WORLD
British Prime Minister Theresa May resigns over Brexit failures
Page 12

VIDEO GAMES
Feeling lucky, punk? Try the confidently bland Rage 2
Page 16

NBA PLAYOFFS
Leonard shines as Raptors put Bucks on ropes
Back page

Fierce weather pounds parts of Midwest for 4th successive day » Page 8

WORLD
British Prime Minister Theresa May resigns over Brexit failures
Page 12

VIDEO GAMES
Feeling lucky, punk? Try the confidently bland Rage 2
Page 16

NBA PLAYOFFS
Leonard shines as Raptors put Bucks on ropes
Back page

Great senior picture

West Point to graduate record number of black female cadets

BY MICHAEL HILL
Associated Press

WEST POINT, N.Y. — The class of cadets preparing to jubilantly toss their caps in the air at the U.S. Military Academy’s graduation ceremony Saturday includes 34 black women, a record number that’s a sign of concerted efforts to diversify West Point’s Long Gray Line.

West Point remains mostly white and mostly male. The 34 women comprise a thin slice of the roughly 1,000 cadets in the Class of 2019. Sometimes, they’re the only women of color in a classroom. Still, cadets said they’re proud to be part of a milestone at the historic academy after four years of testing their limits.

SEE CADETS ON PAGE 4

Black female cadets from the Class of 2019 pose at the U.S. Military Academy on May 7 in West Point, N.Y.

RIGHT PHOTO: MARK LENNIHAN/AP

“I can show other little girls that yes, you can come to West Point. Yes, you can do something that maybe the rest of your peers aren’t actually doing. And yes, you can be different from the rest of the group.”

Stephanie Riley graduating cadet

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Stephanie Riley graduating cadet

IRAN TENSIONS

Pentagon to deploy additional 900 troops

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon will send another 900 troops to the Middle East in the coming weeks in a move meant to bolster security for U.S. troops in the region amid heightening tensions with Iran, the Defense Department announced Friday.

Acting Defense Secretary Pat Shanahan notified Congress on Friday that he had authorized a request from U.S. Central Command to send the additional forces — an Air Force fighter squadron, an engineering element and combination of manned and unmanned intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets — into the Middle East, he said in a statement. The Pentagon will also extend the deployment of some 600 soldiers from a Patriot missile battalion already serving in the region.

The move was approved Thursday by President Donald Trump following a meeting among top national security officials at the White House. The president, who had initially opposed sending additional forces, announced Friday that he had approved the new deployments as he left the United States on route to Japan.

Senior Pentagon officials said Friday that the move was meant only to protect American troops and assets serving in the region and not to flare tensions with Iran, which they accused of orchestrating a widespread campaign intent on undermining U.S. influence in the Middle East.

SEE TROOPS ON PAGE 2

NBA PLAYOFFS
Leonard shines as Raptors put Bucks on ropes
Back page

STARS AND STRIPES

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stripes.com Free to Deployed Areas
**Troops: Move designed to bolster security for US forces stationed in the Middle East**

*FROM FRONT PAGE*

“While we do not seek conflict with Iran, we are determined to protect our forces and interests in the region from attack,” Vice Adm. Michael Gilday, the director of the Joint Staff, said Friday. “We will remain postured to respond.”

The new deployments come in the weeks after the Pentagon expedited the deployment of the U.S. Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group into the Middle East and added a B-52 bomber strike group and a separate Patriot missile battery into the region. The additional fighter jets would respond in the case an attack against American troops was conducted, Gilday said. The engineers will help bolster physical security in locations where American are serving, including in Iraq and Syria. The Patriot battalion will provide defensive, surface-to-air missile launchers designed to shoot down short-range ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and aircraft. The drones and manned intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets would be used to better track Iran’s military and its proxy forces across the Middle East.

The announcement was met with mixed responses from Capitol Hill.

Texas Rep. Mac Thornberry, ranking Republican for the House Armed Services Committee, called the move a prudent one to protect U.S. forces and deter Iran.

“The information and warnings we have collected on Iran are not ‘business as usual,’” he said. “It is important that we make clear to Iran, in words and actions, that they cannot attack us with impunity.”

Rep. Adam Smith, D-Wash., chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, rebuked the move. Smith said political leaders from both sides of the aisle have called for de-escalation and, at first blush, Friday’s move does not do the bill.

Gilday told reporters at the Pentagon that classified intelligence had convinced him that Iran in recent weeks was plotting attacks on American troops in Iraq via its proxy militias. Nonetheless, Gilday did not provide specific information detailing those threats or evidence they were imminent. He said American intelligence officials were working to declassify some information to share safely with the public.

The admiral also fingered Iran for recent attacks in Iraq, including a rocket launched into Baghdad’s Green Zone on Sunday and in the Persian Gulf, where four oil tankers were sabotaged in recent weeks off the coast of the United Arab Emirates. Gilday said Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps was likely responsible for those attacks.

The United States now has some 60,000 to 80,000 troops operating within the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, which includes the Middle East and southwest Asia, according to CENTCOM. That includes some 14,000 troops in Afghanistan, about 5,200 in Iraq and less than 2,000 in Syria.

Top U.S. officials, including Trump, and top Iranian officials, including Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, have insisted they do not seek a war. Shanahan said Thursday before the meeting with Trump that the Pentagon’s actions were meant to limit the chance of “Iranian miscalculation.”

The heightened tensions have come in the weeks after the United States designated Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps an international terrorist organization, the first time it has designated a state-controlled military arm as such.

Iran’s leadership has made its own threats, declaring American troops in the Middle East terrorists and announcing it could scrap some of its commitments under the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, better known as the Iran nuclear deal, including increasing its uranium enrichment.

The United States left that agreement about one year ago, but European Union countries have remained committed to it.

Katie Wheelbarger, the acting assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs, said Friday that the U.S. goal with the Iranians is to drive them back to the negotiation table to strike an agreement. “We do not seek conflict with Iran,” she said. “Our policy remains an economic and diplomatic effort to bring Iran back to the negotiating table to encourage a comprehensive deal that addresses the range of their destabilizing behavior in the region.”

Shanahan told reporters at the Pentagon’s No. 2 official since July 2017 until he was appointed the acting secretary in January. He took over after former Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis resigned in December over policy differences with President Donald Trump.
**MILITARY**

**Trump looks at loophole to sell arms to Saudis**

**By Matthew Lee**  
**and Susannah George**  
**Associated Press**

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration is considering an emergency declaration that would allow it to make an arms shipment to Saudi Arabia without the approval of Congress, two U.S. officials and lawmakers opposed to the move said Thursday.

The officials said a decision on invoking a national security waiver in the Arms Export Control Act to bypass congressio nal review of proposed sales to the Saudis could be made as early as Friday. The officials were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

It was not immediately clear what sales would be covered by the possible waiver, which could allow previously blocked weapons transfers to move forward or be applied to new ones. A sale of precision-guided munitions to Saudi Arabia has been on hold for over a year. Congressional opposition to U.S. military support for Saudi Arabia has been growing, and lawmakers have blocked about $2 billion in arms sales to the kingdom for more than a year. President Donald Trump last month vetoed legislation that would have ended U.S. military assistance for the Saudi-led war in Yemen against Iran-backed rebels, but administration officials have complained that sales remain blocked.

The law requires Congress to be notified of potential arms sales, giving the body the opportunity to block the sale. But the law also allows the president to waive that review process by declaring an emergency that requires the sale be made “in the national security interests of the United States.”

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who would authorize the waiver, has been considering the step for months, according to the officials.

Sen. Bob Menendez, D-N.J., the ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said Thursday that he would move to halt any sales that arise from an exemption.

“I will pursue all appropriate legislative and other means to invalidate these and any planned ongoing sales should the administration move forward in this manner,” he said in a statement.

**President, first lady pay respects at Arlington cemetery**

President Donald Trump and first lady Melania Trump visit Arlington National Cemetery for the annual “Flags In” ceremony on Thursday.

**Tech firms vie for military drone, robot contracts**

**By Aaron Gregg**  
**The Washington Post**

Hoping to capitalize on an imagined future in which robots are on the front lines of warfare, defense contractors are making new investments in small, portable drone systems that can surveil enemy territory or even neutralize targets.

In March, an Oregon-based thermal imaging company, FLIR Systems, opened a new East Coast headquarters less than a mile from the Pentagon that it hopes will serve as the core of a defense business focused on unmanned systems. Also, on May 7, a pair of California-based technology companies, AeroVironment and Kratos Defense & Security Solutions, announced they will team up to develop a system of small, unmanned drones that can be launched and controlled from a larger drone.

Jim Cannon, president and chief executive of FLIR, described the new Northern Virginia office as the culmination of a long-term strategy, and trying to forge new contacts with Pentagon leadership as military agencies seek to modernize their operations.

“It’s important that we get a center of gravity around the Washington area,” Cannon said. “We wanted to show our customers that they are at the center of our strategy, and moving to D.C. is a great way to do that.”

The new Northern Virginia presence is underpinned by a series of acquisitions in unmanned military technology. In late January, it spent $200 million to acquire Aeryon Labs, a Canadian company that makes a small surveillance drone called SkyRanger. The drone is designed to be carried in a rucksack and used for surveillance and controlled through a handheld tablet.

In 2015, FLIR bought a Norwegian company called Prox Dynamics, which makes a quiet, hand-sized surveillance drone it calls the Black Hornet.

The SkyRanger drones are meant to be operated in hard-to-reach, austere areas where higher-flying drones might have poor visibility. The vice president of product management at Aeryon, of Canada, David Proulx said it has already been put to use by deployed military forces.

Proulx said the company will differentiate itself by finding new ways to orchestrate the drones into complex military operations.

“When we started the business 20 years ago, the idea of a camera flying on a small quadcopter was quite advanced,” Proulx said. “Now, the idea of a flying camera is commoditized. Our customers need a platform that can adapt and change.”

FLIR further built out its unmanned systems profile in early February when it bought Endeavor Robotics, which makes ground-based robots that the Army has used for years to defuse roadside bombs.
FROM FRONT PAGE

“I just showed myself and those who thought I couldn’t do it initially that yes, I can,” said senior cadet Stephanie Riley, of Jacksonville, Fla. “And not just, ‘yes, I can.’ I can show other little girls that yes, you can come to West Point. Yes, you can do something that maybe the rest of your peers aren’t actually doing. And yes, you can be different from the rest of the group.”

Riley was among the black female cadets who recently posed for pre-graduation photos in their gray uniforms, holding out ceremonial sabers. The pictures — part of a tradition for graduating cadets — were posted widely online and became a symbol of West Point’s increasing diversity.

“I was more excited to just take the picture because it means that we’re all graduating and it was great to be there with a lot of my sisters who have been there for me in very tough times during summer training and during the academic year,” said senior cadet Gabrielle Young, from Hopkins, S.C. “I didn’t expect it to have the impact that it did around the country.”

While West Point challenges every cadet, experiences can be different for black females. Riley said people would look to her for comment during classroom discussions about race or slavery. Young said she’s acutely aware of how she carries herself and how she’s perceived by different people.

“I feel like in some ways that I do have to prove myself a little bit more, prove that I belong here. And even a classmate told me, I think our freshman year, that I only got in because I was a black female,” said Young, one of the few in her class chosen for medical school.

West Point boosted efforts to recruit women and blacks after being told to diversify in 2013 by then-Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond Odierno. The academy changed its marketing approach and opened a diversity office. Admissions officials increased outreach to metropolitan areas like New York City, Atlanta and Detroit. Not all of these efforts were aimed specifically at minorities or women, but they broadened the search for qualified candidates.

Williams suspended classes for a day in February so the entire academy could focus intently on them. And it was only four years ago that 16 black female seniors inadvertently stirred up controversy by raising clenched fists in one of their own pre-graduation pictures.

Critics saw political overtones in a gesture that supporters said was made in good-natured solidarity.

On Saturday, Young and Riley will be among the graduates commissioned second lieutenants in the U.S. Army after an address by Vice President Mike Pence. Williams will go into the Signal Corps. Young will study to become a doctor.

“I don’t think I would trade this experience for anything in the world,” Young said. “I know that I’ve accomplished a lot and I know that I’m prepared for whatever.”

Members of the senior class march past a statue of George Washington during Parade Day at the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, N.Y., on Wednesday.
Afghan police: Blast at Kabul mosque kills 2

By Amir Shah
Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — A bomb exploded during weekly prayers Friday at a mosque in an eastern part of Kabul, killing two people, including the prayer leader, and wounding 16, officials said.

According to Kabul police chief spokesman Basir Mujahid, the bomb was concealed in the microphone used to deliver the sermon. The prayer leader, Maulvi Samiullah Rayan, was the intended target, the spokesman added.

No militant group immediately claimed responsibility, but both the Taliban and Islamic State regularly stage attacks in the country’s capital.

The Kabul neighborhood where the bombing took place is dominated by ethnic Pashtuns, most of whom are Sunni Muslims and who make up the backbone of the Taliban movement.

Meanwhile, a car bombing wounded 12 people late Thursday in the southern city of Kandahar.

Provincial council member Yousaf Younas said the bombing targeted insurgents from neighboring Pakistan’s secessionist Baluchistan Liberation Army.

It was the second attack in recent years to target the group in Kandahar’s posh Aino Mina residential area, he said. Last year, a suicide bomber blew himself up there, killing five Baluch separatists, including the mastermind behind the attack last year on the Chinese Consulate in Pakistan’s port city of Karachi that killed and wounded 23 police officials and two civilians.

Pakistan has struggled with the yearslong insurgency in Baluchistan where separatists demand a greater share of the region’s wealth and autonomy from Islamabad.

The separatist group also claimed responsibility for an attack earlier this month on a luxury hotel in the northern city of Gwadar, on the Arabian Sea.

Most of the residents in the hotel were Chinese nationals involved in the development of the port.

Kandahar’s provincial police Chief Tadin Khan said there was no evidence that Baluch insurgents were the target of the explosion, which he said also wounded four children.

Afghan police: Blast at Kabul mosque kills 2

By Edith M. Lederer
Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS — The Netherlands called Thursday for the establishment of a tribunal to prosecute war criminals in Syria who are responsible for “mass atrocity crimes.”

Dutch Foreign Minister Stef Blok made the proposal at a U.N. Security Council meeting on the protection of civilians in conflict, saying that “it must be accounted for, and an end to impunity for violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.”

He said ISIS fighters responsible for mass atrocities should be prosecuted, preferably in the region, and “if feasible” by “an ad hoc or hybrid international criminal tribunal.”

“I am fully aware of the complex obstacles on our road towards this goal,” Blok said. “But we have to keep in mind: Justice is a prerequisite of lasting peace and security.”

He said the Netherlands will organize an expert meeting on the prosecution of fighters from ISIS, which is also known as ISIL, on the sidelines of the annual gathering of world leaders at the General Assembly in September.

“Tribunal Security Council members and others to join us on this road towards justice,” Blok said.

ISIS’ self-declared “caliphate” that once spanned a third of both Iraq and Syria has been defeated on the battlefield, but its fighters are now staging insurgent attacks.

The atrocities its fighters and supporters committed have left deep scars. Thousands of members of Iraq’s Yazidi minority, mainly women and girls, were raped and other women were killed. Suspected homosexuals were pushed off roofs to their deaths. Captured Afghan and other Westerners were beheaded, and an unknown number of suspected opponents were killed.

A Security Council resolution backed by more than 60 countries to refer the Syrian conflict to the International Criminal Court was vetoed by Russia and China in May 2014. A new attempt at the council to refer Syria to the ICC would almost certainly face a similar fate.

The General Assembly established an independent panel in December 2016 to assist in the investigation and prosecution of those responsible for war crimes or crimes against humanity in Syria.

In March, the Iraqi government, with U.N. support, started exhuming a mass grave left behind by ISIS in the northwestern Sinjar region in the presence of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Nadia Murad, whose slain Yazidi relatives are believed to have been buried in the area.

The U.N. investigative team said in a report circulated Thursday that to date, the exhumation of 12 gravesites has been completed, and investigators have started collecting “testimony.”

In the report to the Security Council, the team said investigators plan to focus on three initial areas: ISIS attacks against the Yazidis in Sinjar in August 2014; ISIS crimes in Mosul between 2014 and 2016; “including the execution of religious minorities, crimes involving sexual and gender-based violence and crimes against children”; and the mass killing of unarmed Iraqi air force cadets from Tikrit Air Academy in June 2014.

The report said survivors come from all communities in Iraq “and the information we have been consistent and clear: ISIL must be held accountable for its crimes.”

A Security Council resolution backing the new approach to an international criminal court for Syria is “not one of retribution but one of justice,” the report said. “Those who have spoken to the investigative team wish for the crimes of ISIL to be exposed, openly and objectively, so that the world can see the true nature of those acts and so that we can, together, honor the victims.”

Netherlands wants tribunal to try some ISIS members for multitude of war crimes
Trump gives Barr power over classified info

He wants agencies to release origins of Russian investigation

By Zeke Miller
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump has granted Attorney General William Barr new powers to review and potentially release classified information relating to origins of the Russia investigation, a move aimed at accelerating Barr’s inquiry into whether U.S. officials improperly surveilled Trump’s 2016 campaign.

Trump on Thursday directed the U.S. intelligence community to “quickly and fully cooperate” with Barr’s investigation of the origins of the multiyear probe of whether his campaign colluded with Russia.

Former intelligence officials and Democratic lawmakers questioned Trump’s move, which marked an escalation in his efforts to “investigate the investigators” as he works to undermine the findings of special counsel Robert Mueller’s probe. Trump’s announcement came amid mounting Democratic calls to bring impeachment proceedings against him.

Press secretary Sarah Sanders said in a statement that Trump is delegating to Barr the “full and complete authority” to declassify documents relating to the probe, which would ease his efforts to review the sensitive intelligence underpinnings of the investigation.

Such a move could create fresh tensions within the FBI and other intelligence agencies, which have historically resisted such demands.

Barr has already asked John Durham, the U.S. attorney in Connecticut, to examine the origins of the Russia investigation to determine whether intelligence and surveillance methods used during the probe were lawful and appropriate. Still, Barr has been directly involved, according to a person familiar with the matter who was not authorized to disclose it publicly, and is working with CIA Director Gina Haspel, Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats and FBI Director Christopher Wray.

Trump has frequently claimed his campaign was the victim of “political war.” The intelligence community has insisted it acted lawfully in following leads in the Russia investigation and conducted surveillance under court order.

Wray vocally opposed the release by Congress last year of details from a secret surveillance warrant obtained by the bureau in the Trump campaign’s request from Carter Page. The White House had eagerly encouraged Republicans on the House intelligence committee to disclose that classified information, believing it could help undermine the Russia investigation.

Wray, though cooperating with Barr in a review of the origins of the Russia probe, would presumably balk at declassifying classified information that could reveal sensitive sources or methods of intelligence gathering.

Former intelligence officials and Democratic leaders on congressional intelligence committees criticized Trump’s decision.

Transgender protections may be cut

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration on Friday released a proposed rule that in effect says “gender identity” is not protected under federal laws that prohibit discrimination in health care.

It is part of a backdrop of administration actions to limit or move back some of the new recognition for LGBT people in areas ranging from military service to housing.

The proposed rule from HHS reverses the Obama administration, which had been working the Affordable Care Act’s anti-discrimination section does indeed protect transgender people seeking health care services.

Friday’s action was long expected by activists on both sides of the nation’s social issues divide. Trump’s religious conservative base has argued that the Obama administration stretched the meaning of “sex discrimination” to include gender identity.
Trump presses for company to build border wall

BY NICK MIROFF AND JOSH DAWSEY

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump has personally and repeatedly said he wants the head of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to award a border wall contract to a North Dakota construction firm whose top executive is a GOP donor and frequent guest on Fox News, according to three administration officials.

In phone calls, White House meetings and conversations aboard Air Force One during the past several months, Trump has aggressively pushed Dickinson, N.D.-based Fisher Industries to Department of Homeland Security leaders and Lt. Gen. Todd Semonite, the commanding general of the Army Corps, according to the administration officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The push for a specific company has alarmed military commanders and DHS officials.

Semonite was summoned to the White House again Thursday after the president’s aides told Pentagon officials — including Gen. Mark Milley, the command-er of the Army — that the presi-dent wanted to discuss the border barrier.

According to an administra-tion official with knowledge of the Oval Office meeting, Trump immediately brought up Fisher when the president was told by the Army Corps that the agency did not accept its bid to install barriers along the south-ern border, a contract potentially worth billions of dollars.

Design and time

Trump has latched on to the company’s public claims that a new, weathered-steel design and innovative construction method would speed up the project — and deliver it at far less cost to taxpay-ers. White House officials said Trump wants to go with the best and most cost-effective option to build the wall quickly.

The president is one of the country’s most successful build-ers and knows better than anyone how to negotiate the best deals, said Sarah Sanders, White House press secretary. “He wants to make sure we get the job done under budget and ahead of schedule.”

Fisher’s CEO, Tommy Fisher, has appeared on conservative television and radio shows, say-ing that his company could build more than 200 miles of barrier in less than a year. And he has courted Washington directly, meeting in congressional offices and invit-ing officials to the southwest des-ert to see barrier prototypes.

Even as Trump pushes for his firm, Fisher already has started building a section of fencing in Sunland Park, N.M. We Build the Wall, a nonprofit organization that includes prominent conservatives who support the president — its associates and advisory board include former House ad-viser Stephen Bannon; Black-water USA founder Erik Prince; ex-Rep. Tom Tancredo, R-Colo.; and personal friends and associates to his allies — and the president’s willingness to dive into the minutiae of specifc projects.

Improper influence

But Trump’s personal interven-tion risks the perception of im-proper influence on decades-old government agencies to seek competitive bids, free of political interference.

A senior White House official explained Trump’s advocacy for Fisher by saying the presi-dent wanted the company to be cheaper than others and could build the wall faster. The official said Trump would prefer another company if he learned they could do the work cheaper and faster than Fisher.

The official said Trump had not told Semonite he must award the contract to the company but had repeatedly brought up Fisher as an option because he sees the process as too expensive and too slow. Trump wants to see hun-dreds of miles of border bar-rier completed within the next two years.

The president has taken an intense interest in the border barrier project, expressing frus-tration with the pace of progress on a structure he views as key to his reelection campaign. Several administration officials have said the president requires frequent briefings from his staff and has given specific but shifting in-structions to Semonite and DHS leaders on his preferred tastes and design specifications.

Buttigieg: Trump’s possible pardon of war crime soldiers is ‘disgusting’

BY JOHN WAGNER

WASHINGTON — Demo-cratic presidential aspirant Pete Buttigieg said Thursday that he thinks it is “disgusting” that President Donald Trump is re-portedly considering pardons for several American military mem-bers accused or convicted of war crimes.

Buttigieg, the mayor of South Bend, Ind., who served in Af-ghanistan as a Navy Reserve intelligence officer, said during an appearance at a Washington Post Live event that such pardons would hurt the standing of the U.S. military abroad and make troops less safe.

“My view is it’s disgusting,” Buttigieg said, adding that it is important to maintain the cred-ibility of the U.S. military justice system. “If the president blows a hole in that, he is blowing a hole in the military and he is putting troops’ lives at risk.”

Buttigieg said that during his military service, “the flag on my shoulder represented a country that kept its word. ... If we lose that, nothing will keep us safe.”

Several recent reports have said Trump is considering some pardons of military members on an expedited basis to exercise his power around Memorial Day.

Buttigieg’s military service came up at several points during a wide-ranging interview with the Post’s Robert Costa.

Buttigieg, 37, the youngest candidate in the Democratic presidential field, referred to his military service when seeking to make the case that he could take on Trump.

“I don’t have a problem standing up to someone who was work-ing on Season 7 of ‘Celebrity Apprentice’ when I was packing my bags for Afghanistan,” Buttigieg said, citing Trump’s previ-ous NBC reality television series.

Buttigieg also accused Trump of skirting military service in Vietnam for an illegitimate reason.

“I have a pretty dim view of his decision to use his privilege to fake a disability in order to avoid serving in Vietnam,” Buttigieg said.

Trump has said he received a medical deferment in 1968 be-cause he had bone spurs in his feet.

The New York Times reported late last year that the daughters of a deceased podiatrist said it was “family lore” that their father provided the diagnosis as a favor to Trump’s father, who owned the building in which the podiatrist practiced.

Bank CEO charged with trying to trade loans for post on Trump administration

BY LARRY NEOUMESTER

NEW YORK — A banker who prosecutors say tried to buy himself a senior post in President Donald Trump’s administration by making risky loans to former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort was arrested Thursday on a financial institution bribery charge.

Stephen M. Calk, 54, appeared in Manhattan federal court in the afternoon and pleaded not guilty. He was released on $5 million bail. Magistrate Judge Debra Freeman told Calk to have no contact with bank employees except for his brother. Prosecutors will submit an official list of bank employees he cannot contact by next week.

Calk’s lawyer, Jeremy Margo-lis, said in a statement his client will be exonerated on the “base-less isolated charge.”

Authorities said Calk com-mitted the crime while serving as CEO of The Federal Sav-ings Bank, a small bank headquar-tered in Chi-cago with an office in New York. Calk has no involvement with the bank and is on a com-plete leave of absence, a bank spokesperson said Thursday in a statement.

Federal prosecutors described the charge in a release, saying Calk abused his bank position by approving $16 million in high-risk loans that were ultimately downgraded by the bank’s pri-mary regulator.

William F. Sweeney Jr., head of New York’s FBI office, said Calk “went to great lengths to avoid banking violations in an attempt to secure a senior position in a presidential administration.”

“He attempted at petitioning for political favors was unsuccessful in more ways than one — he didn’t get the job he wanted and he compromised the one he had,” Sweeney added. Calk convicted, he could face up to 30 years in prison.

Manafort lobbied Trump’s son-in-law, Jared Kushner, to con-sider Calk for secretary of the Army, according to emails from the weeks leading up to the 2016 election.
JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — An outbreak of nasty storms in the Midwest spawned tornadoes that razed homes, flattened trees and tossed cars across a dealership lot, injuring about two dozen people in Missouri’s capital city and killing at least three others elsewhere in the state.

The National Weather Service confirmed that a large and destructive twister moved over Jefferson City shortly before midnight Wednesday.

Officials said the tornado packed winds of up to 160 miles per hour and cut a path about 3 miles long and a mile wide. Emergency workers reported about two dozen injuries but no fatalities in the city of about 40,000 people.

For the fourth consecutive day, tornadoes strafed the middle of the country Thursday, this time concentrated in sparsely populated panhandles of Oklahoma and Texas. The weather service received reports of more than a dozen tornadoes, along with numerous reports of large hail and torrential rain.

Storms this week in the central U.S. have left at least seven people dead, including three near Golden City, Mo.

Kenneth Harris, 86, and his wife, Opal, 83, were found dead about 200 yards from their home, and Betty Berg, 56, was killed and her husband, Mark, seriously injured when their mobile home was destroyed, authorities said.

While forecasters said the threat of severe weather would ease Friday and into the weekend, another natural disaster could be imminent in Jefferson City. Most of the city, including the tornado-ravaged section, sits on a bluff overlooking the south side of the Missouri River. The swollen river is projected to top a levee on the north side of the river by Friday, potentially flooding the city's airport, which already has been evacuated.

Many in Jefferson City considered themselves fortunate to survive the tornado.

David Surprenant watched the storm approach, then rushed to join his family in the basement. By then, the windows had started shattering and the pressure dropped.

“It was just the eeriest sound ever, and it felt like it was taking your breath right out of you,” said Surprenant, 34. He and his family were unharmed.

Kerry Ann Demetrius locked herself in the bathroom of her Jefferson City apartment as the storm approached.

“It sounded like stuff was being thrown around, everything was just banging together, and then it just went dead silent,” she said. She emerged to find the roof had been blown off her apartment building.

The National Weather Service said preliminary information indicates the tornado at Jefferson City was an EF-3, which typically carry winds up to 160 mph.

The severe weather moved in from Oklahoma, where rescuers struggled to pull people from high water.

Floodwaters along the Arkansas River could approach or surpass record levels for about 120 miles from Tulsa, Okla., to Fort Smith, Ark. More than 1,000 homes have been damaged and 35 to 40 highways closed by floodwaters in Oklahoma, Gov. Kevin Stitt told reporters Thursday evening.

The heavily traveled Interstate 40 bridge over the Arkansas River at Webbers Falls, Okla., reopened after a dam escaped major damage when a pair of loose barges rammed into it.

The barges, carrying a total of about 3,800 pounds of fertilizer, broke loose Wednesday and floated down the swollen river. They eventually hit the dam and sank, causing only “minimal damage,” The Army Corps of Engineers said.

A twister also caused damage and several injuries in the town of Carl Junction, not far from Joplin, Mo., on the eighth anniversary of the catastrophic tornado that killed 161 people in that city. Police Chief Delmar Haase said nearly three dozen homes had significant damage, and several people sustained minor injuries.
VR helps police interact with autistic people

By Michael Balsamo
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — An autistic man walks out of a store without paying for a toy he picked up. He's followed by a storekeeper demanding he come back inside. The situation quickly escalates, and police are called.

Officers arrive, their patrol car's lights flashing and sirens blaring, to find the man in the parking lot, yelling and not responding to their commands. They have a choice: confront the man and risk having the situation turn violent or regroup to figure out a different approach.

The scenario is part of a virtual reality simulation for police that’s being developed by Axon — the company known best for developing the Taser — so officers can learn how to interact with people who suffer with autism.

In the autism scenario, officers experience it first from the point of view of the autistic person, watching as the storekeeper approaches somewhat angrily and pulls the toy robot away, telling the man he needs to pay for it. Police are called, and officers arrive and confront him. They can then play it from the perspective of the police officers, observing tell-tale signs that someone could be autistic.

A cracking call on the radio reports an aggressive male suspect shoplifting and fighting with an employee. The officers pull up to find the man in the parking lot, holding the toy and flailing his arms. They introduce themselves and ask the man what's happening. He doesn’t respond.

“We need you to calm down!” an officer tells the man, who is hitting himself in the head and speaking incoherently.

The ability to tell the difference between someone who's acting in an unusual way that may be due to autism versus someone who could be a risk for violence is one of the challenges the scenario presents. The officers are taught that flashing lights and sirens can be overstating and just turning them off could ease the situation. They are also encouraged to remain calm, avoid physically confronting the person and to engage specially trained officers from a mental health crisis team, if their department has one.

The training can also create “a sense of empathy” and emphasizes that other methods like shouting or grabbing a suspect “can hypersensitize someone who is autistic,” Rick Smith, Axon’s founder and CEO.

Lisa Noland, who survived an attack at the hands of serial killer Bobby Joe Long, speaks to reporters after his execution Thursday in Starke, Fla.

By Brendan Farrington
Associated Press

STARKE, Fla. — A serial killer who terrorized Florida with a murderous spree that claimed 10 women in 1984 was put to death Thursday, his execution witnessed by a woman who survived one of his attacks and aided in his capture.

Bobby Joe Long, 65, was pronounced dead at 6:55 p.m. Thursday following a lethal injection at Florida State Prison.

“Long had no last words, simply closing his eyes as the procedure began, witnesses said.”

The killer terrified the Tampa Bay area for eight months in 1984 as women began showing up dead, their bodies often left in gruesome poses. Most were strangled, some had their throats slit and others were bludgeoned.

Law enforcement had few clues until the case of Lisa Noland, who survived one of Long’s attacks. She witnessed Thursday’s execution from the front row.

Noland was abducted by Long outside a church that year. He raped her but ultimately let her go free. She left him in DeLand positioned herself in the witness room for the murder Michelle Simms, 22. Noland placed herself in the witness room where she hoped Long would see her.

“I wanted to look him in the eye. I wanted evidence of his crimes on the scene and gave police details leading to his capture. Long confessed to the crimes, receiving a lifetime sentence.

By the time he put the gun to my head, it was nothing new to me,” she told The Associated Press earlier this week.

She said she knew from her past abuse that if she fought Long, it would enrage him.

“I had to learn who he was, what made him tick. If I did the wrong move, could it end my life? So literally, the night before, I wrote a suicide note out, and now I was in a position where I had to save my life,” she said on Wednesday.

By Brendan Farrington

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Major law enforcement organizations dropped their opposition Thursday to California legislation that strengthens standards for when police can use deadly force, a shift that followed changes to the measure.

The measure would bar police from using lethal force unless it is “necessary” to defend against an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury to officers or bystanders. It was prompted by public outrage over fatal police shootings, including the killing of unarmed vandalism suspect Stephon Clark in Sacramento last year.

The current standard lets officers kill if they have “reasonable” fear they or others are in imminent danger, a threshold that makes it rare for officers to be charged following a shooting and rarer still for them to be convicted.

“The peace that came over me is a remarkable feeling,” she said.

“If at the time he put the gun to my head, it was nothing new to me,” she told The Associated Press earlier this week.

She said she knew from her past abuse that if she fought Long, it would enrage him.

“I had to learn who he was, what made him tick. If I did the wrong move, could it end my life? So literally, the night before, I wrote a suicide note out, and now I was in a position where I had to save my life,” she said on Wednesday.

“The courts can still consider whether officers needlessly escalated a situation or failed to use de-escalation tactics that could have avoided a shooting,” he said.

The ACLU considers the revised measure to still have the most language of any in the U.S., though legal experts split on the significance of Thursday’s changes.

“This is so watered down,” said Ed Obayashi, a use-of-force consultant to law enforcement agencies and a Plumas County deputy sheriff. “The language is virtually legally synonymous with current constitutional standards for use of force. It really is a distinction without a legal difference.”
GOP lawmaker blocks disaster assistance bill

By Andrew Taylor

WASHINGTON — A House GOP conservative complaining of Washington’s free-spending and opaque ways blocked a long-overdue $19 billion disaster aid bill on Friday, extending a tempest over hurricane and flood relief that has left the measure meandering for months.

Texas Republican Chip Roy, a former aide to Texas firebrand Sen. Ted Cruz, objected to speeding the measure through a nearly empty chamber, also complaining that it does not contain any of President Donald Trump’s $4.5 billion request for dealing with a migrant refugee crisis on the U.S.-Mexico border.

“It is a bill that includes nothing to address the humanitarian emergency and humanitarian crisis we face at our southern border,” Roy said.

Democrats said the House will try to again pass the measure next week during a session, like Friday’s, that would otherwise be pro forma. If that doesn’t succeed, a quick bipartisan vote would come after Congress returns next month from its Memorial Day recess.

The relief measure would deliver money to southern states suffering from last fall’s hurricanes, Midwestern states deluged with springtime floods and fire-ravaged rural California, among others. Puerto Rico would also get help for hurricane recovery, ending a monthslong dispute between Trump and powerful Democrats like Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, of New York.

Trump said Thursday that he will enthusiastically sign the bill, which delivers much-needed help to many areas in the country where he performs well with voters.

The House drama came less than 24 hours after the Senate passed the bill by a sweeping 85-8 vote that represented a brushback pitch by a chamber weary of Trump’s theatrics and where some members are increasingly showing impatience with the lack of legislative action.

Trump had favored the bill even though $4 billion-plus to deal with the humanitarian crisis involving Central American migrants at the border had been removed.

“I didn’t want to hold that up any longer,” Trump said. “I totally support it.”

Much of the money would go to Trump strongholds such as the Florida Panhandle, rural Georgia and North Carolina, and Iowa and Nebraska. Several military facilities would receive money to rebuild, including Camp Lejeune in North Carolina and Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska.

Disaster aid bills are invariably bipartisan, but this round bogged down. And a late-week breakdown on the appropriations panel left important must-do work for lawmakers when Congress returns next month.

After months of fighting, Democrats banded together and won further aid to Puerto Rico, the U.S. territory slammed by back-to-back hurricanes in 2017.

Talks this week over Trump’s border request broke down, however, over conditions Democrats wanted to place on money to provide care and shelter for asylum-seeking Central American migrants.

Talks were closely held, and the opaque process sometimes left even veteran lawmakers in the dark.

Lawyer: Deal close in Weinstein sexual misconduct lawsuits

NEW YORK — A tentative deal has been reached to settle multiple lawsuits brought against the television and film company co-founded by Harvey Weinstein, who has been accused of sexual misconduct by scores of women.

Attorneys involved in the negotiations told a federal bankruptcy court judge during a hearing in Wilmington, Del., Thursday that a breakthrough in a still-unfinished mediation had put a settlement within reach.

The amount of the deal wasn’t revealed in court, but a person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press it was worth $44 million. The person wasn’t authorized to reveal details of the discussions and spoke on condition of anonymity.

“We now have an economic framework in principal that is supported by the plainiffs, the (New York attorney general’s) office, the defendants and all of the insurers that, if approved, would provide significant compensation to victims, creditors and the estate and allow the parties to avoid years of costly, time-consuming and uncertain litigation on all sides,” Adam Harris, a lawyer for studio co-founder Bob Weinstein, told the judge.

He cautioned that there was still “a lot of work here to do.”

“But,” he added, “I personally am very optimistic.”

The size of the settlement was first reported by The Wall Street Journal. More than 15 lawsuits have been filed accusing Harvey Weinstein or the company of misconduct. The settlement would cover many of them, including a class action by alleged victims that accuses the film company of operating like an organized crime group to conceal widespread sexual harassment and assaults.

It would also resolve a civil suit by the New York attorney general alleging that Harvey Weinstein’s media company, in enabling his mistreatment of women, violated labor laws.

The New York attorney general’s office declined to comment on the amount of the settlement.

Any settlement would need to be approved by the courts.

Harvey Weinstein also faces criminal charges in New York of rape and performing a forcible sex act. His trial is scheduled to begin in September. The settlement wouldn’t resolve his criminal case.

Weinstein denies all allegations of non-consensual sex.

US charges WikiLeaks founder with publishing classified info

WASHINGTON — In a case with significant First Amendment implications, the U.S. filed new charges Thursday against WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, accusing him of violating the Espionage Act by publishing secret documents containing the names of confidential military and diplomatic sources.

The Justice Department’s 18-count superseding indictment alleges that Assange directed former Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning in one of the largest compromises of classified information in U.S. history. It says the WikiLeaks founder, currently in custody in London, damaged national security by publishing documents that harmed the U.S. and its allies and aided its adversaries.

The case comes amid a Justice Department crackdown on national security leaks and raised immediate fear among news media advocates that Assange’s actions — including soliciting and publishing classified information — are indistinguishable from what traditional journalists do on a daily basis. Those concerns led the Obama administration Justice Department to balk at bringing charges for similar conduct.

Assange’s lawyer, Barry Pollack, said Thursday that the “unprecedented charges” against his client imperil “all journalists in their endeavor to inform the public about actions that have been taken by the U.S. government.” The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press called the case a “dire threat” to media freedom, and the American Civil Liberties Union said it was the first time in history a publisher was charged for disclosing truthful information.

But Justice Department officials sought to make clear that they believed Assange’s actions weren’t protected under the law, though they declined to discuss the indictment. The new Espionage Act charges go far beyond an initial indictment against Assange made public last month that accused him simply of conspiring with Manning to Craig a Defense Department computer password.

“Julian Assange is no journalist,” said Assistant Attorney General John Demers, the Justice Department’s top national security official. “No responsible actor, journalist or otherwise, would purposely publish the names of individuals he or she knew to be confidential human sources in war zones, exposing them to the gravest of dangers.”

Zachary Terwilliger, the U.S. Attorney in Alexandria, Va., where the case was brought, said Assange was charged with illegally soliciting classified information and not simply publishing it. He said that while the indictment alleges that he published hundreds of thousands of documents, it would have him disclosing only a “narrow set of documents” related to the identities of confidential sources.

Prosecutors sought throughout the document to make a distinction between what Assange did as the founder and “public face” of WikiLeaks and the work of journalists.
US cities feel effect of migrant releases

BY ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON Associated Press

MIAMI — A surge of asylum-seeking families has been strain- ing cities along the southern U.S. border for months, but now the issue is flowing into cities far from Mexico, where immigrants are being housed in an airplane hangar and rodeo fairground and local authorities are struggling to keep up with the influx.

U.S. immigration officials have eyed spots in states like Florida, Michigan and New York to help process the migrants before they move on to their destination, which could be anywhere in the U.S.

And in border states, cities that are several hours’ drive from Mexico are already seeing sometimes hundreds of migrants a day.

The situation is leaving local authorities and nonprofits with the task of providing shelter for a night or two, a few meals and travel assistance to help migrants reach their final destinations across the U.S.

The issue erupted in political intrigue last week when Demo- cratic stronghold in Florida balked at plans to send migrants to their counties, conjuring images of homeless migrants on the streets.

But elsewhere, cities and states are quietly making arrange- ments. New Mexico and Colorado reached an agreement to drop off some migrants in Denver. A remote desert town in California has helped hundreds reach shelters for short-term stays.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has historically ensured that families had travel plans before releasing them, but last year, it shortened custody stays in response to the growing numbers of arrivals from Mexico.

They began dropping migrants off in cities along the border at burgeoning shelters and bus stations.

At the same time, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, which turns over border-crossers to ICE after arresting them, has begun flying migrants to other cities for processing and is releasing them directly into communities without going through ICE, saying their own facilities are at capacity.

As numbers have swelled in border cities, authorities have begun looking farther inland.

In Florida, reports of asylum-seeking migrants detained at the U.S.-Mexico border in tents or makeshift areas under bridges seemed a distant matter until last week. Officials warned the public of plans federal officials gave to fly 1,000 border-crossers from El Paso, Texas, to two Florida coun-
ties per month to be processed and released into the community, calling it a “humanitarian crisis” that could create a “homeless encampment.”

“I was scared they were going to come here and live in tents,” said Mark Bogen, mayor of Broward County, among the first to publicly oppose the plan. “It’s not that we are not welcoming. We are welcoming, but we don’t have resources for these people at this point.”

Florida’s Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis got on the phone on Saturday with President Donald Trump, who assured him that would not happen. Detroit and Buffalo, N.Y., were also considered as places to send migrants, but acting Homeland Security Secretary Kevin McAleenan quashed the idea on Sunday.

In New Mexico, the cities of Las Cruces, Deming and Albuquerque have embraced relief efforts.

But the board of commissioners of sparsely populated Sierra Coun-
ty, in the same state, approved a resolution Tuesday that opposes the relocation of migrants there, citing the area’s impoverishment and lack of transportation.

Las Cruces, 46 miles north of the border city of El Paso, is strug-
gling to keep up. About 6,500 mi-
grants have been dropped off by Border Patrol since April 12, in the city of 100,000 people.

“We don’t anticipate a slow-
down anytime soon,” said city spokesman Udell Vigil.

Abortion opponents divided on exception of rape, incest victims

BY DAVID CRARY Associated Press

Even as the anti-abortion movement celebrates victories as the no- exceptions bans passed in several states, it’s divided by a widening rift over whether those prohibitions should apply to victims of rape and incest.

The debate pits those who believe any abortion is immoral against those who worry that a no-exceptions stance could be harmful to some Republican can-
idates in upcoming elections. A Gallup poll last year found that 77% of Americans support excep-
tions in cases of rape and incest.

“There is a media spotlight shining on this issue, said Clarke Forsythe, senior counsel with Americans United for Life.

“State leaders need to be prudent and reflect not only on state elec-
tions but also national elections, and the pace of change the public might accept.”

There’s potential for even more division.

The Federalist, an online mag-
azine influential in conservative

and anti-abortion circles, ran an

article this week by two abortion

opponents suggesting that women

who induce their own abortions

should be prosecuted for murder.

The position is at odds with the pro-women rhetoric of leading anti-abortion groups.

“We’re 100% percent against prosecuting women,” said Kristi Hamrick, spokeswoman for Stu-
dents for Life of America.

Divisions over rape-and-incest exceptions have existed within the anti-abortion movement for years but have become more ap-
parent as several states in the South and Midwest enacted tough bans on abortion.

Only the ban in Georgia in-
cludes an exception for victims of rape or incest — and then only if the woman files a police re-
port first. Measures enacted in Alabama, Ohio, Kentucky, Mis-
issippi and Missouri do not con-
tain those exceptions, nor does a measure nearing final approval in Louisiana.

Alabama’s ban is the toughest:

Perforning an abortion at any stage of pregnancy would be a fel-
yony punishable by up to 99 years
or life in prison. The only excep-
tion would be when the woman’s health is at serious risk.

Some Republicans in Ala-
abama’s GOP-controlled Senate,

as well as minority Democrats,

were enraged when an exception for rape and incest was removed without a roll call vote. The flare-
up prompted a five-hour delibera-
tion before final approval came

on May 14.

Emboldened by the bans, 17

anti-abortion leaders sent a let-
ter Wednesday to Republican Na-
tional Committee Chairwoman

Ronna McDaniel requesting a

meeting and urging the GOP to

explicitly oppose exceptions for

rape and incest.

The signatories included

Kristan Hawkins, president of

Students for Life; the Rev. Frank

Patone, director of Priests for

Life, and activist Ryan Bomberg-
er, the son of a woman who was

impegnated by a rapist but opted

to have an abortion.

“We understand that issues like rape and incest are difficult
topics to tackle,” the letter said.

Nevertheless, it is our view that

the value of human life is not de-
termined by the circumstances

of one’s conception or birth.”

McDaniel, in reply, described the

GOP as “the party of life” and

added, “I welcome any discussion

about how to protect it.”

Discussing the bans in an in-

terview with CNN on May 17, Mc-

Daniel said, “Personally, I would

have the exceptions. … But we

are a party that is a broad tent.”

President Donald Trump,

House Minority Leader Kevin

McCarthy, of California, and Sen-

ate Majority Leader Mitch Mc-

Connell, of Kentucky, also have
distanced themselves from the no-exceptions bans.

In several state legislatures, debate over the exceptions pro-
duced dramatic moments.

Samantha Blakely, 25, a travel

industry employee from Birming-
ham, Ala., testified at a hear-
ing on the Alabama ban about her decision to have an abortion after a rape in 2017 resulted in pregnancy. She said ban support-
ers ignore the difficult situations faced by women like her.

“They have absolutely lost sight of victims,” Blakely told The As-

sociated Press. “There are blind-
ers on, to block out victims of rape and incest.”

None of the abortion bans en-
acted this year has taken effect.

All are expected to be blocked by federal courts, with ban support-
ers hoping appeals might lead to the U.S. Supreme Court.
N. Korea says no de-nuclearization talks unless US changes stance

By Kim Gamel
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea – North Korea warned on Friday that it will not resume nuclear talks unless the United States changes its position, the latest sign of growing frustration over Washington’s administration’s refusal to ease sanctions against the communist state.

The statement appeared on the state-run Korean Central News Agency on the eve of President Donald Trump’s planned visit to Japan. North Korea accused the United States of deliberately derailing the second summit between Trump and leader Kim Jong Un in late February by making irrefutable demands such as unilateral disarmament.

KCNA noted the North had suspended nuclear and long-range missile tests and returned the remains of American soldiers killed during the 1950-53 Korean War. “However, the United States did not move forward with a new measure in the same manner but deliberately pushed the talks to a rupture by merely claiming the unilateral disarmament,” said the KCNA.

The spokesman said the United States could not “move us even an inch” with its current approach, and “further its mistrust and hostile acts towards (North Korea) grow, the fiercer our reaction will be.”

“Unless the United States comes forward with a new method of calculation, the (North Korean-U.S.) dialogue will never be resumed and, by extension, the prospect for resolving the nuclear issue will be much gloomier,” KCNA added. “The U.S. would be well advised to wake up to reality and learn anew how to dialogue and negotiation.”

North Korea has stepped up its angry rhetoric against the United States since the Hanoi summit ended early without an agreement. However, it has avoided directly criticizing Trump, who insists he maintains a good relations with Kim.

The communist state also has expressed anger over the seizure of one of its cargo ships, the U.S. Justice Department claims was used to export coal in violation of American and international sanctions.

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May to quit as British PM

By Karla Adam and William Booth
The Washington Post

LONDON — Theresa May announced Friday that she will resign as the leader of Britain this summer, a move that will set in motion a battle for who will succeed her as the next prime minister.

May was under intense pressure from within her own party after being soundly defeated in parliamentary elections earlier this week. She faced a growing revolt among her Conservative members over her continued support for an approach that she had promised would take Britain out of the European Union without a deal.

May also faced growing criticism from the opposition Labour Party, which has argued that her approach was too slow and methodical, and from some among her own Conservative Party, who have argued that she was not doing enough to secure a Brexit deal.

May spoke at a news conference Friday evening, saying she had decided to resign after the loss of support for her Brexit plan in the election. She said she would remain in the role of prime minister until her successor is chosen.

“I have been absolutely clear that this would be my last election,” she said. “I have been clear that this would be my last term as prime minister.”

She said she would work with the new leader to ensure a smooth transition. “I have been clear this would be my last term as prime minister,” she said. “I have been clear that this would be my last election.”

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China ramps up rhetoric in trade standoff

BY CHRISTOPHER BODEEN
Associated Press

BEIJING — Stepping up Beijing’s propaganda offensive in the tariffs standoff with Washington, Chinese state media on Friday accused the U.S. of seeking to “colonize global business” with moves against Huawei and other Chinese technology companies.

There was no word from either side on progress toward resuming talks between the world’s two largest economies, though President Donald Trump said he expected to meet with his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, next month at a G-20 meeting in Japan.

Negotiations over how to cut the huge, long-standing U.S.-China trade deficit with China and resolve complaints over Beijing’s methods for acquiring advanced foreign technologies foundered earlier this month after Trump raised tariffs on billions of dollars of imports from China.

At a daily briefing Friday, Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang accused American politicians he didn’t name of “fabricating various lies based on subjective presumptions and trying to mislead the American people.”

The China Daily, an English-language newspaper, said U.S. expressions of concerns about Chinese surveillance equipment maker Hikvision were for the self-serving aim of claiming the “moral high ground” to promote Washington’s political agenda.

“In this way, it is hoping to achieve the colonization of the global business world,” the newspaper said.

Hikvision said in a statement Friday that it takes U.S. concerns about its business seriously and is working to ensure it complies with human rights standards. Activists have been urging the U.S. and other countries to sanction China over repression of members of Muslim minority ethnic groups in the Xinjiang region, where an estimated 1 million people are being detained in re-education camps.

The New York Times reported the U.S. Commerce Department might put Hikvision on its “entity list,” restricting its business with U.S. companies for its alleged role in facilitating surveillance in Xinjiang.

In its statement, the company said it had “engaged with the U.S. government regarding all of this since last October.”

Hikvision said it had retained former U.S. Ambassador-at-large Pierre-Richard Prosper, of the firm Arent Fox, to advise the company regarding human rights compliance. “Over the past year, there have been numerous reports about ways that video surveillance products have been involved in human rights violations,” the statement said. “We read every report seriously and are listening to voices from outside the company.”

In South Korea, officials said they were discussing security issues related to its 5G, or fifth-generation, cellphone networks with the U.S.

Officials in South Korea’s Foreign Ministry and presidential office did not, however, confirm the report by the Chosun Ilbo newspaper that U.S. officials want Seoul to block a local wireless carrier that uses Huawei equipment for its 5G services from unspecified “sensitive areas.”

Washington considers Huawei, the world’s leading supplier of telecom gear and No. 2 smartphone maker, a security threat. Huawei has sought to alleviate those concerns and has rejected assertions that it would facilitate spying by Beijing.

It’s unclear whether Seoul would accept potential U.S. demands to block imports of Huawei products at risk of triggering retaliation from China, its biggest trade partner.

A U.S. business group reported Friday that its members’ operations in China are facing growing pressure from trade friction after the Trump administration imposed 25% tariffs on $250 billion in Chinese imports, with plans to extend those duties to another $300 billion — virtually all the goods America buys from China.

MARKET WATCH

May 23, 2019

Dow Jones -285.14

Industrials -25,490.47

Nasdaq composite -122.56

Standard & Poor’s 500 -34.03

Russell 2000 -2,822.24

1,501.38

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates

Euro costs (May 27) ................................ $1.1478

British pound (May 27) ............................... 1.30

Japanese yen (May 27) .............................. 107.05

South Korean won (May 27) ......................1,160.00

Commercial rates

Bahrain (Dinar) ...................... 0.3770

British pound (Pound sterling) 1.2663

Canada (Dollar) .............................. 1.3482

China (Yuan) .............................. 6.9004

Denmark (Krone) ..................... 6.6688

Egypt (Pound) ............. 16.8651

Euro ......................... $1.1186/0.8932

Hong Kong (Dollar) 6.8490

Hungary (Forint) .................... 296.74

Israel (Shekel) ...................... 3.6069

Japan (Yen) ...................... 109.58

Korea (Won) ...................... 1,236.16

Norway (Kroner) .............. 8.7106

Philippines (Peso) ....... 52.13

Poland (Zloty) .............. 3.84

Portugal (Euro) .... 1.42

Singapore (Dollar) .......... 1.3760

South Korea (Won) .... 1,186.64

Switzerland (Franc) .......... 1.0012

Thailand (Baht) ........ 31.80

Turkey (Lira) .............. 6.0761

Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), government and other banking facilities may offer rates provided for reference only. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate – 5.59

Discount rate – 3.00

Fed funds rate – 2.50

3-month Bill – 2.71

20-year bond – 2.73

SUNDAZ IN THE PACIFIC

The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.
Homeless student is class valedictorian

TENNESSEE — A homeless student has graduated as his high school’s valedictorian and was offered dozens of scholarships totaling $3 million.

Tupac Moseley said his family fell behind on bills after his father died. They lost their home when it was foreclosed in February. Moseley said his family spent three months living with relatives and in a cabin at a Christian retreat center before securing housing.

Despite the uncertainty and stress, Moseley graduated from Raleigh Egypt High School with a 4.3 GPA.

He’s attending Tennessee State University and will be majoring in electrical engineering when he starts this fall. TSU President Glenda Glover said the college will pay for his housing and meal plan so “everything is free.”

Deputies foil plans for stocked post-prom party

Palm City — Sheriff’s deputies foiled plans for a post-prom bash at a Airbnb that had been stocked with liquor, pot and stripper poles.

Martin County Sheriff’s Lt. Ryan Grimsdale said they heard about the April 12 party just before several hundred West Boca Community High School students were set to get on three buses to head to the three-story Palm City home.

The Sun-Sentinel reported each student paid $80, which covered the bus ride and party favors, including Jello shots, high-end liquors and mixers and beer. Marijuana joints had been pre-rolled.

Grimsdale said the party would have “rivalred any bar in Martin County that day.”

Woman gets car after shared tale of long walk

Slidell — A cashier at a Walmart outside New Orleans whose tale of walking six miles to work before sunrise was shared widely has been given a new car.

WWL-TV reported that Slidell police officer Bradley Peck saw Anita Singleton walking near Highway 11 at 5:30 a.m. this week. Peck offered Singleton a ride after learning she worked at a Walmart superstore six miles away. During the drive, Singleton said that her job was a blessing, even if it meant a long walk in the dark.

The officer was so moved by Singleton that Slidell Police Chief Bobby Martin decided to surprise Singleton with a new set of wheels.

Police say man shot fireworks at people

Brattleboro — Police in Vermont have accused a man of shooting fireworks at vehicles and pedestrians, one of which hit a man in the head.

Police said one caller said fireworks were being shot out of a vehicle at other drivers on May 14 on Brattleboro’s Main Street. Police also made contact with a man walking who said he was struck by fireworks from a vehicle. He didn’t seek medical attention.

Aible Ford, 21, of Brattleboro, was later cited on fireworks possession and simple assault charges.

Fugitive seeks ‘likes’ before surrendering

Torrington — A police department said a fugitive has agreed to surrender if enough people respond to an online wanted poster on social media.

Torrington police said Jose Simms, 29, who is believed to be somewhere in New York, has seven arrest warrants and is being sought as a fugitive after failing to appear in court.

Lt. Brett Johnson posted on the department’s Facebook page on Wednesday that Sims had contacted him through Facebook and agreed to turn himself in if the post containing his poster gets 15,000 ‘likes.’ Johnson said he negotiated Simms down from 20,000 ‘likes.’

The lieutenant described the challenge as difficult but doable.

He also suggested that if anyone knows were Simms is hiding, they could let police know and save the department some expense.

Man using torch to kill bugs dead after fire

Henderson — Authorities said a man died after being pulled from a basement crawl space where he ignited a house fire with a torch he was using to exterminate bugs.

Aible Ford, 21, of Brattleboro, was later cited on fireworks possession and simple assault charges.

Senior prank forces high school to close

Roanoke Rapids — Officials in a school system said a senior prank that went too far forced them to cancel classes at a high school which was built nearly a century ago.

Spokesman Les Atkins of the Roanoke Rapids Graded School System said Tuesday that toilet paper was rolled across the courtyard at Roanoke Rapids High School, doors were glued shut, interior doors were spray painted and vegetable oil was spread onto the school’s historic hardwood floors.

Police Chief Bobby Martin described it as “a senior prank that went a little bit overboard.” He estimated damages at $7,200, and said investigators are reviewing surveillance video.

Parkour practice

Lasse Hammer practices parkour during a sunny Tuesday at the at the Municipal Services Building in Philadelphia.

Senior prank forces high school to close

NC

Henderson — Authorities said a man died after being pulled from a basement crawl space where he ignited a house fire with a torch he was using to exterminate bugs.

The Clark County coroner on Tuesday identified the dead man as Jeff Long, 63, of Henderson.

Henderson city spokeswoman Kathleen Richards said a woman and a dog escaped unharmed and firefighters quickly doused the fire after arriving a little after 6 p.m. Monday to find light smoke at the one-story house.

Long was taken to a hospital where he was pronounced dead a short time later.

Investigators determined that Long ignited unspecified combustible materials with the propane torch in the crawl space.

Damage to the home was estimated at about $60,000.

From wire reports
In 1992, Disney transported audiences to the mythical land of Agrabah, where they met a street rat with a heart of gold, a flying carpet, a headstrong princess and a magical genie with some oddly current pop culture references. With the music and lyrics of Alan Menken, Howard Ashman and Tim Rice, “Aladdin” went on to win the hearts of millions and became the highest-grossing picture of the year.

It was an ambitious animation project that paid off and generated decades of fan goodwill, not to mention two Oscars and a future Broadway musical. Now, following in the lucrative footsteps of “Beauty and the Beast” and others, the studio is taking another shot at “Aladdin,” this time in live-action. The film, from director Guy Ritchie, opens Friday.

How do you re-create the magic of “Aladdin” without the help of a genie’s lamp?

Well, getting a movie star like Will Smith on board doesn’t hurt. Smith agreed to play the Genie. The part was originated by the late Robin Williams, who brought his signature irreverence and wit and modern references to the role. But even with Smith’s bona fides, he was nervous. Williams’ performance has become iconic in the past 27 years. In other words, it would be a tough act to follow.

“It was not a no-brainer,” Smith said. “I was really terrified at first. You know, you have to be careful with these types of films that mark people’s childhoods.”

Smith and the filmmakers knew that remaking “Aladdin” would inevitably involve a delicate dance of paying homage to the original while also modernizing some aspects of the story, including casting ethnically appropriate leads, who could sing and dance and carry a large-scale production, and giving a character like Princess Jasmine more agency.

They found Egyptian-born and Canada-raised actor Mena Massoud to play Aladdin and British actress Naomi Scott, who is of half South Asian descent, as Jasmine.

“She was one of my favorite princesses,” Scott said. “I think I gravitated toward her because of her strength and because I felt like I saw myself in her.”

In this film, she’s fighting for equality and the opportunity to succeed her father as Sultan.

“It’s just about her being human and more well-rounded,” said Scott.

She even gets her own empowerment anthem in a new original song called “Speechless,” written by Menken, and fellow Oscar-winning songwriters Benj Pasek and Justin Paul (“The Greatest Showman,” “La La Land”).

Menken was the bridge between past and present for the production, and said he had to be both the “keeper of the flame of the original” and “part of a new team.”

“When you’re working at Disney you have a lot of people keeping an eye, a very careful eye, on the legacy,” Menken said. “So I am very protective.”

“Aladdin” was shot on a massive soundstage outside of London, where the Agrabah set spanned the size of two football fields, and on location in Jordan, including at Wadi Rum. Since there’s no real city of Agrabah, production designer Gemma Jackson (“Game of Thrones”) used elements of Moroccan, Persian and Turkish architecture as inspiration.

As far as musical numbers go, the biggest production of the film by far is the “Prince Ali” sequence, where Aladdin, with the Genie’s help, enters the city as they think royalty would, boasting of his great wealth, bravery and an assortment of animals including 75 golden camels, 53 peacocks and 95 white Persian monkeys.

Ritchie employed 250 dancers and 200 extras to flesh out the world and commissioned a 30-foot-high camel made of 37,000 flower heads for “Ali” to ride in on.

While there will be many, many familiar touchstones for audiences from the songs to the score to even some of the dialogue, there are some ways the live-action film had to deviate from the original.

There are additional story elements and a new character in Jasmine’s handmaiden (played by “Saturday Night Live” alum Nasim Pedrad). And it leans into the diversity you’d expect from a story set in the Middle East, which was personally important to Massoud.

“Coming from the Middle East and Egypt, we’re just really ecstatic any time we see positive representation coming from Hollywood,” Massoud said. “This is certainly positive representation.”
The one time I got mad about Rage 2, it was my fault. My first night with the post-apocalyptic shooter, I spent at least 30 minutes fuming over the game’s “insane balancing issues” after I tried to flush out a bandit enclave and kept getting plucked off with explosives. “Why,” I fumed to myself, “do the enemies have so many grenades this early in the game?”

Silly me. The next day I realized there are perks that permit you to lob grenades back at their senders. Finding this perk was the biggest aha! moment I had in the couple of dozen hours I spent with Rage 2. In this game, life begins when you start fixating over skill trees.

Rage 2 feels like a last-generation game that has benefited from a contemporary coat of graphics. Similar to any number of postapocalyptic shooters, it’s set in a wasteland of burned-out cars and skeletal buildings overrun by mutants and maniacs whose fashion sensibilities suggest that punk will never die, even after its subversive aura has long been stripped away.

The storyline is so by-the-numbers that the best thing that can be said of it is that the writers do a nice job of maintaining a light tone throughout. This suggests to me that they were abundantly aware of how slight a piece of entertainment they were working on.

The narrative never shoots for big emotions, just decent quips and ostentatious puns. The one element that made me think they might be reaching for something deeper was that the hero of the game is from a place called Vineland, which made me wonder if someone on the writing team is a Thomas Pynchon fan. Pynchon has a novel of the same name, and as anyone who has read him knows, the dyed-in-the-wool, anti-authoritarian author is a connoisseur of puns.

At the start of the game, Vineland is all but destroyed by a military group called the Authority, led by General Cross, an evil dude who resurrects himself at a later point using his own DNA. Before taking his leave, Cross brutally kills the leader of Vineland—a gruff, warrior-woman named Prowley.

Depending on your gender preferences, you can go after Cross as Prowley’s adopted son or daughter—either of whom is named Walker. Assisting you to that end is Lily, Prowley’s biological daughter, who spends remarkably little time grieving over her mom.

After listening to a holographic recording of Prowley, who had the good sense to figure out that the Authority would eventually off her, you strike out into the Wasteland to try to meet up with three people stationed in different areas of the land who’d very much like to see the Authority toppled. Closest by is John Marshall, a heavily bearded old-timer who runs the outlay town of Gunbarrel. Further away are Loesum Hagar, the mayor of the Wasteland’s biggest settlement, and Dr. Kvasir, a wizened old scientist who enjoys riding on the back of one of his pitiful mutant creations.

All three nurse ambitions of putting into effect Project Dagger, a plan to infiltrate the Authority’s base and take out General Cross. To accomplish this, you first need to level up your relationships with them by completing different tasks out in the Wasteland. You can ingratiate yourself with Marshall by taking out bandit camps and mutant nests, with Mayor Hagar by destroying armored convoys, roadblocks and large mechanical sentries; and with the doctor by tracking down useful tech upgrades housed in smallish podlike structures called Arks, and by extracting “feltrite” from crashed meteors. Feltrite is one of a number of resources that can be used to upgrade Walker’s abilities. It’s also sometimes dropped by dead enemies, though it vanishes soon after they fall, which provides plenty of incentive to keep moving.

Rage 2 goes out of its way to encourage you to fight aggressively. The quicker you rack up kills, the higher your kill multiplier goes, and the faster your Overdrive ability recharges. With Overdrive activated, you dish out greater damage for a short period of time while your health recharges. The shooting in the game is tight, but who wouldn’t expect that given the storied history of id Software? Elite enemies are formidable without being bullet sponges, and the bosses aren’t overtaxing. If all you’re looking for is good shooting mechanics, the game has you covered.

At the heart of Rage 2 is an upgrade system that allows you to power up your weapons so that they handle better, operate over greater range and carry more ammo. You can also upgrade your vehicle as well as a variety of abilities, including particularly useful ones like a dash that permits you to evade enemy attacks. I’m a sucker for a good skill tree, and in that respect Rage 2 delivers. But having a better shotgun did little to make me forget that I was playing yet another game set in an overly familiar postapocalyptic setting with forgettable side activities. At some moment during the time I spent with Rage 2, the phrase “a game that’s confidently bland” entered my mind, where it’s lingered ever since.

Platforms: PC, PlayStation 4, Xbox One
Online: bethesda.net/en/game/rage2

More game reviews at stripes.com/games
Virtual reality’s new hope

Vader Immortal: A Star Wars VR Series is Lucasfilm’s best gaming bet

BY TODD MARTENS
Los Angeles Times

This summer, visitors to Disneyland in Anaheim, Calif., and Florida’s Walt Disney World will be able to enter the universe of Star Wars with the opening of Galaxy’s Edge, a 14-acre land with ambitions to offer unprecedented levels of play in the theme park space.

But there are limits. Since Galaxy’s Edge is set in the timeline of the current trilogy, don’t expect to play alongside Darth Vader.

For now, re-creating certain aspects of the world of Star Wars will be left in the digital space. And that doesn’t just mean the usual console and mobile video games. Lucasfilm’s relatively secretive ILMxLab has released Vader Immortal: A Star Wars VR Series – Episode I for the new Oculus Quest headset, the Facebook-owned company’s latest bid to prove that virtual reality can be a medium for the masses.

ILMxLAB has become something of a corporate outlier after Lucasfilm parent Disney largely shifted to a licensing model for interactive experiences outside the theme parks.

The division experiments with interactivity in storytelling and has developed Star Wars and “Wreck-It Ralph” experiences for the Void, a Utah-based technology firm whose location-based VR can be found in malls and Anaheim’s Downtown Disney. Due later this year is one related to the Marvel franchise.

While VR has been seemingly hyped as the next big thing for what feels like multiple decades now, what draws Lucasfilm to the medium, says Mohen Leo, a visual effects veteran who serves as ILMxLab’s director of experience development, is that, when done right, it can be transformative. Much of what happens in the space is experimental, making it a playground for early adopters but largely a curiosity to the public at large. The hope is that the relative smoothness, and story-focused, nearly hourlong length, of “Vader Immortal,” could start to change that.

“One of the most sort of unique things about VR is that it can give you personal memories of fictional things,” Leo says. “You actually remember being in a place in Star Wars. And I don’t think any other medium can do that, that you actually remember something that didn’t happen. We get to design memories.”

Though the very nature of the VR medium means the audience for Vader Immortal will be significantly more limited than a Star Wars film or theme park attraction, the Oculus Quest, released May 21, could be a major step in making high-end VR more accessible.

Priced at $399 for a 64 GB edition (a larger 128 GB edition sells for $499), the Quest is cord- and computer-free, eliminating a major stumbling block — the need for a top-priced PC — in making VR appealing to the average user.

“In 2015 and 2016 there was a year’s worth of glossy front covers of tech magazines talking, ‘Get ready for the world to change!’ And then, when this wave of commercial headsets launched and the world didn’t completely change, people started to see it as a disappointment,” says Oculus executive Colum Slevin.

The Vader Immortal experience — don’t call it a game, all of its principal creatives insist — will last 45 or so minutes, depending on your skills with a saber. It’s pegged to be the first of three episodes written by veteran film, television, comic and game writer David S. Goyer (Dark City, the Dark Knight trilogy), and, at least in the first episode, showcases a more vulnerable side of Vader.

Set between the events of “Revenge of the Sith” and “A New Hope,” this can be thought of as a short film with some game-like elements. Players will adopt the role of a smuggler, one who gets intercepted by the evil Imperial Empire and taken to Vader’s home planet, the hellish volcanic world of Mustafar, a spot seen in the narratively connected project for the Void, Star Wars: Secrets of the Empire.

Players will slowly discover their own Force powers and will be joined on the quest by a mostly trusty droid sidekick, the Maya Rudolph-voiced ZO-E3, a legless floater with wires exposed who seems to realize it has escaped death probably a few more times than most. If needed, ZO-E3 will provide some instructional help, but much of the interactivity in Vader Immortal — wielding a lightsaber, climbing some stairs — is relatively intuitive.

Vader Immortal is designed with the knowledge that it will likely be someone’s first VR experience. In that sense, says Ben Snow, the director of the project, expect futurx episodes to experiment with using the Force and other interactive elements.
BREATHE EASY

BY JILL U. ADAMS
Special to The Washington Post

When spring arrives, it’s a joy to open your windows and feel the fresh air. All too soon it will be summer and we’ll shut ourselves in again.

This ritual raises a question: Which is healthier — outdoor air or indoor air? They’re related, of course. The air inside our homes originates from outside and can carry pollen or pollutants, such as those produced by combustion engines. Indoor sources might add to the mix with tobacco smoke, cooking, mold spores, dust and pet dander.

A tightly sealed home may allow this mix of particulate matter to become more concentrated inside than out.

For good health outcomes, “The key is to catch small particles,” says Stuart Batterman, an environmental health scientist at the University of Michigan’s School of Public Health.

Particles that are 2.5 millimeters or smaller — called fine particles, particulate matter 2.5 or PM2.5 — are small enough to travel deep into the lungs and sometimes cross into the bloodstream. Fine particles are regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency because they can cause health problems.

High particulate matter may be associated with serious outcomes, such as asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature deaths in people with heart or lung disease. Those affected may experience airway irritation, difficulty breathing and coughing.

The most vulnerable are those with asthma, particularly children because their airways are smaller, and elderly people who have respiratory conditions, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or emphysema, or heart disease.

The first thing you should do is try to remove the source of irritants, says Brian Christman, a pulmonologist and spokesman for the American Lung Association.

While air filters can be helpful, says Christman, “they’re about No. 4 or 5 on the list of things you can do about air quality.”

“If you’re allergic to cats, and have five cats at home, an air filter won’t help,” he says.

Short of getting rid of pets, you can keep them out of your bedroom. If mold is a problem, you’d want to dry out areas of dampness — whether that means fixing leaks or seepage or using an exhaust fan when you shower.

Use the exhaust fan over your stove when you’re cooking with high heat, such as grilling or stir-frying. Reducing the humidity of your home makes it less friendly for mold and dust mites.

Specialized pillow and mattress covers can reduce dust mite exposure. Christman also suggests avoiding harsh cleaners such as ammonia and bleach. “Those things are hard on your airways, particularly if you have sensitive airways,” he says. Stick to more natural cleaners such as vinegar and baking soda.

After you’ve managed source control, a good air cleaner may help filter out what’s left.

Air cleaners can remove particulate matter from the air inside your home. There are two basic setups: a portable appliance or adapting a house- or building-wide HVAC system. The stand-alone appliances, also called air purifiers, circulate the air in a room and trap particles. If you have a forced air system of heating and cooling, that system does the same thing for all your rooms, and you can upgrade the system’s filter to improve particle removal.

A 2012 study tested portable air cleaners in low-income households of children with asthma. Air cleaners, when used in the children’s bedroom, reduced particulate matter by an average of 50 percent.

Those with forced air should take advantage of that system to clean the air throughout the house, Batterman says.

You already have a filter; for cleaner air, you can upgrade the system’s filter to better catch small particles. And you need to change it regularly — every three months is a common recommendation.

The cheapest filters are worthless for catching particles, Batterman says. He recommends a pleated filter with a Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) rating of 13 or higher (so does the EPA).

The filter works whenever the system’s fan is running and the windows are closed. That means during heating or air-conditioning season; or you can turn on fan mode. Newer thermostats have a mode that cycles the fan on and off, so you get the benefits of filtering without running the system constantly.

A couple of things to watch out for: Don’t use air filters that have an electrical field. Called air ionizers or electronic filters, these create ozone, which is harmful for health.

Specific air-quality problems might provide additional reasons for filtering your home’s air, such as wildfires. Air quality trouble spots can be viewed daily at an EPA website, AirNow.gov.

But unless you have a health condition that requires you pay close attention to indoor air quality, you really don’t need an air filter.

Batterman says he’s not a proponent of super clean spaces. Christman says regular dirt and dust are not bad for you. There’s evidence that growing up in very clean environments is related to the rise in autoimmune and allergic disorders, although the precise culprits have not been identified.
When words fail
Here’s how to recognize if your child is speech delayed

BY TAMARA GANE
Special to The Washington Post

M y son was 3 years old when I realized he wasn’t developing at the same pace as other children. He understood everything I said to him, but he could verbalize only a handful of words in return: Mama, no, bye-bye, Bobo (the name of our dog) and fish, which always ended with a drawn-out sssshhh-sound that wrapped itself around my heart. I was slowly noticing the other toddlers at the park and library story time were in possession of a far greater vocabulary, and some of them were speaking in complete sentences. Yet no matter how hard I tried to get my son to repeat even the simplest words, his responses were unintelligible.

He was struggling and I didn’t know why. I felt like I was failing him, so I decided to have him evaluated by our local school district after my mother told me a friend had done this with her own child. This was when I learned my son’s limited vocabulary was actually a sign of speech delay.

In addition, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association says parents should look for the following signs of a problem:

• Not smiling or playing with others from birth to 3 months
• Making few sounds and very few gestures, such as pointing, by 7 to 12 months
• Not understanding what other people are saying from 7 months to 2 years
• A lack of interest playing or talking with other children at 2 to 3 years
• A lack of interest in books or drawing by age 2 1/2 to 3 years

If you do suspect your child has a speech or language deficit, early intervention is key. Ask for a referral from your pediatrician, or make an appointment to have your child assessed by a licensed speech pathologist. You can also have a child evaluated through your state’s early childhood intervention program by contacting the special education program in your school district.

In my son’s case, I set up an appointment for a free evaluation through the local schools. His speech delay was significant enough to qualify him for a free speech-language-based preschool program three days a week. I also was fortunate to have medical insurance that covered twice-weekly visits with a private speech pathologist.

The first changes I noticed in my son were behavioral. Before enrolling in speech therapy, he was prone to frequent outbursts and temper tantrums. “Temper tantrums and hitting are often noted in youngsters with speech delay,” Berkowitz says. “It makes sense since they cannot articulate their wishes or express their frustration.”

My son’s teachers encouraged him to convey his wants and needs through signs and gestures. They taught him to rub his tummy when he was hungry, or flap his arms to call my attention to a bird outside the window. I learned to calm him down when he was upset by simply asking him to point to what he wanted. He wasn’t necessarily going to get the requested item, but at least he knew he was heard and understood.

You can also help your child by speaking aloud to them as much possible, including reading. Scanlon also recommends giving a child choices instead of asking open-ended questions, to provide your child with words to imitate and repeat.

And it’s important not to overly anticipate your child’s needs, Scanlon says. Allow them to use words, signs or gestures to ask for that toy they’d like to play with to encourage and reward direct communication.

If your child is in school, work with the teacher to make sure he feels comfortable and empowered in the classroom. Hannah Greico, a former elementary school teacher and education and disability advocate in the Washington area, says many speech-delayed students are anxious and insecure about their verbal abilities. Greico says she doesn’t call on those students unless their hands are raised, to avoid the pressure of putting them on the spot.

Greico recommends a combination of private speech therapy and special education services through the school district for school-aged children. She encourages parents to have their child evaluated and to get an independent education plan (IEP) in place.

And remember, Scanlon says, you’re not alone.

“If you’re still waiting to hear your little one utter a word, stay positive,” she says. “That’s the most important thing you can do. Don’t let anyone tell you this is a bad time. Don’t worry.”

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

The power of quiet moments

The stump outside my house was the perfect resting place for four earthworms. At just under two feet in diameter, there was enough room across its Ringed surface for me to sit and slice at the same time.

Despite that one might think, I was and am a non-violent person. But as a child, I believed that worm pieces regenerated. By cutting worms in half, I thought I was multiplying their population, therefore taking part in important zoological conservation work.

I had no idea I was actually committing mass murder.

My parents often scolded me when they found the holes I’d dug in our lawn to keep the worms in. I may have even gotten a spanking. It was the 1970s, after all.

So, one day when my father came home and found me chopping a new batch of worms on the stump, he wanted to know where I’d dug up our lawn this time. Proudly, I told him that our grass was unharmed, because I’d found many earthworms in the old lady’s yard up the street.

He went inside our house, changed into his plaid polyester lounge pants and sweater vest, then came back to the stump. With a lit pipe protruding from his bushy mustache, my father considered his options. Normally, he was loud and a little scary, but this time he calmly announced, “Lisa, you’re not supposed to dig holes in people’s lawns. We will visit the old lady’s house, and you will tell her what you did.”

My memory of our walk up the street is patchy. I recall feeling a nervous burning in the pit of my stomach, and tunnel vision that made the old lady’s house seem a million miles away. Her porch stairs multiplied as I ascended them. My father waited on the sidewalk.

I remember seeing the old lady open the door. But I will never forget the bone-crushing humiliation I felt while confessing my crime to her.

I went on to make plenty of bad choices in my youth, but I never dug up worms in anyone’s yard again. The punishment I received was simple, quiet and highly effective.

In fact, looking back at mistakes I’ve made in my 52 years, the most vivid memories are of the quiet times when I was left to consider the gravity of my transgressions. I was harshly admonished by my parents, but can never quite remember what I’d done wrong in the first place. The heated emotions of intense moments seemed to wash out the underlying significance, leaving me feeling only sorry for myself.

One of the best lessons I learned as an adult happened when I was a new attorney. My client was one of a dozen defendants in a complicated products liability case. At the deposition of my client (my first deposition ever), I asked the roomful of older male attorneys if I could question my client first, rather than waiting until the other lawyers asked their questions, as was customary. I was confident that the facts would clear my client of liability and save everyone a lot of time. They all agreed.

The next day, my boss called me into his office. I had nothing but respect for this seasoned litigator whom I had come to know as my mentor. I sat across the desk from him with my legal pad and pen, putting down a list of new tasks as he spoke.

“Oh, and one last item, Lisa,” he said calmly. “About yesterday. You know, when the other side wants information, they need to work for it. Don’t make their job easier.”

In that quiet moment, the clutter of my mind parted like the Red Sea, and I could clearly see my error. I had broken a cardinal rule of litigation procedure and felt an acute sense of shame. How could I be so stupid?

Much like the worm massacres of my youth, I certainly wouldn’t make that mistake again while practicing law.

The lesson was cemented in my mind permanently, never to be forgotten.

In today’s world of angry rhetoric, violent attacks and knee-jerk reactions, sometimes it’s the quiet voices that are best heard.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari’s columns at: themeatandpotatoescottsdale@gmail.com

Lisa Smith Molinari
Lindh’s due process helps US fight terrorism

BY JASON REZAIAN
The Washington Post

J ohn Walker Lindh, a U.S. citizen who moved to Afghanistan and joined the Taliban, was released from prison Thursday after serving 17 years of a 20-year sentence. As expected, his return to society is controversial.

Some reports indicate that he has not changed his radically anti-U.S. views. They question whether he continues to maintain contacts in support of Islamic State, evidence that he remains a terrorist threat. For some people, this re-inflation view that he’s a traitor should remain constant for the rest of his life based on the original charges brought against him.

Our feelings behind these positions are entirely understandable. But let’s put them aside for a moment. Instead, let’s consider just how crucial the notion of law and order is to the health of our democracy and its institutions.

As odious as Lindh’s professed allegiances were, he still received due process. He had the opportunity to hire counsel and took part in judicial proceedings, ultimately receiving a plea bargain. He then went on to serve his sentence in a unit of the Terre Haute Federal Correctional Institution.

At a time when the nation is divided on so many fronts, upholding the rule of law and ensuring that everyone agrees to agree upon. Yet since the beginning of our apparently endless war on terrorism, justice has been anything but blind, as we have witnessed over and again.

What if, for example, the Trump administration had the authority to detain people accused of plotting and committing violent crimes against the U.S.

At first, 9/11 united us from coast and all points in between. But that feeling of oneness was momentary. Our debates over how we should respond to the threat on U.S. soil soon revealed deep differences.

Initially and understandably, the desire was to go “smash the face” on behalf of U.S. forces. But over time, 88 percent of Americans approving of a military response focused on Afghanistan.

While the country was focused on military tradition and trials of those suspected of implementing, planning and aiding in the attacks. In both cases, we dealt with fellow citizens who joined forces with those eager to do harm.

Yet we have not still haven’t come up with an entirely adequate response, although U.S. citizens can reliably count on a trial on U.S. soil, some representation and some measure of transparency.

U.S. citizenship ensures a much broader and deeper protection than any other terror suspect receives after the attacks. The U.S. government took suspected members of the Taliban, al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups into custody for long periods, denied them due process, then tried and convicted them in opaque military trials. This isn’t really up for debate. It’s merely stating the facts.

The inhumane treatment of these suspects, and the denial of their basic rights at the U.S. detention center in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, are some of the most serious long-term miscarriages of justice in our country’s history.

As the American perception of moral authority we once enjoyed. Even worse, many other countries have mimicked U.S. policy, using often unsubstantiated terrorism- and national security-related charges — Iran and Turkey, for instance — to justify the imprisonment of political oppositions and others perceived to be at odds with their leaders.

We see these tactics to deny due process increasingly employed around the world.

Lindh — mostly because of his American citizenship — is a freedom symbol for the high-profile nature of his case — did get a trial in U.S. court. He had legal representation and the opportunity to defend himself. His 20-year sentence was reduced by three years for good behavior.

At one level, Lindh’s return was expected. If he had been a Saudi or a Palestinian or a young Mexican woman who had grown up in Iran, he would have been a refugee. At another, as a single chapter in one of our country’s longest and most bitter stories, it’s his release that is a victory for the rule of law. Justice was served.

Jason Rezain is a writer for The Washington Post’s Global Opinions. He served as the paper’s correspondent in Tehran, Iran, from 2012 to 2016. He spent 54 days unjustly imprisoned by Iranian authorities until his release in January 2016.

Renewable energy to flourish in Trump Country

BY GARY ABBEYNATH
Special to The Washington Post

HILLSBORO, Ohio — Those who suggest that President Donald Trump’s trade war with China could cost Ohio farmers aren’t the only ones who worry. They are also afraid he will forget that farmers, like most people, are not single-issue voters.

Entrenched, mindfulness-hating, Christian farmers tend to be churchgoers, and in America is where such churches thrive.

It is a sentiment that runs in the family tradition. Plus, some said, they simply don’t want to wake up every day to the sight of thousands of solar modules in fields along the back roads near their homes.

Lots of promises are being made by solar advocates about jobs, infrastructure improvements and other benefits for this western corner of Appalachian Ohio. One handout from a solar advocacy group even suggested that each turbine can fight Ohio’s opioid epidemic.

But tying the price for most counties to the time of payment of more dollars in local communities, particularly for education. Ohio’s school funding formula is largely based on local real estate wealth, leading to richer districts in the suburbs and poorer districts in many rural areas. Thanks to Ohio’s “payment in lieu of taxes” formula, which allows property owners to improve solar companies will pay several thousand dollars per megawatt, adding up to millions of dollars in Ohio towns in the next few years. A couple of small school districts where the projects are located will be the big winners.

The president may ridicule wind and solar, but in the heart of Trump Country, renewable energy is about to flourish, providing electricity for the millions of consumers — but only after turning off the lights in a few old barns.

Gary Abbeynath, a contributing columnist for The Hillsboro (Ohio) Times-Gazette, is a freelance writer and former newspaper editor based in Hillsboro, Ohio.

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Thursday’s scores

Thursday’s transactions

Thursday’s transactions
The Boston Bruins’ David Backes celebrates after scoring against the New Jersey Devils on March 21.

D avid Backes waited his entire career to play for the Stanley Cup, and now he’s going to have to do it against some of his best friends in hockey.

The former St. Louis captain will face his old team with the NHL title on the line, starting Monday night when the Blues and Bruins open the final in Boston. It’s not the ideal situation for the 35-year-old Backes, but after waiting 13 seasons to get to this point, he’ll take it.

“It’s a binary decision now. It’s us or them. One of us is going to win the Cup,” he said this week after the Blues beat San Jose in the Western Conference finals.

“The position you’d want to be at in the beginning of the year,” Backes said. “I wish those guys well up until this point, but now it’s all about us and winning this thing. All our thoughts and all our efforts are in this room.”

Backes was an all-star in 2011 and a leader on the Blues who finished in the top seven of the Selke Award voting for five straight seasons before signing a five-year deal with the NHL title on the line, starting Monday night when the Blues and Bruins open the final in Boston. It’s not the ideal situation for the 35-year-old Backes, but after waiting 13 seasons to get to this point, he’ll take it.

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Backes was an all-star in 2011 and a leader on the Blues who finished in the top seven of the Selke Award voting for five straight seasons before signing a five-year deal. $30 million contract with Boston in 2016. St. Louis feared Backes might be ready to move on as the Blues were rivals in college, with McCoy being the 2nd overall pick in the 2010 draft — one spot after Suh was taken by the Detroit Lions.

Tom Brady was the Super Bowl last season, has agreed to terms with the Buccaneers as a replacement for Gerald McCoy.

McCoy was released earlier this week after nine seasons with the Bucs, who selected him third overall in the 2010 draft — one spot after Suh was taken by the Detroit Lions.

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The Mets’ Carlos Gomez gestures while running the bases after hitting a three-run home run off Washington Nationals relief pitcher Wander Suero during the eighth inning Thursday in New York.

## Thursday

### Mets, Nationals 4, 0

**New York**

- L.Helmetz 3b 1 0 0 0
- D.Wilson 1b 1 0 0 0
- T.Murphy ss 0 0 0 0
- K.Richardson 1b 0 0 0 0
- J.Davis 1b 0 0 0 0
- J.Pollock lf 0 0 0 0
- Y.Webb ss 0 0 0 0
- B.Gall 1b 1 0 0 0
- T.Sanchez 1b 0 0 0 0

**Washington**

- J.Ramos 3b 1 0 0 0
- K.Parker 3b 1 0 0 0
- J.Charles 3b 1 0 0 0
- B.Bay 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Gonzalez 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Meier 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Bandy 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Villar 1b 1 0 0 0

### Yankees, Orioles 0, 0

**New York**

- T.Sanchez 1b 0 0 0 0
- J.Pollock lf 0 0 0 0
- Y.Webb ss 0 0 0 0
- B.Gall 1b 1 0 0 0
- T.Sanchez 1b 0 0 0 0
- J.Ramos 3b 1 0 0 0
- K.Parker 3b 1 0 0 0
- J.Charles 3b 1 0 0 0
- B.Bay 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Gonzalez 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Meier 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Bandy 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Villar 1b 1 0 0 0

**Baltimore**

- J.Ramos 3b 1 0 0 0
- K.Parker 3b 1 0 0 0
- J.Charles 3b 1 0 0 0
- B.Bay 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Gonzalez 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Meier 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Bandy 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Villar 1b 1 0 0 0

### Phillies, Cubs 0, 0

**Philadelphia**

- J.Flannery ss 0 0 0 0
- J.Meier 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Bandy 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Villar 1b 1 0 0 0

**Chicago**

- J.Ramos 3b 1 0 0 0
- K.Parker 3b 1 0 0 0
- J.Charles 3b 1 0 0 0
- B.Bay 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Gonzalez 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Meier 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Bandy 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Villar 1b 1 0 0 0

### Twins, Angels 0, 0

**Minneapolis**

- J.Ramos 3b 1 0 0 0
- K.Parker 3b 1 0 0 0
- J.Charles 3b 1 0 0 0
- B.Bay 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Gonzalez 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Meier 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Bandy 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Villar 1b 1 0 0 0

**Los Angeles**

- J.Ramos 3b 1 0 0 0
- K.Parker 3b 1 0 0 0
- J.Charles 3b 1 0 0 0
- B.Bay 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Gonzalez 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Meier 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Bandy 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Villar 1b 1 0 0 0

### Red Sox, Blue Jays 0, 0

**Boston**

- J.Ramos 3b 1 0 0 0
- K.Parker 3b 1 0 0 0
- J.Charles 3b 1 0 0 0
- B.Bay 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Gonzalez 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Meier 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Bandy 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Villar 1b 1 0 0 0

**Toronto**

- J.Ramos 3b 1 0 0 0
- K.Parker 3b 1 0 0 0
- J.Charles 3b 1 0 0 0
- B.Bay 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Gonzalez 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Meier 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Bandy 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Villar 1b 1 0 0 0

### Marlins, Tigers 0, 0

**Miami**

- J.Ramos 3b 1 0 0 0
- K.Parker 3b 1 0 0 0
- J.Charles 3b 1 0 0 0
- B.Bay 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Gonzalez 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Meier 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Bandy 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Villar 1b 1 0 0 0

**Detroit**

- J.Ramos 3b 1 0 0 0
- K.Parker 3b 1 0 0 0
- J.Charles 3b 1 0 0 0
- B.Bay 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Gonzalez 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Meier 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Bandy 1b 1 0 0 0
- J.Villar 1b 1 0 0 0

### This day in baseball

1906 – Jesse Tannehill’s 3-0 victory over the Chicago Cubs makes him the last pitcher to win at home with a shutout in the 19th century. Tannehill pitched a no-hitter over 20 years after the last perfect game in the major leagues.

1979 – Nolan Ryan’s no-hitter for the Mets against the Chicago Cubs became the seventh pitcher to strike out 3,000 batters in his career. Ryan struck out 13 batters to tie the record and won his 300th career game against the Cubs.

2003 – Shawn Green of the Los Angeles Dodgers hit a two-run home run over the Arizona Diamondbacks, setting a major league record for the most home runs hit by a left-handed batter in his last three games.

2013 – Boston Red Sox hit a pair of two-run home runs. Mark Teixeira also hit a two-run home run and was named the MVP of the game. The Red Sox became the first team to hit more than 100 home runs in a season.

2019 – Puig and Trout both hit home runs to tie a major league record for the most home runs hit by a left-handed batter in his last three games.
Kiermaier lifts Rays over Tribe

By Tom Withers
Associated Press

CLEVELAND — As he sprinted madly around the bases, Minnesota's Kevin Kiermaier wondered when he'd stop.

He never did.

Kiermaier legged out a three-run, inside-the-park homer when Cleveland outfielders Oscar Mercado and Leonys Martin collided, and Ryan Yarbrough handled the Indians' struggling lineup into the eighth inning of his first start this season to lead the Tampa Bay Rays to a 7-2 win Thursday night.

With the Rays ahead 3-0 in the sixth, Kiermaier hit a sliding liner to left-center. Mercado and Martin converged on the ball before slamming into each other as they each made an all-out attempt at catching it.

Mercado took the worst of the crash as Martin's left knee drove hard into his right hip. As the two Indians players lay helplessly in the grass, the ball ricocheted toward the left-field corner and Kiermaier easily circled the bases for the first inside-the-park allowed by Cleveland since 2008.

“I never saw the ball — at all,” said Kiermaier, who feared he'd get thrown out. “I was just running to run. At the time, I didn't know what was going on. I was so confused running the bases. I don't know what the heck happened.”

Once he rounded third, Kiermaier stopped worrying. But even back in the dugout, he was puzzled.

"I asked my teammates, ‘Is that a homer? What just happened?’” he said.

Tommy Pham, Avisail Garcia and Willy Adames hit solo homers off Adam Plutko (1-1) as the Rays improved baseball's best road record to 16-7.

Yarbrough (3-1), recalled before the game after a stint at Triple-A Durham, allowed two runs and four hits in a career-high 7 2/3 innings. The left-hander began the year in Tampa Bay's bullpen, but struggled and was sent down April 24 to work on his mechanics.

He looked fine-tuned against the Indians, who dropped their fourth straight and nearly lost two more players to injury on a freakish play in the sixth.

The collision between Mercado and Martin sums up the Indians lately. Nothing is going right.

Mercado was down for several minutes before getting to a crouch and finally standing. He did some jogging as manager Terry Francona looked on and remained in the game only to be further tested in the inning as he had to race in to catch a short fly and a line drive.

“It couldn’t have been placed any (more) perfectly,” Mercado said. “We both reacted and like, a last-minute — we both reacted and dove. Unfortunately, it resulted in that, but it’s a learning experience.”

Kiermaier hoped both Mercado and Martin were OK.

“It’s not fun,” he said. “After watching the replay, they hit really good. I hit that ball in a perfect spot. Both of them could not make the play, but they ran into each other. As an outfielder, that’s never what you want to do.”

Roundup

Twins tie franchise mark with 8 HRs, rip Angels

Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Miguel Sano and Jonathan Schoop each hit two of Minnesota's franchise record-tying eight home runs and the Twins hammered Matt Harvey and the Los Angeles Angels 16-7 Thursday.

C.J. Cron homered, doubled twice and singled twice for the Twins, Max Kepler, Jorge Polanco and Eddie Rosario also homered for Minnesota.

It was the third time in franchise history — dating to their days as the Washington Senators — and second time this season the Twins homered eight times. Before doing it April 20 against Baltimore, the last time it happened was in 1963 against Washington.

Schoop drove in four runs and Sano three as the Twins won six of seven on their trip that began in Seattle and wound up with their first sweep in Anaheim since 1997.

There were a total of 11 home runs in this game, which was originally set for Wednesday but postponed due to unplayable field conditions following a pre-game storm.

The eight home runs also tied the Angels mark for most allowed. It previously happened in 2005 against Texas and 1996 vs. Oakland. Tommy La Stella hit his first grand slam in the ninth for the Angels, who have dropped four straight.

Yankees 6, Orioles 5: Mychal Givens (0-2) walked Aaron Hicks with the bases loaded to force in the tiebreaking run in the ninth inning, and visiting New York completed a four-game sweep of Baltimore.

Clint Frazier and Luke Voit homered for the Yankees, who went deep 13 times in the series.

Mets 6, Nationals 4: Carlos Gomez hit a go-ahead, three-run homer in the eighth inning that helped host New York overcome its opponent’s comeback that started after Washington manager Dave Martinez’s heated ejection.

Gomez’s first homer of the season came off Wander Suero (1-4) as the Mets completed a four-game sweep.

Pirates 14, Rockies 6: Josh Bell, Bryan Reynolds and Starling Marte homered in the seventh inning to lead host Pittsburgh past Colorado.

The Pirates jumped on Rockies starter Antonio Senzatela (3-4) for eight runs over 3 1/3 innings, but Colorado stormed back in the sixth, plating six runs that were charged to Pittsburgh starter Jordan Lyles (5-1).

Marlins 5, Tigers 2: Garrett Cooper hit a grand slam with two outs in the ninth inning and then drove in the go-ahead run in the 13th with a two-out single off Reyes Moronta (1-4), lifting visiting Atlanta past San Francisco.

Riley and Ozzie Albies each had three hits for Atlanta and Tyler Flowers homered.

Red Sox 8, Blue Jays 2: Ryan Weber (1-0) pitched six innings to earn his first career win as a starter, Steve Pearce homered and had three RBIs and visiting Boston beat Toronto.

Pearce went 3-for-5. He singled in the fourth and sixth innings and hit a two-run shot off Ryan Feierabend in the ninth.

White Sox 4, Astros 0: Lucas Giolito (6-1) pitched a four-hitter for his first major league shutout, rookie Eloy Jimenez hit his third homer in two games and visiting Chicago beat Houston.

Yeon Moncada had an RBI double and Tim Anderson added a run-scoring single for the White Sox, who earned a four-game series split by handing Houston its first set of consecutive losses since May 1-2.

The Minnesota Twins' Jorge Polanco hits a two-run home run against the Angels during the second inning Thursday in Anaheim, Calif.

TONY DEJAK

The Indians' Leonys Martin, top, and Oscar Mercado collide while going for a ball hit by the Tampa Bay Rays' Kevin Kiermaier during the sixth inning of Thursday's game in Cleveland. Kiermaier legged out a three-run, inside-the-park home run.

TONY DEJAK/Associated Press
Segura, Phillies get split

By Jay Cohen
Associated Press

CHICAGO — Jean Segura and the Philadelphia Phillies think they learned a little more about themselves during a wild four days in Chicago.

They liked what they found out, too.

“We got enough talent here to beat anybody in the league,” Segura said.

Segura and J.T. Realmuto homered off Jon Lester, and the Phillies beat the Cubs 9-7 on Thursday for a split of the four-game series between division leaders. Andrew McCutchen added two hits and two RBIs as Philadelphia won for a split of the four-game series.

“His stuff is just as good as it was the night before,” McCutchen said. “He had the gutsiest performance possible out there.”

Philadelphia manager Gabe Kapler said:

“We got enough talent here to beat anybody in the league.”

The Cubs’ Jason Heyward homered during the ninth inning and retired Jon Lester, and the Phillies won 5-4 in 10 innings.

The Phillies won 5-4 in 10 innings in the series opener Monday night. They also held the lead each of the previous two days, only to falter down the stretch. But they managed to hold off the Cubs in the finale behind Hector Neris’ adventurous four-out save.

“We stayed in there and battled and got the outs that we needed,” McCutchen said. “That’s all you can ask for from a closer.”

Anthony Rizzo and Kyle Schwarber homered for Chicago, which had won three of four.

New twist on old rivalry

By Ronald Blum
Associated Press

NEW YORK

The traditional rivalry between the New York Yankees and the Boston Red Sox is one that may be taking on a new twist.

Olympic Stadium is seen during the 2012 Summer Olympics at Olympic Park in London. The traditional rivalry between the New York Yankees and the Boston Red Sox will take a radical twist when they meet in London next month. They will play on artificial turf for the first time in more than 2,200 games over a century.

The Yankees and the Red Sox are scheduled to open the Major League Baseball season in London on June 2 and June 3. They will play a split doubleheader on June 2 and a single game on June 3.

The stadium in London will be set up with a synthetic field, similar to those used in the 2012 and 2016 Olympics. The artificial turf will be placed on the Olympic Stadium, which is an oval track and field venue.

The stadium was built for the Olympic Games in 2012 and has hosted numerous events since then. The stadium has a capacity of 24,300 and is located in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in Stratford, London.

The artificial turf used in London is manufactured by Turf One, a company based in the United Kingdom.

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For some, Indy 500 is only their first or second race of year

One-shot drivers see race as launching pad

INDIANAPOLIS — Sage Karam carried the burden of an entire team into his final four-lap qualifying attempt last weekend. He could extend his season by putting Dennis Reinbold’s No. 24 car into the Indianapolis 500 starting grid. Or he could go home and wait 12 months for another chance.

Karam delivered in the last-row shoot-out, qualifying 31st with a win-or-go-home mentality that has become a theme for the drivers who show up at the track annually with only one or two races on their schedule.

“I think that’s why I was so emotional after (qualifying),” Karam said Wednesday. “I was feeling a lot of pressure because I waited a whole year to get back to Indy. I did so much to get ready and I didn’t want all this stuff to go for nothing. Also Dennis has never had a car that failed to make the race. I didn’t want to be the first.”

The 24-year-old Karam came up clutch with an average speed of 227.740 mph, putting him ahead of 2016 pole-winner and series regular James Hinchcliffe. It also put him ahead of two-time Formula One champion Fernando Alonso, who got bumped out of Sunday’s race.

A relieved Karam started screaming into the team radio before crossing the yard of bricks on his final lap and nearly broke down in a post-qualifying news conference.

Not every one-off driver winds up in such a high-stakes situation.

Three-time race winner Helio Castroneves will make his 10th attempt at a record-tying fourth Indy 500 win from the No. 12 starting spot Sunday.

Oriol Servia continues to chase the elusive win that would make him an instant star in his native Spain.

And Karam and teammate JR Hildebrand are trying to help Reinbold generate enough to transition to running IndyCars full-time.

The challenges are different, too.

At 31, Hildebrand is the 2011 Indy runner-up who acknowledges he’s adjusted his mentality to his new job after previous stints as both a full-time and part-time driver in the series. Hildebrand has competed in only one or two races five of the last six years.

“I think you look at racing in a little different way when you’re only racing once,” he said before qualifying 21st. “In some ways, it makes it easier because you can have a much more focused approach. But it’s also impacted how I think about my aggression level during the race.”

Castroneves is a relative newcomer to this form of racing.

A year ago, the popular Brazilian competed only two times in Indy cars — making his season debut on Indianapolis’ road course and his season finale two weeks later on the Brickyard’s historic oval. That’s the plan Team Penske followed again this year, and it’s the intended plan for 2020.

For now, Castroneves finds himself in an ideal situation. He’s working with a deep-pocketed team he knows, on a track he loves and with data he understands better than most. Yet it can be tricky, as Castroneves found out last year when he crashed after completing 145 laps and finished a career-worst 27th.

“I’m glad I’m with the same team because I’m comfortable with so many phases of it, starting with the seat and what you have on the steering wheel and the language with the engineer,” Castroneves said. “At some point, muscle memory kicks in and the good news is that everyone is running their first oval of the season here so you’re not too far behind.”

For drivers like Karam and Conor Daly, they know they must succeed at Indianapolis to get back in the game full-time.

In Karam’s case, he has a whole team counting on him, too.

“Doing well in the Indy 500, that’s where it all starts,” Karam said. “It’s the biggest race in the world. If you win the race it would not only be a career changer for me, it would be a team changer for DRR and the boys to be able to go and do more races. Dennis has made this his life’s dream, to win it, and I want to fulfill that for him and that team.”
By KEITH JENKINS
Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Mired in their worst skid of the season at the worst possible time, the Milwaukee Bucks need an answer in the Eastern Conference finals.

A lineup change didn't provide one, so the Bucks have to use something else with six games left in the series.

The Bucks returned to the starting five they used most of the season in Game 5, the lineup that helped them to the NBA's best record. But they were a sixth game with the Tampa Bay Lightning as the third and fourth games and now face elimination when the series resumes Saturday.

Guard Malcolm Brogdon finished with 18 points, 11 rebounds and six assists Thursday in his first start since returning from a foot injury in Game 5 of the Eastern Conference semifinals against the Boston Celtics. But his first career postseason double-double wasn't enough as Milwaukee lost 105-99 to the Raptors.

The top-seeded Bucks need a win in Toronto after falling there twice already in the series.

“You know, we've been a resilient group all year,” Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer said. “We just need to think about going and winning one game, go to Toronto and get that.”

Budenholzer said before Game 5 that he and his staff were thinking of making a change to the starting lineup after going with the same five in each of the first four games of the series.

Along with Giannis Antetokounmpo, that group included Nikola Mirotic, Brook Lopez, Kris Middleton and Eric Bledsoe.

After winning the first two games in the series, the Bucks then lost consecutive games for the only second time all season.

Milwaukee's coaching staff elected to switch things up and start Brogdon instead of Mirotic. “I think Malcolm was very good overall, and it's a group that started 64 out of 65 games for us,” Budenholzer said. “Malcolm has been the starter for the preponderance of the season and so I just felt it was the time for that group to start again.”

Brogdon scored eight early points to propel Milwaukee to a 22-2 lead at the first quarter. But the Raptors turned the game around early in the second and pulled away behind 15 points in the final quarter from Kawhi Leonard, who finished with 35.

“Hey, he's a great player,” Brogdon said. “We've got to be able to limit him if we're going to win the next game.”

Mirotic was scoreless in just nine minutes on Thursday. He averaged nearly 25 minutes through the first four games of the series.

Budenholzer said he wasn't sure what role Mirotic would play in Game 6.

“We'll evaluate everything and see how Niko fits,” he said. “He can be very helpful to us.”

The Bucks got just 15 points from their bench on Thursday, their lowest of any game this series.

Despite losing Games 3 and 4 in Toronto, the Bucks head north knowing they won two games in the Scotiabank Arena in the regular season.

“Yeah, it's a great environment to play in,” said Lopez, who finished with 16 points and eight rebounds on Thursday. “We're ready for the challenge, so we just have to obviously go out there and take care of business.”

FRANK GUNN, THE CANADIAN PRESS

Raptors forward Pascal Siakam (43) blocks Milwaukee Bucks forward Giannis Antetokounmpo during the second half of Game 5 of the Eastern Conference finals in Milwaukee on Thursday.

Leonard showed no obvious signs of the leg soreness that bothered him in Toronto in the previous two games, hitting the 30-point mark for the fourth time in the series. He had a career-high nine assists, made five three-pointers and grabbed seven rebounds.

Frederick VanVleet, whose son was born Monday, scored 21 points, hitting seven threes. Kyle Lowry added 17 as the Raptors put themselves in position to advance to the NBA Finals for the first time.

A victory at home Saturday would set up a matchup with two-time defending champion Golden State.

Lowry has 1,126 points in 66 playoff games for Toronto, surpassing DeMar DeRozan (1,117) as the franchise's postseason scoring leader.

The Raptors battled out of an early 14-point hole, then got 15 points from Leonard in the fourth quarter to send the top-seeded Bucks to their first three-game losing streak of the season.

“Has been unbelievable in the playoffs with the Spurs as well,” Raptors coach Nick Nurse said. “I can only say that he’s been really good and strong through the fourth quarters. He wants the ball and he wants to make the plays and he seems to be making the right plays. You’re almost allowed to take him when he pulls up at 15 feet and it doesn’t go in. He’s playing at both ends.”

Giannis Antetokounmpo had 24 points for Milwaukee hours after being announced as a unanimous first-team, All-NBA selection.

“Not going to fold,” he said. “Come on, he’s the best in the league, man. We’re not going to fold. We’re going in and give it everything we’ve got. We can’t fold. We’re going to come back to Milwaukee being (ticked).”

Eric Bledsoe scored 20 and Malcolm Brogdon added 18 points and 11 rebounds in his return to the starting lineup.

“It’s first to four. We’ve got to go to Toronto, get a game. I think the group will be ready,” Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer said.

Brew crew: Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers got sucked into a beer chugging contest, and it didn’t go well for him.

Teammate David Bakhtiari had no trouble downing three cups when he was shown on the video board. The camera panned to Rodgers and he could only finish about half of one, drawing scorn from some fans.

Brewers star Christian Yelich had no trouble chugging one later in the game.
Lillard, Walker are big winners among All-NBA selections

By Brian Mahoney
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Giannis Antetokounmpo and James Harden got the most votes, and Damian Lillard and Klay Thompson also were big winners when the All-NBA teams were announced.

Those guards can cash in with supermax contracts based on their selections to one of the three All-NBA teams that were announced Thursday.

LeBron James also was voted to the third team, tying the NBA record with his 15th All-NBA selection.

Rounding out the first team were Stephen Curry, Paul George and Nikola Jokic, who was Denver’s first All-NBA selection since Carmelo Anthony in 2010.

Antetokounmpo and Harden were unanimous selections, receiving all 100 votes from a panel of writers and broadcasters who had to choose two guards, two forwards and one center for each of the three teams.

Walker was the final selection but all that matters is what he made it. By doing so, he became eligible to receive a five-year contract extension worth about $221 million from the Hornets if he opts to stay in Charlotte, a reward the NBA put in recently as further incentive to keep players with their current teams.

The Hornets could have offered him about $30 million less if he wasn’t selected and failed to earn the criteria for the largest possible contract.

Lillard, a second-team selection, can get more than $190 million over four years with a new contract in Portland.

Antetokounmpo will have his chance for a mega deal in Milwaukee after next season. He’s an MVP finalist who was also a first-team All-Defensive selection for a Bucks team that had the best record in the league and hosted Game 5 of the Eastern Conference finals later Thursday.

“It’s a pretty incredible season but he’s much more focused on tonight and getting ready to go,” Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer said.

James has been a lock for most of his career, but was no sure thing after an injury-plagued first season in Los Angeles. His streak of 11 consecutive seasons as an All-Star player, a record shared with Karl Malone, came to an end. He did, however, make his 15th consecutive appearance on the All-NBA roster — joining Kobe Bryant as the only players to do it.

Lillard, a second-team selection last season, will be a big winner this year.

Lillard’s first All-NBA nod also tied James with Kobe Bryant and Tim Duncan for the most in NBA history.

The 15th All-Star selection tied James with LeBron James as the onlookers who’ve made that many teams in consecutive seasons.

Kobe Bryant was the only players to make the All-NBA team the past two years.

Had Thompson been an All-NBA player, the Warriors couldn’t have offered him a supermax contract unless Durant chose to decline their supermax offer of up to $30 million less.

Thompson’s selection could also help Draymond Green’s chances to land a supermax contract.

Green, who is a free agent after next season, could qualify by winning Defensive Player of the Year for the second time in his career or by making the All-NBA team.

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Snub costly for Thompson

Warriors guard not eligible for ‘supermax’ deal after All-NBA exclusion

By Jon Becker
The Mercury News

OAKLAND, Calif. — Klay Thompson rarely complains about his numbers. Yet, the Warriors’ unassuming star could not help but convey his annoyance both with words and body language over not being named on an All-NBA team.

First, Thompson rolled his eyes when informed that Charlotte guard Kemba Walker made one of the two All-NBA third team over him. Then, Thompson questioned his exclusion, which will cost him an extra $30 million he could have earned as a free agent this summer.

“I can’t control it. But do I think there’s that many guards in the league better than me? No,” Thompson said. “But that’s a reason why we’re still playing. So I don’t really want to get into it, honestly.”

The NBA hasn’t released its salary cap yet, but Thompson could’ve landed a so-called “supermax” deal that would be for five years and expected to be worth around $220 million if he re-signs with the Warriors this summer.

Because of the exclusion on the All-NBA teams, Thompson can sign up to a five-year deal expected to be worth around $190 million. The Warriors are expected to give the max contract he expects, but salary cap rules prohibit the Warriors from offering anything more.

Yet, Thompson insisted he can deal with that reality for a simple reason.

“Rings,” he said.

Thompson has three of them in the past four years. He might collect another one when the Warriors play either the Milwaukee Bucks or Toronto Raptors in the NBA Finals beginning on May 30.

Even though Thompson had two significant shooting slumps on an All-Star-laden team this season, he still averaged 21.5 points while shooting 46.7% from the field and 40.2% from three.

That might not be enough to compete for a spot on the All-NBA’s first team over Stephen Curry and James Harden. Maybe not enough to solidify a spot on the All-NBA’s second team over Damian Lillard and Kyrie Irving.

Isn’t that enough, though, for Thompson to land on the All-NBA’s third team instead of Russell Westbrook or Walker?

Instead, a panel of select sportswriters and broadcasters voted for Westbrook (178 points) and Walker (51 points) over Thompson (100) on Thursday.

Interestingly, the Warriors could benefit from Thompson’s exclusion on an All-NBA team. The Warriors would save about $30 million in luxury taxes.

The Warriors will save about $30 million in luxury taxes.

With the Warriors only allowed to have up to two players on supermax contracts, they no longer have to make some potentially tough financial decisions with their star players.

Curry signed a five-year, $221 million contract in the 2017 off-season. Kevin Durant, who landed on the All-NBA second team, was already eligible for a supermax deal based on making an All-NBA team the past two years.

Had Thompson been an All-NBA player, the Warriors couldn’t have offered him a supermax contract unless Durant chose to decline their supermax offer of $221 million.

Thompson’s exclusion could also help Draymond Green’s chances to land a supermax contract.

Green, who is a free agent after next season, could qualify by winning Defensive Player of the Year for the second time in his career or by making the All-NBA team.

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Golden State Warriors guard Klay Thompson celebrates with fans after scoring against the Trail Blazers during Game 2 of the Western Conference finals in Oakland, Calif.

Golden State Warriors guard Klay Thompson celebrates with fans after scoring against the Trail Blazers during Game 2 of the Western Conference finals in Oakland, Calif.
Seizing the moment
Leonard, Raptors one win away from Finals

BY ANDREW SELIGMAN
Associated Press

MILWAUKEE

Kawhi Leonard arrived in Toronto thinking he could pick up another championship to go with the one he already has. One more victory and he’ll play for another ring. And dominant performances like he put up Thursday night are a big reason why.

Leonard scored 35 points and the Raptors beat the Milwaukee Bucks 105-99 to take a 3-2 lead in the Eastern Conference finals.

‘I’m not afraid of the moment. This is what I work out for in the summer. I’m just trying to win.’
Kawhi Leonard
Toronto Raptors forward

Inside: LeBron, Lillard, Kemba among All-NBA picks, Page 31

Bruins’ Backes set to face former Blues buddies » Stanley Cup Final, Page 25