US donations help more Kabul wrestlers following ISIS attack

BY PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — Dozens of boys tossed and tumbled on the bright blue mats at the Nasir Ali Feroz Zada Wrestling Club one recent evening — mats first bought with money donated by Americans to help a different Kabul wrestling club destroyed by a suicide attack last September.

Billed as a way to support Afghan youths, a campaign to raise funds for the bombed Maiwand Wrestling Club has been so successful over the past six months that it's now helping to repair wrestling facilities like this one in other parts of the city.

"If you want to make the world a better place, it's better to develop young kids than try to fix men," said Hooman Tavakolian, 42, a New York investment manager and sports charity founder who launched the campaign on the crowdfunding platform GoFundMe, in a recent phone interview.

"So that's our mission — to develop brighter futures. If it keeps kids from straying into organized crime and terrorist groups, it could help keep our servicemembers safe too," said Tavakolian, a former college wrestler and coach, whose efforts were supported by USA Wrestling.

SEE WRESTLING ON PAGE 5

Taliban declare start of spring offensive amid talks with US

BY AMIR SHAH
Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — The Taliban announced Friday the start of their spring offensive despite talking peace with the United States and ahead of a significant gathering of Afghans meant to discuss resolutions to the protracted war and an eventual withdrawal of American troops from the country.

The insurgents released a lengthy, six-page statement on Friday afternoon warning that "terrorist attacks" would continue until foreign forces leave. The Taliban also denied that the latest offensive was a violation of a September agreement that called for a "quiet period" and a "surgical" approach to attacks.

"Our national interests and agenda will not change in any way because of anyUS military action," the Taliban statement said.

SEE TALIBAN ON PAGE 2
Afghan war crime probe is rejected

Associated Press

BRUSSELS — International Criminal Court judges on Friday rejected a request by the court’s prosecutor to open an investigation into war crimes and crimes against humanity in Afghanistan and alleged crimes by U.S. forces linked to the conflict.

In a lengthy written ruling, judges said an investigation “would not serve the interests of justice” because an investigation and prosecution are unlikely to be successful as those targeted — including the United States, Afghan authorities and the Taliban — are not expected to cooperate, the court said in a statement.

The decision does acknowledge that the 2017 request from prosecutor Fatou Bensouda to open a probe “establishes a reasonable basis to consider that crimes within the ICC jurisdiction have been committed in Afghanistan and that potential cases would be admissible before the Court.”

The decision comes a month after U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Washington would refuse to cooperate with the Kabul government, something the insurgents say they will talk to Kabul officials at the upcoming Qatar meeting only as “ordinary Afghans” and not as government representatives.

Meanwhile, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told The Associated Press on Friday that the insurgents banned the International Committee of the Red Cross and the World Health Organization from operating in territory under their control. This is the second time in the past year the insurgents have barred Red Cross workers.

Robin Waubo, a Red Cross official in Kabul, said the organization was putting its activities “on hold” until its representatives can meet with the Taliban to resolve the issue.

“We are going to have a dialogue with them in order to try and begin our work again,” Waubo said, warning that thousands of displaced people will be adversely affected by the Taliban decision.

“It is a big issue for us because we have to stop working,” he said.

Taliban: Government blasts statement forces, condemned the Taliban announcement, saying it brought into question the insurgents’ sincerity in seeking a peaceful end to the war.

Human Rights Watch slammed the ruling, calling it “a devastating blow for victims who have suffered grave crimes without redress.”

“The judges’ logic effectively allows states to opt out on their obligation to cooperate with the court’s investigation,” said Paran-Preet Singh, the group’s associate international justice director. “This sends a dangerous message to perpetrators that they can put themselves beyond the reach of the law just by being uncooperative.”

Afghan security forces gather at the site of an attack near Bagram Air Field on Tuesday. Three U.S. Marines were killed when their convoy hit a roadside bomb on Monday. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack.

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RELOCATION GUIDE

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ADVERTISING

Saturday, April 13, 2019
Pentagon awards $3.2B contract for Navy E-2D Hawkeye aircraft

By Brian Ferguson
Stars and Stripes

The Navy has awarded defense contractor Northrop Grumman a $3.2 billion contract to deliver 24 E-2D Advanced Hawkeye aircraft. The five-year, fixed-price contract, announced by the Pentagon on Wednesday, covers work on the airborne early warning aircraft through 2026.

The contract also includes an option for nine additional foreign military sales aircraft, according to a Northrop Grumman statement. The State Department cleared Japan to obtain nine additional E-2Ds, according to a Defense Security Cooperation Agency statement in September. Japan currently has four of the planes. Under the current program, the company has delivered 37 E-2Ds to the U.S. Navy, the Northrop Grumman statement said.

The company is also contracted to deliver a series of capability upgrades. The third upgrade is slated for this fall and includes an aerial refueling capability to extend the aircraft’s endurance.

The carrier-based E-2D provides expanded battlespace awareness for carrier strike groups, area surveillance, search-and-rescue guidance and navigational assistance, among other roles, according to a U.S. Navy fact sheet.

WWII bomb removed in Wiesbaden

Stars and Stripes

A World War II-era bomb discovered near U.S. military facilities in Wiesbaden, Germany, was safely removed Thursday evening by German authorities, city officials said.

The ordnance was discovered on Thursday in a construction site on the U.S. Army’s Wiesbaden garrison, according to city officials. Such discoveries occur frequently across Germany, which was heavily bombarded during World War II. About 2,000 tons of unexploded bombs and other munitions are found each year in the country.

During the bomb removal, the U.S. Army’s Wiesbaden garrison provided a staging area for city emergency vehicles, which helped with the transport of city residents unable to evacuate to a shelter area, the Army said.

The bomb weighed about 550 pounds, according to city officials.

In August 2017, a record 70,000 people had to leave their homes for the same reason. Both bombs were safely removed.

Occasionally, unexploded ordnance is discovered on U.S. Army posts in Germany. A small WWII bomb was removed in June from the U.S. Army’s Robinson Barracks in Stuttgart after being discovered at a construction site on post.

Navy investigates why barge capsized at base in northern Idaho

Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. — The U.S. Navy is investigating why a barge capsized at a stealth submarine research facility in northern Idaho.

The 48-by-80-foot barge capsized in early February at the Acoustic Research Detachment base at Lake Pend Oreille, The Spokesman-Review reported on Wednesday. The experimental support platform was used to deploy large-scale submarine models and to maintain an underwater sonic measurement system, according to Navy officials.

A buildup of ice on the platform might have contributed, but the incident remains under investigation, said Capt. Roxie Thomsen Merritt, a spokeswoman for the Naval Surface Warfare Center’s Carderock Division.

“The weather conditions on Lake Pend Oreille were generally severe leading up to the event, with very cold temperatures and large amounts of accumulated snow and ice on the ESP,” Thomsen Merritt said in an email.

Tugboats and other vessels started to haul the barge back to the base when it began to sink “to avoid potential damage to the underwater test facility,” Thomsen Merritt said.

A Naval Sea Systems Command team was sent to stabilize the barge and develop a salvage and restoration plan.

“They are still doing all the investigating and assessments, and we won’t know the extent of the damage until they are released to a suitable sponsor, most likely a parent or close relative, while they await immigration proceedings,” she said.

Last month’s request for housing stems from a continuing increase in border crossings. For that reason, HHS is “preparing for the need for high-bed-capacity to continue” and “is once again requesting the assistance of the Department of Defense to help respond to the migration influx of unaccompanied alien children along our southern border,” Stauffer said.

HHS made a similar request last summer as President Donald Trump’s administration faced scrutiny for separating parents from their children as they crossed the border. HHS, as well as DHS, were seeking space to house adults and minors. Neither agency acted on those requests.

However, the Pentagon identified three potential installations in western Texas — Fort Bliss in El Paso, Dyess Air Force Base near Abilene and Goodfellow Air Force Base near San Angelo. Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas also was considered.

Last year’s review of military bases capable of housing children included potential impact studies, with some of the results being made public. At Goodfellow, a study released July 6 showed that making room for 15,000 adults and children migrants would have no impact to operations. To do so, there’s a plan to build temporary structures on the base.

The studies conducted based on the 2018 request will be part of the new review process, Davis said.

The military has housed unaccompanied migrant minors in the past. In 2014, HHS used space at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas to house thousands of unaccompanied children.

Options sought to house up to 5,000 migrants

By Rose L. Thayer
Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — The Defense Department is once again reviewing military bases to determine which ones are capable of housing migrant children. Acting Defense Secretary Pat Shanahan on Tuesday approved a request from the Department of Health and Human Services to look for housing options for up to 5,000 migrant children, said Army Lt. Gen. Jamie Davis, a Pentagon spokesman.

Shanahan’s approval simply begins a process to “identify facilities or land through fiscal year 2019,” if requested, Davis said. A second request from HHS asking to house the children would be required before the Pentagon would take any further action.

“DOD is working with the military services to identify potentially suitable locations for such support to HHS,” Davis said.

About 12,500 unaccompanied minors are in federal custody, according to the Office of Refugee Resettlement, which is part of HHS. That’s 1,000 more than when HHS made the request one month ago.

There isn’t a specific trigger that would lead HHS to house children at military facilities, said Evelyn Stauffer, spokesman for the Administration of Children and Families, the office within HHS that manages the refugee resettlement program.

“This is a situational decision based on need for temporary shelter and appropriate, available facilities,” she said.

Apprehensions at the U.S. border with Mexico have increased each month of 2019. In March, 92,607 people were apprehended at the border, according to Customs and Border Protection statistics. That’s 8,975 more unaccompanied minors — up from February’s numbers by more than 2,000 children.

Once children are referred to the Office of Refugee Resettlement from the Department of Homeland Security, the office is responsible for their care until they are released to a suitable sponsor, most likely a parent or close relative, while they await immigration proceedings.

Last month’s request for housing stems from a continuing increase in border crossings. For that reason, HHS is “preparing for the need for high-bed-capacity to continue” and “is once again requesting the assistance of the Department of Defense to help respond to the migration influx of unaccompanied alien children along our southern border,” Stauffer said.

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The military has housed unaccompanied migrant minors in the past. In 2014, HHS used space at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas to house thousands of unaccompanied children."
By Tom Vanden Brook
USA Today

WASHINGTON — The Army has stripped the former adjutant general of the Oklahoma National Guard of one star in retirement after an investigation substantiated allegations of an inappropriate relationship with a subordinate officer and improperly accepting gifts, according to documents obtained by USA Today.

Brig. Gen. Robbie Asher had been serving as Oklahoma’s adjutant general and commander for the National Guard in the state. Before his forced retirement in 2017 and demotion in 2018, he had been a two-star officer. The reasons for his dismissal and discipline had not been reported.

Asher, in an interview with USA Today, denied having a sexual affair with the subordinate officer, a lieutenant colonel. The Army inspector general’s investigation substantiated allegations that Asher had been involved in an “inappropriate relationship” with the fellow officer and had improperly accepted gifts from her by boarding his horse at her family’s ranch for free. However, the Army stopped short of concluding Asher engaged in any sexual misconduct.

Asher was appointed to the Guard post in Oklahoma in 2015. In 2017, then-Gov. Mary Fallin abruptly replaced him and issued a terse announcement that did not cite the Army’s ongoing investigation, which had begun in June 2016. There are about 9,000 troops in the Oklahoma National Guard.

USA Today received through the Freedom of Information Act a redacted copy of the inspector general’s report and memos that reprimanded and demoted Asher.

“Your actions lead me to question your judgment as a senior leader,” Gen. James McConville, the Army’s No. 2 officer, wrote in a January 2018 memo to Asher. “Not only did you choose to engage in this inappropriate relationship but after allegations arose, you responded by expressing your love for the subordinate officer to multiple people. Your actions brought significant discredit to you, the Oklahoma National Guard and the Army as an institution.”

The report also indicates there was a belief among some in the Oklahoma National Guard that having sex with superior officers was key to advancement. “Success in the OKNG was dependent on who you knew,” a coworker and acquaintance of Asher and the lieutenant colonel told investigators.

“We know there’s potential for sexual misconduct within the ranks for a number of reasons, including the nature of their relationship, ambiguously worded text messages and interactions that led mutual friends, family and past and present members of the [Oklahoma National Guard] to suspect they had a sexual relationship were inconsistent,” with Army policy, according to the inspector general’s report.

The other substantiated allegation involved Asher boarding his horses at the ranch owned by the subordinate officer and the woman’s husband. Federal ethics regulations prohibit accepting gifts from employees who make less money.

The Guard received about 50 reports of sexual assault in 2016 and 2017, with more than half related to military service, Guard officials said during a roundtable with reporters Thursday.

The U.S. Air Force is investigating allegations of sexual assault and harrassment within a Wisconsin Air National Guard security unit dating back to 2002. The investigation came at the request of U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis., after a master sergeant in the unit, Jay Ellis, told her office that he had learned of six incidents between 2002 and 2016 and high-ranking officers had done little to address them.

That probe spurred Gov. Tony Evers and Baldwin last month to the National Guard Bureau in Washington to review the Wisconsin Guard’s sexual assault handling and handling of similar procedure, investigative process and accountability measures.

The Guard’s sexual assault response coordinator, Robert Barina, said Thursday that 20 of the 52 assault reports were “restricted,” meaning the person who reported the assault requested confidentiality and the identity of all involved remains secret. The Guard’s leader, Maj. General Donald Dunbar, is notified when such a report is made but isn’t told the details. The Guard helps connect the victim with counseling services, but no investigation is launched and the allegations aren’t referred to law enforcement.

Confidentiality was not requested in the remaining 32 reports. In those cases, Dunbar was notified and the incidents were referred to civilian law enforcement as well as Guard investigators.

Twenty of those 32 reported assaults were connected with the victim or perpetrator’s military service in some way, Barina said. Guard investigators substantiated 10 of those reports, meaning there was enough evidence to continue down the path toward internal punishment.

Nearly 10,000 people serve in the Wisconsin National Guard tracks 52 sexual assault complaints

Wisconsin National Guard spokesman Jackie Halverson said the current database was constructed in 2012 after Congress ordered the U.S. Department of Defense to standardize sexual assault reporting across all branches of military service.

Halverson declined to comment on the status of the Air Force investigation. She said no one from the National Guard Bureau has contacted the Wisconsin Guard about the review that Evers and Baldwin requested last month. A bureau spokeswoman didn’t immediately respond to an email Thursday inquiring about whether the bureau has launched the review.

The roundtable participants included Trovato, Halverson, Brania, Guard victim advocate Amber Garfoot and Guard attorney David Dziobkowski. In addition to explaining the reporting process, they noted that victims can seek expedited transfers away from perpetrators within the same unit; that commanders stress to their soldiers and airmen to compete for themselves professionally but also to limit their drinks at dinner or prohibiting any alcohol while traveling for training; and how Guard leaders train a service dog to comfort victims.

“We want our numbers to be zero,” Halverson said. “We want our assaults to be zero.” They declined to discuss the details of any specific case.

Sexual assaults have plagued the military for years. In 2017 alone, the four branches received 5,864 reports from military members who said they had been sexually assaulted during their service, up 10 percent from 2016, according to Department of Defense figures.

We want our numbers to be zero. We want our assaults to be zero.
WAR ON TERRORISM

Wrestlers: US donations help gym to rebuild

FROM FRONT PAGE

Boys as young as 4 were among scores of people packed into the Feroz Zada club when Stars and Stripes visited in March. Some said they enrolled because of the refurbishment.

The club is in a poor neighborhood at the base of Wazir Akbar Khan Hill, under the shadow of a giant Afghan flag U.S. servicemembers often fly over in helicopters that crisscross the capital’s skies. It’s one of a dozen gyms affiliated with the Maiwand Wrestling Club, which had its gym bombed by the Islamic State last year.

“We were doing nothing wrong here, we were teaching people how to wrestle, how to be healthy and be a good person in the community,” said Ghulam Abbas, 52, a coach who has taught at the Maiwand gym for three decades. “We are building the community, but they are coming and killing us.”

On the day of the attack last September, Abbas held the steel-plated door so the attacker couldn’t enter the main room of the gym. The bomber then detonated his explosives opposite Abbas, witnesses said.

The next thing the wrestling coach remembers is waking up at the hospital with his left arm missing.

The facility is in Kabul’s Dasht-e-Barchi district, which is home to many ethnic Hazaras, a minority frequently targeted by the local ISIS affiliate known as Islamic State Khorasan Province. More than 20 were killed and dozens of others wounded after the ISIS suicide bomber shot the Maiwand gym’s door guard and then blew himself up. The ball bearings and rivets packed into the bomb embedded into the bodies and the concrete walls of the gym.

In the weeks after the attack, Abbas said he was depressed and discouraged. But when the community began donating money and he heard that people in foreign countries also wanted to help, he became determined to reopen the gym.

The Maiwand Club gym was rebuilt and reopened in November with protective barriers installed.

While the Feroz Zada gym across town was never destroyed by terrorists, it was in desperate need of refurbishment, said Raza Ahmadi, 27, who manages all the Maiwand-affiliated gyms.

“The old mats were not up to standard,” Ahmadi said. “We had to fill them with anything soft we could find, like cotton, and guys often got hurt while wrestling.”

To show their appreciation for the American donations through Tavakolian’s charity Hoomanities, which paid for new mats and mat covers and helped to buy gym equipment and wrestling outfits, the club held a small ceremony last month.

Tavakolian, who immigrated to the U.S. from Iran as a child during the Iran-Iraq war and later wrestled for New York’s Hunter College, created Hoomanities to empower young people around the world and “reinstate hope in humanity through sports,” the nonprofit’s website says.

Tavakolian has collected more donations, including wrestling gear provided by several American universities, which he’s still trying to get to Afghanistan to help more clubs, he said.

Such gyms help keep kids off the streets, where they could get into drugs or crime, Ahmadi said at the ceremony.

Staff, gym members and their families do worry about the possibility of future attack, Ahmadi said in an interview, “but if anything happens we’ll fight it and we’ll keep going.”

That sense of defiance also exists at the Maiwand club.

“We’re not afraid of anything. If I have only one drop of blood in my body, I will work here and help the young people,” said Ahmad Zia, 27, an employee at the gym. Zia’s cousin was among the dozens of wrestlers and coaches killed in the September attack.

The Maiwand club’s rebirth should serve as a reminder of the struggles many Afghans face while trying to live normal lives, and of the horrors that will continue as long as war does, said Abbas, the coach.

“Young people want to be educated,” Zia said. “We can’t let the war affect the boys.”

For the last 40 years, I’ve seen so many problems in my country,” Abbas said. “During the civil war my house was hit by a rocket and my wife died. My cousins have died in this war. In Afghanistan there’s not a single family who is not affected by the war. But ... we should not lose hope.”

Zubair Babakarkhail contributed to this report.

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PHOTOS BY J.P. LAWRENCE/Stars and Stripes

A young wrestler performs a drill at the Maiwand Wrestling Club in Kabul, an Islamic State suicide attack destroyed the club, but the facility reopened in the fall.

Ghulam Abbas, who lost his arm in an Islamic State bomb blast, instructs a wrestler at the Maiwand Wrestling Club in Kabul on April 7.

A wrestler swings his body in an impromptu gymnastics session.
Pentagon institutes ban on transgender troops

BY CATHLIN M. KENNEY AND COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump’s ban on transgender people serving in the military went into effect Friday, nearly two years after he surprised top Pentagon leaders with a series of tweets announcing he would not allow transgender people to serve in any capacity. The Pentagon will no longer allow the vast majority of people who have been diagnosed with gender dysphoria, the medical condition associated with those who are serving or had a contract with the military, to enlist in the service. The new policy comes as Trump’s administration faces at least four lawsuits seeking to halt the orders that overturned the Pentagon’s 2016 decision to end its longstanding ban on open military service by transgender people.

The Pentagon on Friday defended its decision. Tony Kurta, who is performing the duties of the deputy undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, told reporters that the decision was made in consultation with the military and by former Defense Secretary Jim Mattis after top military leaders raised questions about transgender military troops’ service. Kurta was pressed Friday for details about information from the study used to make the determination to alter the policy. He declined to provide any data supporting the policy, citing the ongoing litigation and denying the policy was being implemented. Because of Trump’s July 26, 2017 tweets. The data collected in the Mattis study has not been made public, however, and no medical experts have responded by calling the new policy discriminatory and vowed to continue fighting. Aaron Belkin, the director of the Palm Center, a research institute that studies LGBTQ inclusion in the military, said the policy was overturned by former President Barack Obama in 2011.

“Our nation lurches backwards in a disgraceful re-treat from the arc of our civil rights history,” Belkin said in a statement released Friday. “Our hearts break for the courageous transgender person who want to give nothing more than to defend their country, and we pledge not to rest until inclusive policy is restored.” He vowed the “transgender ban won’t stand for long.”

The policy

Pentagon officials have routinely denied the policy — dubbed “the Mattis plan” — constitutes a blanket ban on transgender people. Military service most people who have been diagnosed with gender dysphoria — described by the American Psychiatric Association as “a conflict between a person’s physical or assigned gender and the gender with which he/she/they identify.” Those people to enlist with a diagnosis of gender dysphoria who have doctor certification they have remained stable in their biological sex for 36 months. People who have medically transitioned their sex are not barred from service. A Supreme Court ruling in January paved the way for the Pentagon to implement its transgender policy, when the court decided injunctions on the policy levied by federal judges overseeing the lawsuits should be removed.

In a March 12 directive, the Pentagon gave servicemembers with gender dysphoria one month to be diagnosed by a military doctor in order to stay in the service under the old policy. Transgender servicemembers who are serving or had a contract to ship to entrance training before Friday can stay in the military under the old policy, which allows them to serve openly in their preferred gender and to receive medical treatment to transition throughout the remainder of their careers. The policy does not bar them from re-enlistment, Kurta said.

It remains unclear precisely how many servicemembers on active duty identify as transgender. A 2016 Defense Department survey, which was anonymous, found about 9,000 servicemembers identified themselves as transgender men or women. Kurta said. Some 1,400 troops have been diagnosed with gender dysphoria since the 2016 policy was implemented, he said. Fewer than 10 active-duty servicemembers have undergone gender reassignment surgery in that time, Kurta said.

After Friday, servicemembers who are diagnosed with gender dysphoria must serve and adhere to the standards of their biological sex and a transition to their preferred gender must not be medically necessary for the servicemember’s treatment of gender dysphoria. If a servicemember must undergo gender transition to treat their gender dysphoria, and they cannot or will not meet the standards associated with their biological sex, Kurta said, they will be referred to the disability evaluation system.

The policy will be reviewed in two years, he said.

“The department will continue to treat all individuals with dignity and respect and every servicemember is able to express their gender identity. DoD will take no actions solely based on gender identity,” Kurta said.

Reactions

Some medical and LGBTQ advocacy groups voiced outrage about the implementation of the military policy, as did some former Pentagon leaders under the Obama administration.

The president of the American Medical Association, Dr. Barbara McAneny, said in a statement that “there is no medical reason — including a diagnosis of gender dysphoria — to exclude transgender individuals from military service.”

She added transgender health care, including treatment for gender dysphoria, is effective.

The American Military Partner Association, an organization for LGBTQ military families, said the implementation of the directive is “dragging us backward into the dark days of ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.’”

Pentagon officials said transgender servicemembers and qualified recruits are willing to risk their very lives for our nation, and we will not stop fighting to reverse this unconscionable ban until they are once again able to serve openly and authentically as they deserve,” the statement read.

Former Navy Secretary Ray Mabus marked the policy’s implementation in a tweet, saying the “Discriminatory & intolerant #TransMilitaryBan goes into effect today. The American principle has always been [about] what you can do, not who you are. Implementing this policy erodes our democracy & seriously weakens our military. Proud to #SupportTransTroops.”
**President wants to keep N. Korea sanctions**

**NATION**

**By Deb Riechmann**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump says the U.S. wants to keep economic sanctions in place to pressure North Korea to give up nuclear weapons, but he isn’t ruling out a third summit with Kim Jong Un or taking steps to ease food or other shortages in the repressive nation.

“We want sanctions to remain in place,” Trump said Thursday at the White House during a meeting with South Korea President Moon Jae-in. “I think that sanctions right now are at a level that’s a fair level.”

Moon, for his part, has called for an easing of sanctions, including those holding back joint economic projects between North and South Korea. Trump said he would favor easing those sanctions at the right time but added: “This isn’t the right time.”

He said he was open to discussing smaller steps such as helping to ease North Korea’s humanitarian problems, but that in general, the U.S. wants sanctions to remain.

“There are various smaller deals that maybe could happen,” Trump said.

You could work out step-by-step pieces, but at this moment, we’re talking about the big deal. The big deal is we have to get rid of the nuclear weapons.”

Negotiations on Pyongyang’s nuclear program appear to be stalled, and there is uncertainty over whether Kim is considering backing out of talks or restarting nuclear and missile tests. The Korean Central News Agency on Thursday said that at a party meeting on Wednesday, Kim stressed “self-reliance” in his country to “deal a telling blow to the hostile forces” that “go with bloodshot eyes miscalculating that sanctions can bring” North Korea “to its knees.”

Moon said it’s important to maintain the “momentum of dialogue” and express a positive outlook to the international community that a “third U.S.-North Korea summit” will be held.

“I’d like to express my high regard for how you have continued to express your trust towards Chairman Kim,” Moon said.

“And also, you have made sure that North Korea doesn’t deviate from the dialogue track.”

The United States and North Korea have accused each other of causing the Hanoi summit’s breakdown. But they haven’t formally abandoned diplomacy. Moon, a liberal who facilitated U.S.-North Korea talks for decades, is hoping to push for an inter-Korean summit with Kim, according to Moon’s office.

Moon met Kim three times last year.

At the White House, Moon did not publicly address the issue of sanctions. But several North Korea watchers, including Sue Mi Terry, a North Korean expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and a former Asia analyst at the CIA, said Moon is trying to persuade Trump to agree to some sanctions to keep the talks alive.

While Trump didn’t rule out a third summit with Kim following his earlier two meetings with him in Singapore and Hanoi, Victor Cha, a North Korea expert from the Bush administration, wasn’t as hopeful.

With Trump already campaigning for re-election, Cha said, “It’s hard for me to think Trump will risk a third summit.”

Trump walked away from making a deal with Kim at their meeting in late February.

Trump said Kim was asking for sanctions relief without wanting to fully dismantle all his nuclear weapons programs. There is ongoing debate over whether harsh sanctions can pressure Kim to denuclearize or will keep him away from the negotiating table.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Wednesday that the administration was fully engaged in efforts to negotiate a resolution to the nuclear standoff.

“We are going to keep at it,” he said. But there have been no public accounts of any progress since the Hanoi summit.

Sen. Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., assessed the denuclearization talks as “stuck on first base.” Merkley said the North Koreans had continued developing their missile program and were finding ways to circumvent economic sanctions straining its economy.

He cited a U.N. panel of experts that warned on March 5 that there has been a “massive increase in illegal ship-to-ship transfers of petroleum products and coal,” rendering the latest U.N. sanctions “ineffective.”

Trump changes his tune on WikiLeaks

**By Jonathan Lemire and Eric Tucker**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — It was a far cry from “I love WikiLeaks!” President Donald Trump declared that “I know nothing about WikiLeaks” after its discredited founder, Julian Assange, was hauled out of the Ecuadorian Embassy in London to face charges, a step that came shortly after the president on Thursday showered praise on Assange’s hacking organization for its work after night during the final weeks of the 2016 presidential campaign.

Asked about Thursday’s arrest, Trump told the White House, “It’s not my thing. I know there is something having to do with Julian Assange. I’ve been seeing what’s happened with Assange and that will be a determination, I would imagine, mostly by the attorney general, who’s doing an excellent job. So, he’ll be making a determination. I know nothing really about this.”

“It’s not my deal in life.”

When asked about Assange in 2017, Trump said he did not “support or support” WikiLeaks’ move to release hacked emails and that he would not be involved in any decision for the U.S. government information — which led to the charges against Assange on Thursday.

At no point from a rally stage did Trump express any misgivings about WikiLeaks. But in August, WikiLeaks obtained the emails from the Clinton campaign about the hack of Donna Brazile which he said could “break a password for a computer hacking conspiracy, accusing him of scheming with Chelsea Manning, a former Army intelligence analyst, to break a password for a classified government computer.

Truman had met Jones at a Veteran of Foreign Wars convention last year, and Jones, of Cranston, R.I., asked to spend his birthday with the president. Truman looked happy to oblige, joking with the men and their families and asking each one to say a few words. When one of the guests presented Truman with a hat and suggested he tweet about it, the president deadpanned: “I don’t tweet that much.”

Sidney Walton, 100, of San Diego, and a medic in the war, told the president he joined the Army to fight Hitler, prompting Trump to reply: “That was a good reason.”

Walton is on what his family called the “No Regrets Tour,” a personal mission to visit all 50 states and the White House to educate Americans about World War II veterans.

Paul Kriner, 103, of Chambersburg, Pa., told the president he participated in 517 missions of combat. The president told him he didn’t look a day over 90.

Kriner and Wigfield are working with the Greatest Generations Foundation, which provides vet- erans with the chance to memorialize their stories and find closure by returning to visit where they served.

Trump described the men as “great heroes, great warriors, highly respected.”

Trump vets get Oval Office visit

**Associated Press**

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump treated four World War II veterans to an Oval Office meeting Thursday, fulfilling a birthday wish for Allen Jones, 95, and giving three other veterans age 100 and older a day to remember.

One of the men, Floyd Wigfield, 101, of Columbus, Md., managed to win a promise from the president for a return flight on Air Force One following this June’s ceremony marking the 75th anniversary of D-Day and the Battle of Normandy. “We’ll work that out,” Trump said. “You’ll like Air Force One.”

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House Dems mark 1st 100 days with wins, flubs

BY LISA MASCARO
AND PADMANANDA RAMA
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Newly elected Democratic Rep. Sharice Davids is most proud of setting up a congressional office in part of her Kansas district she hadn’t been able to visit for one year. For Rep. Lucy McBath, D-Ga., her biggest victory was passing the gun background-checks legislation she advocated for after her son’s shooting death. And for New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, her top achievement was the introduction of the landmark Green New Deal.

As the Democratic freshmen lawmakers round the first 100 days of their new majority in the House, they’re taking stock of their accomplishments, noting the stumbling blocks and marking their place as a front line in the nature of the freshman class. It is two years after Trump took office, with more women than men on that side of the aisle. It’s also the most diverse ever, with many newbies sweeping into office in a blue wave that followed two years of Trump.

House Democrats set out an ambitious agenda with legislation on the kitchen table processes that helped them win the majority — protecting the Affordable Care Act, for a new Congress — an automatic, if arbitrary, moment to assess the workings of a new administration.

Buttigieg and Pence reflect a historic moment, even amid the everyday challenges of being new on the job.

On campaign trail, Buttigieg goes from cordial to critical of Pence

BY BRIAN SLODYSKI
AND MICHELLE R. SMITH
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The complex dynamic between Buttigieg and Pence reflects a connection born of political necessity — protecting the Affordable Care Act, imposing new ethics rules — while engaging in aggressive oversight of the Trump Administration.

Their investigations extend well beyond special counsel Robert Mueller’s probe into Russian interference in the 2016 election as they dig into the president’s business dealings and push for Trump’s tax returns.

But with the spotlight comes high-profile setbacks. Democrats splintered over Ocasio-Cortez’s climate change proposal and exposed party divisions over Israel’s treatment of Palestinians. One new lawmaker, Rashida Tlaib of Michigan, already faces a test when on day one, she told supporters — using an expletive — that the new majority would impeach Trump.

The first 100 days is often a milestone for a new Congress — an automatic, if arbitrary, moment to assess the workings of a new administration.


Democrats know they face challenges ahead, not only in avoiding the internal divisions that stymied House Republicans when they were in power but also in delivering on their campaign promises.

“For me personally, the biggest frustration has been that we’re working on a lot of different things. But if you’re just looking at whatever tweet of the day or the investigation and so on, but we’re actually working on the issues that we were elected to do,” she said. "If it looks like all we’re focusing on is the president and responding to whatever tweet of the day or the investigation and so on, but we’re actually working on the issues that we were elected to do, that’s OK,” Malinowski said. “Because one of our jobs is to give people hope that something better is possible if we do in 2020 what we did in 2018.”

At the House Democrats’ retreat this week in Virginia, Ocasio-Cortez said their power lies in being able “to come in as a class.”

Many of them say they know theirs is a historic moment, even amid the everyday challenges of being new on the job.

McConnell, R-Ky., is providing backstop for a new Congress — an automatic, if arbitrary, moment to assess the workings of the Trump Administration.

The relationship between the two men has come under scrutiny as Buttigieg’s campaign becomes a surprise hit, raking in $7 million during the first quarter. After he formally launched his White House campaign, the gay mayor has emerged as a central figure in the race for the White House.

On campaign trail, Buttigieg goes from cordial to critical of Pence.

On campaign trail, Buttigieg goes from cordial to critical of Pence.

That year by signing a “religious freedom” law criticized as anti-LGBT. Republicans, including the mayor of Indianapolis, demanded that the governor and the GOP legislature “fix this law” and “do so immediately.” Buttigieg criticized statehouse politicians for the “most embarrassing incident” and tweeted he was “disappointed” Pence signed the bill.

In early 2015, Pence was grappling with an HIV outbreak in southern Indiana and facing calls from political leaders, including Buttigieg, to respond by approving a needle exchange program. Buttigieg, who was months away from publicly coming out as gay, was largely absent from that debate.

Pence caused a national uproar by signing a “religious freedom” law criticized as anti-LGBT. Republicans, including the mayor of Indianapolis, demanded that the governor and the GOP legislature “fix this law” and “do so immediately.” Buttigieg criticized statehouse politicians for the “most embarrassing incident” and tweeted he was “disappointed” Pence signed the bill.

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Trump considered dumping migrants in Dem stronghold ‘sanctuary cities’

By JILL COLVIN and COLLEEN LONG
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The White House considered going after illegal migrants through local authorities instead of Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials — a move that would have been a blow to sanctuary cities, three sources familiar with the idea confirmed Thursday. They told The Associated Press that President Donald Trump considered the proposal amid his ongoing battle with Democrats over border wall funding.

So-called sanctuary cities are locations where local authorities do not work with Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials to help round up people living in the country illegally. Some places like New York City and California have laws preventing cooperation with federal immigration agents.

The Washington Post said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s district in San Francisco was among the targets.

“The extent of this Administration’s cynicism and cruelty cannot be overstated,” said Pelosi spokeswoman Ashley Etienne. “Using human beings — including little children — as pawns in their warped and perverted fear and demonize immigrants is despicable, and in some cases, criminal.”

A spokesman for the Department of Homeland Security said the suggestion was “floated and rejected, which ended any further discussion.” A White House official also said the idea was floated and rejected. That official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal discussions, said when administration officials suggested it to Department of Homeland Security officials and others, those officials said it was a “no-go.”

Trump’s job approval rating rebounds after release of Mueller report summary

By JOHN WAGNER
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump’s job approval rating has rebounded following the release of a four-page summary of special counsel Robert Mueller’s findings related to Russian interference in the 2016 election, according to a new poll. A Gallup survey released Friday finds that 45 percent of Americans approve of Trump’s job performance, up from 39 percent in March.

While more Americans — 51 percent — continue to disapprove of the president’s performance than approve, the latest approval figure matches two previous highs in Gallup polling. Trump’s earlier 45 percent readings came during his first week in office in January 2017 and in June 2018 after his summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

According to a summary of top-line findings of Mueller’s report provided to Congress on March 24 by Attorney General William Barr, Trump and his campaign did not illegally coordinate with Russia, but Mueller left open the question of whether Trump obstructed justice. Barr announced that he concluded Trump did not commit obstruction. The attorney general’s brief account also quoted the Mueller report as saying, “While this report does not conclude that the President committed a crime, it also does not exonerate him.”

Since then, Trump nevertheless has repeatedly claimed “total exoneration,” while Democrats are increasingly accusing Barr of providing political cover for the president. Barr has pledged to release a redacted version of the Mueller report in coming days.

Gallup found that Trump’s job approval remained unchanged from last month among Republicans, with about 9 in 10 approving of his performance.

The increase in Trump’s overall rating is the result of single-digit increases in approval among independents and Democrats, of 6 percentage points and 4 percentage points respectively, Gallup said.

On Thursday, Trump shared an inaccurate graphic on Twitter that said his overall approval rating was 55 percent.

Infighting stalls aid for regions hit by storms

By ANDREW TAYLOR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Six months after hurricanes devastated the Southeast, Washington infighting has shelved a widely backed disaster aid package for Donald Trump’s allies in Florida and Georgia are desperately awaiting.

Trump’s opposition to aid to Puerto Rico — slammed by back-to-back hurricanes in 2017 — has sparked a standoff with Democrats demanding more aid for the island’s U.S. territory. Trump is feuding with the island’s Democratic officials and raised aid to Puerto Rico at a closed-door lunch with Senate Republicans last month.

Senate Republicans have stuck with the president so far, refusing to add more funding to help Puerto Rico rebuild its water systems or help its impoverished residents. But Senate leaders on Wednesday doubled down on disaster aid terms. Democrats, in turn, filibustered a $14 billion aid package over the issue last week, but the measure has languished since.

“Typically, when these kinds of things happen we figure out how to help as much as possible and do it on an overwhelming bipartisan basis,” said Sen. Bob Casey, D-Pa. “That has not been our approach on this aid package. It does not help Puerto Rico rebuild its water systems . . . and it does not help our troops overseas. That is our job, that is what the government is for.”

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Frustration is also bubbling in the Senate, where Trump allies such as David Perdue of Georgia and Rick Scott of Florida — a state that said it needs federal resources to get fully back on its feet — are pressuring the president to deal. Scott visited with Trump Thursday at the White House, along with Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Richard Shelby, R-Ala., and Sen. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz.

Disaster aid bills have traditionally been nonpartisan, but hard feelings still linger from the 2012-2013 Superstorm Sandy experience, in which most Republicans voted against a large aid package that went chiefly to Democratic New York and New Jersey. At the time, Schumer was especially upset that last year’s move to block the Senate measure but Democrats haven’t faced much political heat for the maneuver, and Schumer appears confident that Republicans will have to yield and give more aid to Puerto Rico.

The House passed a $41 billion measure in January but the measure got tangled up during the partial government shutdown. Earlier this week, House Appropriations Committee Chairman Nita Lowey, D-N.Y., unveiled a new bill with $3 billion more to respond to flooding in Midwestern states such as Iowa and Nebraska.

Trump has been slow to release already appropriated funding for Puerto Rico and critics say he has shown little urgency in helping the island. Trump attacked the island’s governor at a recent meeting with Senate Republicans, telling them that Puerto Rico has gotten too much disaster help compared with states such as Texas.
Ohio governor signs ban on abortion after 1st heartbeat

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — A bill imposing one of the most stringent abortion restrictions in the nation was signed into law in Ohio on Thursday, banning abortions after a detectable heartbeat, in a long-sought victory for abortion opponents that drew an immediate constitutional challenge.

In signing the heartbeat bill, Republican Gov. Mike DeWine broke with his predecessor, Republican John Kasich, who had vetoed the measure twice on grounds that it was unconstitutional. But DeWine defended Ohio Republicans’ decision to push the boundaries of the law because “it is the right thing to do.”

“This taking action really is a kind of a time-honored tradition, the constitutional tradition of making a good-faith argument for modification or reversal of existing legal precedents,” he said. “That is what this is.”

He said it’s the government’s job to protect the vulnerable. The bill outlawed abortions once a fetal heartbeat is detected, which doctors say can be as early as five weeks into pregnancy, before many women know they are pregnant.

Ohio’s closely divided politics had slowed the progress of the bill as it has caused momentum elsewhere, forcing years of debate in the state where the movement originated. Of five previous states that have passed heartbeat bills, three have seen their law struck down or blocked by the courts, another faces a legal injunction and the fifth is awaiting the governor’s action.

DeWine’s signature came a day after the latest version of the bill cleared the Republican-controlled Legislature. Even before the bill was signed, the American Civil Liberties Union of Ohio said it was preparing a constitutional challenge to the law on behalf of Pre-Term Cleveland and three other Ohio abortion clinics.

The legal challenge is what the bill’s backers have always wanted. They hope to provoke a legal challenge with the potential to overturn the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling that legalized abortion on demand, usually at 22 to 24 weeks.

“The heartbeat bill is the next incremental step in our strategy to overturn Roe v. Wade,” said Ohio Right to Life President Mike Gonidakis. “While other states embrace radical legislation to legalize abortion on demand through the ninth month of pregnancy, Ohio has drawn a line and continues to advance protections for unborn babies.”

The Ingram Collection is not without controversy. A 36-count indictment alleging Avenatti demanded millions to stay quiet about claims he planned to reveal about Nike paying high school players. Avenatti, 48, was arrested March 25 in New York on the Nike charge. Federal prosecutors at the time announced he also faced single counts of wire and bank fraud in Southern California, where he lives.

The 61-page Southern California indictment adds dozens of counts and details charges that carry a potential prison sentence of 55 years, prosecutors said. Even if convicted of all counts, such a term is highly unlikely.

Avenatti faces 10 counts of wire fraud for stealing from a paraplegic man and four other clients he allegedly deceived by taking their money and using it to fund a lifestyle that included living in multimillion-dollar homes, sponsoring an auto racing team and flying in his own private jet, authorities said. The jet was seized Wednesday by federal agents.

He was also charged with 19 tax counts, including lying to an IRS officer, not paying personal income taxes since 2010, failing to pay taxes for his businesses, including two law firms, and pocketing payroll taxes from the Tully’s Coffee chain that he owned, the indictment said.

Avenatti was also charged with submitting phony tax returns to get more than $4 million in loans from The Peoples Bank in Biloxi, Miss., in 2014.

The Ingram Collection issued a statement Wednesday that says, “There are Porsches and then there are Porsches,” he said. “If it’s a significant car in the Porsche world, chances are they have one. They really enjoy a peerless reputation.”

For example, the collection includes a Gmund coupe, an early model that separates the German-made sports cars that houses a rarely seen but world-famous collection of Porsches.

The Ingram Collection is housed next to the building in Durham that collapsed Wednesday. The structure that holds the German-made sports cars was extensively damaged. About half its roof collapsed.

Details on any damage to the collectible cars have not been released. The Ingram Collection holds some important classics, said Rob Sass, editor-in-chief of Porsche Panorama, the official magazine of Porsche Club of America.

“There are Porsches and then there are Porsches,” he said. “If it’s a significant car in the Porsche world, chances are they have one. They really enjoy a peerless reputation.”

Porsches automobiles are visible through the roof of a damaged building in Durham, N.C., on Wednesday.
A monster of a pollution problem

A huge monster made of plastic recovered at sea and on the beaches by Greenpeace sits on the Place Georges-Pyhone during an event organized by Greenpeace in Fribourg, Switzerland, on Friday.

Greenpeace wants above all to denounce the pollution caused by single-use plastics that end up creating real continents of waste in the oceans.

Algerians march anew as anger mounts at interim leader

BY AOMAR OUALLI AND NADINE ACHOUST-LESAGE
Associated Press

ALGERIA — Riot police pulled back from positions in Algeria’s capital Friday as protesters massed in an iconic square, demanding the departure of the country’s interim leadership.

A larger-than-usual police deployment met protesters who converged on Algiers, lining boulevards and checking all vehicles entering the city. Skirmishes broke out at the outset of the protest near the central post office, a symbol of the pro-democracy movement.

Apparently wanting to avoid an escalation of violence, rows of riot police then suddenly started pulling back from the area, lowering their face shields and truncheons.

The crowd broke out in applause as police vans drove away shouting, “The police with the people!”

Protest organizers encouraged Algerians to come out in Algiers and other cities to show that the departure last week of longtime President Abdelaziz Bouteflika is not enough, that they want wholesale political change.

Anger is also mounting at military chief Gen. Ahmed Gaid Salah, who was instrumental in the military coup that overthrew his support behind the interim president, Abdelkader Ben Salah, who is seen as part of the old regime.

Ben Salah was named interim leader this week and announced elections for July 4.

“Bensalah, get out!” the protesters shouted, as a river of people adorned in green, white and red Algerian flags wove through the city.

Algeria’s protest movement has been overwhelmingly peaceful and driven by young people frustrated with corruption and unemployment and who want a new generation of leaders to replace people like Bouteflika, ailing and hobbled since a 2013 stroke.

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Pakistani bombing at market kills at least 20

BY ABDUL SATTAR
Associated Press

QUETTA, Pakistan — A suicide bomber targeted an open-air market in the southwestern Pakistani city of Quetta on Friday, killing at least 20 people and wounding dozens of others, police and hospital officials said.

Shortly after the bombing, a senior police chief said the attack was aimed at a paramilitary convoy.

At least eight Shiites were among the dead, as well as a paramilitary soldier and seven other people. Four paramilitary troopers who were guarding the open-air fruit and vegetable market were among the wounded.

Local TV footage showed several damaged shops and at least one paramilitary vehicle. A wounded man told reporters from his hospital bed how he had heard a loud explosion before he was struck down.

Qadir Nayil, a leader of the Hazara community, asked the government to provide better protection for the Shiites.

“Once again, our people were the target and, once again, we will have to bury our dear ones,” he said.

Suspected Islamic extremists abduct Cuban doctors in Kenya

BY TOM ODULA
Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya — Suspected Islamist militants abducted two Cuban doctors in eastern Kenya on Friday in an ambush that killed a police bodyguard in northern Kenya near the Somali border, officials said Friday.

It was the second abduction of a foreigner in five months likely carried out by the al-Qaida-linked Shabab extremist group, which is based in Somalia.

The gunmen may have taken the doctors to Somalia, police spokesman Charles Owino said. He said the doctors’ driver had been detained to help with investigations.

The doctors were ambushed as they headed to work, said David Ohiito, a communications director for the Mandera county government.

Gov. Ali Roba said the gunmen’s vehicle blocked the doctors’ vehicle “and opened fire at their bodyguards, killing one instantaneously.” Al-Shabab was suspected, the governor said.

A police official identified the doctors as Dr. Asael Herera Correa, a general physician, and Dr. Landy Rodriguez, a surgeon. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the press.

At least 100 Cuban doctors have been brought to Kenya in an exchange program that saw about 50 Kenyans travel to Cuba for specialized training last year.
**SCIENCE AND MEDICINE**

**NASA’s study of Kelly twins shows impact of space**

**BY JOEL ACHENBACH**

The Washington Post

Astronaut Scott Kelly made himself a guinea pig for all the people who dream of human journeys to Mars and other destinations in space. In 2015, Kelly rode a rocket into space and spent nearly a year on the International Space Station in low Earth orbit, while his identical twin brother, Mark Kelly, stayed on Earth’s surface for NASA’s celebrated “twins study,” designed to see what spaceflight does to the human body.

The full results, published Thursday in the journal Science, showed that Scott Kelly experienced numerous physiological and chromosomal changes during his long sojourn in orbit, including changes in gene expression. His immune system went on high alert, both when he went to space and upon returning to Earth. His body acted as if it were under attack.

Mark Kelly served as the comparison subject for the experiment. The retired astronaut is married to former congresswoman Gabby Giffords, a Democrat, and scientists were still trying to determine avian hawks and science. His telomeres — structures that protect the ends of chromosomes, much like the plastic caps on the ends of shoelaces, and which erode over time as part of the natural aging process — lengthened in space. But that’s no fountain of youth, the study found, because the telomeres shortened dramatically when he returned to Earth.

The researchers, echoing what NASA has suggested previously, said the twins study turned up no showstoppers — no shockingly significant changes that surely prevent a human mission to Mars or similar long-duration mission. But the report shows that the human body is adapted for life on the surface of Earth and goes haywire in zero gravity.

One of the most dramatic findings concerned epigenetics — how genes are turned on or off to produce proteins. (Contrary to some breathless headlines, Scott Kelly didn’t undergo a space-induced change in his genetic code.) Gene expression changed in both Kel- llys during the study but in significantly different ways. The study found that more than 90 percent of Scott Kelly’s gene expression changes reverted to normal when he returned to the surface.

Histelomeres — structures that protect the ends of chromosomes, much like the plastic caps on the ends of shoelaces, and which erode over time as part of the natural aging process — lengthened in space. But that’s no fountain of youth, the study found, because the telomeres shortened dramatically when he returned to Earth.

Months later, he still showed a slightly elevated number of cells with shortened telomeres, possibly an effect of radiation exposure. “He might be at some increased risk for cardiovascular disease or some types of cancer,” said Susan Bailey, a biologist at Colorado State University who led one of the investigations in the study.

“Although average telomere length, global gene expression and miRNome changes re- turned to near preflight levels within 6 months after return to Earth, increased numbers of short telomeres were observed and expression of some genes was still disrupted,” the report states. The study found certain cog- nitive deficits during a battery of tests in orbit, which lingered when Scott Kelly later took tests back on Earth.

But in an interview with The Washington Post, Scott Kelly, now 55, said that after landing, he suffered flu-like symptoms and felt bad for many weeks, and that altered his cognitive performance. Adjusting to life back on the ground was actually harder than adjusting to life in zero gravity, he said. In his memoir, “Endurance,” he wrote about suffering from skin rashes, burning sensations and horribly swollen legs as well as nausea in the days after he returned.

Mark Kelly is six minutes older than his brother. But Scott Kelly says he’s actually a few millise- conds younger still, due to having spent 500 more days in space than his astronaut brother. Ein- stein’s special theory of relativity leads to a “twins paradox” in which someone moving at a high velocity, such as 17,500 mph in low Earth orbit, ages more slowly than a twin on Earth.

“I look younger than he does,” Scott said. “He’s busy running for office. His telomeres are going to be way worse than mine. I’m not worried. I’ll be on a beach in the Bahamas, and he’s going to be hopefully in the U.S. Senate. He’s going to age much faster than me.”

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**Israeli spacecraft crashes in attempt to land on moon**

**BY ISABEL DEBRE**

Associated Press

YEHUD, Israel — An Israeli spacecraft crashed into the moon just moments before touchdown, failing in an ambitious attempt to make history Thursday as the first privately funded lunar landing.

The spacecraft lost communication with ground control during its final descent. Moments before entering lunar orbit, it had been hoped that the spacecraft hitched a ride on a SpaceX rocket launched from Florida in February.

For the past two months, Beresheet, which means “Gen- esis” or “in the beginning,” traveled around the Earth several times before entering lunar orbit. About 20 minutes before the scheduled landing, engine firings slowed Beresheet’s descent. En- gineers watched in silence as the craft, its movements streamed live on dozens of screens, glided toward a free fall.

But then the screens showed the engine misfiring and the ve- locity surging as it headed toward the lunar surface. Radio signals from the spacecraft abruptly cut off.

Standing before darkened computer screens, controllers de- clared the mission a failure. The craft crashed near the historic Apollo landing sites.

President Reuven Rivlin host- ed dozens of dignitaries at his official residence, one of several celebrations scheduled across the country. The children, some wearing white-and-blue spacesuits, appeared confused as the crash unfolded.

“We are full of admiration for the wonderful people who brought the spacecraft to the moon,” Riv- lin said. “True, not as we had hoped, but we will succeed in the end.”

Beresheet carried a small laser retroreflector from NASA intend- ed to measure magnetic fields and provide insight on the moon’s iron core. It also had a time cap- sule that included a Bible, Israeli cultural symbols and a picture of famed Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon, who died in the crash of the U.S. space shuttle Columbia in 2003.

The head of NASA, Jim Briden- stine, said he regretted the mis- sion didn’t succeed, but “I have no doubt that Israel and SpaceIL will continue to explore and I look forward to celebrating their future achievements.”

Apollo 11 moonwalker Buzz Aldrin expressed his regrets “for what almost was” and tweeted: “Never lose hope — your hard work, team work and innovation is inspiring to all!”
Disney to debut streaming service this year

BY MAE ANDERSON AND MICHAEL LIEBTKE  Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Disney raised the curtain on a hotly anticipated video streaming service that’s aiming to topple industry pioneer Netflix, once a valuable ally of the Magic Kingdom.

The service, called Disney Plus, has been in the works for more than a year, but Thursday marked the first time that the longtime entertainment powerhouse has laid out plans for its attack on Netflix and a formidable cast of competitors, including Amazon, HBO Go and Showtime Anytime.

Disney Plus will roll out in the U.S. on Nov. 12 at a price of $6.99 per month, or $69.99 per year. That’s well below the $13 monthly fee Netflix charges for its most popular streaming plan, signaling Disney’s determination to woo subscribers as it tries to become a major player in a field that has turned “binge watching” into a common ritual.

Like Netflix, Disney Plus will be free of ads. Subscribers will be able to download all of the shows and movies on Disney’s service to watch offline.

Netflix will still have a far deeper video programming lineup after spending tens of billions of dollars during the past six years on original shows such as “House of Cards,” “Stranger Things” and “The Crown.”

But Disney Plus will be able to draw upon a library of revered films dating back several decades while it also forge into original programming.

Its animated classics, including “Aladdin” and “The Jungle Book,” will be available on the service when it launches.

New shows already on tap include “The Mandalorian,” the first live-action “Star Wars” series created by Jon Favreau; a prequel to the “Star Wars” film “Rogue One,” starring Diego Luna; a series about the Marvel character Loki, starring Tom Hiddleston; a rebooted “High School Musical” series; and a new documentary series focused on Disney.

Disney is approaching the streaming industry from a “position of strength, confidence and unbridled optimism,” CEO Bob Iger said Thursday. Iger has led the company since 2005 and expects to step down when his contract ends in 2021.

The service’s entire lineup will cover five categories: Disney, Pixar, Marvel, Star Wars and National Geographic.

Although Disney has an enviable track record of producing shows and films that attract huge audiences, its attempt to build its own Netflix is risky. To make the leap, Disney ended a lucrative licensing relationship with Netflix, which had become the video streaming home for its latest films after their theatrical release, as well as many of its TV series and classic movies.

But now, movies that came out in 2019, and going forward, will be streamed only on Disney Plus. That includes “Captain Marvel,” which came out earlier this year; “Avengers: Endgame,” which debuted in late April; and the upcoming “Toy Story 4,” live-action movies “The Lion King” and “Aladdin,” and “Star Wars Episode IX.”

In many ways, it’s hard to compare Netflix with Disney because of the widely different types of shows each offers, said eMarketer analyst Paul Verna.

“The interesting thing is both companies have ended up in the same place, but they’ve come to it from vastly different backdrops,” he said.

Disney will also contend with a new streaming service from Apple, which is expected to be released in the fall. Apple has not yet said how much its service will cost or when exactly it will launch.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates

| Country            | Rate
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INTEREST RATES

| Prime rate          | 5.50 |
| Discount rate       | 3.60 |
| Federal funds market | 2.41 |
| 3-month bill        | 2.37 |
| 10-year bond        | 2.34 |

WEATHER OUTLOOK

SATURDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SATURDAY IN EUROPE

SUNDAY IN THE PACIFIC

The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.
The number of pregnant teachers at one Kansas elementary school. The teachers’ pregnancies began getting attention last month when Oak Street Elementary in the Wichita suburb of Goddard posted a photo on Facebook of the women showing off their bulging bellies. The district said the school’s kindergarten classes of 2024-2025 are “growing by the day.” Two of the teachers later delivered within a day of each other just two rooms apart in the same hospital. One teacher is expecting twins.

Birdie watching

A fan looks through binoculars at the 16th hole during the first round of golf’s Masters Tournament on Thursday in Augusta, Ga.

The CENSUS

P A

WAYNESBURG — A wanted Pennsylvania woman who taunted a sheriff’s department online by asking if they “do pick up or delivery” has gotten a response: They do both, and she’s in custody.

Chloe Jones commented on the Greene County Sheriff’s Office Facebook post featuring her as one of the county’s most wanted, writing, “Do you guys do pick up or delivery?!” followed by four crying-laughing emojis. Police said she failed to appear in court on assault charges.

Sherrif’s spokesman took to Facebook again to announce her arrest and added that Jones “and her witty comments are taking a hiatus from our Facebook comments section due to the jail not having internet for her to use.”

Cops: Sexual encounter leads to house fire

NJ

WOODBURY — Authorities said a woman set fire to the home where her boyfriend lives several hours after they had a consensual sexual encounter there with another woman.

Woodbury police said Tasia Young told them she had been “going through a lot” and was angry her boyfriend had her take a cab home after the encounter while the other woman remained at the residence in Woodbury.

No injuries were reported in the fire. But Young’s boyfriend and six other people who live in apartments at the home were displaced by the blaze.

Toddler survives 6-story fall from window

WA

REDMOND — Authorities said a 20-month-old boy survived a six-story fall from a window on the top floor of a Redmond apartment complex when he landed on the roof of a parked car.

The boy was in serious but stable condition at an area hospital. Redmond police spokeswoman James Perry told KIRO that the boy “landed in a way where the car absorbed enough of the impact that he was awake and crying when paramedics arrived” Tuesday afternoon.

Perry said the toddler was alone in a bedroom while his mother and two siblings were in another room. Investigators believe the boy propped himself up on a window that was cracked open, then pulled himself through a screen and tumbled down.

Geese undeterred by laser, fake coyote

AR

BENTONVILLE — Officials at Bentonville’s municipal airport are exploring more options to scare off geese after a laser and a fake coyote failed to do the trick.

The airport said the geese pose a safety risk to pilots and passengers. Initially, officials considered killing the geese, but they opted for nonlethal methods instead.

Airport transportation director Dennis Birge said workers have tried shining a $700 laser at the geese to make them fly away, but it hasn’t scared them. Birge told the Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette that a decoy coyote has been slightly more effective, but it can’t be left in one place for too long because the geese grow accustomed to it.

The airport said it’s now considering using a trained dog or falcon to scare off the geese.

The airport has arrested a man who they say intentionally drove his SUV into a pedestrian in a Florida parking lot.

The Broward Sheriff’s Office said in a news release that Luis Alberto Ferri, 36, is charged with aggravated battery for an act described as “bizarre, cruel and reckless.”

Investigators released security video of the Feb. 23 attack. It shows the SUV stopping to let the pedestrian walk by but then accelerating and swerving into the person, leaving the victim with a broken leg.

Drivers urged to brake for turtles in roads

MO

JEFFERSON CITY — Officials are urging drivers to give turtles a brake this spring on Missouri roads.

The Missouri Department of Conservation says vehicles kill thousands of box turtles each year, and spring is a particularly treacherous time for box turtles and other common varieties because they are more active.

Conservation agents say the turtles come out of their burrows starting kindergarten classes of 2024-2025 are “growing by the day.” Two of the teachers later delivered within a day of each other just two rooms apart in the same hospital. One teacher is expecting twins.

Bunnell after he saw the cell-phone recording of him through a crack in the stall door.

Bunnell’s attorney, Brian Quinn, said his client was in a “vulnerable mental place,” and a combination of medications had affected his thinking at the time.

Bunnell also was ordered into a treatment program.

Deputies draw guns on ‘Roomba burglar’

OR

PORTLAND — Deputies said they caught a “burglar” in a house outside Portland after they responded to a possible home invasion, but the burglar wasn’t alive or a person.

It was a robotic vacuum cleaner.

The Oregonian/OregonLive reported that a house sitter in Cedar Hills had called 911 Monday saying someone was inside the bathroom.

The Washington County Sheriff’s Office said deputies entered the home and ordered the burglar out, but nothing happened. Deputies then opened the bathroom door with guns drawn, finding the automatic vacuum cleaner.

Sgt. Danny DiPietro said this encounter was his first “Roomba burglar” in his 13 years on the job. He said the office is still “having a good laugh about it.”
Dealing with Facebook disconnect

Changing habits could require a rethinking of what it means to keep in touch — beyond ‘likes’ and emojis

BY MOLLY BAKER
Philly.com

The classic philosophical riddle is, “If a tree falls in a forest and no one is there to hear it, does it make a sound?” What if you post something on Facebook when no one is there to read it? Has the news really been shared?

Certainly, in the early days of Facebook, people uploaded vacation selfies, commented on pet photos and announced life changes with a status update, and the majority of American adults were there to see it — roughly 68 percent of them, according to a recent Pew research study.

But Facebook is always changing. Like much of the internet, Facebook has more ads, more videos, more politics, more algorithms. For these and many other reasons, more people are deleting the app or at least decreasing their engagement with Facebook.

And there’s the disconnect.

Liz Duffy of Radnor, Pa., recently used the site to let friends know her 92-year-old father had died. “It was very helpful in getting the word out to a lot of people quickly,” she says. “But there were people I would have heard from and didn’t. And that’s when I realized I never told them.”

On the other end, people who have scaled back their Facebook activity or deleted their accounts are often missing the “updates” that family and friends might have shared with them personally in the past.

Indeed, the days of spreading the news door to door of a new baby in the neighborhood, or using a phone chain to let the extended family know someone is in the hospital, are likely things of the past. For better or worse, the Facebook “status update” has become the de facto method for sharing news, with implications for how we interact with one another.

“Facebook has changed the way we think about how we communicate with the world. . . . we’re just broadcasting,” Jabin White, Facebook user

26 percent say they have deleted the app from their phones; and 54 percent say they have changed their privacy settings on Facebook.

But more often, the assumption is that everyone is still on, and that everyone sees everything their friends post. Jabin White, a father of two in Villanova, Pa., who works in digital publishing, was a pretty heavy Facebook user when he joined 10 years ago, and he still has more than 600 “friends.” Some of his roommates from college were commenting back and forth when he noticed one of his closest friends wasn’t participating.

“I only noticed because we were busting his chops and he wasn’t defending himself,” he says. “I texted his wife, and she said he hadn’t been on Facebook in years. I was a little embarrassed how long it took me to notice.”

And it’s not just the missed messages that have White concerned. He worries about the effects of the technology itself.

“Facebook has changed the way we think about how we communicate with the world,” White says. “I probably communicate with people much less than I used to. And I don’t feel guilty about it, because Facebook is training my brain to think I’m keeping up with people just because I commented on their beach photo last summer.”

“We’re not communicating as human beings; we’re just broadcasting,” he says. “We are missing out on the work and rewards of responding to another in joy or grief. And the worst part is that we don’t realize we are missing out on it.”

Daniel Post Senning, spokesman for the etiquette guide the Emily Post Institute, encourages people to see today’s shifting engagement with social media as a moment to examine how we maintain relationships.

“It’s a real opportunity to take those relationships back and manage them in ways that feel really personal,” he says. “It’s important to think about matching the medium with the message. A ‘like’ or a smiley face on Facebook to honor a new baby does not compare to a card with your handwriting that someone can physically hold.”
Far Cry New Dawn
an entertaining return
to Hope County

By Brian Bowers
Stars and Stripes

Nuclear Armageddon might not have improved things in Hope County, but it certainly didn’t make them much worse.

A slightly irradiated Hope County, Mont., is the setting of Ubisoft’s Far Cry New Dawn, a sequel to last spring’s Far Cry 5. The first-person shooter is set about 17 years after the previous game’s hero battled the Eden’s Gate cult, which was terrorizing the rural county. During those years, nuclear war — a looming menace in Far Cry 5 — has come and gone, and survivors have crawled out of their shelters to establish new settlements.

Your character — known as the captain — is part of a team of do-gooders who have arrived to help the Hope County survivors learn to thrive. Unfortunately for the survivors and your teammates, a gang of ruffians called the Highwaymen has arrived to pillage and enslave.

As you roll into the county, the Highwaymen ambush your train and kill virtually everyone aboard. From there, you’ll know the drill if you’re a fan of the franchise. You’ll explore a large open world, attack bases used by the thuggish overlords and tackle a wide variety of missions that lead to a final confrontation with the big baddies — a set of twin sisters in this case.

Along the way, you can gather a posse of sidekicks who can bring a variety of weapons and abilities to the fight. And you’ll also need to ally yourself with the reconstituted Eden’s Gate cult — now called New Eden — which has decided to disavow technology and return to the stone age.

The plot of Far Cry 5 was pretty much a downer. In comparison, New Dawn seems like a light-hearted romp through the forest. Part of that is because the story is less involved and the characters are a bit shallower. However, it also seems that the population is generally a lot less dour. The survivors are pretty pleasant. And most of the sidekicks you’ll gather are off-kilter and entertaining — if you can tolerate a hefty dose of crude banter. The only “downers” this time around are a couple of very brutal cut scenes featuring the twins. Though brutality isn’t new to the Far Cry series, it seems a bit more jarring this time around.

Overall grade: B–

To improve your primary base and its accompanying facilities. In order to upgrade your base, you need to recruit sidekicks and acquire ethanol. And the best way to get ethanol is to attack enemy bases.

Attacking bases has always been one of my favorite activities in Far Cry games. And this time around, it is even more fun. When you conquer an enemy facility, you can use it as a crafting center and forward operating base. Or, you can scavenger every drop of ethanol and let it fall back into the hands of the Highwaymen. If you let this happen, the bad guys return with more and meaner thugs. This makes the base harder to recapture — but also more exciting and much more lucrative.

Another new form of combat is the “expedition.” In this, you leave Hope County via helicopter to tackle a search-and-grab mission in another location. These include a beachhead aircraft carrier, a bridge over a desert canyon and a New Orleans amusement park. These missions are fast-paced and exciting — and repeatable. Another big change is the addition of special powers late in the game. These come from an unusual tree discovered by the New Eden cult. If you eat its fruit, you can unlock several new abilities, such as jumping farther, evading detection and moving super fast while resisting damage. These can be very effective and terrifying fun when assaulting a base or participating in an expedition.

The graphics are solid. Hope County is beautiful thanks to an explosion of vegetation that has covered many of the prewar structures. And character renderings and animations are very good — sometimes exceptional. However, you’ll still notice a few visual glitches, such as rocks floating in the air.

The controls are well designed and very smooth. And the interface that brings up your map, inventory and abilities is efficient.

The game is rated mature, primarily because of a heavy dose of profanity and a few scenes of brutal violence.

While New Dawn isn’t as deep as Far Cry 5, it still makes for an interesting visit to Hope County.

Bottom line: B–

Platforms: PlayStation 4, Xbox One, PC
Online: far-cry.ubisoft.com

Ubisoft provided a copy of the game for review purposes.
Y
ou might have heard the story by now: That Marsai Martin pitched “Little,” a modern spin on “Big,” to Universal Pictures at age 10. It’s true, she did, but that precocious move was preceded by another, more impressive act of rebellion and a pivotal moment in putting her on the path to becoming the youngest executive producer ever: She fired her agents after the first year of “black-ish.”

The ABC show, in which she plays the Johnson’s whip-smart daughter, Diane, was on its first hiatus and Martin and her family wanted to know what opportunities there were.

“They were like, ‘You should just stick to ‘black-ish,’ just chill, take a break,’” Martin said.

Besides, the agents explained, there weren’t any roles for a young black girl out there. But the Martins persisted and suggested creating something themselves.

“They kind of just laughed at us. They didn’t see it because they saw what I looked like: A little black girl that no one didn’t see the vision. But I think they came up with anything I want,” Martin said. “I’m very grateful, and doing it with my family is even better.”

After the break with the agents, “black-ish” creator Kenya Barris helped nudge Martin in the right direction, securing a meeting with his friend, producer Will Packer, who’s been behind such high-profile hits as “Girls Trip” and “Night School,” to hear her idea.

“I didn’t expect much, because, you know, I heard a lot of pitches and most of them aren’t great. I said ‘Listen, I’m sure she’s sweet. I’ll do it as a courtesy,’” Packer said. “And she comes in and she’s got this fully thought out, really coherent, cohesive narrative, with characters and themes. I was like, ‘She’s how old again?’”

Her story would be about bullying and self-consciousness.

“My family is even better.”

When she realized that it meant the studio gets first dibs on anything she creates, she was thrilled.

“I was like, ‘Oh, OK! So I can create whatever I want?’ I thought that was so cool because this mind has a lot of things,” she said. “I can keep creating things that people don’t get to see often.”

She knows it’s unusual to be wielding this much creative power in Hollywood at this young age, but she also enjoys catching people off guard.

“It’s like, ‘Oh, snap, THIS girl created this film?’ And it’s kind of shocking,” she said, laughing.

Her life is pretty crazy right now promoting “Little” and developing new films and television projects. She’s homeschooled with a tutor, which she prefers, and she doesn’t have any regrets about missing out on the high school experience.

“I used to be the shy kid who would barely raise her hand or speak her mind,” she said.

Even now she suffers her own share of self-consciousness.

“That’s something that I have to work on: Self-confidence and loving myself,” she said. “Your girl gets a lot of anxiety. It’s OK. It’s a learning process. I feel like a lot of kids my age get it, whether they’re in the industry or not.”

When she does have a moment to unwind, she plays “gruesome” video games like “Mortal Combat,” gets facials and massages, cooks and sometimes just watches YouTube. But even then her wheels are spinning about possible collaborations with her favorite YouTubers.

Down the line, she wants to direct and write and, basically, do all the things. Packer, for one, is convinced she will.

“She’s got a long, strong career ahead wherever she ends up.”
WEIGHT BIAS

What we mean when we talk about obesity, why it matters, and what we can do about it

By Carrie Dennett
Special to The Washington Post

Research has shown that weight bias can threaten people's physical and mental health, which makes it vital for the medical community to take special care when discussing obesity. Unfortunately, a recent report in the prestigious British medical journal, the Lancet, falls short. The report, which highlights the connections between obesity, malnutrition, and climate change, is the result of a three-year effort involving 26 authors from 14 countries. While the authors criticize discrimination against individuals who have a body mass index (BMI) in the obese range, they do so in a way that reflects and perpetuates bias. That is troubling.

The authors point out that, “in most Western cultures, obesity is seen as a personal failing rather than a predictable consequence of normal people interacting with obesogenic environments.” Seeing obesity as a personal failing leads to weight bias, which manifests in numerous ways. Consider the dehumanizing, headless “butts and guts” images of larger bodies used in the media, and the stereotype that people in larger bodies are stupid, lazy, sloppy, unhappy and incompetent.

This bias not only creates barriers to higher education, jobs and promotions, but also makes it harder for people in larger bodies to avoid seeking medical care. In one study, signs of cancer were written off as part of patients’ obesity. When people in larger bodies — especially women — experience bias from their health-care providers, they are less likely to return to get regular preventive health care. That’s a big problem.

The report then goes on to state that society should not discriminate against people with obesity because it is a “predictable consequence of normal people interacting with obesogenic environments.” In other words: Don’t discriminate against people with obesity, because they can’t help it. They’re diseased.

However, the reason society should not discriminate against people with obesity is because discrimination against people based on their appearance is wrong. People of all shapes, sizes, shades and abilities are worthy of respect and fair treatment.

It doesn’t help that the authors blame obesity on poor diet quality, albeit because of the modern food environment. This perpetuates the myth that fat people are fat because they eat a lot of fast food and other ultra-processed foods. This is far from a universal truth.

Additionally, the report, “The Global Syndemic of Obesity, Undernutrition and Climate Change” is awash in the same gloom-and-doom language used in almost every paper on obesity. In the first place, it refers to obesity as an epidemic (along with undernutrition and climate change, to be fair), involving the “health and economic burdens caused by obesity.” It even equates the economic costs of obesity to the costs incurred by smoking or armed violence and war.

The report’s discussion of undernutrition doesn’t elicit those negative analogies, even though its estimated costs are far greater, which raises a question: Why don’t we constantly hear about “the undernutrition epidemic” or “the war on undernutrition”?

As with most health professionals who seek to avoid contributing to weight stigma, the authors use person-first language, pointing out that “an obese person” is an identity that suggests personal responsibility (again, unfairly, because many factors determine body weight), whereas “a person with obesity” is a person with a disease. Trouble is, person-first language ignores that the word “obesity” is loaded with stigma no matter how you use it in a sentence. This is despite — or perhaps because of — the American Medical Association’s 2013 decision to classify obesity as a disease, going against the recommendations of its Council on Science and Public Health. Today, to be a “person with obesity” is to be seen as diseased, regardless of overall health status and health-related behaviors. The word “obese” is wielded as both an amateur diagnosis and a weapon, designed to shame, silence and dehumanize. Check out the comments on any Instagram photo of a so-called woman with obesity, even if she’s exercising.

We need a new approach. This new strategy, however, should not involve just trying to come up with other, less-stigmatizing ways to say “person with obesity” or “obesity epidemic” (in the case of the latter, we should just stop saying it at all). Instead, we should focus on public policies that make it easier for everyone to find and afford nutritional foods, live in a safe and healthy environment, eat well-balanced meals and be physically active. This will promote well-being for all people, regardless of their weight — especially if we are also willing to examine and challenge our own stereotypes and biases. Then, maybe we can leave the obsessive fixation on weight — which is not a behavior — in the rearview mirror.
Being a grown-up is hard. Being a financially independent grown-up is harder. Our children must take on a lot when they reach adulthood: rent, food, transportation, insurance, but not to mention staying connected (cellphone and/or WiFi) and perhaps student loans. It’s a challenge for most of them: In a 2014 poll conducted by the Pew Research Center, 65 percent of U.S. adults between the ages of 18 and 29 said they received financial help from a parent in the preceding 12 months.

You want to help, but you also want them to stand on their own. The trick: Weaning. Instead of pivoting from paying for everything to paying for nothing, you should methodically transition your child to financial independence.

“If you have the means, there’s a lot of benefit to helping your child achieve financial independence, but you have to do it strategically,” says Bobby Rabell, a certified financial planner and author of “How To Be A Financial Grownup.” A University of Arizona study found that higher parental expectations and a well-grounded financial education promote a more successful shift to young adulthood.

If you’re ready to transition your soon-to-be-adult offspring to financial autonomy, here are some tips for getting started.

**Start early.** Children can grasp basic money skills as early as middle school. Leslie Tayne, a financial attorney concentrating in consumer debt, says to tell the kiddos that if they want a video game or go to a concert with friends, they need to save their money and pay for it themselves. This helps instill a level of independence early on. When Tayne’s twins reached driving age, she provided the car and paid the insurance, but told them they’d have to save their money and pay for it in the upcoming 12 months.

**Seize the moments.** Use any question about money — first paycheck, first car, first chunk of cash as a gift — to jump-start a conversation.

**Have them teach you.** It’s important kids understand how finances work, and what they hear from friends might be just plain wrong. Ask them to explain the difference between a credit card and a debit card, or collision vs. comprehensive car insurance. If they don’t understand or are way off the mark, give them the facts or send them links to articles or websites with accurate information.

**Create an exit strategy.** If you subsidize your child’s rent, consider paying 50 percent the first year, 25 percent the second year and zero in year three. At that point, they might need to get a roommate or downsize, but ultimately the onus will be on your child to find the solution. Sometimes, an end point is self-evident, as in the case of health insurance: Under current law in most states, you can keep a child on your policy until they turn 26.

**Give them choices.** Empowerment is key to financial independence. Cede some control over decisions and finances. Say, “I can help you with this or that. Which would you like me to cover?”

**Consider an adult allowance.** It might make more sense to provide a monthly lump sum rather than contributing to specific expenses. “A fixed amount invites positive behaviors and encourages your child to budget,” says Chicago-based Kelley Long, a certified public accountant and financial wellness coach. If, for example, you are giving $1,000 monthly toward rent and your child finds an apartment for $900 a month, then they will have extra cash. If the apartment they love costs $2,000, they will have to find more money elsewhere.

**Celebrate the positive.** If your child receives a raise, offer hearty congratulations. Don’t penalize them for success by immediately demanding they chip in more. Instead try, “I’m so proud of you. Have you given any thought as to how to transition to some additional expenses you’d like to take on?”

**Share your mistakes.** We’ve all experienced some financial mishap — bunging a check, underestimating a monthly bill, buying that non-returnable lamp we loved until we got it home. Sit down with your kids and explain how you goofed. Ask what they would have done.

**Consider family an ecosystem.** It’s not unreasonable to have your child on the family cellphone plan, but have them chip in proportionally. The same holds true for auto insurance. If you can get a better deal on your plan (multiple vehicles usually garner a discount), have them pay their share. But don’t just pick up the bills. Have your child cover their co-pays and file the paperwork.

**Smash the cash.** Even if you have the means to subsidize every bill, have your child contribute their share, Long says. If that makes you uncomfortable, consider depositing their payments into a special account they can tap into at a future date, such as an emergency fund, for a down payment for a home or even a Roth IRA.

**Keep the door ajar.** Experts agree that even when young adults achieve financial independence, it’s important to reassure them that they can always call you for advice or help.

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**THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE**

Lisa Smith Molinari

**My new car treats me like an idiot**

“Your fuel level is low. Would you like to navigate to the nearest gas station?”

An unfamiliar male voice called out. I glanced at the other seats in my new car, but I was entirely alone. Then I saw the words displayed across my vehicle’s digital screen.

My car was talking to me.

More specifically, it was passively-aggressively telling me what to do. It was the first time it had asked me a direct question since I bought the car back in January. But I wasn’t surprised. In the past few months, I had learned that my new car most certainly believed it was smarter than I am.

Ever since we made the $400 trade-in on our 2005 minivan with 240,000 miles on her odometer, I had been driving around in the veritable lap of luxury. My new SUV was better, cleaner, faster and cooler than my old minivan was in every way. However, my new car brought new problems.

When I drove my old minivan, I was the superior one. Aside from complicated mechanisms, which I left up to qualified automobile repair shops to deal with, I controlled the vehicle. Having put most of her 240,000 miles on herself, I knew exactly how to manually adjust the sound system (with its handy-dandy tape deck), the heat and AC, the seat positions, the headlights, the glasses and all other systems. There was no digital display, no voice recognition feature, no navigation system, no Bluetooth capability, no automatic doors, no heated steering wheel, no keyless stop/start, no camera system.

She was not hands-free, but rather, totally hands-on.

During those meager minivan years, I was a modern-day Robinson Crusoe. My minivan was my primitive island, and I was forced to make do. Like Crusoe, I had nothing to covet, for I had all that I was now capable of enjoying; I was Lord of the Whole Manor... I learned to look more upon the bright side of my condition, and less upon the dark side, and to consider what I enjoyed, rather than what I wanted.

I didn’t complain that the van’s carpets were tainted with years worth of spilled juice boxes and kids’ up-chuck; I just spritzed them with Febreze and carried on. I didn’t gripe when the roof sprouted a leak; I just covered it with tape. I didn’t demand a new car when the door handle fell off; I just got in on the other side.

Through ingenuity and self-reliance, I became the Master of my minivan’s Domain. The Lady of the Manor. The Queen of the Castle.

But now I drive a German-engineered vehicle with complicated digital systems that did not exist when my old minivan was manufactured back in 2005. My new car senses my confusion and takes control, as if I am a complete idiot.

It recognizes my voice, detects my phone, knows every turn I must make. And it’s right. Like Crusoe, I had nothing to covet, for I had all that I was now capable of enjoying; I was Lord of the Whole Manor... I learned to look more upon the bright side of my condition, and less upon the dark side, and to consider what I enjoyed, rather than what I wanted.

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Whistleblower law protects GIs — and others

BY GARY JACKSON
Special to Stars and Stripes

When 3M agreed in July to pay the U.S. Department of Justice $9.1 million to resolve allegations of providing faulty equipment to our military, it signaled a victory for men and women in uniform as well as for all Americans. That’s because the DOJ’s False Claims Act (FCA) allows individuals with evidence of fraud involving federal programs or contracts to sue the party in the wrong on behalf of the United States government.

The whistleblower in action against 3M was not a member of the military, but rather the private sector. Still, FCA qui tam actions are open to military whistleblowers — and that’s a fact well worth remembering. Indeed, the FCA’s association with the Department of Defense cannot be its inception. It was born during the Civil War to fight fraud perpetrated by companies that did not receive compensation for injury as a result of using 3M’s allegedly defective earplugs must now file their own legal actions. Still, because of a whistleblower and the laws that protect them, the wheels of justice are turning.

If the talks with Labour’s leaders fail, May’s next move will be to consult the members of Parliament directly. This involves a cumbersome process known as a “vote of no confidence.” MPs vote for or against the prime minister. If May loses a vote, the speaker of the House of Commons rules whether the motion is valid. If it is, the Speaker would call a general election. The situation is fluid that almost anything is possible. But if she fails, she will have both feet out the window. Her mission has been to deliver a moderate Brexit; if she cannot, her unlived leadership will serve no further purpose. Local elections on May 2 are likely to deliver a rebuff to her party, and on May 23 she faces a still greater humiliation. Britain will have to hold elections for the European Parliament, almost three years after voters resolved by referendum that they wanted out of such entanglements. So, if May can’t get a deal, what happens? With Parliament deadlocked, the leaderless House of Commons must decide if there is a vote of no confidence. That might mean that Brexit is sidelined, despite Corbyn’s personal predilections. But this would be cold comfort. Labour’s leftist agenda is one from which Britain as fast as the prospect of Brexit has done.

More likely, Corbyn would prove too extreme to be elected. Yet if the Conservatives win, the prospects are little brighter. The party would probably fight the election under a new leader, and while the leanings of Conservative Party members, that leader would probably be a hard-line Brexiteer — the front-runner is Boris Johnson, a post-truth Trumpian. Hence the danger that Britain will use its newly granted extra time to head for a sharper break with the EU.

The core concern, that is, Britain as in chunks of continental Europe, centrists politics is failing. The Labour Party has been reeling from losses in local elections for more than three decades. The Conservatives are in thrill to a nostalgic, narrow-minded national romanticism. The Labour Party is made up of an anti-Europe — and that will fight to keep Brexit on the agenda even if it is thwarted in the near future. May, for all her stiff-necked clausning, represents the responsible diminishing old guard. If she topples from the window sill, Britain will miss her.

Gary Jackson is an attorney at the Law Offices of Jerome Sheppard, in Washington, D.C. N.C. He has participated in whistleblower (qui tam) cases around the country.
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Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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ACROSS
1 Milan’s La —
6 Mops the deck
11 First game of the season
12 Fortune-telling decks
14 Gift giver’s words
15 Not level
16 Italian “three”
17 Trombone part
19 Coach
20 Coup d’ —
22 Summer on the Seine
23 Not kosher
24 Hose material
26 1955 Platters hit
28 — — — dah
30 Pinnacle
31 “Pretty please?”
35 From the area
39 Writer Kingsley
40 Highland hat
42 “Elephant Boy”
43 UV ray-blocking stat
44 James —
46 Stanley Cup org.
47 Spill the beans
49 “Psst!”

DOWN
1 Stylish
2 Breakfast bowlful
3 Whatever amount
4 Late July babies
5 As — (usually)
6 Pupil
7 Diminish
8 “Right you —!”
9 Emma of fiction
10 Sound system
11 Frequently
13 Major mix-up
18 “Am — blame?”
21 Bridge fees
23 Printing errors
25 Aye undoer
27 Texer’s chuckle
29 Sites of rapid growth
31 Squander
32 Chevy model
33 Boost
34 Eg. and
36 Big gorge
37 Loathes
38 Humdingers
41 Taj —
42 Out of the storm
43 Simple
45 Pro Bowl
48 stats
50 Singer Sumac

Answer to Previous Puzzle

Towel	Idc	Adj
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Balsa
Sunbird
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Leia
Fico
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Punch
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CRYPTOQUIP

KH E FYXCYJ COBCB AYTJ
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Yesterday’s Cryptoquip: STOP TRYING TO CONVINCE ME THAT FEMALE SHEEP HAVE NO CAPACITY TO LONG FOR THINGS. EWE WISH!

Today’s Cryptoquip Clue: W equals L.
Explore **Stars and Stripes** new feature section: Vietnam at 50.

With contributions from the men and women who were there, as well as voices from experts and our readers, we take a look back at the Vietnam War and the cultural changes that surrounded it. How the war was prosecuted, how it changed our military and foreign policy thinking, and how America viewed itself then and now. It's a radically new design for Stars and Stripes, and one you can help shape by sharing your thoughts and voices.

Visit online for more content and video—or to share your memories: stripes.com/vietnam50
College baseball

Thursday's scores


College hockey

NCAA Division I Tournament

Saturday, March 30
At Providence, R.I.

Western Michigan

FIRST ROUND

First Round

First Round

First Round

Mechanicville, N.Y.

3-0, 6-1, 6-1

3-6, 6-3, 6-2


AP sportlight

Saturday, April 13, 2019

The New York Rangers beat the Toronto Maple Leafs 3-2 to win the Stanley Cup in six games.

College baseball

College baseball

PT Plus

College baseball

College baseball

Thursday's scores


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The New York Rangers beat the Toronto Maple Leafs 3-2 to win the Stanley Cup in six games.
NFL, union encouraged by helmet safety study

Associated Press

NEW YORK — NFL and players’ union officials are encouraged by the improvements in helmet safety, as outlined by the poster both sides released Friday showing six of 11 helmets tested this year moved into the top 10

In its annual study, designed by NFL- and NFLPA-appointed biomechanical engineers, each helmet was subjected to 224 impacts and

conclusion-causing impacts sustained by NFL players during games is simulated to determine which helmets best reduced head impact severity. The study measures rotational velocity and acceleration to evaluate helmets.

VICIS Zero1 graded best for the third straight year. Of the 34 overall helmets on the poster, it was followed by the Schutt F7 LTD and the Riddell SpeedFlex Precision Diamond.

Also in the “green area” of strongly approved helmets was the brand new Xenith Shadow. In all, those four manufacturers had all 27 models at the top of the poster.

The yellow section, in which helmets performed worse than the green group, had seven models.

“Last year for the first time we prohibited helmets, and had a category based on the last testing that showed they would perform poorly,” said Dr. Kristy Arbogast, the NFLPA’s appointed consultant to the testing.

“The thing that’s really notable is how receptive the players were to that info. 56% moved up the poster. They are eager to have the information that helps them make informed decisions about their equipment choice.”

Arbogast commended manufacturers for “innovating and introducing new helmets, the fact all new ones performed well is very encouraging.”

The poster includes gray areas within the green and yellow sections. That indicates that less than 1% of NFL players are wearing that model, providing players with additional information. But Arbogast stresses that “doesn’t mean they aren’t safe or viable options.”

The 11 models — nine new, one discontinued — in the red area are banned.

VICIS doubled the number of NFL players using Zerol from 2017 to 2018, with 135 players wearing it last season. Among them are league MVP Patrick Mahomes, Super Bowl MVP Julian Edelman, Russell Wilson, Doug Baldwin, Dee Ford and Golden Tate.

Makar said. “And I think the thing we’re going to be stressing tomorrow especially is we’re not done yet.”

Massachusetts defenseman Marc Del Gaizo, right, and Denver’s Griffin Mendel race to the puck behind the net during the third period of Thursday’s Frozen Four semifinal in Buffalo, N.Y. Del Gaizo scored 15:18 into OT to seal a 4-3 win and send the Minutemen to their first-ever NCAA title game.

Del Gaizo seals UMass’ OT win

MINUTEMEN advance to first championship in program’s history

Associated Press

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Marc Del Gaizo thought maybe he was dreaming.

“Right now it seems like I’m dreaming, but we’re off to the national championship and that’s all that matters.”

Del Gaizo scored 15:18 into overtime to seal a 4-3 victory over Denver in a semifinal game that ended just after midnight Friday.

The Minutemen (31-9), making just their second NCAA Tournament appearance, rebounded after squandering a 3-1, third-period lead and came back having two forwards — including captain Niko Hildenbrand — ejected for illegal hits to the head.

The victory continued around a Hockey East program that hadn’t previously won more than 21 games and was two years removed from a 5-29-2 finish in its first year under coach Greg Carvel.

That five-win season is still pretty fresh,” Carvel said. “The pain from that season has sunk in. The glory of this season hasn’t sunk in yet.”

That’s, in part, because the Minutemen’s ride from obscurity to the national spotlight isn’t over.

UMass now prepares for its first championship game of the weekend.

Minnesota Duluth forward Billy Exel celebrates his goal against Providence during the third period on Thursday. Exel’s go-ahead goal helped the Bulldogs to a 4-1 win over the Friars in Buffalo, N.Y.

Frozen Four roundup

Minnesota Duluth 4, Providence 1: Coach Scott Sandelin isn’t taking the Bulldogs’ third consecutive trip to the Frozen Four championship game for granted because of how difficult it is to get there.

It wasn’t easy for the Bulldogs once again in pulling out a 4-1 win over Providence in a tightly contested game they sealed by scoring two empty-net goals in the final 33 seconds Thursday.

The National Collegiate Hockey Conference champion Bulldogs became the first team to reach three consecutive championship games since Boston College from 2006-08. Minnesota Duluth lost 3-2 to Denver in the 2017 championship game.

Providence scored first on a power play but it was all Duluth on Thursday night after Billy Exel scored 7:29 into the second period.

The Duluth Bulldogs faced the Providence Friars in the NCAA Frozen Four Championship Game at KeyBank Center in Buffalo, NY on April 13, 2019.

Del Gaizo was named the tournament’s Most Outstanding Player after totaling three goals and two assists in the championship.

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WASHINGTON — Nicklas Backstrom and Alex Ovechkin came out firing, the Carolina Hurricanes surged and the Washington Capitals showed why they’re the defending Stanley Cup champions when it mattered most.

Backstrom and Ovechkin combined to score three goals on the first eight shots before 19-year-old rookie Andrei Svechnikov led a furious third-period comeback.

The Capitals, who led Columbus 2-0 in each of the first two games of last year’s playoffs before losing 4-3 and 5-4, had those experiences and the Lightning’s loss on Wednesday fresh in their minds.

“We knew it’s not over, even 15-nothing,” Ovechkin said. “You can see what happened last night in a different game. It’s the playoffs and you never know what’s going to happen.”

Another three-goal comeback almost happened in this one. Well after the “Back-to-back!” chants faded into nervous silence, Hurricanes goaltender Petr Mrazek rebounded from allowing a soft opening goal to Backstrom by stopping Nic Dowd and Carl Hagelin on breakaways and then aside Brett Connolly and Lars Eller on rapid-fire chances early in the third.

Svechnikov became the youngest player to score two-plus goals in a playoff game since Dainius Zubrus in 1997, but the Hurricanes failed to score on two late power plays and Eller sealed it with an empty-net goal with 36.6 seconds left.

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The Golden State Warriors are set to begin their quest for a third straight title, and this time it’s up to someone else to try to stop them.

With LeBron James gone to the West and this year gone entirely from the postseason, the Eastern Conference headquarters for the NBA Finals won’t be in his home for the first time since 2010.

He played for the title for eight straight years, which may have been great for the TV ratings but lately wasn’t much good for the competition. The Warriors swept Cleveland last year after winning 4-1 in 2017.

Teams are lining up to seize his old spot atop the East, all capable of providing the intrigue that was absent the last couple of years.

There’s Milwaukee, with Giannis Antetokounmpo in position to exit June fully atop the NBA with a title and an MVP award.

Or Toronto, humiliated by the Cavaliers in the last two years but armed now with a former NBA Finals MVP in Kawhi Leonard.

It could be Philadelphia, with Joel Embiid and Ben Simmons anchoring perhaps the most talented starting five outside of the Bay Area.

And don’t forget Boston, the presumptive East favorite in the preseason that can still live up to expectations.

“Every team is better, but maybe things will be better.”

“I think the parity and the competition in the East, and not knowing and everyone having a sincere chance maybe in the East that didn’t, when you look between Toronto, Boston, Philadelphia,” TNT analyst Chris Webber said. “All of those story lines, new young stars that’s coming in.”

The long road to get to the Finals begins Saturday with four games, including the top-seeded Warriors against the Los Angeles Clippers in the West. No. 2 Denver faces No. 7 San Antonio in the other Western semifinal, while No. 3 Philadelphia meets No. 6 Brooklyn, East that did not, when you look between Toronto, Boston, Philadelphia,” TNT analyst Chris Webber said. “All of those story lines, new young stars that’s coming in.”

The Warriors’ Kevin Durant, right, congratulates teammate Stephen Curry, Top-seeded Golden State opens the playoffs against the Los Angeles Clippers on Saturday.

“After the All-Star break. I felt very confident we’d be in the race and we were,” Divac said. “Unfortunately, we fell short.”

Divac made the move official just hours after he was given an extension through the 2022-23 season by owner Vivek Ranadive.

Joerger was the ninth coach since Adelman was fired in 2006. That ended a run of eight straight playoff berths and Sacramento hasn’t been back to the post-season since for the NBA’s longest active drought.

“The first part of the season that looks different far beyond just the absence of James for the first time since 2005.”

It includes Denver, in the playoffs for the first time since 2012.

For the first time since 2012.

The Warriors, of course, haven’t just been going to the postseason every year, but getting all the way to the Finals once they do. They’ve done that four straight years, winning three of them, and with a strong finish after some occasional lapses surged to the best record in the West.

Still, this playoff path could provide them plenty of obstacles. The Warriors may need to get by scoring champion James Harden and the Rockets, who took them to a seventh game last year in the conference finals, just to get back to that round this time.


Get out of the West, and the Warriors may have to then get on a plane. They had home-court advantage in all four finals against Cleveland, but Milwaukee and Toronto both finished with better records and would host Games 1 and 2 if the win the East.

And there could be the distractions about their future, with Kevin Durant and Klay Thompson able to become free agents this summer.

The Warriors wouldn’t be alone when dealing with that. Toronto (Leonard), Philadelphia (Jimmy Butler and Tobias Harris) and Boston (Kyrie Irving) all will be trying to win a title with players who could then leave them.

But those are issues for July. First, it’s all about just getting to June.

“It’s a great feeling,” Bucks All-Star Giannis Antetokounmpo said. “Playoffs don’t always come around. I’ve been a part of that couple years but it’s been a great season so far. I know guys are itching to get to this first playoff game.”

The Kings had their most wins since having a 44-38 record in coach Mike D’Antoni’s final season in 2005-06. That ended a run of eight straight playoff berths and Sacramento hasn’t been back to the post-season since for the NBA’s longest active drought.

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American League

East Division
Tampa Bay 10 3 769
New York 10 3 769
Baltimore 5 8 285
Boston 5 8 285
Toronto 2 10 308

Central Division
Cleveland 8 4 667
Detroit 8 4 667
Minnesota 6 8 300
Chicago 6 8 300
Kansas City 5 10 333

West Division
Seattle 8 5 615
Los Angeles 8 5 615
Oakland 9 8 529
Texas 9 8 529

National League

East Division
New York 8 4 667
Philadelphia 8 4 667
Atlanta 7 5 583
Washington 5 10 321
Miami 5 10 321

Central Division
Milwaukee 8 5 615
St. Louis 8 5 615
Pittsburgh 7 6 333
Cincinnati 5 10 333
Chicago 5 10 333

West Division
San Diego 8 5 615
Los Angeles 8 5 615
Arizona 7 6 333
Colorado 5 10 321
San Francisco 5 10 321

Thursday's games

Oakland at Minnesota
New York at Detroit
Seattle at Kansas City, 6, 10 innings
Cincinnati at St. Louis
Miami at Atlanta
San Diego at Arizona

Oakland at Texas

Seattle at Houston at Seattle
L.A. Angels at Texas
Chicago Cubs at Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh at Arlington
Milwaukee at L.A. Dodgers

Friday's games

Detroit at Minnesota
Chicago White Sox at N.Y. Yankees
Tampa Bay at Philadelphia
Kansas City at Tampa Bay (Snell-1-0)
San Francisco at Arizona
St. Louis at Atlanta

Tampa Bay at Arlington


Cubs 2, Pirates 0

Pittsburgh at Chicago


Indians, Tigers

Cleveland at Detroit


Mets, Braves 3

New York at Atlanta


Calendar

April 13-14 — Detroit vs. Kansas City, 2 games — All-Star Game at Cleveland.

April 17-21 — Kansas City at Detroit

April 19-21 — Kansas City at New York

April 22-24 — Los Angeles at Texas

April 22-24 — San Diego at Boston

April 22-24 — Houston at Boston

April 22-24 — Minnesota at Cleveland

April 23-25 — Kansas City at Chicago

April 26-28 — New York at Atlanta

April 30-01 — New York at St. Louis

May 1-2 — St. Louis at Chicago

May 2-3 — Minnesota at Minnesota

May 4-6 — Cleveland at New York

May 6-8 — Chicago at New York

May 7-9 — Minnesota at Minnesota

May 7-9 — New York at Boston

May 10-12 — New York at Los Angeles

May 10-12 — St. Louis at St. Louis

May 13-15 — Cleveland at Boston

May 13-15 — Detroit at Minnesota

May 13-15 — Kansas City at St. Louis

May 13-15 — Minnesota at Minnesota

May 16-18 — Kansas City at Minnesota

May 16-18 — New York at New York

May 19-21 — New York at Boston

May 19-21 — St. Louis at St. Louis

May 20-22 — Minnesota at Cleveland

May 20-22 — Minnesota at Minnesota

May 23-25 — Minnesota at New York

May 24-26 — New York at Boston

May 26-28 — New York at Cleveland

May 27-29 — Minnesota at Minnesota

May 27-29 — St. Louis at St. Louis

May 30-01 — St. Louis at Minnesota

May 30-02 — Minnesota at New York

June 1-4 — St. Louis at Minnesota

June 4-6 — Minnesota at New York

June 5-7 — Chicago at Chicago

June 6-8 — Chicago at St. Louis

June 7-9 — Chicago at Chicago

June 8-10 — Chicago at Chicago

June 10-12 — Tampa Bay at Kansas City

June 17-19 — Minnesota at Minnesota

June 19-20 — Minnesota at Minnesota

June 20-22 — Minnesota at New York

June 21-23 — Minnesota at New York

June 24-26 — Minnesota at New York

June 25-27 — Minnesota at New York

June 26-28 — Minnesota at New York

June 28-30 — Minnesota at New York

June 29-30 — Minnesota at New York

June 30-July 2 — Minnesota at New York

July 1-3 — Detroit at Detroit

July 1-3 — Detroit at Detroit

July 4-6 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 6-8 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 7-9 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 8-10 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 9-11 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 10-12 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 11-13 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 12-14 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 13-15 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 14-16 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 15-17 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 16-18 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 17-19 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 18-20 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 19-21 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 20-22 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 21-23 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 22-24 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 23-25 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 24-26 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 25-27 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 26-28 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 27-29 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 28-30 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 29-31 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 30-01 — Cleveland at Cleveland

July 31-02 — Cleveland at Cleveland
The Cardinals’ Jose Martinez celebrates after hitting an RBI double during the sixth inning of Thursday’s 11-7 victory over the Los Angeles Dodgers in St. Louis. Martinez matched a career high with four hits as the Cardinals set a season high for runs and swept the Dodgers in a four-game series for the first time since July 15-18, 2010.

Wieters powers Cards past Dodgers

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Matt Wieters drove in three runs and stole a base for just the third time in six years, leading St. Louis over Los Angeles 11-7 for a four-game sweep of the NL champions.

Making his first start this season, the 32-year-old Wieters hit a sacrifice fly in the second inning and a two-run double in the fifth that put the Cardinals ahead 8-7. With runners at the corners in the fifth, Wieters stole second as Matt Carpenter struck out, runners at the corners in the fifth that put the Cardinals ahead 8-7. With second inning and a two-run double in the year-old Wieters hit a sacrifice fly in the champions.

The Reds entered the series with eight runs and eight hits in 3 2⁄3 innings. It was their first professional save.

Swanny: Mariners RHP Erik Swanson made his major league debut, allowing two runs and three hits in two innings. He is the 18th player and ninth pitcher to make his Mariners debut this season.

Power: Mariners set mark for HRs to start season

FROM BACK PAGE

“Other teams just can’t seem to do any wrong,” said Kansas City’s Whit Merrifield, whose hitting streak ended at 31 games.

Royals center fielder Billy Hamilton was carted off with a knee injury after failing to grab Mitch Haniger’s tying, two-run triple in the ninth. Royals manager Ned Yost said he did not have an update on Hamilton’s condition.

“Han had the at-bat of the game,” Servais said. “You’re down to your last strike, fighting and clawing. He finally got the changeup up in the zone.”

Merrifield went 0-for-4. He had not gone hitless since Sept. 9.

“Out of my last nine outs, I feel like I’ve made six good swings on good pitches in the zone,” Merrifield said. “I either hit it on the barrel at somebody or just missed it and hit it in the air. That’s kind of what makes streaks like these so rare.

The 2002 Cleveland Indians had homered in each of their first 14 games. Seattle’s 36 home runs are tied with the 2000 St. Louis Cardinals for the most in a club’s first 15 games. The Mariners have scored five or more runs in all but one game.

Vogelbach hit a 427-foot drive off Glenn Sparkman (0-1) for his sixth home run this season.

“I’m not in that situation if Hann doesn’t have the at-bat to tie the game,” Vogelbach said. “He fouled off a ton of pitches. He made him work, and then got a pitch he could handle.”

Brandon Brennan (1-0) struck out three in the ninth, working around his own throwing error on a grounder to get his first major league win. Brennan has not allowed a run in his first 9 2⁄3 innings in the major leagues, holding batters to a .156 average (5-for-32).

Connor Sadzeck pitched a perfect 10th for his first professional save.

The Reds’ Yasiel Puig celebrates after hitting a two-run double off Miami starting pitcher Pablo Lopez during the fifth inning on Thursday in Cincinnati. The Reds won 5-0 to sweep the Marlins.

Reds 5, Marlins 0: Yasiel Puig returned from a two-game suspension and doubled home a pair of runs, and host Cincinnati completed a reinvigorating three-game sweep of Miami.

The Reds entered the series with eight straight losses and the worst record in the NL. They came away with their first three-game sweep of the Marlins at Great American Ball Park since 2010.

Padres 7, Diamondbacks 6: Manuel Margot hit a tiebreaking homer in the eighth inning and San Diego bounced back after blowing a late five-run lead to host Arizona.

The Padres have won six of eight to move into first place in the NL West.

Athletics 8, Orioles 5: Khris Davis hit a pair of home runs for the second straight game, and Baltimore’s Chris Davis extended his record hitless streak to 53 at-bats in visiting Oakland’s victory.

Davis leads the majors with nine homers this season.

Indians 4, Tigers 0: Shane Bieber allowed three hits in seven innings, Leonys Martin homered in his return to his former home and Cleveland shut out Detroit.

Martin, traded from the Tigers to Cleveland last year, hit a solo homer in the third. He and Carlos Santana had three hits apiece for the Indians.

Red Sox 7, Blue Jays 6: Rafael Devers hit an RBI single with one out in the ninth inning and struggling Boston beat Toronto for its first home victory of the season.

Mets 6, Braves 3: Amed Rosario drove in a career-high four runs, rookie Pete Alonso rocketed his latest homer into a terrace fountain far beyond the center field fence as visiting New York beat Atlanta.

Cubs 2, Pirates 0: Jose Quintana struck out 11 in seven innings of four-hit ball and host Chicago blanked Pittsburgh.

Giants 1, Rockies 0: Jeff Samardzija and two relievers combined on a three-hitter and Kevin Pillar homered as visiting San Francisco squeezed past slumping Colorado.

The Seattle Mariners’ Mallex Smith hits an RBI triple during the seventh inning of Thursday’s game against the Royals at Kauffman Stadium in Kansas City, Mo.
DoD policy change put football on hold for Air Force WR Robinette, but he’s finally getting his chance

BY ARNIE STAPLETON
Associated Press

DENVER

Two years after the U.S. Defense Department thwarted his plans of going straight from the Air Force Academy to the NFL, Falcons all-time leading receiver Jalen Robinette is determined to turn that dream into a dream delayed, not dashed.

Close to fulfilling his two-year active-duty commitment, Robinette recently competed in Ohio State’s pro day, where he caught passes from quarterback Dwayne Haskins and glances from pro scouts intrigued by the muscular 25-year-old who hasn’t played since 2016, when he led the nation with a 27.4-yard average.

“I think that day was pretty much a win for me as far as, first of all, being there,” Robinette told The Associated Press by phone from Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas, where he’s a logistics flight commander for the 58th Rescue Squadron. “It looked like 100 people that were there from the NFL.

“Just being there and to have eyes on me, especially after laying low for the last two years, was awesome,” Robinette said. “And I think from a performance stance, I did pretty well. I looked pretty smooth. I feel really good about it.”

Robinette told teams he expects to be available full time by August or September but has saved up vacation days to be able to attend offseason training programs, minicamps and training camps to show his hiatus from football wasn’t a hindrance.

Robinette was the first Air Force player ever invited to the East-West Shrine Game, the Senior Bowl and the NFL scouting combine. He also expected to be the first one ever to go straight into the pros like standout Navy quarterback Keenan Reynolds had done a year earlier when he was drafted by the Baltimore Ravens.

That year, the DoD revised its pro sports policy, allowing graduates of service academies to apply for Ready Reserve so they could begin their pro sports careers immediately. Robinette maintained a full class load his final semester while commuting 100 miles six days a week to train with other NFL hopefuls, including Christian McCaffrey, at Landow Performance, a facility in suburban Denver owned by Loren Landow, who is now the Denver Broncos strength coach.

Robinette was projected as a mid-round selection in 2017 but went undrafted after learning he would have to fulfill his two-year active duty commitment after all. He was told as the first round was underway that Air Force leaders had informed the academy that cadets would still be required to serve at least two years on active duty. That was a precursor to an official reversal of the DoD’s pro sports policy shortly after Jim Mattis was appointed secretary of defense.

The Pentagon said graduates from military academies receive their educations at taxpayer expense, so prospective professional athletes would have to follow in the steps of Roger Staubach, Chad Hennings and David Robinson and first serve their country.

Robinette insists he wasn’t embittered by the policy reversal.

“I wasn’t raised that way, to carry a grudge, to be bitter about something like that,” Robinette said.

He had the same outlook after his commission and graduation were subsequently delayed by several months.

“Absolutely, it was another part of my path,” Robinette said. “Because I was associated with someone who was in an open investigation, I was a witness and with that going on, the academy felt that until that played out, I had to stay there in close range until things got settled down or they figured out what was going on.”

Meantime, Robinette was invited to minicamps with the Bills and Patriots but neither team signed him with his two-year active-duty commitment looming.

He received his commission and graduation on Sept. 7, 2017, and was stationed at Nellis, where he said he was determined to grow as an Air Force officer and train in his spare time to keep his NFL dream alive.

At first he was only able to lift weights and do some speed work, but this year he began training with the 58th Rescue Squadron, which has its own workout facility because its tasks are so arduous.

“So now I have a full field where I can work on route running, agility drills, stuff like that,” he said.

A week before Ohio State’s pro day, Robinette went back to Colorado Springs for Air Force’s pro day, where his trainer clocked him at 4.53 seconds in the 40-yard dash, nearly a 10th of a second faster than his 4.62 clocking at the NFL combine two years ago.

Even though he’ll need to shake some rust off his game, Robinette said, “people are always developing in the NFL. Besides, he said he’s a better prospect now for having spent the last two years focusing on growing as an officer and a teammate.

He’ll gladly pack weight onto his 6-foot-3, 220-pound frame if somebody sees him as a tight end prospect instead of a receiver: “Heck, if you need me to put my hand in the ground and play tackle, I’m fine with that.”

“My goal is just getting a shot,” said Robinette, who already has the answer for any team wanting to know why it should take a chance on a guy who’s been out of football for two years: because he’s been serving his country, growing as a leader and following the chain of command.

“I’ll say, ‘I can still play at a high level. I’m very coachable and really able to buy into an organization and their mission and goal,’” Robinette said. “You don’t have to worry about me being a knucklehead.”
Bryson DeChambeau reacts after his birdie on the 17th hole.

DeChambeau finished in a tie for the lead with a 6-under 66.

Bryson DeChambeau
35-31—66
6

Bjorn Koepka
34-25—59
6

Phil Mickelson
34-23—57
6

Ian Poulter
34-15—49
6

Dustin Johnson
34-14—58
5

Justin Harding
34-13—57
5

Adam Scott
35-14—59
5

Jon Rahm
34-13—57
5

Koepka, DeChambeau share lead

Mickelson sitting one stroke back

Koepka, DeChambeau share lead

Mickelson sitting one stroke back

A quick glance

Leading: Bryson DeChambeau and Brooks Koepka, tied at 6-under 66.

Just behind: Phil Mickelson is one back after a 67, followed by Ian Poulter and Dustin Johnson at 66.

Where’s Tiger? Tiger Woods is four shots behind, tied for 11th with nine other players.

Rocky start: Defending champion Patrick Reed was tied for 44th after shooting 73. Betting favorite Rory McIlroy also shot 73.

Bryson DeChambeau believes science was at work late in the afternoon at Augusta National, creating a force in the atmosphere where big roars from great shots filtered through the back nine.

An easier description: Another exciting finish at the Masters, this time on a Thursday.

Brooks Koepka got it started, adding to his reputation of playing his best golf in the majors. He rolled in a 20-foot birdie putt from behind the 12th green, the first of four straight birdies to take the lead. DeChambeau answered with four straight birdies at the end of his round, with two shots inches away from being even better.

His 8-iron on the par-3 16th grazed the edge of the cup. His 6-iron into the 18th was even better, so good that it rolled smack into the middle of the pin and bounced back an inch or two.

Both wound up in a share of the lead at 6-under 66.

“Absolutely, there is an energy and there is something in science that does talk about that,” said DeChambeau, who has a scientific answer for everything. “It’s there for the taking, and there is something in science that does talk about that,” said DeChambeau, who has a scientific answer for everything. “It’s there for the taking, and there is something in science that does talk about that.”

“I took advantage of it with some force in the atmosphere where Augusta National, creating a great atmosphere and gets you all pumped up, creates adrenaline flow. I believe that’s partially what happened today.”

“They were one shot ahead of 48-year-old Phil Mickelson, who delivered thrills of his own.

Mickelson found some momentum after shots in the pine trees at No. 10 and in the water on No. 11, both leading to bogey when he thought it could have been worse. He answered with three birdies on the next four holes, including a shot into the 16th that stopped a stroke short of the cup. Mickelson was two shots behind.

“I made five birdies — that’s the thing for birdie after nearly making hole-in-one for birdie after nearly making hole-in-one for birdie after nearly making hole-in-one for birdie after nearly making hole-in-one. That was the thing for birdie after nearly making hole-in-one. That was the thing for birdie after nearly making hole-in-one. That was the thing for birdie after nearly making hole-in-one.”

“Tiger Woods missed all the action. He played earlier in the round and methodically scored a solid 70. It was a good start for Woods in his quest to end 11 years without a major, and he was atop the leaderboard briefly until a late bogey. He sounded satisfied.

“I’ve shot this number and won four coats, so hopefully, I can do it again,” said Woods, who slightly miscalculated. The last green jacket he won in 2005 began with a 67. The goal was to not fall too far behind early, and he is just four shots behind.

Rory McIlroy’s bid for the last leg of the career Grand Slam began with a 73, which featured six bogeys.

“I made five birdies — that wasn’t the problem,” McIlroy said. “I just made too many mistakes.”

Even more surprising to McIlroy was no one from the early starters took advantage of soft turf from recent rains.

“I’m there for the taking, and I’m surprised someone hasn’t run off,” McIlroy said.

And that’s right about when Koepka and DeChambeau took off.
KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Railing by two runs and down to their last strike, the Seattle Mariners found a way to keep their winning streak alive. “Confidence is building,” manager Scott Servais said.

Seattle became the first major league team to homer in each of its first 15 games when Dee Gordon connected in the sixth inning, then beat the Kansas City Royals 7-6 Thursday behind Daniel Vogelbach’s home run in the 10th. Seattle improved the best record in the major leagues to 13-2, completing a four-game sweep and extending its winning streak to six. The Mariners became just the third team since 1987 to open with at least 13 wins in the first 15 games after Milwaukee (14-1 in 1987) and Boston (13-2 last year).

Kansas City has lost 10 straight games, has the poorest record in the big leagues at 2-10 and is off to its worst 12-game start since 2006. The Royals failed to preserve leads of 4-0 in the sixth and 6-4 with two outs in the ninth.

SEE POWER ON PAGE 29