (and) will also keep on being a contributor to regional peace,” Tsai said.

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Fort Hood plans to recognize ‘Hug Lady’

BY ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — No matter what unknown circumstances lay ahead for soldiers as they deployed from Fort Hood, they could always rely on one thing — Elizabeth Laird would see them off with a hug and be there with another when they returned home.

Better known to soldiers at the Texas base as the “Hug Lady,” Laird was a fixture for about 12 years at the terminal at Robert Gray Army Airfield in Killeen, Texas, Cecilia Abbott, reported in the Killeen Daily Herald.

“Just to have someone there for you when you leave and when you go,” said Sgt. Christopher Peckham, a Chinook helicopter mechanic at Hunter Army Airfield in Georgia. While stationed at Fort Hood, he received a hug from Laird to and from a rotation at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin in California.

“A lot of soldiers don’t have immediate family where they are stationed, especially the single guys,” Peckham said. “It’s a local comfort when you are leaving somewhere when you return back after an extended period of time.”

It didn’t matter the time of day or whether it was a holiday. Laird was there, often wearing boots, a belt and a yellow hair ribbon adorned with military pins. She took her time, smiling, offering prayers and speaking to each soldier as she hugged them goodbye, her delicate, grandmotherly demeanor a sharp contrast to the soldiers weighed down by bulging backpacks and rifles.

In 1993, Fort Hood ended on Christmas Eve 1955 when she died at age 83 after a battle with cancer that lasted over a year. During her time in a Killeen hospital, the Killeen Daily Herald reported soldiers visited Laird to show her gratitude and appreciation for her unwavering dedication to the troops.

Soldiers call for honors

Now, soldiers are again rally together to show their support for Laird by asking the Defense Department and Fort Hood through a Change.org petition to rename in her honor the terminal at Robert Gray Army Airfield where she spent hours offering countless hugs.

“I chose to sign the petition because of my love for her calling,” said Tyler Morgan, a former sergeant who flew out of the central Texas base in 2014 for a rotation in Korea. Laird hugged him as he left and was waiting with a hug when he returned.

“I couldn’t think of a more fitting homage to the woman who loved the troops so much, she just had to hug us all,” he said.

Peckham started the petition, which has garnered more than 85,000 signatures in slightly more than a week. He came up with the idea for the petition while talking with a friend last month.

“Everybody I know that’s deployed out of Hood obviously knows about her. It just occurred to me one day, why hasn’t anything been done?” he said. “My buddy … was like, ‘Go for it. Go to Change.org and make a petition.’”

So Peckham did. The first day that he posted the petition, he saw it had 5,000 signatures before he went to bed that night. When he woke up, it had 10,000 more.

“I expected a lot of people to know about it, but I did not expect two days after posting the petition having 50,000 people sign it,” he said.

But the petition to name the Fort Hood terminal for Laird has a complication — it’s already named for someone else.

Though the petition is a well-in-tentioned call to honor a woman beloved by soldiers, the terminal, which opened in 2005, is named the George Larkin Terminal. Larkin, like Gray, the airfield’s namesake, was a Doolittle Raider during World War II.

More so, Fort Hood officials said there is a covered plaque honoring Laird’s actions in the terminal, just waiting to be unveiled at a dedication ceremony.

The petition arose while base officials worked with Laird’s family to schedule a public ceremony, which will be held at 10:30 a.m. July 1 at the airfield, Fort Hood’s public affairs office confirmed Wednesday. The commemorative plaque will be unveiled during the ceremony in the room where deploying soldiers gather to await their flights. That room is where Laird routinely provided words of encouragement and gave hugs to deploying soldiers.

‘Ordered’ to hug

Laird first began hugging soldiers in 2003, according to her obituary. Her involvement at deployment flight lines started with volunteering for the Salvation Army as a way to show her appreciation for soldiers as post-9/11 conflicts escalated. That led her to hugging each soldier as they left Fort Hood for Iraq, Afghanistan or training rotations.

Former III Corps and Fort Hood Command Sgt. Maj. William “Joe” Gainey “ordered” her to hug each of his troops upon leaving a base. She was committed to do so and soon was referred to by soldiers as the Hug Lady.

“She was her love — many times talking about the love in the soldier’s eyes, how proud they were to serve their country to protect their loved ones at home,” Laid’s obituary reads.

Her service to country began decades before. In 1949, Laird enlisted in the Women in the Air Force, an auxiliary branch that allowed women to serve in limited roles in the Air Force, in her hometown of Birmingham, Ala. She served until 1951, when she got married and had a son, according to a 2012 profile of Laird in the Fort Hood Herald.

She landed in the Fort Hood area in the 1970s with her third husband, Joe Gainey. Together, the couple ran a fax preparation business called Have Pencil Will Travel. She continued to run the business after her husband died and did so until her own passing.

Laird also visited nursing homes and gave residents blankets she crocheted.

Hundreds attended her funeral, including the first lady of Texas, Cecilia Abbott, who plans to unveil a plaque in her honor during World War II.

“People who are dealing with trauma need some way to process that,” she said.

“Hugs are a universal sign of kindness; they bring people together and are a healing tool. She was an inspiration to us all and we are proud to have known and cared for her.”

Veteran yoga instructor touts meditation training for troops

BY SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

CAMP ZAMA, Japan — The Army should start teaching soldiers meditation techniques in basic training to make them more resilient to trauma they might face in combat, according to the author of an upcoming book on military mindfulness.

“Military and Mindful: Eight Essential Elements of Your Military Career and Motherhood,” by Iraq War veteran Benefsheh Verell, will be published in December.

The Zama-based Army spouse and former military policewoman said she became interested in meditation after attending a yoga retreat in upstate New York in 2008.

“I was a captain in the Army teaching at West Point while my husband was deployed to Iraq,” she said May 30 at Zama.

“I was looking for my 2½-year-old and pregnant with our daughter and working full time and I was drowning. I was angry all the time. ’

Yoga and meditation helped change her, she said. Verell, who trained to become a yoga instructor in 2012.

“I realized I didn’t have to be angry and miserable all the time,” she said.

Mindfulness, according to Verell, is being present in the moment.

“Meditation and yoga help build this awareness because they focus on breathing, sensation in the body and noticing your thoughts,” she said.

A person can practice mindfulness while gardening, swimming, running or doing other activities, Verell said.

The repetition of movement in the body acts as a meditation,” she said. “The person brings the attention back to the breath and sensation in the body when they notice the mind wandering away from the task.

Mindfulness techniques are already helping the Zama American Middle-High School football team, according to Carmen Middleton, a special education teacher at the school.

“For the past 18 months the team, which reached the Department of Defense Education Activity-Pacific Division II Championship game for the first time in six years last season, has been practicing mindfulness techniques before practices, she said.

Verell’s goal is to bring mindfulness practices to the Army in a way that’s accessible to troops, she said. She is also involved in training yoga instructors to work in military communities.

“People who are dealing with trauma need some way to process that,” she said.

The Army is already training its soldiers for troops, but the training isn’t consistent across the service, said Verell, who plans to soon launch a website with instructors who serve on Zama and work with the military to hold workshops on other bases in Japan.

“My dream is to have mindfulness start in basic training, rather than throughout the soldier’s career,” she said. “If you give them these skills they will be better prepared to deal with things they might face in combat.”

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Pentagon eyes updates to discharge form

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON—The Pentagon is working to make the standard military service discharge form — the DD-214 — fully electronic and looking to implement recommendations from a recent report that would include improving the accuracy and privacy of servicemembers’ records.

The Pentagon’s Office of the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness asked the Rand Corp. to conduct a review of the DD-214 two years ago because the department intends to modernize the form by making it fully electronic, so it wanted to understand which parts of the form are used by different organizations and the ways to get it to them more effectively.

“There are lots of stakeholders and lots of folks who use the form,” said Patricia Mulcahy, director of officer and enlisted personnel management, said of the Rand report’s view. “So there’s been an effort to have to be very deliberate and conscientious of all those stakeholders because we want to make sure first and foremost that whatever we do is better for the member while we continue to protect their privacy.”

Originally created in the 1950s, the DD-214 is a document that servicemembers receive at the end of their service, detailing everything from their military education to the medals that they have earned and the type of discharge they received from their branch of service. The document is crucial for veterans to verify their service and to receive benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs or their local state government.

One of the major issues found in the review is the different ways that the services fill the form with data, leading to inaccurate information.

“The Rand report found there are no policies regarding what record systems the services should use to populate the form and how to do it, “so each service has different systems and methods, some of which are more advanced than others.”

The military services are now working to bring their records into the Integrated Pay and Personnel Systems and the personnel office is coordinating alongside them to make the data from those records automatically included on the electronic DD-214. That is expected to take three to five years, according to Mulcahy.

The Defense Department will be looking at which blocks of information in the form to update, and that starts by talking to the organizations who use various data in the form, said Kent Bauer, deputy director of officer and enlisted personnel management.

“That’s probably the first target is to go back to the various organizations and say what benefits are you adjudicating off of this and what do you really need to do that,” he said.

The form “should be consistent across the board, regardless of branch,” Jim Marszalek, the national service director for Disabled American Veterans, said about changes he would like to see. He also believes the DD-214 should be updated to list the locations where servicemembers served “because there are a lot of benefits based upon where you serve.”

The DD-214 now has a block listing “Foreign Service,” where a servicemembers’ time overseas is noted by month and day but not location. For example, Vietnam veterans who believe they were exposed to Agent Orange must show that they served in Vietnam, Marszalek said, and listing the Vietnam Service Medal on the DD-214 only proves they served in support of the war in some way but not necessarily that they were in Vietnam.

“So without saying where you served, now the VA has to go and verify through military personnel records where exactly this veteran served,” he said. “So I think if the DD-214 actually had the places of where these servicemembers have served, I think that will be beneficial.”

Balancing who gets what information while protecting the privacy of the servicemember is a priority. The Rand report recommended the Defense Department look at ways to reduce the amount of information a veteran would have to give to organizations in order to prove their service.

“Instead of having 30 items on a form that’s a lot of information,” said Bauer about changes he would like to see to this organization and the other 10 go to this organization,” Bauer said. “And the member and the service are the only people who can see all of that information.”

Infantry officer is first woman in her division with EIB

By CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

Despite the desert heat, dozens of soldiers in Kuwait last week earned the prestigious Expert Infantry Badge, including one of the first women to receive the decoration since women began making inroads into combat arms fields previously closed to them.

An initial field of more than 300 soldiers who started training for the weeklong skills test at Camp Buehring is narrowed to fewer than 180, including three women, who made it to the first official event — a fitness test — on May 27. About one-third of them earned the EIB six days later after completing a 12-mile ruck march and final test event earlier in the morning, Army said in a statement this week.

1st Lt. Shelby DePriest, of Fort Carson, Colo.-based 1st Battalion, said in the Army’s statement late last month.

“Since January 2016, the Army has transferred more than 1,000 women from infantry jobs over three years ago. This is the final test for the 8th Infantry Regiment’s company level, Army G-1 Lt. Gen. Thomas Seamands said in a statement late last month.

Other officers are now assigned to infantry or armor positions at forts Carson and Bragg and three more of the Army’s largest bases — Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Bliss, Texas; and Fort Campbell, Ky. — Seamands said, and officially plan to open assignments to women this year at Fort Stewart, Ga.; Fort Drum, N.Y.; Fort Riley, Kan.; Fort Polk, La.; and Vicenza, Italy.

DePriest commissioned in 2017 after completing ROTC at Western Illinois University, where she was an art major, and arrived at Fort Carson in January following initial training. She welcomed the opportunities for female soldiers.

“The Army’s taking the right steps,” she said. Regardless of gender, “they just want leaders to be competent.”

For her, earning the EIB was a “pushing story” that validated her readiness to take on the job of platoon leader, for which she’s been groomed and coached over the past 19 months, she said. She expects to take charge of her first platoon later this month.

“I’m finally getting my time to shine,” she said. “It’s a good moment.”

Shortly after earning the badge for the service in a field skill, she got her first Army Commendation Medal, this one for a different set of skills — her artistic abilities for bringing “a little flair to Kuwait” with a unit mural on one of the base’s T-Walls.

“I’m bringing a little flair to the infantry world,” she said.

Liane Hatch/Courtesy of U.S. Army
President Donald Trump and French President Emmanuel Macron meet in Caen, France, following a ceremony Thursday to commemorate the 75th anniversary of D-Day in Normandy, France. Trump said in an interview broadcast Wednesday that he would “not have minded” serving in Vietnam.

Trump reflects on Vietnam: He would have been ‘honored’ to serve

By MARC FISHER
The Washington Post

Donald Trump, Selective Service Register No. 50-63-46-580, never served in the military during the Vietnam War. Neither did his vice president, Vice President Mike Pence.

But 9 million Americans did serve in Vietnam by obtaining medical disqualification — some by a new generation of presid...
Security doors blocked police from Va. gunman

By Ben Finley
and Denise Lawvere
Associated Press

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. — Police responding to the deadly mass shooting at a Virginia Beach municipal building were unable to confront the gunman at one point because they didn’t have the key cards needed to open doors on the second floor.

Over the radio, they desperately pleaded for the electronic cards and talked of bringing in a sledgehammer, an explosive charge or other means of breaking down the doors.

The killer was eventually gunned down, and whether the delay contributed to the toll of 12 victims dead and four wounded is unclear. But the episode last week illustrated how door-lock technology that is supposed to protect people from workplace violence can hamper police and rescue workers in an emergency.

“That candle, while there may be a blind spot that this particular shooting has shown,” said Gregory Shaffer, a former F.B.I. agent and member of the bureau’s elite hostage rescue team. “We need to make sure that first responders have full access to the building.”

The attacker, city engineer DeWayne Craddock, 40, went from floor to floor, killing his co-workers in the rampage last Friday before he was finally killed on the second floor in a gun battle with police.

It was not clear how police initially got to Craddock. Virginia Beach police spokeswoman Linda Kuehn said police were unavailable to talk about the matter Wednesday.

Police Chief James Cervera said the mayhem at the Virginia Beach Municipal Center lasted nearly 36 minutes from the time the gunman started shooting until police took him down.

At about the same time officers were evacuating terrified employees from the third floor, other officers were on the second floor, frantically trying to get to the gunman after he fired at them through doors and walls. On police scanners, officers could be heard becoming exasperated as they tried unsuccessfully to get into locked areas.

“We need access keys. The doors are locked; we need access keys. I know I’ve got citizens here. I don’t have access keys. I can’t evacuate,” said one officer.

Key cards have become a standard feature of building security worldwide. The technology has been used for decades, but it wasn’t until after 9/11 that it really began to proliferate, said Tom Manger, a former police chief in Virginia and Maryland and now senior associate director of the Major Cities Chiefs Association.

“It became seen as best practice. “And today it is seen by most people as not only best practice but as a necessity,” Manger said.

And in many workplaces, security experts say, police often lack quick access to cards or codes — a situation that could cost them precious minutes in a mass shooting.

Ohio doctor charged in 25 deaths by overdose

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — An Ohio doctor was charged with murder Wednesday in the deaths of 25 hospital patients who, authorities say, were killed with deliberate overdoses of painkillers, many of them administered by other medical workers on his orders.

In one of the biggest cases of its kind ever brought against an American health care professional, William Husel was accused of ordering outrageously massive doses of the powerful opioid fentanyl. Many of the patients who died were on ventilators and receiving palliative care. The deaths occurred between 2015 and 2018.

Franklin County Prosecutor Ron O’Brien compared Husel’s actions to extinguishing a dwindling candle.

“That candle, while there may be just a half an inch of wax left, I know that candle out, I’m causing that flame to go out sooner than it would naturally,” O’Brien said.

Husel, 43, pleaded not guilty after turning himself in earlier in the day. A judge set bail at $1 million.

The doctor is the lone defendant. Authorities are not prosecuting nurses, pharmacists and others involved in the deaths, though dozens of hospital employees have been reported to professional boards for investigation and potential disciplinary action.

Husel’s lawyer said he was trying to provide “comfort care” for dying patients.

“At no time did Dr. Husel ever intend to euthanize anyone — euthanize meaning speed up death,” defense attorney Richard Blake said. The patients were going to die whether they were being treated by Husel or another physician, Blake said.

The Columbus-area Mount Carmel Health System has publicly apologized. It issued a statement Sunday pledging to continue cooperating with authorities and making “meaningful changes” within the system.

Husel was fired in December and stripped of his medical license after concerns about his orders were brought to the attention of officials at Mount Carmel, where he had worked for five years.

One exception is schools, which have been at the forefront in ensuring that police can quickly get inside with their own key cards or other methods.

Key card technology posed a problem for some of the police officers who responded to a shooting rampage at the Washington Navy Yard in 2013, according to a report by the city’s police. Aaron Alexis, a former Navy reservist, killed 12 people before being shot dead in the maze-like, 600,000-square-foot building.

A Washington police officer “had the presence of mind” to take a building access card from a deceased security guard, allowing a team of first responders to get into secure areas, the report said.

In the case of the Virginia Beach shooting, the police department used the operations building where the shooting took place were part of the same complex, and police had to run maybe 300 yards to get there. Both the police and the departments inside the building are city agencies.

Shaffer said police are trained to break into buildings and often have the tools to do so, as the radio chatter about sledgehammers and explosives indicated, and he defended the handling of the mass shooting by the Virginia Beach force. He said police “definitely saved lives through their fast response.”

“They did exactly what they were supposed to do and ran toward the gunfire,” he said.

Judge: Jury can see racist content in Md. stabbing trial

Associated Press

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. — Racist memes on a cellphone and a racist Facebook page can be used as evidence in the trial of a white man charged with murder and a hate crime in a black student’s fatal stabbing at the University of Maryland’s campus, a judge ruled Wednesday.

Sean Urbanski’s attorneys argued it would deprive their client of a fair trial if jurors were to see evidence that the 24-year-old liked a Facebook page called “Alt-Reich: Nation” and had at least six photographs of racist memes on his phone.

Prince George’s County prosecutors said the racist content found on Urbanski’s cellphone point to a motive for the killing, indicating he stabbed Bowie State University student Richard Collins III because he was black.

“These photographs show that the defendant has a bias against black people,” the prosecutors argued in their motion.

Urbanski was found guilty of first-degree murder and a hate crime in the May 2017 killing of Collins, 23, an Ohio State University senior visiting friends when he was stabbed to death at a bus stop.

Urbanski went to the University of Maryland. Collins had been commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army.

“Possessing such insensitively material is not against the law,” said defense attorney William Brennan, who cited a New York Times story that suggested the Facebook page was a parody.

Circuit Court Judge Lawrence Hill Jr. denied the defense’s request to exclude the evidence for the trial, scheduled for July 5.

The judge argued that evidence of a first-degree murder and a hate crime in the May 2017 killing of Collins, 23, an Ohio State University student visiting friends when he was stabbed to death at a bus stop.

Urbanski went to the University of Maryland. Collins had been commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army.
WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs on Thursday launched a major expansion of veterans’ access to private doctors, an effort that will cost taxpayers $17 billion over three years.

The VA Mission Act, which was signed into law last June and went into effect on Friday, allows veterans to seek care from private doctors, provided they meet standards of high quality care, and even if they must travel more than 40 miles to see a VA provider.

The VA collected public input on the new rules through comments made last Wednesday. Some veterans groups opposed the 30-minute appointment rule, describing it as arbitrary and unsustainable.

The agency said this week that it didn’t make any changes to the rules based on the comments it received.

The VA Mission Act will allow millions of additional veterans to use private doctors if they live more than a 30-minute drive from a VA medical facility or have to wait more than 20 days for an appointment.

Several veterans organizations that helped shape the Mission Act through Congress said they were concerned about the expansion and its impact on VA hospitals.

“Do we expect on June 6 to be ready,” Wilkie said last week in an interview. “I’m confident our team is doing the best they can to reduce these 30 days for a VA appointment.”

“We have a plan in place with the VA for medical interest” or if the VA determines that a veteran’s condition is in their “best medical interest,” said Carlos Fuentes, director of military and veterans health policy for APA.

“People are more familiar with the VA, and they don’t want to be treated by strangers,” Fuentes said. “They know how the VA has treated them in the past, and they have a plan in place.”

Eligibility changes

The new law officially ends the VA’s metric for setting up appointments, which was based on the ratio of veterans to VA doctors.

The new law sets a goal of seeing veterans at VA appointments within 10 to 14 days.

The VA has not yet set a go-live date for the new rule, which is expected to be implemented in late summer.

“IT concerns

To gain access to private-sector doctors through the Mission Act, veterans can talk with their VA doctors, who will use a new “decision support tool” that’s been shared with all VA hospitals and clinics, Wilkie explained.

“If they want something we don’t have, they will go to their medical team,” he said. “That veteran will sit down with his provider ... the screen pops up, and the medical professional tells the veteran, ‘This is what’s available in our area. We can go ahead and punch this button and make an appointment for you.’”

However, the decision support tool was a source of controversy in the spring, when the U.S. Digital Service warned the system was flawed and could disrupt care.

The U.S. Digital Service — a White House team of software developers that helps federal agencies improve their technology — recommended the VA stop its development.

“If the demand increases, officials said, the VA will have to work with VA providers to get the system ready for the go-live date. The VA told us they’d be ready without issues, but that’s what they said with the Forever GI Bill. We’ll have to see.”

Time will tell

Though the Mission Act makes millions of additional veterans eligible for private-sector health care, the VA is expecting most veterans will opt to keep their VA medical teams.

Senior officials, speaking to reporters last week on the condition that they not be quoted, said the number of appointments that VA patients make with private doctors accounts for about one-third of all VA appointments. They anticipate the number will grow.

“We believe veterans will continue to choose VA,” one official said.

With the Choice program, the VA faltered in its predictions of how many veterans would use private doctors, as well as the cost to taxpayers. Previous VA secretaries appealed to Congress multiple times for more funding for the program.

The VA contends now that its predictions have improved and the current VA budget for community care contains enough money to handle the demand.

If the demand increases, officials said their “largest stance” is not to deplete money from the VA system in order to purchase outside care — something that’s been a long-standing concern among veterans groups that don’t want to see VA money erode.”

Worries about pushing veterans’ health care too far into the private sector and whether the argument about the Mission Act will affect the VA’s support of veterans groups that don’t want to privatize healthcare.

“We’re not on a pathway to privatization,” Wilkie said. “If we are, then we’re doing it in a very strange way.”

But concerns persist. On Thursday, Disabled American Veterans planned to look at how the VA conveys the launch of the Mission Act to veterans and whether the agency encourages veterans to use private doctors.

“The Access standards are our biggest concerns, and the communication piece — whether they will deliver veterans out of the VA system,” Reese said. “In my face-to-face with (VA Under Secretary for Health) Richard Stone, he’s been very compelling that he wants to have veterans choose VA. Right now, we have to give deference to the secretary and undersecretary that they’re telling the truth.”

Department of Veterans Affairs’ Mission Act will allow millions of additional veterans to use private doctors if they live more than a 30-minute drive from a VA medical facility or have to wait more than 20 days for an appointment.
Owners of dogs may be causing pet stress

By Jeremy Rehm
Associated Press

NEW YORK — When dog owners go through a stressful period, they’re not alone in feeling the pressure — their dogs feel it too, a new study suggests.

Dog owners experiencing long bouts of stress can transfer it to their dogs, scientists report in a study published Thursday in Scientific Reports.

The Swedish researchers focused on 52 people who own border collies or Shetland sheepdogs.

They examined hair from the dog owners and their dogs, looking at the concentrations of a hormone called cortisol, a chemical released into the bloodstream and absorbed by hair follicles in response to stress.

Compared to people who reported low levels of stress, those who experienced extraordinarily high levels of stress had dogs with corresponding cortisol levels.

Cortisol is a stress hormone that helps the body cope with stress. Higher levels can signal a chronic stress response.

“All the patterns of cortisol levels in the hair of dog owners closely matched that found in their dogs,” said Lina Roth, a doctoral student at Umea University in Sweden.

Roth and her team found that the patterns of cortisol levels in the hair of dog owners closely matched that found in their dogs in both winter and summer months, indicating their stress levels were in sync.

She thinks the owners are influencing the dogs rather than the other way around because several human personality traits appear to affect canine cortisol levels.

The researchers don’t know what causes the synchronization, but they noted that owners of dogs with high cortisol levels often own more dogs and less often have a job, which could point to a general desire for more dogs and less responsibilities.

“Owners and competitive dogs during training may increase the canines’ emotional reliance on their owners,” she said. “That in turn could increase the degree of synchronization.”

But why do people influence their dogs rather than vice versa?

Perhaps people are “a more central part of the dog’s life, whereas we humans also have other social networks,” Roth said.

The study results are no surprise, said Alicia Buttner, director of animal behavior with the Nebraska Humane Society in Omaha.

“New evidence is continually emerging, showing that people and their dogs have incredibly close bonds that resemble the ones that parents share with their children,” she said in an email.

But she said there isn’t enough evidence to assume that the influence goes only one way, it may go both ways.

“It’s not just as simple as owner gets stressed, dog gets stressed,” she said.

Many other factors could affect a person or dog’s stress levels and possibly even dampen them, she said.

Buttner said cortisol levels don’t necessarily indicate “bad” stress. They instead can indicate a good experience like getting ready to go for a walk, she said.

Roth and her team plan to investigate whether other dog breeds will react to their owners the same way.

In the meantime, she offered some advice to minimize how much stress dog owners may be causing their pets. Dogs that play more show fewer signs of being stressed, she said.

So “just be with your dog and have fun,” Roth said.

Trump halts use of fetal tissue in US research

By Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar and Lauran Neergaard
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration said Wednesday that it is ending medical research by government scientists that uses human fetal tissue.

The Health and Human Services Department said in a statement that government-funded research by universities that involves fetal tissue can continue for now, subject to additional scrutiny — although it also ended one major university project that used the tissue to test HIV treatments.

That school — University of California, San Francisco — called the decision “politically motivated.”

Administration officials said the federal policy changes will not affect privately funded research.

Ending the use of fetal tissue by the National Institutes of Health has been a priority for anti-abortion activists, a core element of President Donald Trump’s political base.

A senior administration official said it was the president’s call. The official wasn’t authorized to publicly discuss internal deliberations and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Research using fetal tissue has led to lifesaving advances, including development of vaccines for rubella and rabies and drugs to treat HIV. Scientists around the country denounced the decision, saying that fetal tissue was critically needed for research on HIV vaccines, treatments that harness the body’s immune system to battle cancer, and other health threats, including some to fetuses themselves.

“Prohibiting valuable research that uses fetal tissue that is otherwise going to be discarded doesn’t make any sense,” said Dr. Lawrence Goldstein, a regenerative medicine specialist at the University of California, San Diego. “It blocks important future research vital to the development of new therapies.”

The government’s own top medical scientist, NIH Director Francis Collins, said as recently as last December that he believes “there’s strong evidence that scientific benefits come from fetal tissue research,” and that fetal tissue, rather than any alternatives, would “continue to be the mainstay” for certain types of research for the foreseeable future.

“Today, fetal tissue is still making an impact, with clinical trials underway using cells from fetal tissue to treat conditions including Parkinson’s disease, ALS, and spinal cord injury,” said Doug Melton, co-director of Harvard’s Stem Cell Institute and president of the International Society for Stem Cell Research.

Last year, the administration announced a review of whether taxpayer dollars were being properly spent on fetal tissue research. As a result, NIH froze procurement of new tissue. On Wednesday, the administration also said it is not renewing an expiring contract with the University of California, San Francisco, that used fetal tissue to create a humanlike immune system in mice for HIV research.

6 migrants killed in Texas SUV crash after fleeing police

Associated Press

ROBSTOWN, Texas — Six migrants who had crossed the U.S. border from Mexico illegally were killed and five critically injured when a sport utility vehicle that earlier fled Texas police crashed into a drainage ditch, authorities said Wednesday.

The incident began about 10 p.m. Tuesday when police in Robstown, 220 miles southwest of Houston, tried to stop the SUV for speeding but broke off the chase when officers lost sight of the vehicle in a brushy area, Robstown Police Chief Erasmo Flores said at a Wednesday afternoon news conference.

Authorities knew no more of the wreck until about 4 a.m., when a resident called 911 to report an injured man had come to her door, Nueces County Sheriff J.C. Hooper said. Deputies couldn’t find the man, but an hour later they encountered two injured young men walking along a road who told of the wreck, Hooper said.

The SUV was traveling at fast as 50 mph when it crashed, Nueces County sheriff’s Capt. Daniel Lorberau said. Several people had to be extricated and were taken to hospitals. In addition to the dead and critically injured, three others suffered lesser injuries.

Agents with the U.S. Border Patrol responded to the scene because the victims from El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico entered the country illegally, authorities said.

The incident is the latest involving undocumented migrants who died in road wrecks while being smuggled through Texas. This kind of multi-fatality traffic crash has become more common along the U.S.-77 corridor through South Texas because of its proximity to the U.S.-Mexico border, Hooper said.

“It has a classic appearance of human trafficking,” he said.
R

n Howard starts the interview to talk about his latest documentary film, “Pa-
varotti,” with an apology. He needs a moment because his daughter — Bryce
Dallas Howard — is on the phone and she’s asking for his advice.

“She never asks for my advice,” Howard says after the short phone call ends.

This is Howard’s world. He’s juggling a life where he’s one of the most successful producers, directors and actors working in Hollywood while still finding time for his family. When it comes to work, his professional life has gone through a few changes in recent years.

Howard spent the majority of his time behind the camera during his post-Opie and “Happy Days” years creating scripted films. Whether it be a production like “Apollo 13” that was based on real events or a sword-and-fantasy saga like “Wil-
son,” Howard had a script to use as his guide.

That changed in 2013 when Howard shifted into a documentary mode for “Made In America” and continued with “The Beatles: Eight Days a Week — The Touring Years.” His latest documenta-
tary, “Pavarotti,” which opened stateside Friday, takes a look at Luciano Pavarotti, the man who became a cultural phenomenon with his private human struggles. It is a show about the opera world in the same way he learned about NASA when working on “Apollo 13” or the world of journalism with “The Paper.”

That’s one of many reasons he finds more pleasure in the documentary format for latest project about Pavarotti’s life.

Carrie Underwood extended her run as the most decorated act in the history of the CMT Music Awards with her 20th win Wednesday night.

Underwood won two prizes at the fan-voted show, including video of the year for “Cry Pretty” and female video of the year for “Love Wins.”

“Fans, thank you so much. I saw you guys doing the Twitter parties and getting together and doing your thing and voting,” she said. “None of us would be able to do any of what we do if not for you guys. You guys put us here. You guys keep us going. You guys let us live out our dreams.”

When she won the first tele-

viewed award of the night, Under-
wood acknowledged her husband, former hockey player Mike Fish-
er. “It is my husband’s birthday today — look what they got you,” she said.

The Grammy-winning coun-
try star also performed at the show honoring the year’s best country music videos, which took place at the Bridgestone Arena in Nashville.

Thomas Rhett, Little Big Town and Dannii Sinatra kicked off the event with a performance of “Don’t Threaten Me With A Good Time.” More collaborative performances followed. Brett Young sang “Here Tonight” with R&B group Boyz II Men. Sheryl Crow and Karen Morris teamed up onstage, while Tanya Tucker — whose new album will be pro-
duced by Bono and David Gamson — sang “Delta Dawn” with the Grammy-
winning Americana singer Marti-

n McBride, Trisha Yearwood, Laura Alaina and more acts.

Little Big Town, who also per-

formed and returned for a second year, talked about the allure of female singers on country radio ahead of the strength of female artists.

On this week’s Billboard country air-

play chart — which tracks radio airplay — only 10 of the 60 slots belong to women or songs co-

starring a woman.

Underwood wins at CMT Awards

Carrie Underwood accepts the award for female video of the year for “Love Wins” at the CMT Music Awards on June 5 at Nashville’s Bridgestone Arena.

“Back in December it was even worse — there were none,” Little Big Town’s Karen Fairchild said.

“If it was that bad, little did they know what was coming.”

Little Big Town told jokes at the top of the show and even sang some of “Old Town Road,” the No. 1 country-rap hit from new-

comer Lil Nas X that was boosted from the Billboard country songs chart when the tune was deemed not country enough.

Dan + Shay — who won a Gram-
my this year as well as honors at the Academy of Country Music Awards and the Billboard Music Awards — took home duo video of the year for “Speechless.”

Zac Brown Band group video of the year for “Someone I Used to Know.”

Ashley McBryde won breakthrough video of the year.

Keith Urban and Julia Michaels won collaborative video of the year for “Coming Home,” while Kane Brown won male video of the year for “Lose It.”

Co-creator: Smolett not returning to ‘Empire’

There’s another plot twist in-

volving Jussie Smolett.

The “Empire” co-creator Lee Dan-
els says the actor is not return-
ing to the show — shortly after a report emerged late Wednesday Fox series’ writers were bracing for Smolett to come back.

“Jussie will NOT be return-
ing to ‘Empire,’” Daniels tweeted Tuesday.

Smolett’s return to the drama series, which is geared up for its sixth and final season, had been in question since Chicago Police asserted in February that Smo-
lett staged his attack of two men in Chicago in January because he was unhappy with his salary.

Smolett has maintained his innocence and denied orchestrat-
ing the attack.

The actor, 36, claimed to police that he was attacked by two men who hurled racial and homo-

phobic slurs at him and placed a rope around his neck. A three-

week investigation followed.

Smolett was indicted by a grand jury on 16 counts of disor-
derly conduct in March, but all charges were dropped later that month. Cook County State’s At-

orney prosecutors have said the charges being dropped should not be viewed as an exoneration for Smolett, but rather the result of him agreeing to do community service and to hand over a $10,000 bond to the city.

The “Empire” team had not said whether Smolett, who plays Jamal Lyon on the show, would return before Daniels’ tweet.

Smolett’s character was cut from the final two episodes of the show’s fifth season after the al-

legrations against him emerged, but episodes featuring Jamal that were already completed aired amid the controversy.

Underwood wins at CMT Awards

BY MISHI FERADU

Associated Press

Associated Press

TNS

Luciano Pavarotti greets the crowd prior to a performance April 6, 2002, in Wichita, Kan. Howard says he sees the Italian tenor’s life as “a bittersweet story.”

Christopher Smith, Invision/AP

OFF SCRIPT

Director Ron Howard sticks with documentary format for latest project about Pavarotti’s life

By Rick Bentley

Tribune News Service

Christopher Smith, Invision/AP

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“Back in December it was even worse — there were none,” Little Big Town’s Karen Fairchild said.

“She’s my question, ladies in the house: What do we have to do to get some airplay around here?”

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From the New York Daily News
BERLIN — Niels Hoegel liked to bring about cardiac arrests in his patients by injecting them with overdoses of heart medication and other drugs because he enjoyed the feeling of being able to resuscitate them. Sometimes he succeeded in bringing them back, but in at least 87 cases they died, making him what is believed to be modern Germany’s most prolific serial killer.

A court in the northwestern city of Oldenburg on Thursday found the 42-year-old nurse guilty of murdering 85 patients, aged 34 to 96, and sentenced him to life in prison. He had earlier been convicted of two other killings.

“Your guilt is incomprehensible,” presiding judge Sebastian Buerhmann said as he handed down the verdict. “I felt like an accountant of death.”

Hoegel worked at a hospital in Oldenburg between 1999 and 2002 and another hospital in nearby Delmenhorst from 2003 to 2005, and the killings took place between 2000 and 2005, the dpa news agency reported.

Hoegel was convicted in 2015 of two murders and two attempted murders and is already serving a life sentence. There are no consecutive sentences in the German system, but Buerhmann noted in his verdict the “particular seriousness” of Hoegel’s crimes, a finding that all but ensures he will remain incarcerated after the standard 15-year term is up.

During his first trial, Hoegel said he intentionally brought about cardiac crises in some 90 patients in Delmenhorst because he enjoyed the feeling of being able to resuscitate them. He later told investigators that he also killed patients in Oldenburg.

That prompted a wider investigation involving both hospitals, and police and prosecutors reviewed more than 500 patient files and hundreds more hospital records. They also exhumed 134 bodies from 67 cemeteries and questioned Hoegel multiple times, concluding that he had used a variety of drugs to attempt resuscitation of his patients, and was fully aware they might die.

Prosecutors noted that many of Hoegel’s victims were not terminally ill patients but were on the path to recovery. “The fact is sometimes the worst fantasy is not enough to describe the truth,” Buehrmann said.

In all, Hoegel was tried on 100 counts of murder, but the court found him not guilty on 15 counts for lack of evidence, which Buerhmann noted with regret to the family members present. “We were not able to shine light through part of the fog that lay over this trial,” Buehrmann said. “That also fills with a certain sadness.”

Pleas are not entered in the German system but during the seven-month trial, Hoegel admitted to 43 of the killings, disputed five and said he couldn’t remember the other 52.

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From The Associated Press
AMERICAN ROUNDUPTaken

**Kids’ ‘Laugh Trackers’ help in choosing trips**

**TN** NASHVILLE — Tennessean tourism officials said they’ve counted kids’ laughs to help parents weigh their trip options. The Department of Tourist Development said it equipped more than 200 kids with wearable “Laugh Trackers” last month for more than 450 hours. The attractions they tried out included the Children’s Museum of Memphis, Discovery Park of America in Union City, Nashville Zoo, Fall Creek Falls in Spencer, Tennessee Aquarium in Chattanooga, Hands On! Discovery Center in Gray and Dollywood in Pigeon Forge. More than 36,000 laughs were recorded, an average of 1.3 per minute.

**Old shell from beach ID’d as ancient oyster**

**SC** FOLLY BEACH — An old shell found on a South Carolina beach four years ago was identified as that of an ancient oyster never before found in the area. The Post and Courier reported that College of Charleston paleontologist Robert Boessenecker deemed the shell found by Ashby Gale to belong to an ancient Ostrea coxi oyster. The newspaper said the ancient shellfish lived 3 million to 5 million years ago and said the ancient shellfish lived 3 million to 5 million years ago and that College of Charleston paleontologist Robert Boessenecker deemed the shell found by Ashby Gale to belong to an ancient Ostrea coxi oyster. The newspaper said the ancient shellfish lived 3 million to 5 million years ago and findings of their remnants have been confirmed only in Florida until now.

**Injured hiker rescued from mountain by helicopter**

**AZ** PHOENIX — Authorities said a 74-year-old hiker whose head and face were injured in a fall on a Phoenix mountain was rescued by helicopter, with video showing her in a stretcher that spun as it was lifted toward the aircraft. A Phoenix Fire Department crew responded to reports of an injured hiker on Piestewa Peak on Tuesday morning. Fire officials said the woman was put in a stretcher-like device that was lifted up from the ground to the helicopter. She was transported to a trauma center and was listed in stable condition.

**Fortune cookie brings luck to lottery winner**

**NC** RALEIGH — A North Carolina man who said he based his Powerball entry on a fortune cookie he got from his granddaughter now has a fortune to celebrate. WRAL in Raleigh reported retired retailer Charles W. Jackson Jr. stepped forward at North Carolina Education Lottery headquarters Tuesday to claim last weekend’s $344.6 million jackpot. Jackson chose the $223 million lump sum payment and said he would donate some of it to several charities and give $1 million to his brother to make good on a deal they made.

**Missed landing**

A battery-powered glider, flown by a local business owner, crashed into a house Tuesday while making its approach to Danbury Airport in Danbury, Conn. Officials said the pilot sustained minor injuries. A mother and her two children in the house were scared but not hurt.

Jackson said he hopes the wind-fall doesn’t change him. He added, “I’m still going to wear my jeans — maybe newer ones.”

**Sheriff to auction abandoned ‘69 GTX**

**MI** SUTTONS BAY — A sheriff’s office in northern Michigan is auctioning some rare muscle: a 1969 Plymouth GTX convertible.

Leelanau County Undersheriff Steve Morgan said the car probably was stored for decades. The odometer shows less than 21,000 miles. The two-door GTX is known as a muscle car for its powerful engine. Morgan said investigators searched the vehicle’s identification number but couldn’t find an owner. The car will be sold as-is to the highest bidder. The online auction at MITN Surplus Auction runs through June 18.

**Jail disputes claim over screening policy**

**MO** KANSAS CITY — A Missouri county legislator said a screening policy at the local jail requiring women to remove their underwear bras before entering the facility is sexist and she is demanding that it be changed.

The Kansas City Star reported that the corrections department disputes Jackson County legislator Crystal Williams’ claims. Corrections director Diana Turner said the rules implemented May 16 aim to prevent weapons and contraband from being smuggled into the Jackson County jail.

**Man, puppy trapped in garbage truck rescued**

**UT** PROVO — A puppy and its owner are recovering after getting trapped in a garbage truck.

Provo Police Sgt. Nisha King said Tuesday officers rescued the puppy and her 43-year-old owner earlier that morning after they got caught by the truck’s compac-

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**The Census**

10 The number of sets of twins graduating this year from Boyle County High School in Danville, Ky., Susan Michael, the senior class coordinator on staff at Boyle County High, said she discovered that almost 10 percent of the class were twins only when she started ordering caps and gowns for graduation.

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**Thieves take blowtorch to ATM, weld it shut**

**FL** OKALOOSA ISLAND Authorities said two Florida burglars thought they were clever when they used a blowtorch to break into an ATM machine, but they never hit the jackpot.

Instead, the burning heat actually welded the ATM’s hinges shut.

Okaloosa County Sheriff’s officials said video surveillance shows two male suspects entering the Boardwalk on Okaloosa Island. Instead of cutting the ATM with the blowtorch, authorities said the would-be thief welded the metal parts shut and the pair left with nothing.

**Actress to address graduating class of 1**

**MA** CUTTYHUNK ISLAND — The single graduating student on a tiny Massachusetts island is receiving the star treatment.

Actress and comedian Jenny Slate will speak at this month’s graduation ceremony for Cuttyhunk Elementary School, a one-room schoolhouse on the island that has a year-round population of around 12.

Slate’s audience will be Gwen Lynch, this year’s lone graduate of the school that goes up to eighth grade, her family and other Cuttyhunk residents.

Slate played Mona-Lisa Saperstein on “Parks and Recreation” and is a former “Saturday Night Live” cast member.

**Pilot, 91, claims age discrimination**

**ND** FARGO — A longtime Fargo pilot and flight instructor said he’s considering legal action to get his license back, claiming he’s the victim of age discrimination.

WDAF said federal regulators revoked his pilot and flight instructor licenses after he was involved in a moving violation and an intersection accident.

KFRO reported he’s accused of crossing a closed runway without permission from the control tower. Gelking said he passed his medical exams and said his age is not relevant to his license status.

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*From wire reports*
Welcome to the Neighborhood.

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With base information, travel tips, restaurant reviews and even the score of your child’s high school basketball game, we’ve got you covered.

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Stars and Stripes KOREA
Stars and Stripes GUAM
Stars and Stripes JAPAN
Stars and Stripes EUROPE

Stay connected and hey, welcome to the neighborhood.
Fiat Chrysler pulls plug on Renault merger

By Angela Charlton and Colleen Barry
Associated Press

PARIS — The surprising collapse of a proposal to merge Fiat Chrysler and Renault weighed heavily on the companies’ shares Thursday, with all sides casting blame for the unravelling of what had appeared like a done deal to create the world’s third-largest automaker.

The French government, which is Renault’s biggest shareholder, said it had asked for five more days to review a deal and to obtain support from Nissan, a longtime Japanese alliance partner. Fiat Chrysler Automobiles instead withdrew its merger proposal late Wednesday, citing “political conditions in France.”

Shares in Renault plunged 7.6% to 51.91 euros in early Paris trading, while Fiat Chrysler sank 2.9% to 11.35 euros on the Milan Stock Exchange.

The French government, which owns 15% stake of Renault, had placed four conditions on the deal: French jobs and factories, creation of the world’s third-largest electric vehicle battery manufacturer with Germany, and a strong political commitment in Germany.

Fiat Chrysler was at fault for the merger collapse, placing “massive pressure” to quickly take the offer or leave it, the French official said. France wanted to delay a vote until Tuesday to have more time to discuss it with Nissan, which had said it intended to abstain from any immediate vote. The official was not authorized to be named according to government policy.

Fiat Chrysler did not have an immediate response to the French government’s version of events. In Tokyo, Nissan declined to comment.

Le Maire said that the French government’s conditions for a final agreement were to complete the merger operation as part of the existing alliance between Renault and Nissan, preserve French jobs and factories, create a governance respectful of the equilibrium between Renault and Fiat Chrysler and ensure participation in an electric battery initiative with Germany.

“An agreement had been reached on three of these conditions. It remained to obtain explicit support from Nissan,” Le Maire said. Nissan had expressed reservations about the deal.

Fiat Chrysler said in its statement that it remained “firmly convinced of the compelling transformational rationale of a proposal,” noting it had been widely-received in markets and in the industry and would have delivered benefits to all parties.

However it became clear that the political conditions in France do not currently exist for such a combination to proceed successfully,” the statement said. “FCA will continue to deliver on its commitments through the implementation of its independent strategy.

The Renault board had met Wednesday evening for a second round of deliberations on the proposal for a 50-50 merger, which the carmaker said would save more than $5.62 billion per year in purchasing expenses and costs for developing autonomous and electric vehicles. The combined company would have produced some 8.7 million vehicles a year, more than General Motors and trailing only Volkswagen and Toyota.

The merger would have created a company worth almost $40 billion. If Nissan had gone along, it would have created the world’s biggest auto company.

Most analysts praised the proposed deal, saying each side bought strengths that covered up the other’s weaknesses. Now, the two companies apparently must find a new way to address any shortcomings at a time when the auto industry is in the midst of a global sales slowdown and facing enormous expenses to develop future technologies.

Karl Brauer, executive publisher at Kelley Blue Book and Autotrader, said the quick failure was unfortunate, “though it’s better than having it drag on for weeks or months and then fail. FCA clearly saw too many obstacles, primarily Nissan’s reluctance.”

Brauer said the merger talk was likely to have affected other boardrooms in the automotive industry, where tie-ups can lead to significant savings on investments in costly technology, especially as the industry faces the transition to electric powertrains and autonomous and semi-autonomous driving.

“A reassessment of partnership opportunities was likely initiated at every major global automaker in the past few days, and those assessments won’t end with FCA’s withdrawal from this deal,” Brauer said.

**EXCHANGE RATES**

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**Eugene Sheffer Crossword**

**ACROSS**
1. Breath fresheners
6. Jazzy style
9. Monk’s title
12. Pub perch
13. Greek H
14. Yank’s foe
15. Very beginning
16. Difficult
18. Imam’s place
20. Conks out
21. Fluffy scarf
23. Drone
24. Leans
25. Has
27. Monastery VIP
29. Past
31. Restitution
35. Travel papers
37. Nickelodeon’s
“Explorer”
38. Tack on
41. Dogpatch
adjective
43. Recipe abbr.
44. Adhesive
45. Roman orator
47. “That’s a lie”
49. Jets and Sharks
52. Swelled head
53. Samovar
54. Full-length
55. Tax form ID

**DOWN**
1. Flavor enhancer, for short
2. Mineral suffix
3. A few
4. Takeout request
5. Wade through mud
6. Render senseless
7. Oklahoma tribe
8. Bit of butter
9. Delicate
10. Stopwatch button
11. Void
12. Redacted
13. Campus areas
19. Short ‘do
22. Have debts
24. Male turkey
26. Part of USSR
28. No-frills
30. Kibosh
32. Never
33. Hosp. workers
34. Enervate
36. Extraterrestrials
38. De Mille of dance
39. Whips
40. Japanese
42. Advantage
45. It gets in the whey
46. Hindu royal
48. Regret
50. Belly
51. Pencil

**Answer to Previous Puzzle**

**CRYPTOQUIP**

```
LA Q TPBLKLZSI UZZW ZA
JPYZNLZCIBYPLNQNPJBLWF
DQKLG, GZSBJLNUPQ
ISTAQGP-NZ-QLTDLIIQB?
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**Yesterday’s Cryptoquip: MY SAILOR FRIEND WAS A VERY WARM, LIKEABLE FELLOW ALL THE TIME. YOU SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BOATER!**

**Today’s Cryptoquip Clue:** D equals M
Here’s what gets lost when we rely on GPS

By M.R. O’Connor
Special to The Washington Post

It has become the most natural thing to do: Get in the car, type a destination into a smartphone, and let an algorithm using GPS data show the way.

Personal GPS-equipped devices entered the mass market in only the past 15 or so years. Before that, a suitable navigation device was a personal GPS, which people now rarely travel without. These gadgets are extremely powerful, allowing people to know their location at all times, to explore unknown places and to avoid getting lost.

But they also affect perception and judgment. When people are told which way to go, they pay less attention to their surroundings. And neuroscientists can now see that brain behavior changes when people rely on GPS.

In a study published in Nature Communications in 2017, researchers asked subjects to navigate a virtual simulation of London. The subjects were monitored to see how their brain activity changed while they navigated the city. The hippocampus, which is integral to spatial navigation, showed more activity in the subjects who were navigating without GPS, indicating that the hippocampus is a primary brain area associated with spatial navigation.

The hippocampus is crucial to many aspects of daily life. It allows us to orient in space and know where we are by creating cognitive maps. It also enables people to remember past events, such as where they were when they first met someone or where they parked their car.

The hippocampus is also linked to a variety of other cognitive functions, including learning, memory, and the ability to form new memories. In addition, the hippocampus is involved in the regulation of emotions, such as fear and anxiety.

And these findings have implications for the future of navigation in the digital age. As GPS becomes more ubiquitous, it may be that the hippocampus is becoming less important for spatial navigation, and that our brains are becoming less adept at remembering our surroundings.

But as we become more reliant on GPS, we are also becoming more dependent on technology. And while technology can be a useful tool, it can also have negative consequences, such as the loss of cognitive function and the reliance on external devices.

In the end, it is important to remember that GPS is just one tool in our repertoire of navigation skills. While it can be extremely helpful, it is not a substitute for the natural, inborn ability to navigate the world using our own skills and knowledge.

M.R. O’Connor is a journalist who writes about science, technology and ethics and is the author of "The Mystery of How Humans Navigate the World."
Honor the victims of the mass shooting in Virginia Beach

The (Norfolk, Va.) Virginian-Pilot
Keith Cox served the residents of Virginia Beach in the public utilities department for 12 years. Well-liked by coworkers, he spent his final moments on Friday working to protect them from a gunman in the municipal center — sacrificing his life in the process.

The remembrance of Cox, published in The Pilot on Monday, is one of many heartbreaking stories to emerge from the darkness that hangs over this community days after the worst mass shooting in the city's history.

Attention should be paid to the criminal investigation being conducted by local, state and federal law enforcement agencies. They are diving into the details of the shooter's life, his movements prior to the attack and the possible motives for this nation-horrific act in the hope of gaining some insight into why and how this happened.

But for now, our focus should be on those precious lives cut short on Friday, celebrating their memory to municipal government. They deserve no less from the community they served.

So let us remember Cox, the public utilities account clerk who was described as a passionate Pittsburgh Steelers fan. She had a tough few years, lost both her parents in the last five years, but was proud of the life she built in Virginia Beach.

Kate Nixon was an engineer with a decade of experience working for the city, whose love of her husband and three children was plainly evident to all who knew her.

Alex Gusev came to this country from Belarus in 2003. He was recalled by a colleague as “a model professional” who handled right-of-way issues for Virginia Beach. He was also a graduate of ODU who was quick to help friends and loved ones in need.

For most of her 24 years in Virginia Beach, LaQuita Brown, a Chesapeake resident, worked as Stafford County's public works director, telling them to lock the door while he ushered several employees into an office. As the shooter roamed the building, they looked for others to help.

Another ODU graduate, Christ Rapp, joined the city 11 months ago after serving as a pastor. As a police officer, he lives by his motto: “I serve, they serve.”

And Bobby Williams, who joined the city in 1981, was repeatedly honored for his lengthy public service throughout his career. He was the type of employee who provides invaluable continuity and institutional memory to municipal government.

Stories about each of the victims are available to read. They have been told with respect, grace and sensitivity, honoring the memory of their selflessness and the emotions they felt on those left behind.

Hold them all in your hearts.

Remember the reality of war on D-Day anniversary

The (Cleveland) Plain Dealer
On June 7, 1944, reporters of The Plain Dealer got a firsthand account of the Allied landing on D-Day and the battle that changed the course of World War II. Twelve of those stories were highlighted in Sunday’s Plain Dealer, from the 2008 remembrances of the late English cricket player Bertie Leighly, of Parma Heights, who came to the United States six years ago to be a World War II veteran considered one of the greatest writers ever to grace the pages of The Plain Dealer, must have passed on to their rewards. Only about 30 American survivors were expected to attend this year’s D-Day anniversary celebration.

Rico and the recovery it so badly needs in Texas

The Houston Chronicle
Can you hear us now? The Trump administration’s outrageous delays in making available more than $12 billion in storm recovery funds — about $4.3 billion of the total is for Texas — has finally been dealt with.

The House on Monday approved a Senate bill that sets a 90-day countdown for the administration to formally invite states such as Texas to submit spending plans for the money. That will kick-start the release of the funds. That means flood recovery funds approved by Congress just months after Hurricane Harvey hit in 2017 will get to Texas in 2020.

That’s astounding tardy, and yet even getting that much money in the gears took — quite literally — an act of Congress.

When Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush began raising hell with the administration over the delays early this year, fellow Houston and Urban Development, which administers the funds, and the Office of Management and Budget, which approves all new rules, seemed anything but fazed.

Instead, what was worked individual members of Congress decided to cross party lines and introduce legislation that would apply only to Texas.

Corbyn teamed with Sen. Joe Manchin, the West Virginia Democrat, on a bill to require the disbursement of the funds. A similar bill was authored in the House by a gaggle of members of Congress, including Rep. Lizzie Fletcher, D-Houston. Neither bill passed, but Corbyn and others managed to include its provisions in a larger disaster funding bill that did. All that’s required is President Donald Trump’s signature, which he’s expected to give.

Congratulations to Corbyn, Manchin and the House members who made it so. Perhaps there’s a lesson about dealing with the president: Talk is cheap, but legislation can produce results.

As we await the presidential signature, we note that many questions have been left unanswered.

Why was the administration so slow? HUD officials told the editorial board earlier this year that because the funds were being spent in new ways — on preventing future flood damage rather than repairing damage from previous floods — new rules were needed.

Congress was right to change the focus of these funds, but HUD should never have allowed the simple change to slow things down so profoundly. Others worried that the recommendation for a rule delay from the president’s bitter reaction to Puerto Rico and the recovery it so badly needs in the wake of Hurricane Maria.

Absent proof, we’ll pray that the latter feud ended with delays. And either way, the intricacies of Team Trump’s machinations can be the subject for a debate another day.

The welcome news this week is that Congress intervened in a way that should pay dividends for Texas, and fairly soon.
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Hosted by Michelle Harven and Air Force veteran Desmon Farris.
**College baseball**

**NCAA Tournament**

Super regional: Best-of-three series necessary to advance to regionals.

**Louisville vs. East Carolina**

Friday, June 2

— Louisville vs. East Carolina (5-12-17)

— Louisville vs. East Carolina (5-13-17)

— Vanderbilt vs. Duke

— Vanderbilt (12-24-17) vs. Duke (14-25-17)

— Vanderbilt vs. Duke (14-27-17)

At Lubbock, Texas

— Texas (42-17-2) vs. Oklahoma (11-23-17)

— Texas Tech vs. Oklahoma State (10-23-17)

At Chapel Hill, N.C.

— North Carolina (46-17-2) vs. Auburn (10-23-17)

— North Carolina vs. Auburn (10-24-17)

— Arkansas vs. Missouri State (10-24-17)

— LSU at Florida State (10-25-17)

At LSU vs Florida State (10-25-17)

— LSU vs. Florida State (10-25-17)

**Sports on AFN**

**AP spotlight**

**AP spotlight**

1930 — Gallant Fox, ridden by Earle Sande, wins the 1500-meter distances over Whirlaway, Becoming the 1930 Triple Crown winner.

— Arts and Letters, ridden by Braulio Bacaris, ends Majestic Prince's streak of four straight wins with a 9-1 upset in the 1930 Preakness.

1978 — The Washington Bullets beat the Lakers in Game 7 to win the NBA championship.

— The seven-game series was won by the Bullets, who defeated the Lakers in Game 7.

— Koleman's goal on the 10-day IL, retroactive to Monday. Optioned RHP Andrew Moore to Arkansas (TL). Reinstated RHP Tyson Fury from the 10-day IL.

— Boston Red Sox vs. Minnesota Twins (10-25-17)

— At a game over.

— The Minnesota Twins vs. the Boston Red Sox.

— The Twins and the Red Sox are playing a doubleheader.

**Pro soccer**

**MLS EASTERN CONFERENCE**

Philadelphia

— Philadelphia Union (10-22-17)

— D.C. United (10-23-17)

— Columbus Crew SC (10-24-17)

— Montreal Impact (10-25-17)

— New York City FC (10-26-17)

— New York Red Bulls (10-27-17)

— Orlando City SC (10-28-17)

— Philadelphia Union (10-29-17)

— Montreal Impact (10-30-17)

— Columbus Crew SC (10-31-17)

**MLS WESTERN CONFERENCE**

Los Angeles FC

— LA Galaxy (10-22-17)

— San Jose Earthquakes (10-23-17)

— Seattle Sounders FC (10-24-17)

— Minnesota United FC (10-25-17)

— Colorado Rapids (10-26-17)

— Portland Timbers (10-27-17)

— Real Salt Lake (10-28-17)

— Seattle Sounders FC (10-29-17)

— Minnesota United FC (10-30-17)

— Colorado Rapids (10-31-17)

**AP spotlight**

**AP spotlight**

1950 — Gale Sayers, who had a 146-yard rushing total, wins the first major professional football offensive player of the year award.

— Gale Sayers of the Chicago Bears, who rushed for 146 yards in the Bears' 27-7 win over the Los Angeles Rams, is named the first major professional football offensive player of the year.

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## American League

### Results

#### Chicago Cubs vs. Rockies 8

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### Standings

#### Central Division

- New York: 29-32 (.475, 5)
- Chicago: 23-38 (.377, 15)
- Boston: 38-22 (.633, —)
- Minnesota: 31-32 (.492, 12)
- Seattle: 26-39 (.400, 17)

#### West Division

- Los Angeles: 23-38 (.400, 17)
- Colorado: 26-39 (.400, 17)
- San Francisco: 25-36 (.416, —)
- San Diego: 29-31 (.494, 16)
- Arizona: 32-31 (.500, 17)

### Division Leaders

- New York: Means 6-4, 1.17
- Seattle: Arroyo 5-4, 3.71
- Boston: Buchter 4-4, 5.52
- Minnesota: Adkins 2-3, 4.55
- Chicago: Hendrix 2-1, 3.26

### League Leaders

- Home Run Leaders:
  - New York: Bruce 17
  - Philadelphia: Harper 12
  - Minnesota: Luch 10

- RBI Leaders:
  - New York: Judge 60
  - Seattle: Mancini 45
  - Atlanta: Arenado 43

- Wins Leaders:
  - New York: deGrom 15
  - Boston: Porcello 13
  - Minnesota: Corbin 12

### Notes

- New York: deGrom allowed 6 HRs in 6 innings.
- Boston: Mancini hit a 3-run HR.
- Minnesota: Corbin struck out 13 in 7 innings.

## National League

### Results

#### Philadelphia vs. Chicago 7

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### Standings

#### East Division

- New York: 38-22 (.633, —)
- Atlanta: 33-28 (.541, —)
- New York: 28-33 (.469, —)
- Washington: 19-42 (.311, —)
- Miami: 24-21 (.533, —)

#### Central Division

- Chicago: 29-32 (.475, 5)
- Milwaukee: 34-28 (.558, —)
- St. Louis: 31-39 (.466, 16)
- Pittsburgh: 29-31 (.493, —)
- Cincinnati: 25-36 (.416, —)

#### West Division

- Los Angeles: 26-39 (.400, 17)
- Colorado: 29-31 (.494, 16)
- San Francisco: 25-36 (.416, —)
- San Diego: 29-31 (.494, 16)
- Arizona: 32-31 (.500, 17)

### Division Leaders

- New York: Means 6-4, 1.17
- Atlanta: Baez 5-1, 3.20
- Miami: Judge 6-5, 3.30

### League Leaders

- Home Run Leaders:
  - New York: Judge 60
  - Philadelphia: Harper 12
  - Atlanta: mã 10

- RBI Leaders:
  - New York: Judge 60
  - Philadelphia: Harper 45
  - Atlanta: mã 43

- Wins Leaders:
  - New York: deGrom 15
  - Philadelphia: Hamels 14
  - Atlanta: Adeiny 13

### Notes

- New York: deGrom allowed 6 HRs in 6 innings.
- Atlanta: mã hit a 3-run HR.
- Miami: Judge hit a 2-run HR.

## Scoreboard

### Marlings 8, Braves 3

#### Marlings

- Baez 3-2, 1 HR, 3 RBI
- Arenado 2-2, 1 RBI

#### Braves

- Franco 2-2, 1 HR, 2 RBI
- Acuña 2-3, 1 HR, 2 RBI

### Phillies 7, Padres 5

#### Phillies

- Harper 4-2, 1 HR, 1 RBI
- Baez 3-2, 1 HR, 3 RBI

#### Padres

- Arenado 2-2, 1 HR, 2 RBI
- Franco 2-2, 1 HR, 2 RBI

## Schedule

### Wednesday's Games

- New York vs. Atlanta
- San Diego vs. Los Angeles
- Pittsburgh vs. Chicago
- Washington vs. Minnesota

### Thursday's Games

- New York vs. Philadelphia
- San Diego vs. San Francisco
- Cleveland vs. Chicago
- St. Louis vs. Minnesota

### Weekend's Games

- New York vs. Atlanta
- San Diego vs. Los Angeles
- Cleveland vs. Chicago
- St. Louis vs. Minnesota

### Next Week's Games

- New York vs. Atlanta
- San Diego vs. Los Angeles
- Cleveland vs. Chicago
- St. Louis vs. Minnesota

## Calendar

- June 13: Detroit vs. Kansas City at Comerica Park
- June 15: New York vs. Chicago at Yankee Stadium
- June 19–20: Owners meeting, New York
- June 20: New York vs. Chicago at Yankee Stadium
- July 2: New York vs. Chicago at Yankee Stadium
- July 9: All-Star Game at Cleveland

## Final Scores

- American League: Chicago 6, Colorado 3
- National League: Philadelphia 7, San Diego 5
Rays’ Morton runs unbeaten string to 20

Veteran right-hander hasn’t lost a game he’s started since Aug. 11

By Noah Trister
Associated Press

DETROIT — Charlie Morton describes himself as a pessimist — even after 20 consecutive starts without a loss.

“It’s never hard for me to be pessimistic,” Morton said. “I just know how it can turn sour quick.”

At some point, another team will probably succeed in breaking him, but not Wednesday night, when the Tampa Bay right-hander allowed five hits in seven innings to lead the Rays to a 4-0 win over the Detroit Tigers. Morton hasn’t lost since Aug. 11, and only Clayton Kershaw of the Dodgers, at 21 starts, has a longer active unbeaten streak.

Morton (7-0) struck out eight with no walks and needed just 83 pitches to complete seven innings. He’s now 22-3 since the start of last season, and after his comments about pessimism, he did talk for a bit about a newfound appreciation for life in baseball.

“I think I’m at the point right now, I think I’m in a happy place,” Morton said. “I’m grateful for every start that I get.”

Austin Meadows tripled and scored on a throwing error in the third to open the scoring. Tampa Bay scored two more in the fifth and snapped its four-game skid.

By Sean Henry
Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Adam Haseley made his major league debut Tuesday as the center fielder for the NL East-leading Phillies, who are scrambling to reconfigure their outfield.

The 23-year-old Haseley made his major league debut Tuesday at the San Diego Padres on Wednesday. It was Haseley’s first major league hit.

Philadelphia Phillies rookie outfielder Adam Haseley watches his RBI double during the Phillies’ 7-5 win at the San Diego Padres on Wednesday. It was Haseley’s first major league hit.

Haseley’s first big league hit lifts Phillies past Padres

Philadelphia Phillies right fielder Adam Haseley watches his RBI double during the Phillies’ 7-5 win at the San Diego Padres on Wednesday. It was Haseley’s first major league hit.

Associated Press

Mets 7, Giants 0: Jason Vargas pitched his first shutout in two years, Amed Rosario hit a three-run homer and host New York to its first three-game winning streak.

Cano hours after his return from the injured list.

The two-time defending NL East winner has overcome a second straight loss after a season-high five-game losing streak.

The 23-year-old Haseley made his major league debut Tuesday as the center fielder for the NL East-leading Phillies, who are scrambling to reconfigure their outfield.

The Nationals led 4-1 in the eighth before another meltdown by a bullpen that has a 6.68 ERA in its last 11 games, including Monday night’s loss to Arizona.

The Phillies rallied from a three-run deficit for a 7-5 defeat of the San Diego Padres.

Veteran right-hander hasn’t lost a game he’s started since Aug. 11.

By Sean Henry
 Associated Press

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Veteran right-hander hasn’t lost a game he’s started since Aug. 11.
From indifference to excitement
Staggering growth of women's game bodes well for World Cup in France

By Kevin Baxter
Los Angeles Times

PARIS — When the U.S. played Norway in the semifinals of the second Women's World Cup in 1995, fewer than 3,000 people showed up at a minor league soccer stadium in Sweden to watch. And that was one of the bigger crowds of the tournament.

“To everyone outside of friends and family and the players themselves, it was like a tree falling in the woods that nobody saw or heard,” said Briana Scurry, the U.S. goalkeeper said of that World Cup. “It happened. But nobody saw or heard it.”

They’re watching and listening now. Because where once there was indifference about women's soccer, now there’s excitement.

The sport has enjoyed such massive growth in recent years, when the eighth edition of the Women’s World Cup kicks off Friday in Paris, the coach who won the title four years ago in Canada says it might as well be considered another game.

“It’s so different than it was even two World Cups ago in terms of just the depth and the talent and the level of players out there and the level of teams,” U.S. coach Jill Ellis said. “It gets more and more competitive and more and more fun and exciting.”

As a result, the 24-team field for this summer’s monthlong tournament is the deepest and most talented ever. An event long dominated by a small number of well-supported elites — the U.S. and Germany combined to win five of the first seven world championships — is now wide open, with at least half a dozen teams heading to France believing they have a chance to climb to the top step of the podium next month.

And one big reason is money. Corporate sponsors, national federations and even individual clubs — spurred, in many cases, by players loudly demanding more support — have spent heavily in the women’s game, expanding domestic leagues and investing in training facilities and grass-roots programs.

In the last two years, games in Mexico, England, the Netherlands, Spain, Italy and elsewhere have drawn record crowds of more than 30,000 for a women’s match, topped by the 66,739 that packed a stadium in Madrid to watch Atletico Madrid beat Barcelona in March.

“There is an audience,” said Mia Hamm, a two-time World Cup champion and a former world player of the year.

The size of the corporate investments that have powered women’s game often amount to a rounding error compared with what is spent on the men’s side, but for a sport that has long been starved for resources, a tiny amount can make a big difference.

And it shows little sign of slowing. FIFA, soccer’s governing body and the organizer of the World Cup, says the global television audience for this summer’s tournament could top 1 billion for the first time, which has advertisers rushing to cash in. A recent study by the Nielsen company showed that 62 percent of viewers were younger than age 34.

FIFA, meanwhile, which would seem to have the most to gain from the growing interest in the women’s game, has instead struggled to keep up. It didn’t even have a women’s division until 2016 and it wasn’t until last October that it announced a coherent strategy to enhance the commercial value and strengthen the foundation of women’s soccer.

“The women’s game is a top priority for FIFA,” Secretary-General Fatma Samoura said at the time.

France vs. South Korea
2 p.m. Friday CET
9 p.m. Friday JKT

While the U.S. women’s team is listed as a top contender for the World Cup title, it has not been without its challenges.

Earlier this year, the team was embroiled in a pay dispute with their federation. The U.S. women's team sued U.S. Soccer twice in the last three years charging gender discrimination in pay and working conditions.

The court has ordered the parties to mediation, but a settlement is far from certain.

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FIFA has yet to match those words with deeds. Although FIFA doubled the prize money for this summer’s tournament to $30 million — $4 million of which will go to the winner — the French team alone got $38 million from FIFA for winning the men’s tournament last summer. And the overall prize-money pool in Russia was $400 million, more than 13 times larger than the women’s purse this year.

Jamaica slips past US men in exhibition

By Ben Nickels
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Not much went right for the United States in its next-to-last prep match for the CONCACAF Gold Cup.

Jamaica dealt the U.S. just its second home defeat to a Caribbean nation in a half-century, beating the Americans 1-0 in an exhibition on Wednesday night that made coach Gregg Berhalter’s new-look team appear far from prepared for the fast-approaching tournament.

Shamar Nicholson took advantage of a giveaway by Christian Roldan to score from outside the penalty area in the 60th minute, five minutes after he entered the match.

“We lacked speed. We lacked aggression in the final third,” Berhalter said. “When the ball’s wide, there should be four guys in the penalty box and we only had two half the time.”

Without midfielders Christian Pulisic, Weston McKennie and Tyler Adams, the U.S. failed to generate much offense, and striker Josh Sargent squandered what chances he did have, including a point-blank shot that went wide in the 71st minute.

The Americans had installed a new, alternative formation during just two days of training.

“Personnel affects formations and performance, for sure, but I think that we’d be selling these guys short if we didn’t say that they can still perform at a high level,” Berhalter said. “Today just wasn’t our day. It wasn’t our best.”

The question now is whether Berhalter’s team can find form in time for its Gold Cup opener on June 18, the Americans’ first competitive match since the October 2017 loss at Trinidad and Tobago that ended the U.S. streak of seven World Cup appearances.

Brazil’s Neymar out with injury

Associated Press

BRASILIA, Brazil — Neymar is out of Copa America after suffering a right ankle injury in a win over Qatar on Wednesday night.

Brazil's soccer confederation said in a statement early Thursday that Neymar had a ligament rupture in his ankle and will not recuperate in time for the South American tournament.

The striker left Brazil's 2-0 victory in the friendly match in tears after twisting his ankle during a hard tackle in the first minutes of the match.

Neymar left the Mane Garrincha stadium using crutches before the match ended.

Associated Press

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Brazil's soccer confederation head Edu Gaspar. The player returned to Brazil's hotel in the early hours Thursday, after he was visited by President Jair Bolsonaro.

The friendly was the first major public appearance for Neymar since a woman accused him of rape Friday in a Paris hotel on May 15. Several signs in support of the player appeared among fans on the same day his accuser reaffirmed her claims in a TV interview.

Neymar has denied any wrongdoing. Asked how shaken the rest of the squad is as a result of Neymar’s problems, Tite replied: “We are not insensitive. I only hope this situation gets solved.”
Blues winning war of attrition

By Stephen Whyno
Associated Press

BOSTON — Twice the Boston Bruins have been forced to finish a Stanley Cup Final game down a defenseman. The St. Louis Blues won both.

That’s not a coincidence. Wearing out opponents and winning the war of attrition has been an ingredient of the Blues’ playoff success. They took advantage of injuries to San Jose’s Erik Karlsson, Joe Pavelski and Tomas Hertl to move on to the final, and with Boston potentially without captain Zdeno Chara for Game 5 Thursday, St. Louis is two victories away from lifting the Stanley Cup as the healthier team.

“We can see it throughout games and throughout series,” Blues captain Alex Pietrangelo said Wednesday. “It’s tough minutes to play against our forward lines when they’re playing the way they can. You can see the momentum we create by our line changes in the offensive zone, we’re just using all four lines. If I was a defenseman, that would be tough to defend against.”

Chara did not go to the arena at all Wednesday, 46 hours after taking a puck to the jaw in Boston’s Game 4 loss that tied the series at 2-2. Coach Bruce Cassidy didn’t talk to and only briefly texted with the 42-year-old defenseman, who has a facial injury that has been reported to take three weeks to heal.

The absence of Chara could prove to be the tipping point in a bruising battle between the Bruins and Blues. Boston defenseman Matt Grzelcyk is out with a concussion and St. Louis forward Robert Thomas is out with a suspected hand or wrist injury. Cassidy said Grzelcyk, who practiced in a no-contact jersey Wednesday, is still in concussion protocol and would need to be medically cleared to play in Game 5.

If Boston is without two of its top five defensemen in Chara and Grzelcyk, it would mean bigger roles for John Moore and Connor Clifton and the possibility of Steven Kampfer seeing his first action since Game 1 of the East finals. And the Bruins’ entire approach would change.

“You lose a little bit of your team defense, well, maybe you’ve got to get to create more offense to balance that out,” Cassidy said. “You got a guy that kills penalties well, maybe stay a little more disciplined. Down the line of how can you make up for what he brings without one guy going in there.”

Meanwhile, St. Louis is relatively healthy except for Thomas. The Blues got defenseman Vince Dunn back for Game 4 after he missed almost three weeks after taking a puck to the face in the West finals, and he assisted on a goal and drastically improved their puck movement.

“He’s a dynamic player,” coach Craig Berube said. “He can make something out of nothing a lot of times. He’s very good at that. He’s elusive and even coming out of our own end, you feel there are times when the puck is going to get stopped up and he’ll do something and make a move and a quick play with the puck that breaks a guy out and it’s a great play that we’re going up the ice now.”

No. 2 seed Commodores one of best-hitting teams

By Teresa M. Walker
Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Julian Infante tipped his cap to the applauding fans after being named MVP of the Nashville Regional following his impressive hitting performance.

The Vanderbilt senior went 6-for-12 in three games, cranking out three home runs, three doubles and five RBIs. And he did it from the ninth spot in the Commodores’ batting order.

It was just another indicator of how strong coach Tim Corbin’s lineup is from top to bottom. The nation’s home run leader, JJ Bleday, had a relatively quiet weekend, yet the national No. 2 seed outscored opponents 28-8 to send Vanderbilt to its ninth super regional.

Ohio State coach Greg Beals said the Commodores’ lineup is as good as there is in college baseball.

“I haven’t seen everybody in the country, but that one’s pretty good,” Beals said. “They’re hitting .319 as a team. They got home runs, and they got stolen bases. They got a little bit of everything that they do in that lineup, and that’s what makes them tough.”

Pitching has been Vanderbilt’s biggest strength during most of Corbin’s tenure. Now he has one of the best-hitting teams in Commodores history and it’s chasing a fourth trip to the College World Series, hoping to add to its 2014 national title and 2015 national runner-up.

Infante’s second home run — and Vandy’s fourth in its regional final — set a school record with 87 this season. The Commodores not only hit for power, but their .319 batting average leads the Southeastern Conference and is fourth nationally. They’ve set school records for most RBIs (497), walks (341) and runs (520) with a few more marks within range for a team with the nation’s most wins (5-210).

“I think whoever walks in here to play Vanderbilt better pack a lunch,” Indiana State coach Mitch Hannahs said. “That’s a very good team.”

By SCOTT KANE

Vanderbilt’s Philip Clarke points to the sky after hitting a home run against Indiana State on Saturday.
US teen Anisimova shocks champ Halep

American Amanda Anisimova celebrates winning her French Open semifinal match against Simona Halep on Thursday in Paris.

By HOWARD FENDRICH
Associated Press
PARIS — Amanda Anisimova smacked one last backhand winner to complete her upset of defending champion Simona Halep in the French Open quarterfinals, flung her racket and covered her mouth with both hands.

Eyes wide, Anisimova then spread her arms with palms up and said, “What!”

In a tournament filled with surprises, Anisimova provided the latest Thursday. Just 17 and ranked merely 51st, yet possessing the mindset and mien of someone much more experienced and accomplished, the American withstood a late charge by Halep and won 6-2, 6-4 to reach her first Grand Slam semifinal.

“I think it will sink in, at least not for today. Yeah, I mean, it’s crazy,” said Anisimova, who was born in New Jersey to Russian parents and moved to Florida when she was 3. “I really can’t believe the result today. And getting the opportunity to play against Simona, that’s amazing. But how it ended is even crazier to me.”

That’s a fair assessment of the entire tournament, when Serena Williams, No. 1 Naomi Osaka and No. 2 Karolina Pliskova lost in the third round; Angelique Kerber and Caroline Wozniacki were gone in the first.

The highest-seeded player in the semifinals is No. 8 Barty, the Australian who will face Anisimova. Barty advanced by beating No. 14 Madison Keys, the United States 6-3, 7-5.

“I felt,” Barty said, “like I was in control.”

The other semifinal is No. 2 Karolina Pliskova, the Czech Republic. Because rain washed out all play Wednesday, the women’s semifinals — normally Thursday, one after another in the main stadium — will be played simultaneously on the second-court complex Thursday morning. The biggest arena will host the men’s semifinals: Rafael Nadal vs. Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic vs. Dominic Thiem. It’s the first time the top four men’s seeds are the last four standing at a major tournament since the 2013 Australian Open.

Djokovic stretched his Grand Slam winning streak to 26 matches as he pursues a fourth consecutive major trophy, beating Alexander Zverev 7-5, 6-2, 6-2. Thiem eliminated No. 10 seed Karen Khachanov 6-2, 6-4, 6-2.

“Controlling the points was the key, I think,” said 2018 French Open runner-up Thiem, who made only 12 unforced errors, 25 a judge annotated. “I think he didn’t miss a lot today.”

Not only has none of the remaining women won a Grand Slam trophy, none has participated in a final.

“Well,” said Halep, who was seeded third, “nothing surprises me anymore in tennis.”

Still, Anisimova’s rapid rise is noteworthy.

Already the first tennis player born in the 2000s to get to a Slam semifinal, Anisimova certainly checked the mindset and mien of Halep.

Anisimova had been considered among the best junior players in the world when she arrived in Paris. She was 17 when she lost to Halep in the 2018 quarterfinals of the French Open, her second Grand Slam.

“Halep had won 16 return games in a row coming in, but Anisimova saved 6 of 7 break points.

A seven-game run that began at 2-2 in the early going put Anisimova up a set and 3-0 in the second. But from 4-1, Halep made one last push, getting to 4-4.

“She was pretty calm,” said Halep, who acknowledged feeling the stress of trying to win a second consecutive title in Paris. “She showed that she’s able to do good things and big things.”

Yet to drop a set through five major tournaments, Halep is another step closer to her first Grand Slam title. It was possible in the tournament’s largest arena, Thiem’s semifinal opponent style. She doesn’t rely on her power as much as precision, deposing what she’s called “effortless shots” near lines and often wrong-footing Halep.

And to think: It was in 2016 that Anisimova was the junior runner-up at Roland Garros at 14.

“I actually kind of miss juniors, but I mean, this is a new phase,” she said, shrugging. “Obviously I respect [Halep] a lot. But I know I’m capable of doing a lot, and I know I can play very well. I mean, I never doubt my abilities. Today that showed.”

Did Barty

“For a 17-year-old to play that well,” said Chris Evert, who won seven of her 18 major trophies in Paris, “is pretty awesome.”

Most impressive, perhaps, was this: Halep had won 16 return games in a row coming in, but Anisimova saved 6 of 7 break points.

The three-point line was last moved in 2008-09, to 20 feet, 9 inches.

Briefly

Ex-Arizona assistant gets 3 months jail in scandal

Associated Press
NEW YORK — A judge has sentenced a former assistant basketball coach at the University of Arizona to three months in prison for his role in a college hoops corruption scandal.

Emanuel “Book” Richardson, who advised former Simona Halep

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New York — A judge has sentenced a former assistant basketball coach at the University of Arizona to three months in prison for his role in a college hoops corruption scandal.
NBA FINALS

Raptors top Curry, Warriors

Golden State PG’s 47-point effort not enough in Game 3

By Jane McCauley

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — For every amazing shot in a career night by Stephen Curry on his home court, Kawhi Leonard and Danny Green kept finding dazzling answers of their own.

The Toronto Raptors decided to “let it rip” on offense in Game 2, and the Raptors beat the banged-up Golden State Warriors 123-109 on Wednesday for a 2-1 lead in the best-of-seven NBA Finals.

Leopard scored 30 points on a late Curry shot in what would have been a playoff career night for the Warriors, and the Raptors beat the Warriors 123-109 for a 2-1 lead.

Curry also had eight rebounds and seven assists, but coach Nick Nurse didn’t do it all for the two-time defending champions, down starters Kevin Durant and Klay Thompson and key backup big man Kevon Looney because of injuries.

“Their outplayed us. They deserved it,” Warriors coach Steve Kerr said. “It’s very hard to just come back and hopefully get back in here Friday night and hopefully get a little healthier and get some guys back.”

Kyle Lowry

Toronto Raptors head coach Kyle Lowry says, “It looks young, but he’s pretty old.”

Toronto Raptors head coach Nick Nurse speaks after Wednesday’s Game 3 win over the Golden State Warriors in the NBA Finals.

Notes: Toronto’s Nurse no ordinary rookie head coach

FROM BACK PAGE

these NBA Finals.

The moment has not been too big for Nurse or the Raptors.

Toronto leads the series 2-1 after a 123-109 win over injury-depleted Golden State on Wednesday night, an outcome that puts the two-time defending NBA champions in trouble.

The maestro of the best season in Toronto history is a 35-year-old NBA coaching rookie, one who’s making plenty of right moves.

“Kyle looks young,” Raptors guard Kyle Lowry said. “But he’s pretty old.”

Nurse might have been an unknown to casual NBA fans when he got the job a year ago following the firing of his former boss in Toronto, Dwane Casey, Nurse was an assistant on Casey’s staff, largely credited with running things on the offensive side of the ball. He had good relationships with players, but the task of replacing someone who was the NBA’s coach of the year and got fired anyway was daunting nonetheless.

He has handled it with ease.

“Each game’s critical, and the next one will be as critical as (Game 3) was,” Nurse said. “So it’s been like that all through the playoffs, and we just got to guard and play who is out there. That’s all we can do.”

The guy he’s going against has eight rings already. Steve Kerr won five as a player, has three as coach of the Warriors and eight rings already. Steve Kerr said, “It’s been like that all through the NBA Finals.”

Nurse might have been an unknown rookie head coach. “He’s a first-time NBA head coach,” Nurse said. “Every time we make a run or a tough foul call and they slowed it down and say some vulgar language to me. There’s no place for people like that in our league.”

Toronto Raptors guard Stephen Curry led all scorers with a career-playoff high 47 points in Game 3 of the NBA Finals, but it wasn’t enough for hobbled Golden State, which fell 118-109 to the Toronto Raptors in Oakland, Calif., on Wednesday.

Warriors guard Stephen Curry led all scorers with a career-playoff high 47 points in Game 3 of the NBA Finals, but it wasn’t enough for hobbled Golden State, which fell 118-109 to the Toronto Raptors in Oakland, Calif., on Wednesday. 

Toronto Raptors head coach Nick Nurse speaks after Wednesday’s Game 3 win over the Golden State Warriors in the NBA Finals.

Fan shooves Toronto G Lowry, is ejected

OAKLAND, Calif. — A fan seated courtside for Game 3 of the NBA Finals was ejected after shoving Kyle Lowry when the Toronto Raptors star crashed into a row of seats while trying to save a ball from going out of bounds.

Lowry scored 23 points and made several big shots in a 123-109 victory Wednesday night that gave the Raptors a 2-1 lead over Golden State. There was as much buzz about Lowry’s dust-up with the fan as his offense.

“There’s no place for that,” Lowry said. “They have no reason to reach over two seats and then say some vulgar language to me. There’s no place for people like that in our league.”

Warriors spokesman Raymond Ridder and security officials confirmed the fan who shoved Lowry was ejected and escorted from Oracle Arena.

The incident overshadowed a breakout game for Lowry. He scored 15 points in the first half and finished 8-for-16 from the floor with five three-pointers.

Lowry also had nine assists and four rebounds.

— Associated Press

Finals

(Best-of-seven; x=if necessary)

Toronto 2, Golden State 1
Toronto 118, Golden State 109

Wednesday: Toronto 118, Golden State 109

Friday: at Golden State. AFN-Sports, 9 a.m. Saturday, JKT

Monday: at Toronto. x-Thurs., June 13; at Golden State. x-Sunday, June 16

x-Sunday: NBA Summer League, Las Vegas

Wednesday Raptors 118, Warriors 109

GOLDEN STATE — Igudala 6-6 1-2 11, Draymond 6-6 5-7 17, Cousins 1-7 5-6 14, Curry 4-12 11-14 47, Livingston 10-19 3-4 25, Green 5-14 3-6 14, Iguodala 2-4 2-2 6, VanVleet 4-8 0-0 11, Lin 0-0 0-0 0, McCaw 1-3 0-0 2, Beas 0-0 0-0 0, Totals 36-91 25-30 115.

OAKLAND — Leonard 9-17 10-24 29, Ibaka 1-2 0-0 2, Lowry 8-16 2-2 20, Curry 14-31 13-14 47, Livingston 1-3 1-1 2, Thompson 4-15 2-4 12, Gasol 5-10 1-4 10, Inglis 1-3 0-0 2, Gasol 6-11 2-3 15, Curry 4-21 4-4 17, Oubre 4-6 2-3 11, Carroll 1-4 0-0 2, Beas 2-2 2-2 6, Iguodala 2-4 0-0 6, Lin 0-0 0-0 0, McCaw 0-2 0-0 0, Poeltl 0-0 0-0 0, Totals 22-58 6-9 119.

Monday:

Toronto: Leonard 12-30 3-6 26, Ibaka 4-6 0-0 8, Lowry 8-16 3-6 18, Leonard 3-5 3-4 9, Curry 4-12 1-2 9, Cousins 4-5 0-0 8, Iguodala 3-9 2-4 8, Lowry 6-16 3-4 15, Leonard 6-13 0-0 12, Curry 3-9 0-0 6, Cousins 3-4 0-0 6, Totals 19-47 7-16 44.

Golden State: Leonard 7-17 1-3 15, Ibaka 1-1 0-0 2, Lowry 8-16 3-6 15, Leonard 3-5 3-4 9, Curry 4-12 1-2 9, Cousins 4-5 0-0 8, Iguodala 3-9 2-4 8, Lowry 6-16 3-4 15, Leonard 6-13 0-0 12, Curry 3-9 0-0 6, Cousins 3-4 0-0 6, Totals 19-47 7-16 44.

Toronto 2, Golden State 1

Thursday: at Toronto. AFN-Sports, 40 (11am Saturday, JKT)

Sunday: at Golden State. AFN-Sports, 40 (11am Saturday, JKT)

Saturday: NBA Summer League, Las Vegas

Wednesday:

Toronto Raptors star crashed into a row of seats while trying to save a ball from going out of bounds.

Raptors 118, Warriors 109

Hobbled Golden State, which fell 118-109 to the Toronto Raptors in Oakland, Calif., on Wednesday.
Hitting all the right notes
Raptors maestro Nurse plays winning tune

By Tim Reynolds
Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif.

T oronto coach Nick Nurse plays to the beat of his own drum.

And that’s not even one of the instruments that he’s messing around with these days.

Nurse’s office in Toronto has a guitar stand on one side of his desk and a piano on the other. He’s trying to master both; the guitar travels with him on the road and he’s been known to strum it while studying film. The piano doesn’t exactly fit in the overhead storage bin of the plane, so it stays behind.

Nurse says he’s not any good yet.

His team, however, is making plenty of beautiful music so far in the NBA Finals.

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Toronto Raptors
head coach Nick Nurse

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