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# STARS AND STRIPES®

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SUSAN WALSH/AP



# SHIFT IN STRATEGY

Obama: As the threat moves from Afghanistan, so must US power

By JON HARPER  
*Stars and Stripes*

**M**ore than 12 years after the 9/11 terrorist attacks made al-Qaida operatives in Afghanistan and Pakistan the No. 1 target, the U.S. plans to shift its counterterrorism resources to other regions, President Barack Obama said Wednesday during a speech at West Point.

With so-called "core al-Qaida" severely degraded and the end of the

**'We must shift our counterterrorism strategy to more effectively partner with countries where terrorist networks seek a foothold.'**

President Barack Obama in speech at West Point

U.S. combat mission in Afghanistan in sight, administration officials see other threats as a higher priority.

"Today's principal threat no longer comes from a centralized al-Qaida leadership. Instead, it comes from

decentralized al-Qaida affiliates and extremists," Obama said. "This lessens the possibility of large-scale 9/11-style attacks against the homeland, but it heightens the danger of U.S. personnel overseas being at-

tacked, as we saw in Benghazi ... So we have to develop a strategy that matches this diffuse threat; one that expands our reach without sending forces that stretch our military thin, or stir up local resentments ... Our reduced presence [in Afghanistan] allows us to more effectively address emerging threats in the Middle East and North Africa."

Obama noted that this year's graduating cadets would be the first in more than a decade who might not deploy to a war zone like Afghanistan.

**SEE STRATEGY ON PAGE 14**

**ANALYSIS**

Obama left with very few postwar options

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**DOWNRANGE**

Relief in Afghanistan after Obama makes commitment

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**TROOPS**

Long road to setting number at 9,800

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# QUOTE OF THE DAY

"They have done nothing, and that's why Chris died. It's almost become a normal thing for us to accept this."

— Richard Martinez, whose son, Christopher Michaels-Martinez, died in a shooting spree on the University of California, Santa Barbara college campus, blaming the inaction of politicians on gun laws for his son's death

See story on Page 8

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# MILITARY

# 2 indicted in Navy bribery scheme

By MATTHEW M. BURKE  
Stars and Stripes

A former Military Sealift Command contractor and a Virginia-based businessman have been indicted in federal court in the latest bribery scheme to hit Navy contracting.

Government contractor Scott Miserendino Sr., 55, was charged in the Eastern District of Virginia with one count each of conspiracy to commit bribery, bribery, conspiracy to commit obstruction of criminal investigations and witness tampering as well as obstruction of criminal investigations, according to a Justice Department statement.

Businessman Timothy Miller, 57, was charged with one count of conspiracy to commit bribery and two counts of bribery of a public official.

Miserendino is accused of so-

liciting and accepting bribes from two unidentified companies while playing a role in managing telecommunications projects and awarding government contracts, subcontracts and task orders for the command, the statement said.

Miller is accused of bribing officials for contracts on behalf of his company.

The indictments came after five other individuals pleaded guilty in the bribery scheme involving the Navy's leading transportation provider, the statement said.

Miserendino worked closely with another command official, Kenny Toy, who was also involved in the scheme, the statement said. Between 2005 and 2007, Miserendino allegedly accepted approximately \$100,000 in cash bribes from agents of an unidentified corporation seeking command contracts. He also received a flat-screen plasma television, a wine

refrigerator and other goods.

Miller and his business partner, Dwayne Hardman, allegedly paid \$50,000 in cash bribes to Miserendino and Toy in 2009 for preferential treatment for their telecommunications business in connection with contracts, subcontracts and task orders.

Miserendino allegedly obstructed justice and tampered with a witness by seeing that \$85,000 was paid to Hardman to prevent him from exposing the scheme to law enforcement officials, the statement said.

Toy, a former Afloat Programs Manager for the Military Sealift Command 66 Command, Control, Communication and Computer Systems Directorate, pleaded guilty in February to bribery for receiving more than \$100,000 in cash, the statement said. Hardman pleaded guilty to bribery in February and admitted that he provided

more than \$140,000 in cash bribes to Toy and Miserendino.

Three other individuals — Michael McPhail, Roderic Smith and Adam White — have pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit bribery and forfeited a total of \$289,000, the statement said. The case was investigated by the FBI, Naval Criminal Investigative Service and the Defense Criminal Investigative Service.

It is the latest bribery and corruption scandal to plague Navy contracting.

On May 19, a Navy sailor became the third man to plead guilty in a classified information-for-gifts scandal involving Glenn Defense Marine Asia, an Asia-Pacific Navy contractor. Several others have pleaded not guilty and others remain under investigation in that case.

burke.matt@stripes.com

# Officer gets life for raping daughters

By JOHN VANDIVER  
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — A Stuttgart-based Army officer has been sentenced to life in prison without parole after being convicted of raping his three daughters over a six-year period, the Army said.

The officer, a major assigned to U.S. European Command, was found guilty Saturday following a five-day court-martial in Kaiserslautern.

Capt. Meghan McEnerney, the Army's special victim prosecutor in Europe, credited the three children, all of whom testified during the trial, with having the courage to step forward and confront their father.

"The oldest child testified that her father once told her, 'Some day when you have children you will have to keep them away from me because I won't be able to help myself,'" McEnerney said in a post-trial statement. "So, both the verdict and sentence from this military jury send an important message to the three child victims — first, 'we believe you' and second, 'you and your children will

**The Army's special victim prosecutor in Europe credited the three children with having the courage to step forward and confront their father.**

always be safe."

The officer was convicted on all 32 specifications of rape, sodomy and lewd acts, according to the Army.

Stars and Stripes is withholding the name of the convicted officer to avoid indirectly identifying the victims.

According to an Army post-trial summary, the sexual assaults began in 2006 when the oldest child was 7 years old and the family was stationed in the U.S. In 2008, the Army officer began sexually assaulting his second daughter, who was 6 years old at the time.

"The family moved to a second home in Maryland where the abuse continued in the accused's self-proclaimed basement 'man cave,'" the Army report stated.

"He would tuck his daughters in at night, make them count to 60, and force them to meet him in the man cave where they would be raped and sodomized."

In 2010, the officer began abusing his youngest daughter, the Army report stated. In 2012, the family moved to Germany where the assaults continued.

"Finally, one day in December 2012 when the oldest daughter was sodomized so brutally that she believed she would die, she disclosed the abuse to her mother in church that same night," an official Army post-trial report stated.

The mother immediately filed a report with the Army Criminal Investigation Command, which initiated an investigation with the German police. The accused's semen DNA was obtained during a medical examination of the daughter and later submitted as evidence against the officer during the trial, the Army said.

"The live testimony from the three child victims shocked the conscience and left little room for doubt that the accused was guilty," the Army report stated.

vandiver.john@stripes.com

# JPAC funding of gravel road investigated

The Associated Press

HONOLULU — A Hawaii-based military command responsible for finding, recovering and identifying missing-in-action servicemembers is being investigated for money spent on a gravel road in Papua New Guinea.

The Defense Department confirms an investigation is underway but officials won't reveal the actual expenditure for the roadwork.

The Honolulu Star-Advertiser reported Tuesday the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command known as JPAC is being investigated for spending as much as \$12 million on a 3.4-mile road to reach a World War II battlefield in Papua New Guinea.

Officials say it's not clear how many missing American servicemembers' remains can be recovered.

American and Australian forces fought the Japanese on the Papuan Peninsula in late 1942 and early 1943.

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# MILITARY

# US may decide to train Syrian rebels

By **MATTHEW LEE**  
AND **LOLITA C. BALDOR**  
*The Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — In an open move that would significantly boost U.S. support to Syrian rebels seeking military help in their quest to oust President Bashar Assad, the White House may soon sign off on a project to train and equip moderate rebel forces.

President Barack Obama is weighing sending a limited number of American troops to Jordan to be part of a regional training mission that would instruct carefully vetted members of the Free Syrian Army on tactics, including counterterrorism operations, administration officials said. They said Obama has not yet given final approval for the initiative and said there is still internal discussion about its merits and potential risks.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss administration deliberations.

In a speech at the U.S. Military Academy on Wednesday, Obama was expected to frame the situation in Syria as a counterterror-

**‘The current policy approach continues to be strengthening the moderate opposition, which offers an alternative to the brutal Assad regime and the more extremist elements within the opposition.’**

**Jen Psaki**  
State Department spokeswoman

ism challenge and indicate he will expand assistance to the opposition, although he was not expected to announce the new program, the officials said.

However, the State Department, Pentagon and U.S. intelligence community, along with many in Congress who back the move, have concluded Assad will not budge without a change in the military situation on the ground, according to the officials. At the same time, there are growing fears about the



**Free Syrian Army fighters board a bus leaving Homs, Syria, in this photo provided by the anti-government activist group Coordination Committee of Khalidiya Neighborhood in Homs. President Barack Obama may soon sign off on a project to train and equip moderate Syrian rebels.**

threat posed by al-Qaida-linked and -inspired extremists fighting in Syria, the officials said.

The Senate Armed Services Committee last week passed a defense bill that authorizes the Defense Department to provide training and equipment to vetted elements of the Syrian opposition.

The U.S. already has covert support operations in place for the Syrian opposition, and it is not yet clear how the new program would work. The U.S. has spent \$287 million so far in nonlethal aid on the

civil war, now in its fourth year.

Rebel commanders for three years have been asking the U.S. for lethal assistance as they've seen gains wiped out one after another, but the U.S. has been reluctant to move to that kind of aid for fear weapons could end up in the hands of extremist rebels who might then turn on neighboring Israel or against U.S. interests.

The State Department on Tuesday declined to comment on the proposed train-and-equip program. Department spokeswoman

Jen Psaki, however, told reporters that an array of options to support moderate Assad foes remained under consideration.

“We have been clear that we see Syria as a counterterrorism challenge, and therefore certainly we factor that in in options we consider,” she said. “The current policy approach continues to be strengthening the moderate opposition, which offers an alternative to the brutal Assad regime and the more extremist elements within the opposition.”

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PACIFIC

# Summit set as Asia-Pacific tensions simmer

By ERIC SLAVIN  
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — Over the past week, a Vietnamese ship sank, Chinese fighter planes buzzed their Japanese counterparts and Thailand staged a military coup.

Suffice it to say, there will be some tension this weekend in Singapore, as each of those nations, as well as the United States, bring a slew of high-level diplomats and security officials to the 27-nation Shangri-La Dialogue.

The dialogue, which began in 2002, has rapidly become one of the most influential summits of its kind, headlined by regional prime ministers and regularly attended by U.S. defense secretaries.

Much of the conversation will center on China's vision of Asia — a future where China seems set on regulating or controlling large swaths of the western Pacific Ocean — versus the opposing visions supported by the United States and the many other countries that border those waters.

"Over the last 12 months, there's been a decline in regional security," said Shangri-La Dialogue senior fellow Alexander Neill. "There are trust deficits in bilateral relationships. Underlying all of this is the rivalry between the rising power of China and the resident superpower, the

United States." Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel and other U.S. officials are expected to engage in side-line discussions with several nations focused on skirmishes with China.

Vietnam likely will be high on the list.

Vietnam's relationship with China hit another low Tuesday when it accused a Chinese ship of sinking one of its fishing vessels near the Paracel Islands, a South China Sea territory claimed by both nations. In response, China accused Vietnam's ship of running into its ship and capsizing.

The U.S. military-to-military relationship with Vietnam has grown since the two nations began limited bilateral exercises in 2010, and Navy officials told Stars and Stripes this month that they hope to expand the scope of those exercises next year.

Vietnam has ruled out basing U.S. foreign troops within its borders. However, Vietnam and Southeast Asia will likely be a target of "heavy military deployment" from the U.S. in the next few years, Neill said.

"I could envision enhanced port visits, and perhaps rotational visits that could be made with Vietnam," Neill said.

The United States has largely sided with Vietnam in its stand-



SANHACI LALIT/AP

**A protester shouts slogans during an anti-coup demonstration at the Victory Monument in Bangkok on Monday. The Thai military's takeover of the government is expected to be a prominent topic at the Shangri-La Dialogue summit in Singapore this weekend.**

off with China after the Chinese moved a \$1 billion offshore oil-drilling rig toward the Paracels earlier in May, raising tensions between the two countries.

"We remain concerned about dangerous conduct and intimidation by vessels operating in this area by the Chinese," State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said Tuesday in Washington.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe also criticized Chi-

na's "unilateral drilling activity" at a meeting with Vietnam officials in Tokyo on May 22. A few days later, Japanese officials said that Chinese fighter planes flew within 100 feet of their surveillance planes near the Senkaku Islands, which Japan administers but China also claims.

China lashed out at Abe's support for Vietnam on Tuesday.

"The [Japanese] want to fish in the troubled waters and achieve

their ulterior motives," China Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said during a news conference. "They want nothing short of chaos."

On Friday night, Abe will give the keynote address at the Shangri-La Dialogue, in front of China's largest-ever delegation at the meeting, organizers said.

Japanese officials are also expected to meet with South Korean and U.S. officials to discuss placing an advanced missile-defense system in South Korea, according to a Wall Street Journal report.

The U.S. has already conducted a site survey for a Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense Battery, which would be placed to counter North Korean missile launches. No final decisions have been made, according to the report.

The most prominent discussions at Shangri-La not involving China or North Korea will likely center around Thailand, where the military has overthrown the civilian government and suppressed dissent.

Although Thailand and the United States share a very close military-to-military relationship, Washington largely suspended that relationship following the military takeover.

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MILITARY

# Bataan ready in case of Libya evacuation

From staff and wire reports

The USS Bataan has moved into the Mediterranean Sea and could be used, if needed, for any possible evacuation of American personnel from Libya.

Defense officials said Tuesday that the amphibious assault ship was not near Libya and wasn't expected to be positioned off its coast.

Aboard the Bataan are about 1,000 U.S. Marines with the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit, according to Pentagon spokesman Col. Steve Warren.

Warren said the Bataan would remain in the region, and could move or respond quickly if called.

In Washington, the U.S. State Department recommended Tuesday that Americans leave Libya immediately and warned U.S. citizens against any travel to the North African country.

The department said the security situation in Libya "remains unpredictable and unstable," with crime levels high in many parts of the country.

It added that various groups also have called for attacks against U.S. citizens and U.S. interests in Libya.

"U.S. citizens currently in Libya should exercise extreme caution and depart immediately," the department said in a statement.

The department also said that



JAMES A. HALL/Courtesy of the U.S. Marine Corps

The amphibious assault ship USS Bataan prepares to dock at the Royal Jordanian Naval Base in the Port of Aqaba in Jordan last week during Eager Lion 2014. The Bataan has moved into the Mediterranean Sea in preparation for support of Americans in Libya.

due to security concerns and limited staffing it was only able to offer limited emergency services to U.S. citizens there. There was no move to evacuate diplomats from the embassy.

An al-Qaida-inspired group on Tuesday vowed to fight a ren-

egade Libyan general who is waging an offensive against Islamists, who are accusing him of being an "American agent" who wants to replicate last year's military overthrow of an elected government in neighboring Egypt.

Mohammed al-Zahawi, the

leader of Ansar al-Shariah, said in a televised news conference that his group would combat Gen. Khalifa Hifter's so-called "Dignity Operation," which began more than 10 days ago and is aimed at crushing Islamist militias and their political backers.

## Exercise in Med kicks off

Stars and Stripes

The U.S. Navy has kicked off the active portion of its annual maritime exercise with Mediterranean nations, bringing together naval and police forces from southern Europe and north Africa, including problem-plagued Libya.

Now in its eighth year, Phoenix Express is one of four regular exercises hosted by the Navy command for Africa to work with nations on problems such as drug trafficking, armed robbery at sea and illegal fishing.

The exercise will combine vessel-tracking exercises with underway boarding drills.

Participants set up a maritime operations center at Naval Air Station Sigonella, Sicily, on Monday to begin the at-sea portion of the exercise.

Other events began earlier this month at the U.S. Naval Support Activity Souda Bay, Crete.

African nations are often hobbled in their response to maritime crime by a lack of resources, corruption and complicated or unclear command structures.

The Pentagon has placed increased focus on training North African security forces in recent years following gains from insurgent groups in Algeria, Libya and Mali.

Libya presents a special maritime problem, with militias in control of the critical oil port of Benghazi. Navy special operators boarded a hijacked vessel in March after it fled at the port and evaded government efforts to stop it.

The incident embarrassed the national government and resulted in the former prime minister fleeing the country.

Clashes between armed groups have since followed, with a former Libyan army officer and later rebel leader announcing a campaign against the militias and attacking their positions in Benghazi and Tripoli earlier this month.

# Libyan jets bomb militia camp

By ESAM MOHAMED  
The Associated Press

TRIPOLI, Libya — Libyan military jets bombed a militia camp Wednesday in the eastern city of Benghazi, part of a renegade general's ongoing offensive against Islamists that has divided the country, security officials and witnesses said.

Two airstrikes hit the February 17 militia compound, sending a column of black smoke into the air, they said. Panicked residents fled as the militia responded with anti-aircraft fire, the official said.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to journalists.

Though launched by government aircraft, the attack appears to be part of renegade Gen. Khalifa Hifter's ongoing offensive, aimed at crushing Islamist militias and their alleged backers in parliament. Eastern air bases have pledged their support to Hifter, who launched the offensive May 16 in Benghazi.

Two days later, militias allied with Hifter stormed and ransacked the Libyan parliament in Tripoli, declaring the body suspended.

Politicians, tribes and army units have lined up with Hifter since, as thousands also have

demonstrated to support him.

February 17, founded by Islamist Fawzi Abu Katef and targeted in Hifter's May 16 attack, is one of the biggest and most powerful militias in Benghazi. Its forces originate in the rebel brigade that toppled longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi.

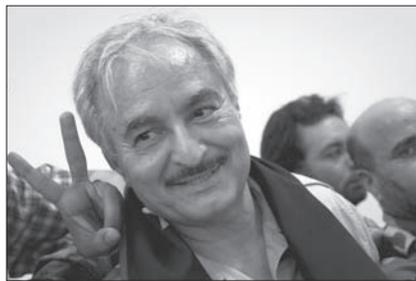
The strikes come a day after an al-Qaida-inspired group called Ansar al-Shariah vowed to battle Hifter's forces and open the "doors of hell" if he continued his offensive.

The group also warned the United States and Arab countries like Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates against supporting Hifter.

Ansar al-Shariah has been linked to the Sept. 11, 2012, attack on the U.S. outpost in Benghazi that killed four Americans, including U.S. Ambassador Chris Stevens.

Meanwhile, Libya's parliament continues to struggle after a disputed vote earlier this month saw Islamist-backed businessman Ahmed Matiq named as the country's interim prime minister. The attack by militias aligned with Hifter came as parliament planned to name a Cabinet for Matiq's administration.

On Wednesday, lawmakers notified immediate past interim Prime Minister Abdullah al-Thinni of Matiq's new Cabinet.



Then-Libyan senior rebel commander Khalifa Hifter leaves a 2011 news conference in Benghazi, Libya. A top general under Moammar Gadhafi, now-Gen. Khalifa Hifter launched an offensive on Islamist militias this month.

It's not clear whether al-Thinni will step down and allow Matiq's government to take over.

Parliament's mandate expired in February, and nonstop demonstrations have been used to try to push the parliament into holding early elections.

Opponents accuse the parliament of financing Islamist militias across the country, especially in the east, where there are targeted killings of top officials at most every day.

Libya's army and police rely heavily on the country's myriad militias, the heavily armed groups formed around ethnic identity, hometowns and religion. Bringing them under control has been one of the greatest challenges for Libya's successive interim governments after Gadhafi's downfall, one they largely failed at as militias have seized oil terminals and even kidnapped a former prime minister seemingly at will.

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## MILITARY

# Pentagon to review military health facilities

By ERNESTO LONDONO

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel on Tuesday announced a sweeping review of the Pentagon's health care facilities, spurred by concern that it could be suffering from strains similar to those afflicting the Department of Veterans Affairs system.

Officials said the review is expected to take 90 days. As outrage spread over allegations that several patients at a VA facility in Phoenix died waiting for care, Hagel became concerned about the state of the health care network that treats the active-duty force, his spokesman said.

"It's clearly within the context of what he's watching at the VA," the Pentagon press secretary, Rear Adm. John Kirby, said in a statement. "He wants to know what we don't know. He doesn't want to wait for similar allega-

tions to appear with the active military health care system."

Kirby said the review was unrelated to the situation at Womack Army Medical Center at Fort Bragg, N.C., one of the Army's largest medical facilities. The outsider of the head of that facility, Col. Steven Brewster, and the suspension of three top deputies was reported Tuesday on the website of The New York Times.

The Army removed the four Tuesday after two patients in their 20s unexpectedly died in the past 10 days, shortly after they sought treatment at the hospital's emergency room.

The changes were due both to the patient deaths and to problems with surgical-infection control identified in March by the Joint Commission, an independent body that accredits hospitals, according to the Times. In a statement, the Army said that "senior Army medical leaders have lost trust and confidence" in Brewster, Womack's commander, and

had replaced him with Col. Ronald T. Stephens, another doctor.

New acting deputies were also named to head clinical services, nursing and administration while investigations continue.

According to the Times report, the first of the two recent fatalities at Womack involved Racheal Marie Rice, 29, a mother of three who underwent a routine tubal ligation May 16 and died the next morning, according to hospital staff members. The procedure is considered low-risk for complications and death. Within three hours of surgery, Rice, the wife of an active-duty soldier, returned to the emergency room, feeling ill.

Patients who return that soon after surgery are supposed to be placed on a triage list and seen quickly. Rice waited for about two hours without seeing a doctor, then left to breast-feed her baby, who is about 6 months old, according to people familiar with the case. By the next morning, she was close to death. An ambulance

took her from her home back to Womack, where she died.

The second patient, a 24-year-old active-duty servicemember who could not be identified, visited the emergency room last weekend and received a diagnosis of tachycardia, a potentially dangerous condition involving an elevated heart rate, according to two people familiar with the case.

He was given medication, instructed to follow up with his doctor and released, according to one staff member. Why and where he died remained unclear on Tuesday.

The Times wrote that Pentagon data shows that Womack, which performs more than 14,000 inpatient and outpatient surgical procedures a year, had a higher-than-expected rate of surgical complications from January 2010 to July 2013, the latest data available. In March, the hospital suspended all elective surgery for two days after inspectors from the Joint Commission found fault

with surgical infection control procedures.

The hospital remains fully accredited, the Times noted.

Kirby said Hagel received a preliminary briefing on the state of the Defense Department's health care system this week. He was scheduled to meet Wednesday morning with senior officials who will play a role in the assessment.

In the statement released late Tuesday, Kirby said the review will "examine whether current access to care meets the department standards. It will also examine the safety and quality of the care" extended to military members, Defense Department civilians and their dependents.

Asked whether there are indications of problems beyond Fort Bragg, Pentagon spokesman Col. Steve Warren said: "This review will determine that. I don't know that we've seen any indications that there is a crisis in the department."

## Landstuhl center verified for trauma at lower level

By MATT MILLHAM

Stars and Stripes

LANDSTUHL, Germany — Three years after becoming the military's only Level I trauma center overseas, Landstuhl Regional Medical Center received official word Friday that it has been verified again as a trauma center, but at a lower classification — Level III.

The lower-level verification was long in the works, and more an indication of the winding down of the war in Afghanistan than a measure of Landstuhl's ability to treat some of the most seriously wounded personnel, hospital officials said. All of the capabilities it added to become a top-tier trauma center will remain at least until the end of the war in Afghanistan and, hopefully, beyond that, said Kathleen D. Martin, who helped build the hospital's trauma program as its trauma nurse director.

"It took a lot to get it in place," she said. "And so we want to make sure that at any point, we can pulse up if there's another contingency operation and be able to take care of our servicemembers."

A year ago, Landstuhl's then commander, Col. Barbara Holcombe, said the number of seriously wounded troops evacuated from the front lines had already dropped so low the hospital was no longer meeting the minimum number of patients required for Level I verification.

In all of 2013, Landstuhl admitted 735 trauma patients, according to hospital statistics. That's 465 short of the 1,200 typically needed for Level I verification, according to the American College of Surgeons, which inspects and verifies whether hospitals are meeting the criteria to qualify as trauma centers.

There is no minimum patient

count required for Level III centers, but hospital officials are projecting they'll see between 300 and 500 trauma patients in the next year.

Unlike over the last decade, many of those patients are expected to come from the military community in Europe rather than Afghanistan or Iraq, Martin said. Already, between 30 and 50 percent of Landstuhl's trauma cases come from Europe, an indication of just how few trauma patients are getting evacuated from contingency operations, she said.

Prior to 2007, Landstuhl had never been verified as a trauma center at any level — even during the hospital's busiest days at the height of the Iraq War in 2004, when it admitted nearly 2,500 trauma patients.

Despite what appears to be a downgrade, the hospital is still better equipped and more capable than it was when the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan began, according to Martin.

"Of course people are going to be concerned about that when they hear, 'Oh, you went from here to there? What does that mean?'" she said.

"Nothing has really been given up, which is a good thing."

Though it's not required of Level III trauma facilities, Landstuhl is keeping its neurosurgery capability and some other medical specialties that it could have shed and still made the cut.

Dr. Michael Rotondo, who chairs the American College of Surgeons' Committee on Trauma, said last year it made sense for Landstuhl to make certain changes and cuts "to match the operational tempo downgrade and so that the resources match the need."

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NATION

# A call for action at shooting memorial

By RAQUEL MARIA DILLON AND DON THOMPSON  
The Associated Press

GOLETA, Calif. — Thousands mourned the deaths of their classmates at a California university, lawmakers proposed ways to prevent the next round of deaths, and the rampant presence of guns were at the forefront of both discussions at a rampage that left seven dead, including the gunman, reverberated across the state.

Richard Martinez, whose son, Christopher Michaels-Martinez, 20, died in the attacks, spoke at Tuesday's memorial on the campus of the University of California, Santa Barbara, emphasizing that he did not speak for all the victims' relatives or even his former wife, Michaels-Martinez's mother.

But he urged students to fight for tougher gun laws, and placed the blame on what he called the inaction of politicians.

"They have done nothing, and that's why Chris died," Martinez said. "It's almost become a normal thing for us to accept this."

He got much of the crowd to repeatedly chant "Not one more," in reference to such massacres, a phrase he shouted before reporters and television cameras the day after Friday's massacre.

The school canceled classes



CHRIS CARLSON/AP

A couple embrace before a memorial service for the victims and families of Friday's shooting rampage on the campus of University of California, Santa Barbara, on Tuesday.

and declared a day of mourning and reflection, four days after the shootings and stabbings in the Isla Vista community by community college student Elliot Rodger, 22, who had posted an Internet video outlining his plan to slaughter as many people as possible.

Rodger had legally obtained three semi-automatic handguns and still had 400 unspent rounds of ammunition when he shot himself to death, authorities said.

On the same day, two Califor-

nia Assembly members proposed legislation that would create a gun violence restraining order that could be sought from a judge by law enforcement at the request of family members and friends.

"When someone is in crisis, the people closest to them are often the first to spot the warning signs, but almost nothing can now be done to get back their guns or prevent them from buying more," said Democratic Assemblywoman Nancy Skinner.

# Calif. couple's buried gold coins up for sale

The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — A treasure trove of rare gold coins discovered by a California couple out walking their dog has gone on sale, with one coin selling for \$15,000 on Tuesday.

The coins date from 1847 to 1894 and have been valued at \$11 million.

Several coins were auctioned at the Old San Francisco Mint on Tuesday, and one of them — an 1874 \$20 double eagle that is usually worth \$4,250 — sold for \$15,000.

Don Kagin, whose firm is handling the sale, said most of the remaining 1,400 coins had gone on sale on Amazon.com and Kagins.com after the auction.

The couple, whom Kagin declined to identify, found them last year buried under the shadow of a tree in their rural Northern California property.

Here are five things to know about the coins and their origin:

**Why are they so valuable?**

Experts say paper money was illegal in California until the 1870s, so it's extremely rare to find any coins from before that period. Additionally, most of the coins are in mint condition, having been stashed away seemingly immediately after they were minted. They were valued by Don Kagin, a numismatist who is handling the sale and marketing of the coins.

**Who found them?** Kagin said the couple — a middle-aged husband and wife — does not want to be identified in part to avoid a gold rush on their rural Northern California property by modern-day prospectors. They discovered the coins in eight cans buried in the shadow of an old tree on the

property. They plan to keep a few of the coins themselves and use the money from the rest to pay off bills and donate to local charities. Money from Tuesday's auction will benefit the effort to turn the Old Mint into a museum.

**Where did the coins come from?** Most of the coins were minted at the San Francisco Mint, according to Kagin. It's not clear, however, who put them in the ground or how they were obtained, though theories have abounded. Kagin said people have linked the coins to stage-

coach bandit Black Bart, outlaw Jesse James and a theft at the San Francisco Mint, but none of the theories has panned out.

**What is in the collection?** The treasure consists of four \$5 gold pieces, 50 \$10 gold pieces and 1,373 \$20 double eagles. Among the coins displayed Tuesday was the crown jewel of the collection — an 1866-S No Motto \$20 gold piece valued at more than \$1 million.

**How does this discovery compare to other coin finds?** Kagin calls this coin find the largest such discovery in U.S. history.

One of the largest previous finds of gold coins was uncovered by construction workers in Jackson, Tenn., in 1985 and valued at \$1 million. More than 400,000 silver dollars were found in the home of a Reno, Nev., man who died in 1974 and were later sold intact for \$7.3 million. Gold coins and ingots said to be worth as much as \$130 million were recovered in the 1980s from the wreck of the SS Central America. But historians knew roughly where that gold was because the ship went down off the coast of North Carolina during a hurricane in 1857.

# Obama lawyer to look into CIA officer name slip

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama's top lawyer will look into how the name of the CIA's top official in Afghanistan was accidentally revealed to thousands of journalists, the White House said Tuesday.

White House spokeswoman Caitlin Hayden said chief counsel Neil Eggleston will also make recommendations for how to ensure such a disclosure doesn't happen again.

The officer's name was included by U.S. Embassy staff on a list of American officials who met with Obama on Sunday during a surprise visit to Afghanistan.

The White House provided the list to a Washington Post reporter who was representing the news media on the trip. The reporter, as is typical under

those circumstances, then sent the list to the White House "press pool" list. An estimated 6,000 email addresses are on that distribution list.

The Associated Press is withholding the officer's name at the request of the Obama administration, which said its publication could put his life and the lives of his family members in danger.

Deputy National Security Adviser Tony Blinken indicated in a TV interview that the outing of the CIA official was worrisome.

"It shouldn't have happened. We're trying to understand why it happened," Blinken said on CNN.

Blinken declined to say whether the CIA official was being moved out of the country for his safety. The intentional disclosure of the name of a "covered" operative is a crime under the U.S. Intelligence Identities Protection Act.

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# NATION

# Obama postpones deportation policy review

By JOSH LEDERMAN

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama has asked his homeland security chief to hold off on completing a review of U.S. deportation policies until the end of the summer, senior White House officials said Tuesday, in a move aimed at salvaging any hopes for Congress to act on immigration this year.

Obama in March directed the government to examine whether deportation practices can be made more humane, seeking to pacify frustrated immigration advocates. That step emboldened House Republicans to argue they can't trust Obama to enforce the law, and that bypassing lawmakers through executive action would deliver a death knell to the broader immigration overhaul that Obama and Democrats are seeking.

Caught in the middle, Obama is seeking to preserve what the White House sees as a

narrow window in June and July in which Congress could conceivably act before Washington's focus becomes consumed by the November midterm elections.

"The president really wants to maximize the opportunity to get a permanent solution enacted, which requires Congress," said Cecilia Munoz, the director of the White House's Domestic Policy Council.

The delay defuses an emerging split among traditional Obama allies that emerged after the president commissioned the deportation review.

Some immigration advocates and Democrats urged Obama to take immediate executive action in the face of congressional procrastination. Others insisted the focus should remain on pressuring House Republicans to act while there's still a chance — however slim — to pass a bill that could provide a path to citizenship for the 11.5 million immigrants in the U.S. illegally. "We've got maybe a window of two, three

months to get the ball rolling in the House of Representatives," Obama said earlier this month.

That window, White House officials said, has opened now that primary elections have wrapped up in many states where Republican incumbents are being challenged by conservative candidates who oppose an immigration overhaul.

A make-or-break deadline comes when lawmakers leave Washington for a monthlong August recess to focus on campaigning.

In Denver on Tuesday, Vice President Joe Biden made similar remarks about Republican opposition to immigration reform and reluctance to deal with legislation during campaigns.

"They've got their chance now," Biden said. "Most of the primaries are over." Obama informed Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson of his decision to delay the review during a White House

meeting last week in which Johnson updated the president on the review's progress, a senior White House official said. Homeland Security will continue working on the review but won't release the results until the window for congressional action has closed, said the official, who wasn't authorized to comment by name and demanded anonymity.

On the congressional front, the Senate last year passed a comprehensive bill with bipartisan support that Obama says meets his criteria for what an immigration fix must include. House Republicans have refused to take up that bill, saying they preferred their own piecemeal approach.

But the House Republican leadership has made no move to bring legislation to a vote. And last week, Republican leaders blocked any votes on immigration legislation — including one offered as an amendment by a Republican — in yet another ominous sign for immigration's prospects.

# Fire crews attack Central Calif. blaze

The Associated Press

FRESNO, Calif. — Firefighters swarmed to the Central California foothills on Tuesday, attacking a blaze that had grown to 1,300 acres in two days.

Officials urged some residents east of Lake McClure in Mariposa County to leave their homes, as fire crews work to tamp down the flames before they grow too large to handle.

In an extreme dry year like this, state fire spokesman Daniel Berlant said, they are attacking it

from all angles. "We're fighting this fire not only on the ground but also in the air, helping to slow this thing down," Berlant said.

The Hunters Fire ignited Monday afternoon and destroyed three buildings as it spread to the dry brush in steep foothills. Crews had difficulty reaching it, and on Tuesday temperatures rose into the 90s with winds up to 20 mph, adding to the challenge of an already dry year.

More than 670 firefighters on the ground had the fire 20 percent

contained, Berlant said. The cause remained under investigation.

In its third dry year, California has already had 1,700 wildfires in 2014, said Berlant, who compared that with the 900 by this time last year.

"The drought has let fires like this burn at a much more intense and active rate than we would typically see," he said.

Up to 100 homes are potentially threatened, and the Mariposa County Sheriff's Office notified about 50 residents in immediate danger, urging them to evacuate.

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NATION

# Renowned poet, author Maya Angelou, 86, dies

By HILLEL ITALIE  
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Maya Angelou, a modern Renaissance woman who survived the harshest of childhoods to become a force on stage, screen, the printed page and the inaugural dais, has died. She was 86.

Her death was confirmed in a statement issued by Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C., where she had served as a professor of American Studies since 1982.

Tall and regal, with a deep, majestic voice, Angelou defied all probability and category, becoming one of the first black women to enjoy mainstream success as an author and thriving in virtually every artistic medium. The young single mother who performed at strip clubs to earn a living later wrote and recited the most popular presidential inaugural poem in history. The childhood victim of rape wrote a million-selling memoir, befriended Malcolm X, Nelson Mandela and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., and performed on stages around the world.

An actress, singer and dancer in the 1950s and 1960s, she broke through as an author in 1970 with "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings," which became standard (and occasionally censored) reading, and was the first of a multipart autobiographical work that continued through the decades. In 1993, she was a sensation reading her cautiously hopeful "On the Pulse of the Morning" at former President Bill Clinton's first inauguration. Her confident performance openly delighted Clinton and made the

poem a best-seller, if not a critical favorite. For former President George W. Bush, she read an poem, "Amazing Peace," at the 2005 Christmas tree lighting ceremony at the White House.

She remained close enough to the Clintons that in 2008 she supported Hillary Rodham Clinton's candidacy over the ultimately successful run of the country's first black president, Barack Obama. But a few days before Obama's inauguration, she was clearly overjoyed. She told the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette she would be watching it on television "somewhere between crying and praying and being grateful and laughing when I see faces I know."

Her very name as an adult was a reinvention. Angelou was born Marguerite Johnson in St. Louis and raised in Stamps, Ark., and San Francisco, moving back and forth between her parents and her grandmother. She was smart and fresh to the point of danger, packed off by her family to California after sassing a white store clerk in Arkansas. Other times, she didn't speak at all: At age 7, she was raped by her mother's boyfriend and didn't speak for years. She learned by reading, and listening.

"I loved the poetry that was sung in the black church: 'Go down Moses, way down in Egypt's land,'" she told the AP. "It just seemed to me the most wonderful way of talking. And 'Deep River.' Ooh! Even now it can catch me. And then I started reading, really reading, at about 7½, because a woman in my town took me to the library, a black school library. ... And I read every book, even if I didn't understand it."



American poet and novelist Maya Angelou, shown in 2008, had talents beyond writing that included dancing and acting.

At age 9, she was writing poetry. By 17, she was a single mother. In her early 20s, she danced at a strip joint, ran a brothel, was married (to Enistatious Tosh Angeles, her first of three husbands) and then divorced.

After renaming herself Maya Angelou for the stage ("Maya" was a childhood nickname), she toured in "Porgy and Bess" and Jean Genet's "The Blacks" and danced with Alvin Ailey. She worked as a coordinator for the civil rights group Southern Christian Leadership Council, and lived for years in Egypt and Ghana, where she met Malcolm X and remained close to him until his assassination, in 1965. Three years later, she was helping King organize the Poor People's March in Memphis, Tenn., where the civil rights leader was slain on Angelou's 40th birthday.

Angelou was little known outside the the-

atrical community until "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings," which might not have happened if James Baldwin hadn't persuaded Angelou, still grieving over King's death, to attend a party at Jules Feiffer's house. Feiffer was so taken by Angelou that he mentioned her to Random House editor Bob Loomis, who persuaded her to write a book.

Angelou's musical writing style was clear in a passage about boxing great Joe Louis' defeat against German fighter Max Schmeling:

"My race groaned. It was our people falling. It was another lynching, yet another Black man hanging on a tree. One more woman ambushed and raped. A Black boy whipped and maimed. It was wounds on the trail of a man running through slimy swamps. ... If Joe lost we were back in slavery and beyond help."

# First lady responds to school meal critics

By MARY CLARE JALONICK  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — First lady Michelle Obama is striking back at House Republicans who are trying to weaken healthier school meal standards, saying any effort to roll back the guidelines is "unacceptable."

The rules set by Congress and the administration over the last several years require more fruits, vegetables and whole grains in the lunch line and set limits on sodium, sugar and fat. The first lady met Tuesday with school nutrition officials who said the guidelines are working in their schools.

The event was an unusual move for the first lady, who has largely stayed away from policy fights

since she lobbied for congressional passage of a child nutrition law in 2010.

"The last thing we can afford to do right now is play politics with our kids' health," Mrs. Obama told participants.

An agriculture spending bill approved by a House subcommittee last week would allow schools to waive the standards if they have a net loss on school food programs for a six-month period. Rep. Robert Aderholt, R-Ala., who wrote the bill, said he was responding to requests from school food directors who have said the rules are too restrictive. The School Nutrition Association, which represents school nutrition directors and companies that sell food to schools, has lobbied for changes to the standards and endorsed the

House bill.

At the White

**"The last thing we can afford to do is play politics with our kids' health."**

First lady Michelle Obama

see any roll backs.

"We're not just talking about food, we're talking about educa-

tion," said David Binkle of the Los Angeles Unified School District. He said participation is up in his district, along with test scores and graduation rates, since they made school foods healthier there.

The president of the School Nutrition Association said Tuesday that the school officials invited to the White House weren't representative of those who have concerns.

"Our request for flexibility under the new standards does not come from industry or politics, it comes from thousands of school cafeteria professionals who have shown how these overly prescriptive regulations are hindering their effort to get students to eat healthy school meals," said SNA's Leah Schmidt.

## George W. Bush has knee replacement

DALLAS — Former President George W. Bush has successfully had a partial knee replacement in Chicago.

Bush spokesman Freddy Ford said Bush had the procedure Saturday and returned home to Dallas on Monday. Ford said in an email Tuesday that Bush was "doing great" and was able to "get up, walk around, and go up and down stairs just a couple hours after the procedure."

Bush is known as a fitness buff. Since leaving the White House the 67-year-old has hosted an annual 100-kilometer mountain bike ride in which he rides along with those injured in wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. He participated in the ride earlier this month at his Crawford ranch.

From The Associated Press

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## WORLD

# Chechen leader says no troops sent to Ukraine

By PETER LEONARD  
The Associated Press

DONETSK, Ukraine — As the fighting becomes more ferocious in eastern Ukraine, Chechnya's Moscow-backed leader said Wednesday he had not sent any of his troops to help pro-Russia insurgents but some Chechens may have gone there on their own.

Scores of rebel fighters have been killed this week around the major eastern city of Donetsk, and Ukrainian border guards have reported at least one gunbattle as they blocked groups of armed men trying to cross into Ukraine from Russia. Ukraine and the West have accused Moscow of fomenting the unrest, but Russian President Vladimir Putin has denied sending any troops to help the insurgents.

Fighters who looked like Caucasus residents have been seen among the pro-Russia rebels who have seized government buildings, declared independence from Ukraine and are fighting government forces in the east.

In a statement posted on his Instagram, Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov said two-thirds of the 3 million Chechens live outside his province in Russia's North Cau-

casus mountains, so he "can't and mustn't know where each of them goes."

"If someone saw a Chechen in the zone of conflict, he's there on his own," he said.

Kadyrov's pro-Russia forces, known for their warrior spirit and deadly efficiency, helped Russia win a quick victory in a 2008 war with neighboring Georgia. The 37-year-old leader has vowed an unwavering fealty to Putin and has hailed the Russian leader's policy in Ukraine.

In the most furious battle yet, rebels in Donetsk tried to take control of its airport Monday but were repelled by Ukrainian forces using combat jets and helicopter gunships. Dozens of men were killed and some morgues were overflowing Tuesday. Some insurgent leaders said up to 100 fighters may have been killed.

The city remained tense Wednesday, with Ukrainian fighter jets flying overhead. Some gunshots were heard.

In Sloviansk, a city 55 miles north of Donetsk that has seen constant fighting over the past few weeks, residential areas came under mortar shelling Wednesday from government forces. A school was badly damaged and other



MUSA SADULAYEV/AP

**Chechen regional leader Ramzan Kadyrov, left, accompanies Russian journalists Sunday following their release Saturday from captivity in Ukraine. Kadyrov said Wednesday he had not sent any of his troops to help pro-Russia insurgents in Ukraine.**

buildings were hit. Residents told The Associated Press that several people were wounded.

Kadyrov, a former rebel who fought Russian forces in the first of two devastating separatist wars, switched sides during the second campaign when his father became the region's pro-Russia leader. Following his father's death in a rebel bombing, Kadyrov rebuilt the region relying on generous Kremlin funding and squelched the rebel resistance

with his ruthless paramilitary forces, which have been blamed for extrajudicial killings, torture and other abuses.

Putin praised Kadyrov last week after he negotiated the release of two Russian journalists arrested by Ukrainian forces and accused of assisting the rebels in the east, earning Putin's praise. The Chechen leader has not said how he got the journalists freed, but has directed threats at the Ukrainian authorities.

# Search for lost plane to pause

By DAVID FICKLING  
AND CHRIS JASPER  
Bloomberg News

SYDNEY — The search for wreckage of Malaysian Air Flight 370 will be suspended while investigators assemble a better map of the Indian Ocean, as satellite operator Inmarsat said it can provide no more data on the plane's flightpath.

A robot submarine was to leave the suspected crash area 1,000 miles from Perth on Wednesday, according to Australia's Joint Agency Coordination Centre. The search will resume once a ship-based survey of the seabed has been completed in about three months, its air accident investigator said in a statement, confirming that a final digital transmission from the jet most likely coincided with it running out of fuel.

No trace of the Boeing 777-200 has been found in 81 days of searching from Thailand to the Southern Ocean, the longest hunt for a missing plane in modern aviation history. Data exchanges with an Inmarsat orbiter, including a last burst when fuel exhaustion is thought to have interrupted the electrical supply, remain the only clue to where the Malaysian Airline System Bhd. plane went down with 239 people aboard on March 8.

"The complexities surrounding the search cannot be understated," Martin Dolan, chief commissioner of the Australian Transport Safety Bureau, said on its website. "It involves vast areas of the Indian Ocean with only limited known data and aircraft flight information."

Malaysia's department of civil aviation Tuesday released 43 pages of data logs showing more than nine hours of electronic communications between the 777 and the Inmarsat satellite.

The log includes seven digital "handshakes" with the plane that revealed its distance and direction of flight from the orbiter, and constitutes the entirety of information that Inmarsat has from the aircraft, the British company said.

"There is no more," Inmarsat Vice President Chris McLaughlin said in an interview on Bloomberg Television. "We are working with what we have."

The seventh and final handshake message from the Boeing at 00:19 universal time was a log-on request consistent with its satellite communication system powering up after interruption of the electrical supply, the ATSB said in an interpretation of the data logs.

Estimates of fuel consumption also tally with the jet running dry close to the seventh arc.

# Fire kills 21 at S. Korean hospital for elderly

By HYUNG-JIN KIM  
The Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — A fire believed set by an 81-year-old dementia patient blazed through a hospital ward for the elderly Wednesday and killed 21 people in southern South Korea, mostly from smoke inhalation, police and fire officials said.

The fire on the second floor of the Hyosarang Hospital in Jangseong county also injured seven people and raised concerns about lax fire regulations at a time when the nation is undergoing soul-searching about public safety following the ferry sinking last month that left more than 300 people dead or missing.

Media reports noted that hospitals for the elderly such as Hyosarang, which specializes in dementia and palsy patients, are not required to have sprinklers in South Korea despite a rapidly aging population.

These are the incidents that wretchedly show the dangerous foundation on which our country is established," the Seoul-based Hankyoreh newspaper said in an editorial on its website.

Security video showed the suspect entering the room where the



HYUNG MIN-WOO, YONHAP/AP

**Hospital employees kneel and bow to apologize for victims of a fire outside a hospital in Jangseong, South Korea, on Wednesday after the fire at a hospital annex housing elderly patients killed 21 people.**

blaze began, and the remains of a lighter were found in that room, police station chief Noh Kyu-ho told a televised briefing. Noh said the man, identified only by his surname Kim, denied responsibility.

The video footage showed the fire starting to spread from that

room about two minutes after Kim left, another police officer said, speaking to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because of department rules. Hairs on Kim's arms and hands were

singed and he had moved back to his own room afterward and then quickly exited the hospital later, the police officer said.

There were 34 patients and one nurse on the hospital's second floor at the time of the blaze, and Jangseong Fire Department officials said 20 of the patients and the nurse were killed.

STARS AND STRIPES

OPINION

Why insects shouldn't bug us so much

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By PAULA MOORE

**A**t this time of year, it's not unusual to find ants in your pantry or beetles in your basement. While our fear of creepy crawlies can drive us to want to kill, kill, kill, before you reach for bug spray or rolled-up newspaper, consider that such lethal methods are both cruel and ineffective. (For starters, we're vastly outnumbered — more on that in a minute.) We can — and should — resolve conflicts with troublesome bugs humanely.

I'm not saying that you should live with flies in your fruit bowl. But get over the idea that you can ever be completely bug-free. According to Nancy L. Brill, who was part of a team of entomologists that studied the types of bugs that inhabit our houses, "What most of us don't know is that our homes are filled with a profusion of insects and their relatives, collectively called arthropods, most of which we never see."

As Brill describes in a recent *New York Times* commentary, she and her colleagues from North Carolina State University and the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences collected more than 10,000 specimens of insects, both dead and alive, in just 50 houses in the Raleigh, N.C., area. As many as 100 or more different species of arthropods were often found living under a single roof. You read that right.

The team found spiders and stink bugs, moths and millipedes. More than 90 percent of the homes and guests, and book lice (who harmlessly munch on mildew from old paper), and most homes had dust

mites. The residents of many of the homes included in the study sprayed regularly to kill bugs. Yet, said Brill, "no homes were bug-free. Far from it."  
The good news is that most of these bugs are benign, and some are even beneficial. For example, as Brill points out, carpet beetle larvae help keep our homes tidy by eating dead insects and spilled food. Dust mites dispose of the dead skin cells in our beds.

But whether we consider them "useful" or not, insects play a vital role in the larger ecosystem, and killing them off (if that were even possible) would have far-reaching consequences.

Consider the much-maligned cockroach. Entomologist Coby Schal said roaches



CHRIS WARE, WASHINGTON (KJ) HEARST-LEADER/MCT

"get a bad rap from the 1 percent of cockroach species that infest our homes." The vast majority of cockroaches "have huge ecological importance."

Forest-dwelling cockroaches break down leaf litter and other organic materials that mammals can't digest — helping to prevent the woods from becoming buried in decaying matter. Some species of roaches are pollinators. Others are important food sources for birds and small mammals.

Insects are also smarter than most of us give them credit for — and they may be able to feel pain. Ants use "math" to find the fastest path from one point to another. Social spiders who live in colonies have distinct personalities: Some are shy, whereas others are more aggressive. Researchers have used computer simulations to show that even with their tiny brains, insects have enough neural circuits to possess consciousness. And one study found that ants and other insects have the same chemical in their bodies that's known to transmit pain in humans.

The toxic chemicals that kill bugs can also harm us, so try these kinder methods of coping with errant insects: To repel flies, hang clusters of cloves in a room or leave out an orange peel. Squeeze lemon juice along ant entry points they won't cross over it. Cockroaches are opportunistic, so seal food in airtight containers and remove roaches' hiding places (such as piles of papers), then scatter bay leaves or catnip around your home to repel them. Mosquitoes can be kept at bay with basil plants — they dislike the smell.

All beings, no matter how small, are connected in a circle of life. Let's include them in our circle of compassion as well.

Paula Moore is a senior writer for the PETA Unleashed in Norfolk, Va. This article first appeared on the MCT Forum.

Hash-oil brownies loaded with irony, as well

By JOHN M. CRISP

**T**his would be easy to overstate, but in comparison with much of the world, our country does a decent job of administering justice in a measured, equitable manner.

Sure, there's lots of room for improvement. For example, blacks are considerably more likely to be executed or incarcerated than are whites who commit the same crime. We should work on this.

Still, in a world that has at least 37 countries that outlaw homosexuality, and at least 10 of which punish it with the death penalty, we do a reasonable job of administering even-handed, let-the-punishment-fit-the-crime justice.

Then there's Jacob Lavo-ro. Last week, my local newspaper, the *Austin American-Statesman*, reported that Lavo-ro, 19, of Round Rock, Texas, has been charged with possession of a controlled substance with intent to deliver.

Lavo-ro was caught baking brownies and cookies with a special ingredient, hash oil, a derivative of marijuana with a higher THC concentration than in the regular leaf.

He's in particular trouble because prosecutors can charge him based on the entire weight of the brownies' ingredients — 660 grams — instead of just the weight of the hash oil. And in Texas, possession of more than 400 grams of hash oil with intent to deliver can result in a sentence of as much as life in prison. Yes, life.

I'm no avid proponent of marijuana decriminalization or use, but it's disconcerting that to a 19-year-old kid, who still lives with his parents, worked in a hamburger joint and has no criminal record, could be sentenced to life in prison for a practice that is perfectly legal just 900 miles to the north in Denver.

In fact, if you search for "hash oil in Colorado," at least a dozen sites in Denver alone pop up immediately, each touting the quality and efficacy of its products.

Dr. J's invites you to "Treat Yourself Daily!" with the doctor's hash oil-infused selection of chocolate bars, caramels and hard candies. Or you can take a vegetarian "Health Capsule" if you want to avoid the extra calories.

Since the recreational use of marijuana became legal in Colorado on Jan. 1, sales have exploded, topping \$14 million in just the first month and providing \$3.5 million in additional revenue for the state's coffers.

Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper expects taxes and fees from marijuana sales to amount to \$134 million during the first year, the first \$40 million of which will go to school construction.

I don't have a position on whether all this is a good idea or on whether taxing marijuana sales is a seemingly way to finance public education.

But something is terribly and ironically wrong when the only difference between healthy tax revenues from a profitable

business like Dr. J.'s and the possibility that a 19-year-old kid could go to prison for life is a couple of state lines.

Here's another stunning dose of irony: The same edition of the newspaper that reported Lavo-ro's dilemma reported also on the opening of a new church in Fort Worth, Texas, a collaboration between Calvary Lutheran Church and Trinity Lutheran Church.

Their two pastors noted that young people are leaving the church "in droves." The pastors are sharing the pulpit at a "pub church," a weekly assembly — at about Happy Hour time — of the otherwise un-churched, who gather to "worship, chat and enjoy craft beer."

How do we make sense of a culture that's able to accommodate a church whose essential attraction is alcohol, a state that supports its public school system with the plentiful taxes levied on the sale of an intoxicating substance and another state, only a short distance away, that puts its citizens in considerable jeopardy for doing something that will probably be legal before long?

I can't resolve the paradox. We should work on that, too. In the meantime, Lavo-ro's problem isn't theoretical or abstract. Life in prison, or even a long sentence, would be a staggering misapplication of justice.

John M. Crisp, an op-ed columnist for McClatchy-Tribune, teaches in the English Department at Bel Mar College in Corpus Christi, Texas.

OPINION

# Is Jim Webb the man to close the vets' divide?

By MARGARET CARLSON.

**W**ASHINGTON  
Let's hope the situation at the Department of Veterans Affairs gets just a little better. Not dying worse, but enough to stir President Barack Obama to forceful action.

For Obama, a crisis isn't a terrible thing to waste but a hard thing to feel. He's too smart to get upset, or as senior adviser Valerie Jarrett explained to biographer David Remnick, Obama has "been bored his whole life." He's "just too talented to do what ordinary people do."

The Affordable Care Act was almost dead before Obama made fixing it a top priority. What could be more boring than the VA, a sprawling agency with more than 150 hospitals, drowning in paperwork, stuck in the slow lane of the information highway?

A more ordinary intellect might lower himself to the task.

Not that the president hasn't talked about the VA. In 2007, he called the heroic conditions documented at Walter Reed Army Medical Center a "wake-up call." Then he hit the snooze button. In 2014, he brought it up in his State of the Union address, and on Sunday he spoke about veterans in a rousing speech during a surprise visit to the troops in Afghanistan.

But it took three weeks for the president to say he would "not stand for it" if the reports of deaths of veterans waiting for care and the falsification of records to cover up the waits turned out to be true.

A month later, he's still standing for it. He's waiting for two investigations of alleged shoddy and delayed care at 26 suspect facilities — one by Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki and one by White House aide Rob Nabors — even though we're drowning in investigations of the VA

dating back at least to 1993. That's according to a Senate report published in March as part of yet another bill to fix the VA.

Horror stories abound. In September, ABC showed a paralyzed veteran going unfiled for three days, rampant hospital infections, and nurses told to falsify medical records and hide evidence of malpractice or worse. In May, the Washington Post described the circumstances in which three missing patients at a veterans' hospital in Salem, Va., were found dead on the grounds within a three-day period.

Money has been thrown at the problem, though not enough, as Republicans have been torn between serving a major constituency and their refusal to spend money. They blocked a vote this year that would have increased health and education for veterans.

Although the horrendous backlog is down to 572,002 this month, from 883,930 in 2012, it's still maddeningly awful. There are more claims processors — the gateway to care — but claims-processing per employee has gone down. Obama needs to make digitizing the VA and getting its computers to talk to those at the Pentagon his Manhattan Project.

Unfortunately, the VA is known for patronage and dead wood. A bill just passed in the House would allow the secretary to fire people more easily.

Obama called Shinseki in, but kept him on, even though members of both parties and the American Legion say it is time for him to go. A Vietnam vet whose right foot was partially blown off, Shinseki also showed bravery when he defied President George W. Bush by calling out his proposed troop deployment to Iraq as way too low.

He's had no such public moment in six years. It's a parody of crisis management that in a flat voice he said he was mad as



**Former U.S. senator from Virginia and secretary of the Navy Jim Webb might be drafting himself for the job of Veterans Affairs secretary.**

hell.

Let's find someone who is. As they might say in Hollywood, "Get me a Jim Webb."

In between jobs now — he decided to serve only one term as a U.S. senator from Virginia — Webb, a decorated Marine, is on tour for his 10th book, "I Heard My Country Calling."

Webb learned how to run something as secretary of the Navy under Ronald Reagan. He isn't afraid to speak up to a president. When Bush asked after Webb's son, a Marine lance corporal fighting in Iraq,

Webb said, "That's between my boy and myself."

In an interview on CBS, he explained, "There's nothing harder than having your kid in combat and not knowing, every morning, not knowing whether he's alive."

His time in the Senate was devoted to veterans. Webb drove a modern GI bill through Congress while, as a lawyer, he represented veterans pro bono.

Their current treatment, he says, is a matter of poor leadership, not policy.

"One thing they teach you in the Marine Corps," he said in an interview on Fox, is that "if you have a problem, put your good leaders on the problem."

He could be drafting himself for the job.

As he takes his daily walk through Arlington National Cemetery, where his parents are buried, he reads the headstones of people he will never know but who are "every bit as important to me as my own family."

Someone that real to you wouldn't be left unseen and untreated for months while staff covered it up. You wouldn't order a study; you would go to those 26 suspect facilities, experts in tow, and root out those responsible for the shameful neglect.

The words etched on the VA building — "To care for him who shall have borne the battle" — have devolved into "Thank you for your service," which gives those of us whose families were spared the fighting something to say to those who fought. But we don't come close to gratitude.

In his book, Webb writes, "I and my fellow combat veterans stand on one side of a great impassable divide, with the rest of the world on the other."

We need to wage a peacetime war across that divide. We promised.

Margaret Carlson is a Bloomberg View columnist.

# Obama is a skilled politician but a lousy manager

By DOYLE MCMANUS

**W**e don't normally expect our presidents to pay close attention to how long veterans are being asked to wait for care in the vast medical system run by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

But we do expect presidents to appoint Cabinet officers and other aides who can run the federal government well — well enough, at least, to prevent full-blown scandals from erupting.

That's what the VA's long-running scheduling problems have made into after allegations that dead while waiting for medical care — and bureaucrats apparently manipulated records to make their performance look good when it wasn't.

No one can read the stories of individual veterans who suffered at the hands of the bureaucracy — like Edward Laird, 76, a Navy veteran who lost half of his nose because he had to wait two years for cancer tests — without feeling helpless fury.

And those stories are certain to keep coming.

It's an especially dangerous scandal for President Barack Obama because it fits into a narrative about his presidency: that he's a skilled politician and speechmaker but a lousy manager.

The biggest problems Obama has faced in the White House — aside from unrelenting opposition from Republicans in Congress — have come not from making policy but from trying to implement it. The calamitous launch of his health care plan has all its biggest and most painful examples, but it's only one of several.

The 2009 economic stimulus plan's "shovel-ready" projects that took months to start, the confused response to the 2010 BP oil spill, the flap over IRS scrutiny of conservative organizations, even the State Department failures that led to the deaths of four Americans in Benghazi, Libya, in 2012 — all were mainly lapses in management, not policy.

**Obama has never paid as much attention to the nitty-gritty of management as he has to making policy and campaigning for votes.**

The president's conservative critics have accused him, often wildly, of every sin they can think of, from diabolical conspiracy (in the case of the IRS) to dereliction of duty (Benghazi). But the charge that's likely to stick is one that connects all those unrelated events to an underlying truth: Obama has never paid as much attention to the nitty-gritty of management as he has to making policy and campaigning for votes.

"Presidents get elected because of their rhetorical skills, but they succeed or fail based on their managerial skills," warned Elaine Kamarck, a former White House aide to Bill Clinton who directs a center on public management at the Brookings Institution. "In this administration... somehow, there is no adequate communications system; the White House keeps getting hit by

these unpleasant surprises."

Until recently, Kamarck noted, the White House didn't have a high-ranking aide assigned full time to monitoring how programs were being implemented. That's one of the reasons for the failure of the health care website; the engineers foresaw it, but nobody high up was pulling that information out of them.

Bad management alienates even a president's allies. Kamarck noted, "His popularity can go down and stay down," she said. "That's what happened to Jimmy Carter in the last year of his presidency. That's what happened to George W. Bush after Hurricane Katrina."

And now, "that's the narrative about Obama. It's the narrative even among Democrats. They're beginning to say, 'Oh, we love everything he says; we just wish he could get something done.'"

In the case of the VA health system, problems many of us are learning about now have long been evident but never quite got fixed.

"This has been building for 10 or 15 years," said Philip E. Carter, an expert on veterans affairs at the Center for a New American Security. He said demographic surges of aging Vietnam vets, plus returning vets from Iraq and Afghanistan, were straining the system.

Even the specific problems of excessive waiting times and bureaucrats manipulating records aren't new.

The VA knew that some of its medical centers had piled up huge backlogs in patient appointments by 2011. The Government Accountability Office, Congress' investigative arm, reported in 2012 that

VA bureaucrats were fiddling with waiting time records.

It was reported in 2013 that at least six veterans died in South Carolina because of long delays in providing diagnostic tests. Accusations of misconduct at the VA medical center in Phoenix, the incident that turned the problem into a scandal, have been percolating through the bureaucracy for more than a year.

So if Obama only learned of the depth of the problems from watching TV, as his spokesman said last week, something is amiss with his administration's internal communications.

It's possible to hold out some optimism amid these scandals.

Every crisis is also an opportunity," Carter said. "Fixes are available at the VA, and this is the time to put them in place."

It's even possible that the White House has learned some management lessons. After the health care website crashed last fall, Obama named a seasoned administrator, Jeffrey Zients, to take charge — and seven months later, the health insurance program appears to be working.

Two weeks ago, Obama created a White House post — deputy chief of staff for policy implementation — and filled it with Kristine Casper, an ex-Obama who worked with Zients on the health care crisis. "We have determined we need more senior-level focus on implementation and execution," White House chief of staff Denis McDonough said in announcing her appointment.

Good call. Too bad it came too late to help some of those vets.

Doyle McManus is a columnist for the Los Angeles Times, where this column first appeared.

MILITARY

# Obama has few options for post-war Afghanistan

By Travis J. Tritten  
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama chose one of the few political paths open to him Tuesday when he announced plans to draw down U.S. forces in Afghanistan to 9,800 by the end of the year — picking an option that satisfies public desire to end the war without immediately abandoning the troubled country after years of blood and sacrifice.

The president has long promised to end a war that many Americans no longer support after 13 years.

He is also clearly mindful of the criticisms that the U.S. departure from Iraq in 2011 was too quick, a charge that has stuck as that country now faces an armed challenge from al-Qaida and other insurgents.

Choosing to keep 9,800 troops on the ground at least for another year puts an official period at the end of the story of America's military role in Afghanistan while maintaining a commitment to a country where more than 2,100 U.S. troops died.

His decision is part of a broader effort to redirect U.S. foreign policy away from the wars after 9/11 while continuing counterterrorism operations against al-Qaida in Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

"The bottom line is it's time to turn the page in a decade where

so much of our foreign policy was focused on the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq," Obama said Tuesday.

By the end of 2015, the number of troops would be cut in half and then replaced by a small embassy staff in 2016.

About 2,120 Americans have died and 17,674 have been wounded since the U.S. invaded Afghanistan in 2001, according to Pentagon spokesman Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida leadership

after the 9/11 attacks. But the war was largely eclipsed by the conflict in Iraq, which drew more attention and more resources until the Taliban had rebounded.

By the time Obama ordered a 2009 troop surge — raising the number of U.S. troops by 30,000 to more than 100,000 — the American public had grown war-weary after two long conflicts. The killing of bin Laden in 2011 convinced many Americans that the need to continue the war was gone.

Three years after bin Laden's death, 48 percent of all Americans think the war itself was a mistake, according to a Gallup poll in February — a dramatic increase from 6 percent opposition in 2002.

According to a Pew Research Center poll also in February, 52 percent of Americans now think the U.S. cannot achieve its goals in Afghanistan.

Such poll numbers would make it difficult for any president to sustain the war and the Obama administration, keenly aware of the falling support, has been eager to find an exit.

The administration considered pulling all troops from the country at the end of the year but military leadership had argued for a minimum of 10,000 to keep up training of Afghan security forces and maintain counterterrorism operations.

Some in the Pentagon wanted at least 13,500 to stay after the war's end, said Anthony Cordesman, the Arleigh A. Burke chair in strategy at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Obama decided on a number just under the minimum advised by military leaders. The postwar plan also creates a hard timeline and places no conditions on the scheduled reductions from 9,800 — something that drew criticism from Capitol Hill and elsewhere for telegraphing information to the enemy.

"We have been rushing to get to 2014 at the expense of real Afghan readiness," he said.

Despite the appearance of a rush to the exits, the president's plan may get what passes for a good political reception in Washington, where the administration has faced fire from both sides of the aisle.

Republicans are likely to sup-



EVAN VUCCI/AP

President Barack Obama greets troops at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, during an unannounced visit on Sunday.

port a continued troop presence but oppose the timeline, said Larry J. Sabato, director of the University of Virginia's Center for Politics.

Democrats are likely to go along with Obama's post-war plan for Afghanistan, though there is likely to be complaining about the president's lack of movement on liberal causes such as closing the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and reining in targeted drone killings, Sabato said.

"Basically, the administration wants to make sure Afghanistan doesn't go to hell in a handbasket after we leave," he said. "I think most people would see it as wise."

On Tuesday afternoon, the political machine in Washington was in full swing following the Obama address as Republicans

began hammering the president on his timeline.

"Even now, an al-Qaida safe haven is emerging in northeast Afghanistan, and I question whether the enemy will take further advantage of the announced timeline to renew its efforts to launch new operations, as we see them attempting in Iraq and Syria today," Rep. Mike Rogers, R-Mich., chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, said in a released statement.

Sens. John McCain, R-Ariz., Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., and Kelly Ayotte, R-N.H., called the announcement of a timeline a "monumental mistake and a triumph of politics over strategy."

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## Strategy: President stresses partnership in fighting terrorist networks overseas

FROM FRONT PAGE

In a time of budget constraints and war-weariness among the American people, Obama wants to shift more of the security burden to America's allies.

"We need partners to fight terrorists alongside us," Obama said. "A strategy that involves invading every country that harbors terrorist networks is not one and unsustainable. I believe we must shift our counterterrorism strategy — drawing on the successes and shortcomings of our experience in Iraq and Afghanistan — to more effectively partner with countries where terrorist networks seek a foothold."

Obama called on Congress to establish a new \$5 billion Counterterrorism Partnership Fund to help train, build capacity and assist partners who are fighting terrorists in places such as Yemen, Somalia, Mali and Libya. The administration will also seek an additional \$5 billion within the Fiscal 2015 Overseas Contingency Operations funding request — which is normally used to support training operations like the one in Afghanistan — for the Defense Department's counterterrorism



SUSAN WALSH/AP

President Barack Obama congratulates class valedictorian Ryan Mauldin during the commencement ceremony for the U.S. Military Academy at West Point's Class of 2014, in West Point, N.Y., on Wednesday.

activities, such as intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance missions, and special operations, according to a White House fact sheet.

Reflecting the new counter-

terrorism outsourcing strategy, Obama in his speech announced his intention to "ramp up support" for the moderate opposition that is battling both the Assad regime and Islamic extremists in

Syria.

He did not specify whether the increased support would include additional arms, training, intelligence sharing or other assistance. A senior administration official, speaking to reporters on the condition of anonymity, said the White House is interested in providing vetted members of the Syrian opposition training and equipment, but not putting U.S. boots on the ground.

"We're talking specifically about assistance to the opposition," the official said. "We're not talking about activities within Syria by the United States military. That is not something that we're contemplating."

Obama said that his administration would also provide more assistance to Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq as they deal with Syrian refugees and transnational militants traveling to and from Syria.

Some lawmakers say Obama dithered when it came to Syria.

"While there were options for helping the once mostly moderate opposition forces, in many places extremist rebels have now taken control of the front lines," House

Homeland Security Committee chairman Michael McCaul, R-Texas, said in a press release after Obama's speech. "Therefore President Obama's decision to wait until now to address the crisis will affect not only our national but homeland security for years to come."

"I welcome the new focus on Syria," Rep. Ed Royce, R-Calif., the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said in a press release. "This will require sustained U.S. engagement, which has been absent to date, but that this national security threat demands. Like elsewhere around the globe, the president has been late in responding to this crisis."

Obama said there will still be cases where the U.S. will take unilateral military action against terrorists, but with restrictions.

"The partnership I've described does not eliminate the need to take direct action when necessary to protect ourselves ... [but] our actions should meet a simple test: We must not create more enemies than we take off the battlefield," he said.

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## MILITARY

## Troop level news met with relief by Afghans

By HEATH DRUZIN  
Stars and Stripes

KABUL — President Barack Obama's announcement that the U.S. plans to keep nearly 10,000 troops in Afghanistan past the end of the year brought relief to Afghans worried that a full withdrawal would leave a security vacuum.

But questions remain about what the post-combat mission in this still-active war zone will look like.

The long wait for Obama's announcement caused tension in a nation where, nearly 13 years after the U.S. military invasion that ousted the ruling Taliban, a war is still raging in parts of the country, and Afghan troops still rely on U.S. intelligence and technology to fight an entrenched insurgency.

"This will remove a sense of drift from U.S. military policy in Afghanistan and it will bring a sense of reassurance to pro-government enclaves in the country that Americans won't abandon them after 2014," said Graeme Smith, the International Crisis Group's senior analyst in Afghanistan.

On Tuesday, Obama announced the U.S. is willing to keep 9,800 troops in Afghanistan after all combat troops withdraw at the end of December. That number would be drawn down by half during 2015, and all but embassy security teams would be gone by the end of 2016. That's close to what U.S. military commanders had requested.

In a statement released Wednesday, the commander of both U.S. and allied forces in Afghanistan, Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, praised the decision.

"The people of Afghanistan and their government should be reassured with this commitment to their continued progress and development," Dunford said. "I see this as reinforcing success."

If, as expected, other NATO nations also make troop commitments beyond this year, the residual force is likely to be higher than the 8,000- to 12,000-troop force many experts thought would be left in the country. There are currently more than 30,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan, far below the 100,000 that were in the country at the height of the war.

Afghan presidential candidate Ashraf Ghani welcomed the announcement, which gives Afghans "peace of mind," his spokesman, Hamidullah Farouki, said. "We now understand they are not going to leave us alone."

The troop commitment shows that the U.S. and Afghanistan still have mutual interests in a continued mission, said Afghan military analyst and retired Brig. Gen. Naqibullah, who like many Afghans goes by only one name.

"I think with the current situation, they need us and we need them," he said. "Everyone knows that the fight against terrorism is not finished."

The situation in Afghanistan



A soldier with the 82nd Airborne Division plays guitar at Camp Mike Spink in northern Afghanistan in late April, just before U.S. troops handed control of the base to the Afghan National Army.

HEATH DRUZIN/Stars and Stripes

## Behind the numbers: Long road to 9,800-troop commitment

By JON HARPER  
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Months after the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan told lawmakers that 10,000 American troops were needed to complete the mission there, President Barack Obama on Tuesday said there will be 9,800 in country at the start of 2015, half that at the end of 2015, and a "normal" embassy presence at the end of 2016, just weeks before his presidency ends.

The projected force levels are contingent upon the Afghan government signing the Bilateral Security Agreement that has been negotiated. The Obama administration has said that if the BSA isn't inked, all American troops will be withdrawn by the end of this year. The BSA provides legal protections for U.S. military personnel operating in the country.

The two Afghan presidential candidates involved in the nation's runoff election have said that they will sign the agreement if they are elected.

There are approximately 32,000 American troops in Afghanistan today, down from a peak of about 100,000 that was reached following the troop surge Obama initiated a few months after taking office.

Obama said the post-2014 mission would be narrowly focused on training Afghan National Security Forces and supporting counterterrorism missions against the remnants of al-Qaida. The U.S. "combat mission" will be over by

the end of this year, and the ANSF will be responsible for securing Afghanistan, according to Obama.

The issue of troop levels in Afghanistan has sparked wide disagreement, often pitting administration officials against military experts.

White House officials had floated the idea of leaving behind a much smaller force. Vice President Joe Biden reportedly recommended leaving as few as 1,000 troops for counterterrorism purposes only. There was even talk of a "zero option," whereby all American troops would have been withdrawn.

Some commanders called for leaving behind far more troops than the 10,000 that Marine Gen. Joseph F. Dunford requested. In congressional testimony in January 2013, the outgoing commander of U.S. Central Command, Gen. James Mattis, recommended leaving 20,000 troops in Afghanistan post-2014.

U.S. officials hope European allies will contribute a few thousand troops of their own to the post-2014 mission. Decisions about the size of NATO's future presence in Afghanistan will likely be made next month, according to officials.

"We expect that our allies will be with us going forward," Obama said in his speech.

A senior administration official said the 9,800 troops will be "sufficient" to achieve U.S. goals, even without NATO support.

Officials said Obama's decision

about Afghanistan should be viewed in the larger context of global threats and priorities.

"This makes sense from our national security interests precisely because of the way in which the counterterrorism mission and threat has changed," a senior administration official said. "Again, as we have seen al-Qaida's core push back, and we've seen regional affiliates seek to gain a foothold in different parts of the Middle East and North Africa, what makes sense is a strategy that is not designed for the threat as it existed in 2001 or 2004. We need a strategy for how it exists in 2014 and 2016, and that is going to involve far more partnership and support across this entire region and less of the type of presence that the United States had in Afghanistan over the last 13 years."

"The bottom line is, it's time to turn the page on more than a decade in which so much of our foreign policy was focused on the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq," Obama said. "When I took office, we had nearly 180,000 troops in harm's way. By the end of this year, we will have less than 10,000. In addition to bringing our troops home, this new chapter in American foreign policy will allow us to redirect some of the resources saved by ending these wars to respond more nimble to the changing threat of terrorism while addressing a broader set of priorities around the globe."

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"You've got an insurgency that's as entrenched as ever but a president that wants to reorient American foreign policy."

Obama has said there will be no troops without a long-sought security agreement with Kabul that Afghan President Hamid Karzai has refused to sign.

Ghani, a former finance minister, and his opponent in a presidential runoff scheduled for June 14, former Foreign Minister Abdullah Abdullah, both have said they would sign the agreement soon after taking office.

The U.S. troop commitment may also allay some concerns of donor nations whose aid is crucial to a country that relies almost entirely on foreign money to fund its government and military. Afghanistan's economy has been feeling the pinch in the past year as jobs with foreign organizations dry up and property values fall ahead of the withdrawal of foreign troops and the contracting services that supported them.

**"I think with the current situation, they need us and we need them. Everyone knows that the fight against terrorism is not finished."**

Naqibullah,  
Afghan military analyst

"The presence of the foreign forces is needed because you've already seen business decrease in the past two years," said Mohammad Nabil, 42, a shopkeeper in Kabul.

Questions about the new mission remain, such as what it will look like. Obama did signal in his speech that the controversial nation-building phase of the war in Afghanistan is largely over.

"We have to recognize Afghanistan will not be a perfect place, and it is not America's responsibility to make it one," he said. "The future of Afghanistan must be decided by Afghans."

While Obama's announcement was a relief to many, there is still the more crucial question of whether the international community is willing to keep funding the Afghan National Security Forces at their current level of roughly 350,000 troops, Smith, of the International Crisis Group, said. The funding plan agreed upon at the 2012 Chicago Summit, assuming that the insurgency would be significantly weakened, called for the ANSF to shrink by about a third by 2017.

"Cutting the force 'is just not tenable right now," Smith said. "If you cut 130,000 Afghan security forces with the situation like it is today, you're going to have a big problem."

Zubair Babakarkhail and Stars and Stripes reporter Josh Smith contributed to this report.  
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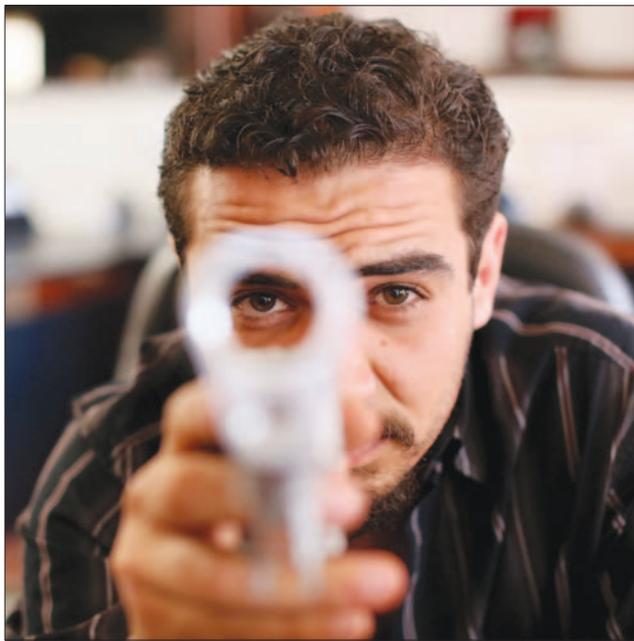
compromise between the U.S. military's assessment of what is necessary in Afghanistan and Obama's desire to reshape American foreign policy, Keating said.

"[Obama's] speech makes much more sense in terms of American domestic politics than it does in terms of what's happening on the ground in Afghanistan," he said.

was only one factor in determining the final plans, said Michael Keating, a senior fellow with the U.K.-based Chatham House.

The proposed plan signals a

NATION



SANDY HUFFAKER/For The Washington Post

Dimitri Karras displays an unfinished receiver for an AR-15-style rifle at his store in Oceanside, Calif. It appeals to customers who appreciate the fact that the parts have no serial numbers, said Karras, a former Marine who expects to sell about 75,000 receivers this year.

# Firing 'blanks'

ATF worried about widespread sales of unfinished — and unregulated — receivers

By SARI HORWITZ  
The Washington Post

SAN FRANCISCO — It was John Zawahri's failure to pass a background check that prevented him from buying a firearm in California several years ago. So the 23-year-old obtained an "unfinished receiver," the metal piece that holds the critical mechanisms that allow guns to fire, and built an assault rifle. Last summer, he went on a rampage at a college in Southern California, firing about 100 rounds and killing five people before police fatally shot him.

Zawahri's assault became one of the most notorious cases involving unfinished receivers, which are unregulated and have become readily available for purchase online and at some gun stores. Officials from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives view the spread of the receivers as an effort to get around strict gun-control laws, particularly in California. They also acknowledge that they have no idea how many of the components have been made and sold.

"That is the million-dollar question," said Joseph Riehl, the special agent in charge of the ATF's San Francisco office. "We know for sure there are tens of thousands, just in California."

The sale of unfinished receivers, also called "blanks" or "80 percent lower receivers," is one of the most daunting challenges for law enforcement officials tasked with enforcing firearms regulations. There are no sales records produced for unfinished receivers, as there are for ordinary gun sales, which means the ATF cannot check with stores for information about buyers when a gun is used in a crime. Because the receivers bear no serial numbers or other markings that would indicate where they were manufactured, guns made with them can't be traced back to their owners if they are found at a crime scene.

Unfinished receivers generally are formed pieces of metal, available for purchase for \$60 to \$250. They're legal, but there is no real use for them other than as the lower part of a firearm.

Converting them into firearms is relatively simple: Use a drill press to create holes in the receivers, well out certain areas and combine the pieces with other parts to make a fully functioning semiautomatic rifle. The process can take one to seven hours, depending on skill level.

ATF officials say gun enthusiasts are effectively exploiting a loophole in the law designed to regulate firearms. Under the Gun Control Act of 1968, it is illegal for an unlicensed person to make a firearm for

sale or distribution. Vendors, however, say that because the receivers are not finished, they are not firearms and therefore are legal to sell and distribute.

"It is absolutely the right of every American to defend themselves and to keep and bear arms," said Dimitri Karras, who sells unfinished receivers on the Internet and at his store in Oceanside, Calif. "This is a channel for them to do that."

Karras, a former Marine who was stationed at nearby Camp Pendleton, Calif., opened his store after serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. He sells combat packs, slings, tactical belts and carriers for wearing armor. He is not licensed to sell firearms and points out that no guns in his store are for sale — only the parts to make them, an experience with edge appeal that he says is "very cool" and represents the difference between buying a house or building your own.

Karras acknowledged that there is something else that attracts customers: They

don't have to submit to a background check and they don't have a serial number that could be traced.

"In the current day and age we live in, the NSA efiles files on almost everyone in our country," Karras said. "This is a way for people to maintain their privacy."

Law enforcement officials say their inability to trace the firearms is becoming a major problem. Firearms built with unfinished receivers are increasingly being found at crime scenes and being purchased from suspected gang members by undercover ATF agents.

Local police, officials say, often don't contact the ATF about the guns because they know they can't be traced, which makes estimating how many are out there that much more complicated.

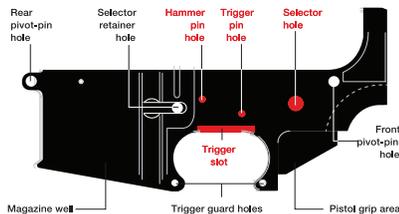
The ATF is trying to crack down on makeshift guns by targeting shops and individuals who offer to turn unfinished receivers into functional pieces for firearms. In February, undercover agents in California bought seven AR-15-style firearms from two brothers who allegedly offered to finish receivers and assemble them into guns. The brothers, Luis Cortez-Garcia and Emiliano Cortez-Garcia, have been charged with operating illegal shops in Sacramento, Fresno and making and selling pistols and rifles.

## Homemade AR-15 rifles

Under U.S. law, a completed AR-15 lower receiver — even without a barrel, stock, magazine or trigger — is still considered a firearm and requires a serial number. The lower receiver holds the mechanisms that make the rifle fire. Gun manufacturers are circumventing the legislation by selling receivers that are 80 percent complete. A small industry selling the final equipment necessary for people to build their own serial-number-free rifle has emerged. Here is how it works.

### LOWER RECEIVER FINISHING

The customer can order an 80 percent complete, serial-number-free receiver from most manufacturers. All that remains is for the customer to drill trigger, hammer and selector holes, and cut the trigger slot.



Manufacturers then sell a kit of 30 internal trigger parts required to turn a lower receiver into a fully functional unit, ready for assembly to the upper receiver, charging handle, bolt carrier, buttstock and bullets.

### THE FINAL COST OF A SERIAL-NUMBER-FREE AR-15



SOURCES: bravocompanyusa.com, colfaxtactical.com, impactguns.com ALBERTO CUADRA and RICHARD JOHNSON/THE WASHINGTON POST

FACES



# Mission: Possible

Co-stars Cruise and Blunt hit 3 premieres for new flick 'Edge of Tomorrow' in 1 day

By HILARY FOX  
The Associated Press

Three premieres in three cities on one day. Tom Cruise and Emily Blunt are pushing their own limits to promote their latest movie "Edge of Tomorrow."

The tour started Wednesday with an early London premiere, moving on to Paris and ending in New York.

Film stars are used to jetting around to launch their projects, but not usually on the same day. Blunt, the 31-year-old British actress known from "The Devil Wears Prada," says it's typical of her co-star. "When I heard about the premiere idea of three in one day, I just said, 'that's Tom's idea,'" she said. "Edge of Tomorrow," directed by Doug Liman, is an action thriller, a science-fiction tale, a war movie and a love story all rolled into one.

Cruise, 51, plays military PR man Maj. William Cage, a quick-talking coward who is forced to fight for humanity against an alien invasion. Blunt is the poster girl for the army, a highly-trained warrior and the only person who can help Cage when he starts living the same day over and over again, never reaching the tomorrow of the title. Shot in the U.K. at Warner Brothers' Leavesden Studios, the director says three premieres in twenty-four hours is nothing compared to what they achieved on the set. "Edge of Tomorrow" was an impossible movie



to make — harder than anything I've ever done before. So having a premiere day that starts off sounding impossible really seemed like it would be a great way to finish," Liman said.

Cruise and Blunt joked about who will have more stamina on the day. "Because I have a baby, I'm not sleeping as much any way," Blunt noted. "You'll be like, unconscious. But I'll be there," Cruise countered.

Despite shooting around the clock, the stars took time out when Blunt invited Cruise to a trendy London sex club to celebrate Matt Damon's birthday — a story she revealed on Jimmy Kimmel's U.S. chat show.

"He thought it was going to be a more civilized night," Blunt says. "But it was fun."

"Edge of Tomorrow" is in U.K. cinemas on Friday and opens in the U.S. on June 6.

Tom Cruise, left with co-star Emily Blunt, and above with the media in London, attended three premieres Wednesday for "Edge of Tomorrow." Paris and New York were the other destinations.

INVISION/AP

## 50 Cent not on the money with 1st pitch at Citi Field

The Associated Press

50 Cent was on the mound, but not on the money.

The rap star was comically off target when he threw out the ceremonial first pitch Tuesday night before the Pittsburgh Pirates played the New York Mets at Citi Field.

Standing on the rubber 60 feet, 6 inches from home plate, 50 Cent wound up and launched a left-handed toss that sailed way right of Mets catcher Jonathon Niese both smiled.

Wearing a Mets jersey with No. 50 and the name Jackson on the back, 50 Cent, whose real name is Curtis Jackson III, held a bat as he posed for pictures with Curtis Granderson and other Mets on



FRANK FRANKLIN II/AP

50 Cent throws out the ceremonial first pitch before a baseball game between the New York Mets and the Pittsburgh Pirates on Tuesday in New York.

the field during batting practice. 50 Cent was born in nearby South Jamaica and has a post-game concert at Citi Field scheduled for June 14.

## Chicago-area woman goes for her 18th 'Jeopardy!' win

The Associated Press

Julia Collins predicted in her eighth grade school yearbook that she would someday be the third person in "Jeopardy!" history to win as many as 17 consecutive non-tournament games, earning her a total of \$372,700 and making her the show's winningest female contestant.

On the episode that aired in the U.S. on Tuesday, the 31-year-old resident of the Chicago suburb of Wilmette became the third person in "Jeopardy!" history to win as many as 17 consecutive non-tournament games, earning her a total of \$372,700 and making her the show's winningest female contestant.

"I went into this feeling like I could win a show and put in a good effort ... but this, it's kind of a daydream come true," Collins said Tuesday.

Collins' appearances on the show also answer another question all but her closest friends and family who watched some of the shows being taped had about why she didn't seem stressed about quitting her consulting job or in a hurry to find work.

"I did a lot of hemming and hawing about why I was less aggressive than I could have been," said Collins, explaining that she

was prohibited by the show from talking about the program at all between mid-January, when she started taping them, and April, when they started to air.

### LaBelle, Sparks set for July 4 show

Patti LaBelle, Jordin Sparks, Michael McDonald and others will join headliner Frankie Valli at "A Capitol Fourth" in Washington, D.C.

Organizers say the July 4 celebration at the National Mall will be hosted by Tom Bergeron of "Dancing with the Stars." Other performers will include Sara Evans, Kendall Schmidt and Kelli O'Hara. Composer John Williams will conduct a new arrangement of the "The Star-Spangled Banner" to mark its 200th anniversary.

### TV show seeks teen rebels for reality show

A television producer is seeking teenagers as young as 13 who like to make their own rules and "party like a rock star" to partic-

ipate in a reality television series about their lives.

A Los Angeles-based casting company, Metal Flowers Media, placed a notice about the series "My Teen Life" in Backstage, a publication widely followed by entertainment professionals for job leads. The company said producers are looking for boys and girls ages 13 to 18 to cast.

Kristi Russell, president of Metal Flowers Media, said Tuesday she is not allowed to divulge details. But she drew a comparison to casting for the A&E series "Intervention," where substance abusers are confronted by loved ones who encourage them to seek treatment.

### Ex-Journey frontman Perry back on stage

Former Journey lead singer Steve Perry performed live for the first time in nearly two decades Sunday night at the Fitzgerald Theater in St. Paul, Minn. The St. Paul Pioneer Press reports that the 65-year-old singer teamed with alternative-rockers the Eels during their second encore.

# BUSINESS/AUTOMOTIVE

# Google developing self-driving car

By Justin Pritchard  
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Google will build a car without a steering wheel.

It doesn't need one because it drives itself. The two-seater won't be sold publicly, but Google said Tuesday it hopes by this time next year, 100 prototypes will be on public roads. Though not driving very quickly — the top speed would be 25 mph — the cars are a natural next step for Google, which already has driven hundreds of thousands of miles in California with Lexus SUVs and Toyota Priuses outfitted with a combination of sensors and computers.

Those cars have Google-employed "safety drivers" behind the wheel in case of emergency. The new cars would eliminate the driver from the task of driving.

No steering wheel, no brake and gas pedals. Instead, buttons for go and stop.

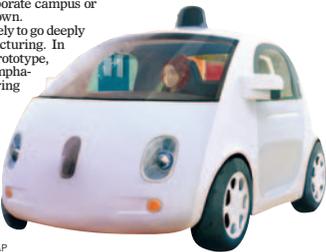
"It reminded me of catching a chairlift by yourself, a bit of solitude I found really enjoyable," Sergey Brin, co-founder of Google, told a Southern California tech conference Tuesday evening of his first ride, according to a transcript.

The electric-powered car is compact and bubble-shaped — something that might move people around a corporate campus or congested downtown.

Google is unlikely to go deeply into auto manufacturing. In unveiling the prototype, the company emphasized partnering with other firms.

This image provided by Google shows an artistic rendering of the company's self-driving car.

GOOGLE/AP



The biggest obstacle could be the law.

Test versions will have a wheel and pedals, because they must use under California regulations.

Google hopes to build the 100 prototypes late this year or early next and use them in a to-be-determined "pilot program," spokeswoman Courtney Hohn

said. Meanwhile, by the end of this year, California's Department of Motor Vehicles must write regulations for the "operational" use of truly driverless cars.

The DMV had thought that reality was several years away, so it would have time to perfect the rules.

That clock just sped up, said the head of the DMV's driverless car program, Bernard Soriano.

## EXCHANGE RATES

| Military rates            |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Euro costs (May 29)       | \$1.3976 |
| Dollar buys (May 29)      | €0.7155  |
| British pound (May 29)    | \$1.72   |
| Japanese yen (May 29)     | 99.00    |
| South Korean won (May 29) | 996.00   |

| Commercial rates     |                 |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| Bahrain (Dinar)      | 0.3771          |
| British pound        | \$1.6717        |
| Canada (Dollar)      | 1.0861          |
| China (Yuan)         | 6.2411          |
| Denmark (Krone)      | 6.4973          |
| Egypt (Pound)        | 7.1463          |
| Euro                 | \$1.3602/0.7352 |
| Hong Kong (Dollar)   | 7.527           |
| Hungary (Forint)     | 223.81          |
| Israel (Shekel)      | 3.4839          |
| Japan (Yen)          | 101.76          |
| Kuwait (Dinar)       | 0.2819          |
| Norway (Krone)       | 5.9575          |
| Philippines (Peso)   | 43.89           |
| Poland (Zloty)       | 3.06            |
| Saudi Arabia (Riyal) | 3.7506          |
| Singapore (Dollar)   | 1.2557          |
| South Korea (Won)    | 1,022.63        |
| Switzerland (Franc)  | 0.8986          |
| Thailand (Baht)      | 32.70           |
| Turkey (Lira)        | 1,033           |

(Military exchange rates are those available to users 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., non-U.S. dollars), the U.S. Department of Treasury provides a weekly local military banking facility. 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.)

## MARKET WATCH

May 27, 2014

|                       |           |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| Dow Jones industrials | +69.23    |
|                       | 16,675.50 |
| Nasdaq composite      | +51.26    |
|                       | 4,237.07  |
| Standard & Poor's 500 | +11.38    |
|                       | 1,911.91  |
| Russell 2000          | +16.01    |
|                       | 1,142.20  |

## INTEREST RATES

|                           |      |
|---------------------------|------|
| Prime rate                | 3.25 |
| Discount rate             | 6.47 |
| Federal funds market rate | 0.09 |
| 3-month bill              | 0.02 |
| 30-year bond              | 3.36 |

## WEATHER OUTLOOK

### THURSDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



### THURSDAY IN EUROPE



### FRIDAY IN THE PACIFIC



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

### Thursday's US temperatures

|                   |    |    |      |                  |    |    |      |                      |    |    |      |                |    |    |      |                 |    |    |      |                   |    |    |      |
|-------------------|----|----|------|------------------|----|----|------|----------------------|----|----|------|----------------|----|----|------|-----------------|----|----|------|-------------------|----|----|------|
| City              | Hi | Lo | Wthr | Chatanooga       | 88 | 63 | Cldy | Fort Wayne           | 79 | 59 | Cldy | Louisville     | 84 | 69 | Rain | Pocatello       | 74 | 44 | Cir  | Shrewport         | 83 | 67 | Rain |
| Ablene, Texas     | 88 | 64 | Pdly | Cheyenne         | 81 | 53 | Pdly | Fresno               | 91 | 58 | Cir  | Lubbock        | 85 | 61 | Pdly | Portland, Maine | 64 | 42 | Cir  | Sioux City        | 89 | 60 | Pdly |
| Akron, Ohio       | 78 | 56 | Pdly | Chicago          | 72 | 54 | Pdly | Goodland             | 88 | 55 | Cir  | Macon          | 89 | 64 | Cldy | Portland, Ore.  | 68 | 55 | Cir  | Sioux Falls       | 88 | 59 | Cir  |
| Albany, N.Y.      | 71 | 46 | Pdly | Cincinnati       | 81 | 64 | Rain | Grand Junction       | 86 | 60 | Cir  | Madison        | 78 | 51 | Cir  | Pueblo          | 88 | 56 | Cir  | South Bend        | 79 | 57 | Cir  |
| Albuquerque       | 87 | 63 | Pdly | Cleveland        | 73 | 56 | Pdly | Grand Rapids         | 80 | 52 | Cir  | Medford        | 78 | 44 | Cir  | Pueblo          | 88 | 56 | Pdly | Spokane           | 65 | 42 | Cldy |
| Allentown, Pa.    | 65 | 51 | Rain | Colorado Springs | 85 | 54 | Pdly | Great Falls          | 68 | 46 | Pdly | Memphis        | 85 | 69 | Rain | Raleigh-Durham  | 81 | 66 | Rain | Springfield, Ill. | 84 | 63 | Cldy |
| Amarillo          | 86 | 58 | Pdly | Columbia, S.C.   | 90 | 68 | Cldy | Green Bay            | 76 | 48 | Cir  | Miami Beach    | 84 | 77 | Cir  | Reno            | 87 | 63 | Cir  | St. Louis         | 87 | 61 | Rain |
| Anchorage         | 57 | 47 | Rain | Columbus, Ga.    | 89 | 67 | Cldy | Harrisburg           | 64 | 54 | Cir  | Midland-Odessa | 88 | 63 | Cir  | Reno            | 78 | 48 | Cir  | Syracuse          | 72 | 49 | Cldy |
| Asheville         | 82 | 57 | Rain | Columbus, Ohio   | 80 | 59 | Cldy | Hartford             | 67 | 47 | Pdly | Milwaukee      | 66 | 49 | Cir  | Richmond        | 68 | 64 | Rain | Tallahassee       | 87 | 67 | Rain |
| Atlanta           | 88 | 67 | Rain | Concord, N.H.    | 70 | 41 | Cir  | Hartford Springfield | 64 | 54 | Cir  | Milwaukee      | 66 | 49 | Cir  | Roanoke         | 77 | 63 | Rain | Tampa             | 87 | 73 | Rain |
| Atlantic City     | 64 | 52 | Rain | Corpus Christi   | 91 | 72 | Cldy | Helena               | 72 | 46 | Pdly | Missoula       | 68 | 39 | Pdly | Rochester       | 71 | 51 | Cldy | Toledo            | 78 | 55 | Pdly |
| Austin            | 84 | 53 | Pdly | Dallas-Ft. Worth | 86 | 70 | Cldy | Honolulu             | 88 | 74 | Pdly | Mobile         | 85 | 69 | Rain | Rockford        | 79 | 55 | Cldy | Topo              | 85 | 65 | Cldy |
| Baltimore         | 65 | 58 | Rain | Dayton           | 79 | 61 | Cldy | Houston              | 84 | 70 | Rain | Montgomery     | 87 | 66 | Rain | Sacramento      | 87 | 57 | Cir  | Tucson            | 96 | 72 | Cldy |
| Baton Rouge       | 84 | 71 | Rain | Daytona Beach    | 85 | 70 | Cldy | Huntsville           | 87 | 66 | Cldy | Nashville      | 87 | 67 | Rain | St. Louis       | 85 | 65 | Cldy | Tulsa             | 84 | 66 | Cldy |
| Bilings           | 74 | 57 | Pdly | Denver           | 85 | 55 | Pdly | Indianapolis         | 81 | 64 | Cir  | New Orleans    | 83 | 73 | Rain | St. Petersburg  | 87 | 75 | Rain | Tupelo            | 85 | 66 | Rain |
| Birmingham        | 84 | 65 | Rain | Des Moines       | 83 | 63 | Cldy | Jackson, Miss.       | 84 | 67 | Rain | New York City  | 66 | 51 | Pdly | St. Thomas      | 87 | 78 | Rain | Waco              | 87 | 66 | Cldy |
| Bismarck          | 90 | 64 | Cir  | Detroit          | 77 | 58 | Cir  | Jacksonville         | 88 | 69 | Cldy | Newark         | 66 | 52 | Cldy | Salem, Ore.     | 68 | 51 | Pdly | Washington        | 87 | 62 | Rain |
| Boise             | 82 | 62 | Cir  | Butte            | 74 | 50 | Cir  | Juneau               | 61 | 45 | Pdly | Norfolk, Va.   | 70 | 66 | Cir  | Salt Lake City  | 80 | 63 | Cldy | W. Palm Beach     | 86 | 78 | Cir  |
| Boston            | 62 | 46 | Cir  | El Paso          | 95 | 74 | Pdly | Kansas City          | 82 | 64 | Cldy | North Platte   | 86 | 58 | Cir  | San Angelo      | 89 | 63 | Pdly | Wichita           | 86 | 64 | Cldy |
| Bridgeport        | 48 | 39 | Rain | Elkins           | 73 | 60 | Rain | Key West             | 87 | 78 | Cldy | Oklahoma City  | 87 | 65 | Pdly | San Antonio     | 90 | 70 | Pdly | Wichita Falls     | 90 | 65 | Pdly |
| Brownsville       | 89 | 76 | Cldy | Erie             | 70 | 55 | Pdly | Knoxville            | 86 | 63 | Cldy | Omaha          | 84 | 63 | Pdly | San Diego       | 72 | 63 | Pdly | Wilkes-Barre      | 88 | 60 | Cldy |
| Buffalo           | 71 | 51 | Cldy | Eugene           | 69 | 49 | Pdly | Lake Charles         | 84 | 69 | Rain | Orlando        | 89 | 70 | Cldy | San Francisco   | 74 | 55 | Cir  | Wilmington, Del.  | 64 | 54 | Rain |
| Burlington, Vt.   | 60 | 39 | Cir  | Evansville       | 84 | 65 | Rain | Lansing              | 78 | 51 | Cir  | Pasadena       | 85 | 65 | Rain | San Jose        | 82 | 53 | Cir  | Yonkers           | 70 | 44 | Cldy |
| Caribou, Maine    | 70 | 39 | Cir  | Fairbanks        | 71 | 46 | Cldy | Las Vegas            | 98 | 78 | Cir  | Pendleton      | 69 | 44 | Pdly | San Juan, P.R.  | 89 | 76 | Pdly | Youngstown        | 77 | 54 | Cldy |
| Casper            | 84 | 53 | Pdly | Fargo            | 88 | 61 | Cir  | Lexington            | 83 | 65 | Rain | Peoria         | 83 | 60 | Cir  | Santa Fe        | 82 | 53 | Pdly | W. Palm Beach     | 86 | 78 | Cir  |
| Charleston, S.C.  | 88 | 69 | Rain | Flagstaff        | 73 | 46 | Cldy | Lincoln              | 87 | 63 | Pdly | Philadelphia   | 65 | 53 | Rain | St. Marie       | 72 | 46 | Cldy | Yonkers           | 77 | 54 | Cldy |
| Charleston, W.Va. | 80 | 64 | Rain | Flint            | 77 | 53 | Cir  | Little Rock          | 82 | 67 | Cir  | Phoenix        | 99 | 81 | Cir  | Savannah        | 88 | 70 | Rain | Los Angeles       | 76 | 61 | Pdly |
| Charlotte, N.C.   | 87 | 65 | Rain | Fort Smith       | 81 | 65 | Cldy | Los Angeles          | 76 | 61 | Pdly | Pittsburgh     | 76 | 59 | Cldy | Seattle         | 65 | 50 | Cldy | St. Louis         | 88 | 70 | Rain |

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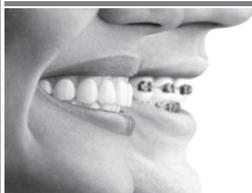
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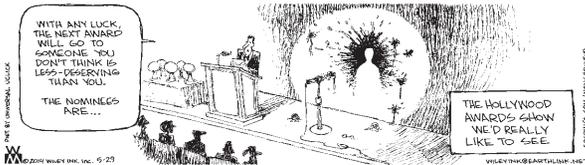
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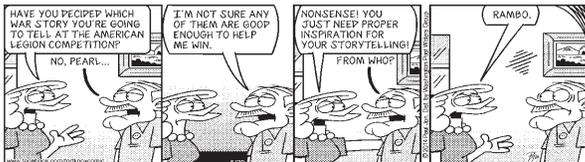
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Doonesbury



Fort Knox



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 12 |    |    |    | 13 |    |    | 14 |    |    |    |
| 15 |    |    |    | 16 |    |    | 17 |    |    |    |
| 18 |    |    |    | 19 |    | 20 | 21 |    |    |    |
|    |    |    | 22 |    |    | 23 |    |    | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 |    |    | 29 |    |    | 30 |    |    |
| 31 |    |    |    |    | 32 |    |    | 33 |    |    |
| 34 |    |    | 35 |    |    |    | 36 |    |    |    |
| 37 |    | 38 |    |    |    | 39 |    |    |    |    |
|    | 40 |    |    |    |    | 41 |    | 42 | 43 | 44 |
| 45 | 46 |    |    |    | 47 | 48 |    | 49 |    |    |
| 50 |    |    |    |    | 51 |    |    | 52 |    |    |
| 53 |    |    |    |    | 54 |    |    | 55 |    |    |

ACROSS

- 1 Supermarket supply
- 5 Jazz style
- 8 Soda shoppe order
- 12 "Two and a Half Men" role
- 13 A Gershwin brother
- 14 Notion
- 15 Pop flavor
- 16 — Mahal
- 17 Aerobic maneuver
- 18 Musical directive to Rhonda
- 20 On
- 22 Be approved
- 26 Layered rock
- 29 Candle matter
- 30 Altar affirmative
- 31 Toothpaste holder
- 32 That man's
- 33 Comic strip possum
- 34 Slangy suffix
- 35 "Indeed"
- 36 In sections, as a window
- 37 Expert
- 40 Ardor
- 41 Partner of Stookey and Travers
- 45 Whirl
- 47 Leap
- 49 "The Music Man" site
- 50 Intimation
- 51 Ram's mate
- 52 Coaster

DOWN

- 1 Handel contemporary
- 2 Lotion additive
- 3 Chutzpah
- 4 Made from "the best stuff on earth" brand
- 5 Chomps
- 6 Man-mouse link
- 7 Sleepwear
- 8 Director Forman
- 9 Pet-shelter transaction
- 10 Zodiac cat
- 11 Spigot
- 19 West of Hollywood
- 21 Monkey suit
- 23 Reuben cheese
- 24 Advantage
- 25 Crucifix
- 26 End
- 27 Luau entertainment
- 28 Disconcerting
- 32 Moor plant
- 33 Illustrator Maxfield
- 35 Sumac of music brand
- 36 Shade of green
- 38 Bivouac array
- 39 Wrote on a keyboard
- 42 Portrayal
- 43 Author Wister
- 44 Bankrolls
- 45 That girl
- 46 Glutton
- 48 Have bills

Answer to Previous Puzzle

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| R | I | B |   | P | H | I |   |   |   |   |
| W | A | D | E |   | M | O | U | S | E |   |
| P | I | N | E | D |   | A | L | M | O | S |
| E | D | G | A | R | A | L | L | A | N | P |
| G | E | E | O | R | L | O | N | R | I | D |
|   |   |   | C | O | M | E |   | O | I | L |
|   |   |   | S | C | A | M | S | H | A | L |
|   |   |   | C | A | R | P |   | S | E | N |
|   |   |   | A | L | A | A | H | E | A | D |
|   |   |   | D | A | V | I | D | A | L | L |
|   |   |   | D | A | N | D | L | L | E | N |
|   |   |   | T | E | L | L | S | T | O | T |
|   |   |   | Z | E | E |   |   | E | K | E |

5-29

CRYPTOQUIP

YEUM YU BQDQO SEUN NQHS  
 PQQNU HUGSEUN YKSE G  
 BOKZNM CKPZMS, YU'DD  
 CGKMS SEU WOYM OUV.  
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BECAUSE I REALLY BELIEVE HOSIERY SALES ARE ABOUT TO SURGE, I'M INVESTING IN THE SOCK MARKET.  
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: D equals L



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## WORLD CUP

## Bench boosts US in friendly vs. Azerbaijan

Second-half substitutes Diskerd, Johannsson score as Americans begin 3-game tuneup

By JANIE McCAULEY  
The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Mix Diskerdur figures the whole honor of wearing No. 10 is only temporary. He fully expects to play alongside Landon Donovan again down the road with the U.S. national team.

For one night at least, Diskerdur did that jersey proud.

Diskerdur and Aron Johannsson, a pair of second-half substitutes raised in Scandinavia, scored to lift a heavy-legged United States over Azerbaijan 2-0 on Tuesday night in the first of three World Cup warmups for the Americans.

"It's an honor. A lot of great players have been wearing that No. 10 for the U.S. previously," Diskerdur said. "I'll enjoy it. When it comes to Landon, I'm sure that we're going to be playing together again someday and of course he has more caps than me so I'm just borrowing the uniform right now."

The U.S. needed a boost from the bench after captain Clint Dempsey was scratched just before kickoff because of a sore left groin. But the 14th-ranked Americans had trouble breaking down No. 85 Azerbaijan.

Diskerdur, born in Oslo to a father from Norway and mother from Arizona who met in college, entered in the 71st and scored four minutes later off Brad Davis' free kick.

With the ball high in the box, Diskerdur headed it down to Michael Bradley, whose shot was cleared off the goal line by Elvin Yunussov. Diskerdur then banged the ball in with a right-footed shot 6 yards for his third international goal.

"It deflected and then it was just an easy job for me to score," Diskerdur said. "I got tackled exactly when I was going to shoot and I was just laying down on the ground in agony."

He was wearing the No. 10 freed up when Donovan was cut from the roster last Thursday.



MARCO JOSE SANCHEZ/AP

The United States' Mix Diskerdur, right, dribbles past Azerbaijan's Dimitrij Nazarov in the second half of the Americans' 2-0 win on Tuesday in San Francisco.

Johannsson, who was born in Mobile, Ala., and moved to Iceland with his family when he was 3, entered in the 62nd and scored his second American goal in the 81st with an open header from the top of the 6-

yard box off a corner kick by Davis, who replaced Graham Zusi at the start of the second half.

"I think we can be very happy with this game," Johannsson said. "We've been work-

ing ridiculously hard in training."

Tim Howard, making his 98th international appearance, got his 53rd win to tie Kasey Keller's U.S. record. The Americans began their intense two-week training camp May 14 at nearby Stanford University, and there appeared to be tired legs.

"It was exactly what we need at this point of our preparation after two fully loaded weeks," U.S. coach Jurgen Klinsmann said. "It was a tricky game. You want to open it up with a goal, and it gets easier. You want to score a bit earlier."

Next up is Turkey on Sunday in Harrison, N.J., followed by Nigeria six days later in Jacksonville, Fla. Then the Americans head to Brazil for their seventh straight World Cup appearance and first-round matches against Ghana, Portugal and Germany.

"It's good to finally get going. Now we can play hard, recover, travel and go again," Howard said. "I thought it was good. I thought tonight was what we probably expected."

The Americans arrived in a red-white-and-blue bus sporting the team's slogan: "One Nation. One Team."

The focus was on Klinsmann, who made the decision to cut Donovan, the American career scoring leader. Dempsey, slated to start up top with Jozy Altidor in a 4-4-2, was an unexpected absence.

"We don't want to risk here anything," said Klinsmann, who estimated Dempsey would heal in two-to-three days. "It's not serious at all."

Chris Wondolowski, a local fan favorite of the San Jose Earthquakes inserted in place of Dempsey, was stopped twice early by goalkeeper Kamran Agbajev, the first with a knee on a diving header in the fifth minute. Wondolowski's header off a cross from Alejandro Bedoya in the 15th was parried over the bar.

Azerbaijan, coached by U.S. team adviser Berti Vogts, was outscored 5-0 in a pair of World Cup qualifiers by Portugal.



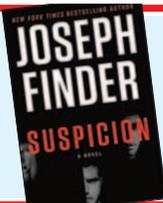
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# HIGH SCHOOL: DODDS-EUROPE

## ATHLETES OF THE YEAR: SOCCER

### Alessandro Thomas, Sigonella

By GREGORY BROOME  
*Stars and Stripes*

DODDS Europe soccer fans know that the gap between Division III and Division I is substantial.

So just imagine the leap Sigonella senior Alessandro Thomas is about to attempt.

Thomas, the centerpiece mid-fielder of the newly-crowned European champion Jaguars and 2014 Stars and Stripes boys soccer Athlete of the Year, is set to make the jump from tiny DODDS-Europe Division III school Sigonella to NCAA Division I DePaul University.

"Opposite ends of the spectrum, right?" Thomas said. "It's definitely nerve-wracking."

As large as the divisional system looms in DODDS-Europe, Thomas' approaching transition from high school to college makes the difference between Sigonella and Ramstein, Division I's largest school, seem petty.

Sigonella Middle/High School has 100 students registered in grades six through 12 as of May 16, according to DODEA data. DePaul enrolled 16,420 undergrads in the fall of 2013. Thomas is part of an 18-person senior class at Sigonella, a smaller group than the 27 players on DePaul's current soccer roster.

Before stepping onto a larger stage, however, Thomas scripted a perfect end to his high school career. On May 22, Thomas cel-

ebrated a second title with the Jaguars, a proper bookend for the title he helped the team to as a freshman. He was named MVP of the Division III tournament. He's a lock for his fourth All-Europe team in as many seasons.

But May 22 might have been a very different day for Thomas.

On an alternate timeline, Thomas would have stayed at Ramstein, where he spent part of his childhood, and suited up for the Royals alongside stars such as Brianno Illari and Cameron Hansen. He would have led his undefeated Ramstein team onto the pitch for the prime-time slot in the day's schedule of six championships, lining up against hometown Kaiserslautern and taking his place in DODDS-Europe's most intense and historic rivalry. He would have celebrated with his teammates when the whistle sounded on their Division I title.

But in reality, Thomas led his Jaguars, their tournament run not yet overshadowing their 0-4-2 regular season, into Thursday's early morning slot. They played Brussels in front of a smattering of fans, the burgers just starting to sizzle on the concession-stand grill, and won the title in DODDS-Europe's smallest division.

Thomas thinks about what might have been. It seems silly for a player of the caliber of the young athlete tested against formidable grown men in southern Italy and bound for a spot on a Big East Conference roster, to prove



MICHAEL ABRAMS/Stars and Stripes

**Sigonella's Alessandro Thomas, right, takes the ball upfield against Michael DeFazio of Brussels in the Division III championship game. Thomas is the Stars and Stripes Athlete of the Year for boys soccer.**

that he could have thrived at the higher levels of DODDS-Europe soccer. But he would have welcomed the opportunity.

"Sometimes I do think about, you know, what if I played D-1, what if I played D-2, how would I stand among the best teams in Europe?" Thomas said.

American Overseas School of Rome coach Niall Boyle said

Thomas excelled at the rigorous Division II level in Italy, where teams like four-time European champion Marymount and his Falcons squad produce the kind of competition that doomed Sigonella to its winless regular season.

"He would have been an important player for any team in Division II," Boyle said.

In the end, however, the alter-

nate timeline fades back into the realm of the hypothetical, and Thomas looks back over his career. He looks back at his Jaguars coaches and teammates, the tight circle of friends and classmates with whom he shares a unique small-school bond, and knows his high-school experience is exactly what it was supposed to be.

"It's just something to think about. I can't change it. It's just whatever," Thomas said. "I love my D-3 team, I love Sigonella, and I wouldn't change it for anything."

Looking at where his path is about to lead him, it's hard to imagine why he'd want to.

### Isabella Lucy, Naples

By GREGORY BROOME  
*Stars and Stripes*

It's impossible to separate the substantial individual talents of Naples senior Isabella Lucy from the perennial excellence of her Wildcats teams.

That's because Lucy's primary talent is being a teammate.

"Isabella is the epitome of a team player, in my opinion," Naples coach Rebecca Lucy said.

Rebecca Lucy is Isabella's mother as well as her coach, so her opinion is necessarily subjective. But more objective evidence tells a similar tale.

Lucy started her career as a promising freshman addition to a reigning Division II DODDS-Europe championship team led by dynamic forward Alex Mack, teaming with Mack to secure the second and third titles of the Wildcats' current reign.

When Mack departed for Liberty University, Lucy transitioned into Mack's former role as the squad's experienced leader and team captain, nurturing the prodigal scoring gifts of new freshman Tyler Treat and guiding the program to its fourth and fifth titles.

Over the course of her career, Lucy's game adapted to fit her team's needs. A self-described "fitness" player on a similarly minded Wildcats side, Lucy still gamely traded elbows with a physical AFNORTH program that emerged as a worthy antagonist to the Naples dynasty. When allotted space on the wing, however, Lucy explored her many options, looping crosses to ready teammates like Treat and Jill Thurston or sending sharp shots on goal.

"She's a game-changer," Rebecca Lucy said. "You put her in and she changes the game." Lucy's career has certainly been charmed by her alignment with stars like Mack and

Treat, along with the many other impact players who have donned Wildcats green in her four-year tenure. But those stars are equally lucky to have played with her.

"We get each other. I know what she's going to do, she knows what I'm going to do. We just work well together," Treat said. "We can think in advance for each other."

Such comments from teammates are the highest praise possible for a player like Lucy, for whom individual glory is indistinguishable from team success. In that regard, the Wildcats' defeat of AFNORTH in the D-II championship game, a win that delivered Naples' fifth straight title and Lucy's fourth in as many seasons, is all the validation necessary.

"I had so much confidence in my team. I knew that no matter how we played it would be a great season," Lucy said. "But the fact that I've been on a championship-winning team four years in a row, it's such an exhilarating feeling. I can't even describe it."

Having won every team and individual accolade available to a DODDS-Europe soccer player — a list that now includes the 2014 Stars and Stripes girl soccer Athlete of the Year — Lucy is headed off for fresh challenges.

Lucy will enroll this fall at American University in Washington, D.C., the first time she'll live in the United States after spending her childhood in Germany, South Korea and Italy. She declined athletic scholarship offers from several NCAA schools to accept an academic grant to study foreign language and communication media in the nation's capital.

Her soccer career, however, isn't necessarily over. Lucy has arranged a tryout with the school's NCAA Division I women's soccer team when she arrives in August.

Though she's grown accustomed to success, Lucy is simply heading out for the best. "Who knows, it's D-I," Isabella Lucy said.



MICHAEL ABRAMS/Stars and Stripes

**Isabella Lucy of Naples celebrates a goal in the Division II championship game last week. Lucy is the Stars and Stripes Athlete of the Year for girls soccer.**

"Anything can happen." If the past four years are any indication, good things likely will.

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FRENCH OPEN/SPORTS BRIEFS

# Williams sisters out in 2nd round

By CHRIS LEHOURTIS  
The Associated Press

PARIS — Instead of playing each other this week at the French Open, Serena and Venus Williams will both be heading home early.

The American sisters both lost in the second round on Wednesday, each being outplayed by little-known opponents at Roland Garros.

Serena, the defending French Open champion and a 17-time major winner, lost to Garbine Muguruzza of Spain 6-2, 6-2. It is her earliest exit at a major tournament since falling in the first round at Roland Garros two years ago — and her most lopsided loss ever at a Grand Slam.

A short time earlier, older sister Venus was eliminated by Anna Schmiedlova of Slovakia 2-6, 6-3, 6-4.

The Williams siblings would have met in the third round had they both won.

"It was one of those days. You can't be on every day, and, gosh, I hate to be off during a Grand Slam," the top-seeded Serena said. "It happens, you know. It's not the end of the world. It is what it is."

The sisters have lost on the same day at a major tournament twice before, with the last coming in the fourth round at Wimbledon in 2011. The other time was at the French Open in 2008 in the third round.

With Li Na also eliminated, it is the first time in the Open era that the top two seeded women have lost before the third round at any Grand Slam tournament.

Serena struggled from the start against the 20-year-old Muguruzza and finished the match with only eight winners and 29 unforced errors.

"Just nothing really worked," Serena said. "I don't know any-

## Scoreboard

### Wednesday

#### At Stade Roland Garros

Paris  
Purse: \$34.12 million (Grand Slam)  
Surface: clay-Outdoor  
Singles

#### Men

Steve Johnson (U.S., def. Robert Loli, France, 4-6, 7 (7), 7-6 (3), 6-3, 6-3.

#### Second Round

Gilles Simon (F), France, def. Alejandro Gonzalez, Colombia, 6-4, 6-0, 6-2.  
Roberto Bautista Agut (27), Spain, def. Benoit Paire, France, 6-4, 7-6 (4), 6-2.  
Ernesto Gulbis (18), Latvia, def. Facundo Bagnis, Argentina, 6-2, 7-5, 6-0.  
Radek Stepanek, Czech Republic, def. Mikhail Youzhny (15), Russia, 6-0, 6-3, 3-6, 6-4.

Marcel Granollers, Spain, def. Alexandr Dolgoplov (20), Ukraine, 1-6, 3-6, 6-0, 6-2.

Novak Djokovic (2), Serbia, def. Jeremy Chardy, France, 6-1, 6-4, 6-2.

Dmitry Tursunov (31), Russia, def. Sam Querrey, United States, 6-4, 7-5, 6-1.

Tomáš Berdych (6), Czech Republic, def. Tobias Kamke, Germany, 6-3, 3-6, 6-3, 6-0.

Milos Raonic (8), Canada, def. Jiri Vesely, Czech Republic, 7-5 (4), 6-4, 6-1.

Roger Federer (4), Switzerland, def. Diego Sebastian Schwartzman, Argentina, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4.

Tomáš Berdych (6), Czech Republic, def. Aleksandr Nedovyesov, Kazakhstan, 6-7 (4), 6-4, 7-5, 6-3.

Tony Robredo (17), Spain, def. Kenny Schieppeler, France, 6-2, 6-3, 6-3.

John Isner (29), U.S., def. Robin Haase, Netherlands, 6-1, 3-6, 1-1, 6-7, 5, Jo-Wilfried Tsonga (13), France, def. Jürgen Melzer, Austria, 6-2, 6-3, 6-2.

Jiri Janovic (22), Poland, def. Jarko Nieminen, Finland, 7-6 (4), 7-5 (4), 6-4.

#### Women

Anna Schmiedlova (4), Slovakia, def. Venus Williams (29), U.S., 2-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Maria Penetta (12), Italy, 5-7, 6-4, 6-2.

Eugenie Bouchard (8), Canada, def. Julia Georges, Germany, 2-6, 6-2, 6-1.

Garbine Muguruzza, Spain, def. Serena Williams (1), United States, 6-2, 6-2.

Angelique Kerber (8), Germany, def. Vajta Lenghenko (U.S.), 6-4, 6-2.

Carla Suarez Navarro (14), Spain, def. Timea Bacsinszky, Switzerland, 7-5, 1-6, 6-4.

Daniela Hantuchova (31), Slovakia, def. Claire Feuerstein (1), France, 6-1, 6-4.

Dominika Cibulkova (9), Slovakia, def. Tereza Smitkova, Austria, 6-3, 6-4.

Mona Barthel, Germany, def. Sabine Lisicki (16), Germany, 6-1, 2-6, retired.

Maria Sharapova, Russia (7), def. Tsvetana Pironkova, Bulgaria, 7-5, 6-2.

thing that actually worked," Muguruzza was playing at the French Open for only the second



DARKO VOJNOVIC/AP

Serena Williams reacts after missing a return during her second-round match Wednesday against Garbine Muguruzza in the French Open in Paris. Williams, the defending champion, lost 2-6, 2-6.

time in her career. She lost in the second round last year, but reached the fourth round at the Australian Open in January.

Venus' loss was the eighth time in her last nine major tournaments that she has failed to win more than one match.

The seven-time Grand Slam champion won the first set and was up an early break in the second. But the 19-year-old Schmiedlova responded by taking eight of nine games and won 2-6, 6-3, 6-4.

"I felt like this was a match that I was most likely going to win. I'm sure, I don't know how Serena felt, but I'm sure she feels like that every time she goes on the court," Venus said. "So I think our expectation was to play in the

next round."

Since reaching the fourth round at Wimbledon in 2011, Venus has been eliminated in the first or second round at every Grand Slam tournament she has played except the 2013 Australian Open, where she reached the third round.

Maria Sharapova advanced to the third round by beating Tsvetana Pironkova of Bulgaria 7-5, 6-2. No. 12 Flavia Pennetta of Italy also lost, while No. 8 Angelique Kerber of Germany and No. 18 Eugenie Bouchard of Canada won.

In the men's tournament, both Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic made it through to the third round.

Federer beat Argentine qualifier Diego Sebastian Schwartzman 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 Wednesday, while the second-seeded Djokovic defeated Jeremy Chardy of France 6-1, 6-4, 6-2.

Djokovic needs to win the French Open to complete a career Grand Slam.

No. 8 Milos Raonic of Canada, No. 6 Tomas Berdych of the Czech Republic, No. 18 Ernests Gulbis of Latvia, No. 25 Marin Cilic of Croatia, No. 27 Roberto Bautista Agut of Spain, No. 29 Gilles Simon of France and No. 31 Dmitry Tursunov of Russia also advanced to the third round.

No. 15 Mikhail Youzhny of Russia and No. 20 Alexandr Dolgoplov of Ukraine lost.

## Briefly

# Cowboys LB Lee tears ACL at offseason practice

The Associated Press

IRVING, Texas — Dallas Cowboys linebacker Sean Lee could miss the 2014 season after tearing a ligament in his left knee in the first offseason practice.

The team hadn't announced results of an MRI but reported on its website Wednesday that Lee has been told he has a torn anterior cruciate ligament.

The off-injured Lee went down during the 11-on-11 portion of Tuesday's practice. His left leg slid out from under him as rookie guard Zack Martin was closing in for a block, and Martin rolled over him.

With Lee's injury and the release of franchise sacks leader DeMarcus Ware, the Cowboys could be without their top two defenders after finishing last in the league in total defense a year ago.

Contact isn't allowed in offseason workouts, but blockers frequently engage linemen and linebackers before plays stop in 11-on-11 drills. The 27-year-old Lee hasn't played a full season in four years. The middle linebacker has missed 15 games over the past two years, including five of the final games in 2013 with hamstring and neck injuries.

Lee signed a six-year extension worth up to \$51 million last year, but durability-based incentives are built into the deal.

### Donovan open to move to NBA

DESTIN, Fla. — Florida coach Billy Donovan reiterated that the Southeastern Conference's annual spring meetings Tuesday that he's committed to the Gators,

but left open the possibility of jumping to the NBA.

Donovan said last week he has been in contact with "several" NBA teams about head-coaching jobs. He declined again to say which teams, but reports say the Cleveland Cavaliers have shown interest.

Donovan left Florida briefly in 2007, agreeing to become coach of the NBA's Orlando Magic. He changed his mind a few days later, returned to Gainesville and has been there since. He just finished his 18th season at Florida, where he has guided the Gators to two national championships and four Final Four appearances.

"All I can say is I love Florida, I'm happy here ... the school's been great to me," he said. "But at the same point, some of the NBA stuff, as I've said before, is intriguing

in a lot of ways — the basketball part of it. That's not to say that I'm unhappy here; that's not the case at all."

### Irish readmit Daniels, Grant

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — Wide receiver DaVarius Daniels and Jerian Grant, the basketball team's leading scorer, have been readmitted to Notre Dame after being suspended for the spring semester for undisclosed academic violations.

Daniels was second on the team last season with 49 catches for 745 yards and is the leading returning receiver.

Grant was leading the Irish in scoring at 19 points a game as well as in assists and steals when he was suspended after a loss to then-No. 3 Ohio State.

NHL PLAYOFFS

# Battling Canadiens remain alive

Bourque's hat trick leads Montreal to physical Game 5 win over New York

The Associated Press

MONTREAL — The Montreal Canadiens are not ready to concede the Eastern Conference title to the New York Rangers.

Rene Bourque scored three goals and the Canadiens chased star goalie Henrik Lundqvist from the game as they defeated the Rangers 7-4 on Tuesday to stave off elimination.

The Rangers, who lead the best-of-seven series 3-2, will have another chance to earn a trip to the Stanley Cup finals in Game 6 on Thursday night in New York.

"I think you're starting to see us playing Montreal Canadiens hockey," Montreal forward Max Pacioretty said. "I don't think you've really seen it in this series just yet."

"It was great to see a little taste of it. I think we still have more. I think we still have little things to work on. And it should be a fun one going back there."

Alex Galchenyuk, Tomas Plekanec and Pacioretty also scored for Montreal, which outshot the Rangers 28-27.

Derek Stepan, playing with a guard on his helmet to protect a broken jaw suffered from a Brandon Prust hit in Game 3, returned to the lineup to score twice for the Rangers. Chris Kreider had a goal and three assists and Rick Nash also scored.

"It was just a strange game," Rangers coach Alain Vigneault said. "It was a different game from what we've seen so far in the series, but now we're going home."

It was the third time in these playoffs that the Canadiens have faced elimination.

As they did after falling behind 3-2 to Boston in the conference semifinals, they came up with their best hockey to stay alive.

Pacioretty feels that being under pressure helps his team focus.

"There's a lot of distractions and noise in this city and I think that when we let it affect us and we don't worry about ourselves and what we can control we get away from our game a bit," he said.

"Now that we're in desperation mode and our backs are against



PAUL CHAISSON, THE CANADIAN PRESS/AP

**Montreal's Rene Bourque, rear, celebrates with teammate PK Subban after scoring his third goal of the game in the third period of Tuesday's 7-4 win over the New York Rangers in Game 5 of the Eastern Conference finals in Montreal. The Rangers lead the series 3-2 with Game 6 on Thursday in New York.**

**'Everybody talks about how Lundqvist is a great goalie. Has he been better than Tokarski this series? I don't think so.'**

**Rene Bourque**

Montreal Canadiens forward

the wall, we're just worrying about what we can control.

"When we got four lines buzzing like that and play the way we're capable of we have a lot of success. Hopefully we can do that next game."

The Rangers weren't facing the same desperation and spent the game trying to play catch-up. Going 3-for-7 on the power play didn't help. Neither did getting an ordinary game from the often extraordinary Lundqvist.

He let in four goals on only 19 shots before he was pulled at 8:58 of the second period in favor of Cam Talbot.

"I pulled him because I thought at that time we needed a little momentum shift and I thought it might catch everybody's attention," Vigneault said. "It did for a while. Obviously it didn't work out."

Montreal's Dustin Tokarski, starting a fourth game since Carey Price was injured in the series opener, allowed four on his first 14 shots, but then made some big saves in the third to preserve the win.

It prompted a bold observation from Bourque.

"Everybody talks about how Lundqvist is a great goalie. Has

he been better than Tokarski this series?" Bourque asked. "I don't think so."

Bourque's second goal proved to be the winner and came just after the Rangers came back to tie the game at 4-4 in the second period.

"Everybody was ready for this game," Bourque said. "We knew the situation."

"It was just a see-saw battle back and forth. (Dale Weise made a great play to tie me. I called for the puck and somehow it got through. It was nice to get in there."

At 10:41 of the third, Rangers defenseman John Moore was given a major penalty and was ejected for a blindside, open ice hit on Dale Weise that was similar to Prust's hit on Stepan. Weise was wobbly when he got up and went for treatment, but returned to the bench late in the period.

The NHL player safety department said that Moore will have a hearing on Wednesday to see if further discipline is in order.

## Scoreboard

**Conference finals**  
(Best-of-seven; x-if necessary)



**EASTERN CONFERENCE**  
N.Y. Rangers 3, Montreal 2  
N.Y. Rangers 7, Montreal 2  
N.Y. Rangers 3, Montreal 1  
Montreal 3, N.Y. Rangers 2, OT  
N.Y. Rangers 3, Montreal 2, OT  
Tuesday: Montreal 7, N.Y. Rangers 4  
Thursday: at N.Y. Rangers  
x-Saturday: at Montreal



**WESTERN CONFERENCE**  
Los Angeles 3, Chicago 1  
Chicago 3, Los Angeles 2  
Los Angeles 6, Chicago 2  
Chicago 3, Los Angeles 1  
Los Angeles 5, Chicago 2  
Wednesday: Los Angeles 2, OT  
x-Friday: at Los Angeles  
x-Sunday: at Chicago

**Tuesday**  
Canadiens 7, Rangers 4

| N.Y. Rangers   | 1  | 3   | 0  | 4   |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| Montreal   | 2  | 3   | 2  | 7   |
| 1. Subban, Markov, 1:48 (pp), 2, N.Y. Rangers; Stepan 4 (Kreider, Staal), 10:41. | 3. Montreal, Plekanec 4 (Gionta, Galchenyuk), 12:24. | 2. Second Period—4, Montreal, Pacioretty 5 (Gallagher, Markov), 3:44, 5, Montreal, Re Bourque 6 (Eller, Van Der Kraak, Nash), 12:06, 8, N.Y. Rangers, Kreider 4 (McDonagh, Brassard), 14:12 (pp), 9, Montreal, Re Bourque 7 (Weise), 15:11. | 3. Third Period—10, Montreal, Re Bourque 8 (Weise, Markov), 6:33, 11, Montreal, Desharnais 2 (Pacioretty), 15:43 (en). | <b>Shots on goal:</b> N.Y. Rangers 10:6-11-27, Montreal 12-12-4-28. |

**Power-play opportunities**—N.Y. Rangers 1 of 7, Montreal 1 of 7.  
**Goals**—N.Y. Rangers, Lundqvist (19 shots-15 saved), 1:48 (pp), 10:41 (en), 8:6. Montreal, Tokarski 2-0 (7-23).  
**A**—21-273 (21,273), **T**—2-41.

**Playoff leaders**

Through May 27

| GP                   | G  | A  | PTS |
|----------------------|----|----|-----|
| Arns Kopitar, LA     | 18 | 17 | 20  |
| Jeff Carter, NYR     | 8  | 12 | 20  |
| Marian Gaborik, LA   | 18 | 10 | 16  |
| Austin Williams, LA  | 18 | 10 | 16  |
| Ryan Getzlaf, Anh    | 12 | 4  | 11  |
| Jonathan Toews, Chi  | 8  | 6  | 14  |
| Evgeni Malkin, Pitt  | 6  | 8  | 14  |
| P.K. Subban, Mon     | 16 | 5  | 14  |
| Jonathon Quastl, Min | 13 | 10 | 14  |
| Drew Doughty, LA     | 8  | 11 | 14  |
| Marian Hossa, LA     | 15 | 12 | 12  |

**Goaltending**

| SV                      | GAA            |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Tuukka Rask, Bos        | 12 348 25 1.99 |
| Henrik Lundqvist, NYR   | 19 525 39 2.15 |
| Corey Crawford, Chi     | 17 485 23 2.44 |
| Carey Price, Mtl        | 12 358 29 2.35 |
| Marc-Andre Fleury, Pitt | 18 517 32 3.00 |
| Ilya Bryzgalov, Min     | 9 182 21 2.63  |
| Jonathan Quick, LA      | 18 516 26 2.60 |
| Ryan Miller, Stl        | 6 185 19 2.70  |
| Semyon Varlamov, Col    | 7 231 20 2.78  |
| Fredrik Andersen, Van   | 17 512 31 3.10 |
| Sergei Bobrovsky, Cfb   | 6 218 20 3.17  |

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## MLB



JAE C. HONG/AP

The Dodgers' Andre Ethier follows through Tuesday on a three-run triple during the fourth inning against the Reds in Los Angeles. Ethier also had a home run in the Dodgers' 6-3 victory.

## NL roundup

## Ethier's 4 RBIs lift Dodgers

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The carousel in the Los Angeles Dodgers' crowded outfield keeps spinning, and center fielder Andre Ethier won't be getting off anytime soon with the way he is swinging the bat and playing defense — especially after left fielder Carl Crawford sprained his ankle.

Ethier drove in the Dodgers' first four runs with a homer and a bases-loaded triple, and Zack Greinke tied a season high with 11 strikeouts in a 6-3 victory over the Cincinnati Reds on Tuesday.

But the jubilation in the clubhouse was subdued after Crawford left the game in the eighth inning with a sprained left ankle. He injured himself chasing down pinch-hitter Chris Heisey's lead-off double into the left field corner. Crawford said that he will have to go on the disabled list, although the club made no such announcement.

Ethier's season-high four RBIs increased his total to 25, despite the outfield situation that had forced manager Don Mattingly to mix and match with Matt Kemp, Crawford, Scott Van Slyke and right fielder Yasiel Puig — the only constant in the bunch. Puig, who came in second in the NL with a .345 average and 38 RBIs, reached base safely for the 28th straight game.

"It's uncomfortable, and it's a tough spot to be in," Ethier said. "I guess this is a situation where too much of a good thing is not necessarily good. But you've got to commend everyone for being professional and handling it as well as they can."

Kemp was not in the starting

lineup for the fifth straight game — his longest such stretch without an injury since he became a regular in 2008. Mattingly and his staff are waiting for the two-time Gold Glove center fielder to become comfortable enough in left field to play there on a regular basis alongside Ethier. Kemp pinch-hit in the eighth and struck out.

Greinke (8-1) allowed three runs, eight hits and no walks in 7 1/3 innings. The 2009 AL Cy Young winner was lifted after giving up a two-run homer by Devin Mesoraco on his 104th pitch — ending Greinke's streak of 22 consecutive starts in which he had allowed fewer than three earned runs. It was the longest such streak since the dead-ball era.

**Giants 4, Cubs 0:** Tim Hudson turned in another vintage performance to start this season, tossing seven scoreless innings to lead host San Francisco.

Hudson (5-2) allowed six hits, struck out five and walked none. The 38-year-old has allowed two earned runs or fewer in nine of his 10 starts, and he has pitched at least seven innings eight times.

**Mets 4, Pirates 2:** Juan Lagares drove in two runs, Vic Black gave the bullpen a boost and host New York finally managed some timely hits in its first game with a new batting coach.

Daniel Murphy doubled twice and light-hitting Ruben Tejada reached base all four times up to help the Mets win for only the fourth time in 13 games. The victory came one day after hitting coach Dave Hudgens was fired and replaced by Lamar Johnson, who had been New York's minor league hitting coordinator.

**Padres 4, Diamondbacks 3:**

Tommy Medica hit a tiebreaking solo homer in the eighth and Eric Stults pitched six effective innings for visiting San Diego.

Stults was sharp early before giving up a couple of runs that allowed Arizona to tie the game at 3-all.

**Rockies 6, Phillies 2:** Wilin Rosario hit a go-ahead, three-run homer and Jorge De La Rosa pitched six strong innings to lift visiting Colorado to victory. Drew Stubbs went 2 for 4 with a double and an RBI for the Rockies, who had lost four of five while being outscored 16-0 in their two previous games.

## Interleague

**Cardinals 6, Yankees 0:** Lance Lynn threw a five-hit shutout in his first career complete game and host St. Louis got home runs from Allen Craig and Matt Holliday. Matt Adams and Holliday had three hits and an RBI apiece and Craig drove in two runs in the interleague matchup. The Cardinals have won 10 of 13.

**Brewers 7, Orioles 6 (10):** Pitcher Yovani Gallardo delivered a pinch-hit double that drove home the winning run with two outs in the 10th inning, foiling Baltimore's strategy and sending host Milwaukee to victory. The Brewers blew an early 5-0 lead, but tied it at 6 with two outs in the ninth on an infield single by Jonathan Lucroy.

**Red Sox 6, Braves 3:** Jackie Bradley Jr. hit a two-run single during a four-run rally in the seventh inning and visiting Boston beat Atlanta in the latest comeback following its longest losing streak in 20 years, a 10-game streak snapped on Monday.

## AL roundup

## Buehrle wins 9th for surging Jays

The Associated Press

TORONTO — Another blast by Edwin Encarnacion helped make Mark Buehrle the first nine-game winner in baseball.

Buehrle won his season-best fifth straight decision, Encarnacion and Adam Lind hit back-to-back home runs and the Toronto Blue Jays extended their winning streak to eight games, beating the Tampa Bay Rays 9-6 on Tuesday.

"Everybody's having fun," Encarnacion said. "You can see it on their faces. We're playing great baseball."

Juan Francisco also homered for the AL East-leading Blue Jays, who have won 13 of 15 and are 19-7 in May.

Buehrle said he's grateful to have Encarnacion's booming bat supporting him.

"He's everything you could ask for," Buehrle said. "Offensively and defensively, he's awesome." Encarnacion connected for the 14th time in May, matching Jose Bautista's team record for home runs in a month. Bautista hit 14 homers in June 2012.

"Eddie's on some kind of roll right now," Blue Jays manager John Gibbons said.

Encarnacion has homered in three straight games for the third time this season.

The Blue Jays lead the majors with 76 home runs. They have gone deep in 10 straight games and 29 of their past 34, hitting 58 homers in that span.

Buehrle (9-1) allowed four runs, three earned, and eight hits in 6 1/3 innings. The left-hander walked one and struck out three.

Lind and Encarnacion both connected off Rays right-hander Alex Cobb, who lost for the first time since April 1 and saw his streak of 24 1/3 scoreless innings snapped.

Jose Reyes began the fifth with a line drive that struck Cobb on the right thigh, knocking him to the ground. Cobb appeared shaken up, but stayed in the game after a few warmup pitches.

"The first couple of warmup pitches the leg was still a little bit dead," Cobb said. "Honestly, by the third or fourth pitch, going back into game mode, it wasn't a factor. It was something I felt was out of my mind."

Last June, Cobb was hit in the head by a line drive off the bat of Kansas City's Eric Hosmer and wound up in hospital. He didn't return until mid-August.

**Tigers 6, Athletics 5:** Pinch-runner Rajai Davis scored on Austin Jackson's fielder's choice groundout in the eighth inning and visiting Detroit halted a three-game losing streak.

D. Martinez drew a one-out walk off Oakland reliever Fernando Abad (0-2). Davis was

brought in to run and the speedy outfielder took second on a passed ball. He then stole third when A's catcher Derek Norris was throwing the ball back to Abad.

After Luke Gregerson replaced Abad, Jackson hit a sharp ground to Oakland shortstop Jed Lowrie, but the A's were unable to turn the double play and Davis raced home with the go-ahead run.

**Angels 6, Mariners 4:** Jered Weaver gave up three runs over six innings for his fifth win in six starts and C.J. Cron homered to lead visiting Los Angeles.

Weaver gave up seven hits and a walk while striking out five. Weaver has lasted at least six innings in nine of his 11 starts this season, and this was the first time in eight outings he allowed more than two runs.

**White Sox 2, Indians 1:** Gordon Beckham homered, Connor Gillaspie singled home another run and host Chicago outlasted Cleveland in a game twice delayed by rain.

Beckham finished 2-for-4, adding a double in the first inning.

**Twins 4, Rangers 3:** Texas closer Joakim Soria bobbed a slow-bouncing ball hit by host Minnesota's Danny Santana to the left of the mound with two outs and the bases loaded in the ninth inning, allowing the winning run to score.

The day began ominously for the Rangers when star pitcher Yu Darvish was scratched from his scheduled start with stiffness in his neck. Fill-in Scott Baker gave up three hits over six innings and Chris Gimenez hit a tiebreaking two-out RBI single in the sixth off Phil Hughes.

**Astros 3, Royals 0:** Collin McHugh held light-hitting Kansas City at bay over seven innings, and visiting Houston earned its first four-game winning streak since last September.

The Astros set the worst record in the AL, but have won four in a row away from home for the first time since taking six straight on the road last May 29-June 3.



CHARLIE REDELF/AP

Houston starting pitcher Collin McHugh helped the Astros shut out the Kansas City Royals 3-0 for their fourth straight victory.

MLB/NBA



DUANE BELOWSON/AP

**Detroit's Ian Kinsler scores during a game against his former team, Texas, on May 23 in Detroit. Texas took three of four games against Detroit, but Kinsler went 8-for-17 at the plate during the series.**

## Fit: Kinsler appreciated for sense of humor, too

**FROM BACK PAGE**

Kinsler has been a catalyst for the Detroit offense, fitting in well on and off the field.

"He's actually funnier than I thought he was. He always looks very serious," manager Brad Ausmus said. "Managing him, he's outstanding — couldn't ask for more."

After being traded by the Rangers, Kinsler was quoted in an ESPN The Magazine story as saying he hoped Texas would go 0-162 this season. He later said he was joking, and he bristled a bit when asked about that comment last week, when the Rangers arrived in Detroit for a four-game series.

Kinsler was asked if any of the Rangers had given him any good-natured grief about his remarks. "They thought it was funny, like everyone probably should," Kinsler said. "The way that it was taken was serious, but it's supposed to be funny. They saw it as funny. I saw it as funny."

Kinsler says he still has some contact with former teammates, but it's clear that he's found a comfort zone in Detroit. He played eight seasons in Texas, and the move to the Tigers enabled him to start fresh with a team full of

veterans.

Those off-the-field responsibilities Kinsler has little use for? They aren't much of an issue now.

"I want to play baseball. I want to be on the field and compete, and talk about the game, help my teammates in that way," Kinsler said. "I love to talk about baseball and what I see on the field and things that you can take advantage of. As far as the other stuff, in my opinion, it's for the birds, and not something I enjoy doing."

Texas took three of four from the Tigers in that series in Detroit, but Kinsler doubled three times in his team's lone victory, and he went 8-for-17 in the series. His presence in the lineup is part of the reason Ausmus was able to drop Austin Jackson from the leadoff spot.

It's only been about two months, but Kinsler is already quieting some of the concerns about the direction his career was heading in. Instead, he's made that big trade look like an unqualified success so far for the Tigers.

"This is the second half of my career, I'm a Detroit Tiger now, and I'm happy with where I'm at," Kinsler said. "I want to impress the people that are here."

**“I want to play baseball. I want to be on the field and compete, and talk about the game, help my teammates in that way.”**

**ian Kinsler**  
Detroit second baseman

# Sources: Cavs interview Chicago assistant Griffin

Florida's Donovan won't promise return to Gainesville

**By TOM WITHERS**  
*The Associated Press*

**CLEVELAND** — As they debate what to do with the No. 1 draft pick, the Cavaliers made a significant first move in their coaching search.

The team interviewed Chicago Bulls assistant coach Adrian Griffin for its coaching vacancy Tuesday, two people with knowledge of the meeting told the Associated Press. They spoke on condition of anonymity because of the private nature of the situation.

Griffin is believed to be the first candidate to formally interview with the Cavs, who are looking for their third coach in three years after owner Dan Gilbert fired Mike Brown last month for the second time in four years.

And while the team was meeting with Griffin, Florida coach Billy Donovan, who has reportedly been contacted by the Cavs, wouldn't promise he will return for another season in Gainesville.

"I think when you start making guarantees about life and start making guarantees about where you're going to be, that's not good because if for some reason I ever change my mind and did something, I wouldn't want (people) saying, 'Well, he promised, he guaranteed, he said this on record,'" Donovan said at the



MITCHELL LAYTON/MCT

**The Cavaliers fired Mike Brown last month for the second time in the last four years.**

Southeastern Conference's annual spring meetings.

"I just think when you start doing that, that's a mistake."

The 39-year-old Griffin wasn't drafted out of college, but he played for five teams during nine seasons in the NBA. He has been on Tom Thibodeau's staff in Chicago since 2010. He also worked under former Milwaukee coach Scott Skiles.

Griffin's background working with the defensive-minded Thibodeau and Skiles, and playing under Jeff Van Gundy and Don Nelson makes him an attractive choice to Gilbert, who

believes defense wins championships. New Cavs general manager David Griffin has said he wants to find a coach with "the defensive background that's dyed in the wool of this franchise" and one with offensive openness.

The Cavs, who defied long odds to win the NBA Draft lottery last week, are not commenting during their coaching search.

Soon after Brown was let go following a disappointing 33-49 season, Griffin was one of the first candidates to be linked to Cleveland's opening. He has a good rapport with players, and can identify with life as a pro after being bounced around the league and playing in Europe. Griffin has been pursuing his doctorate in leadership studies while working as an assistant.

Last week, a person familiar with the Cavaliers' plans told the AP the club plans to interview Los Angeles Clippers assistant Alvin Gentry this week. He previously worked in Phoenix with David Griffin.

The Cavs are also reportedly interested in meeting with Clippers assistant Tyrone Lue, and intend to interview former Memphis coach Lionel Hollins later this week.

AP Sports Writers Andrew Seligman in Chicago and Mark Long in Destin, Florida contributed to this report.



VERNON BRYANT, DALLAS MORNING NEWS/MCT

**Florida head coach Billy Donovan has reportedly been contacted by the Cleveland Cavaliers about their coaching vacancy. He declined to promise he would return to Gainesville next season.**

NBA

Scoreboard

Conference finals  
(Best-of-7; x-if necessary)



**EASTERN CONFERENCE**  
Miami 3, Indiana 1  
Indiana 107, Miami 96  
Miami 87, Indiana 83  
Miami 99, Indiana 87  
Miami 102, Indiana 90  
Wednesday: Miami at Indiana  
x-Friday: Oklahoma City at Miami  
x-Sunday: Miami at Indiana

**WESTERN CONFERENCE**  
San Antonio 2, Oklahoma City 105  
San Antonio 122, Oklahoma City 102  
San Antonio 112, Oklahoma City 77  
Oklahoma City 106, San Antonio 97  
Tuesday: Oklahoma City 105, San Antonio 92  
Thursday: San Antonio at Oklahoma City  
x-Monday: San Antonio at Oklahoma City

**Tuesday**  
**Thunder 105, Spurs 92**  
**SAN ANTONIO** — Leonard 3-9 2-2 10, Duncan 3-8 4-9, Spillner 1-3 1-2, Parker 7-12 0-9 14, Green 1-4 0-3, Ginobili 2-8 0-5, Diaw 5-11 2-14, Adams 2-3 0-4, Belinelli 2-4 2-7, Joseph 4-7 3-4 11, Baynes 0-3 2-2, Bonner 3-4 0-6 8, Ayres 0-1 2-4. Totals 33-57 22-92.

**OKLAHOMA CITY** — Durant 11-22 7-31, Ibaka 4-5 1-4 9, Perkins 1-1 0-2, Westbrook 12-24 14-14 40, Jackson 1-5 0-3, Lamb 2-7 2-7, Butler 2-3 0-4, Adams 2-3 0-2 4, Fisher 1-2 0-0-3, Collision 0-0-0 0, Jones 1-1 0-0 2. Totals 37-76 24-31 105.

**WESTERN CONFERENCE**  
San Antonio 2, Oklahoma City 105  
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# Thunder blast Spurs to draw even

## Oklahoma City's Westbrook hits 40 in Game 4 victory over San Antonio

By CLIFF BRUNT  
The Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — Russell Westbrook is picking up where Kevin Durant left off. Durant hasn't shown the same consistent excellence in the postseason that earned the Thunder star the MVP award after the NBA regular season. Westbrook has picked up the slack, making a case for being Oklahoma City's best player in the postseason.

Westbrook had 40 points, 10 assists and five steals in Oklahoma City's 105-92 victory over the San Antonio Spurs on Tuesday that tied the series at two games apiece.

The guard has been doing similar damage throughout the playoffs, averaging 26.6 points, 8.1 assists and 7.5 rebounds in 17 postseason games. In one stretch, he had three triple-doubles in five games.

"Just his focus on every possession on the defensive end and his poise on the offensive end — I think that's what's fun to watch," Durant said. "People outside of our team don't really look at that type of stuff, but that's something we can definitely build on as a group, is watching him wreak havoc on the defensive end and offensively, playing with such patience."

Tuesday's performance matched the second-highest playoff point total of Westbrook's career, falling short of the 43 he

scored in the 2012 NBA Finals. "Coach told us he needed maximum effort from us tonight, and it starts with me at point guard," Westbrook said. "My job is to play both sides of the ball. If you want to win a championship, those are things you have to do."

Westbrook shot 50 percent from the field and took just five three-pointers on Tuesday. He made 14 of 14 free throws.

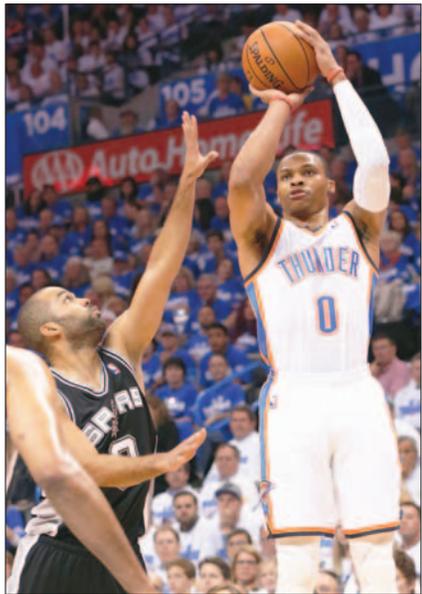
"Sometimes he's going to go off," Spurs guard Manu Ginobili said. "He's capable of doing that. If he makes a lot of jumpers, it gets really tough."

In the midst of posting a monster game, Westbrook still managed to help Durant score 31 points. It was Durant's highest-scoring game of the series after the NBA's leading scorer was held to a 22.7-point average in the first three games.

Serge Ibaka added nine points and eight rebounds for the Thunder, who have turned around the series since he returned from an injury that was expected to keep him out for the rest of the postseason.

Boris Diaw had 14 points and 10 rebounds, and Tony Parker added 14 points for the Spurs, who pulled their starters in the middle of the third quarter. They also blew a 2-0 lead against the Thunder in this round two years ago.

San Antonio hosts Game 5 on Thursday.



Sue Osofsky/AP

Thunder guard Russell Westbrook shoots over Spurs guard Tony Parker in the first quarter of Game 4 of the Western Conference finals on Tuesday in Oklahoma City. The Thunder won 105-92 to even the best-of-7 series 2-2.

# Sterling responds with vow to fight sale of Clippers

By BRIAN MAHONEY  
AND TAMI ABDOLLAH  
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Donald Sterling and the NBA are headed toward a June 3 hearing that will determine if he remains owner of the Los Angeles Clippers.

Unless Shelly Sterling finds a buyer for the team first.

The Sterlings were part combative, part cooperative Tuesday, with Donald Sterling fighting to keep his team even as his estranged wife said he had authorized her to sell it. He didn't seem willing to give it up in his passionate response to the league's attempt to oust him.

"We do not believe a court in the United States of America will enforce the draconian penalties imposed on Mr. Sterling in these circumstances, and indeed, we believe that preservation of Mr. Sterling's constitutional rights requires that these sham proceedings be terminated in Mr. Sterling's favor," the response said.

Sterling's response to the league's charge that he damaged it and its merchandising partners with his racist comments was delivered before Tuesday's

deadline.

He argued that there is no basis for stripping him of his team because his statements were illegally recorded "during an inflamed lovers' quarrel in which he was clearly distraught."

According to the response, a copy of which was obtained by The Associated Press, Sterling says V. Stiviano recorded him without his knowledge and thus the recording was illegal under California law. He also said he could not have "willfully" damaged the league because he did not know it would be made public.

Meanwhile, the attorney for Shelly Sterling confirmed that Donald Sterling had given her written permission to sell the team. According to a person who is in contact with a potential bidder, who spoke to the AP on the condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss the process publicly, the Clippers are seeking binding bids before next Tuesday — the day NBA owners are scheduled to meet in New York and vote on whether to strip Sterling of the team.

The league said in a statement Tuesday that if the three-quarters of the 30 owners voted to sustain the



MARK J. TERRILL/AP

Donald Sterling, right, told the NBA he will not agree to allow his estranged wife, Shelly, left, to sell the team despite claims from Shelly Sterling's lawyers that a deal is in place for her to have the power to sell the franchise. A hearing has been set for June 3.

charge, "the Sterlings' interests in the Clippers will be terminated and the team will be sold."

Shelly Sterling submitted her own separate response to the NBA's charges Tuesday that included a "vigorous response to the attempt by the NBA to blame her for doing nothing wrong," according to a person with knowledge of

the proceedings. The individual wasn't authorized to speak publicly about the response.

In his response, Donald Sterling says that next week's hearing cannot be fair because the owners have already made up their minds, quoting 10 teams who commented on Twitter or elsewhere that they supported the seizure

of the team. An AP survey on the day Commissioner Adam Silver announced Sterling's lifetime ban found that more than half of the teams supported it and no owner was against it.

"These proceedings will be a spectacle meant to mollify the popular opinion, not a fair and impartial hearing. The outcome of these proceedings became a foregone conclusion weeks ago," the response states.

The response also notes the disparity between his lifetime ban and \$2.5 million fine and previous NBA punishments, including the \$100,000 fine levied on Kobe Bryant when he was caught referring to a referee by a homosexual slur, and the 72-game suspension of Ron Artest for punching a fan.

The NBA said Sterling is in violation because his racist comments were harmful to the league and its business partners, including the players. Sterling's response argues that because his comments came in the privacy of his girlfriend's living room he cannot be considered "taking a position" that damaged the NBA, as required under the league constitution.

# SPORTS



**Bringing the Thunder**  
Westbrook's 40 points help OKC even series | **NBA playoffs, Page 31**

**MLB**

## Perfect fit?

### Trade for Kinsler paying off so far for first-place Tigers

BY NOAH TRISTER  
*The Associated Press*

**I**n Kinsler says joining the Detroit Tigers has been a bit of a relief so far.

His team is in first place and he's among the league leaders in hitting — and that's about all he has to worry about when he shows up at the ballpark each day.

"I'm here to play baseball. I'm here to win. I'm here to help the team any way I can and perform," Kinsler said. "That's really it."

"I'm not worried about taking care of any young kids, or making sure dress code is met, or anything like that. Just here to play ball and help the team," he said.

Kinsler was sent to Detroit during the offseason in a blockbuster trade that moved Prince Fielder to Texas. And although Detroit made the deal with financial flexibility in mind, it also was getting an accomplished player.

Kinsler has certainly lived up to his end of the bargain to this point. The 31-year-old second baseman was hitting .322 through Tuesday night's game at Oakland.

Although Detroit has slumped recently, the Tigers lead the AL Central by a comfortable margin, and it looks like Kinsler has a shot to hit over .300 for only the second time in his career (.319 in 2008). He's been more than just a steady replacement at second base for Omar Infante, who left via free agency.

**SEE FIT ON PAGE 30**

Two months into his first season with Detroit, Ian Kinsler is hitting .322 through Tuesday, and the first-place Tigers have a five-game lead over the Chicago White Sox in the AL Central.

JULIAN H. GONZALEZ, DETROIT FREE PRESS/MCT



### By the numbers

**9**

Number of years Ian Kinsler played for Texas before being traded to Detroit.

**0**

Number of games Kinsler said he hoped Texas would win this season.

**32**

Kinsler's career high for home runs in a season, hit in 2011 with Texas.

SOURCES: Yahoo.com; The Associated Press

### Inside:

- Buehrle becomes first nine-game winner, Page 29
- Ethier helps push Dodgers past Reds, Page 29

Canadiens stave off elimination  
**NHL playoffs, Page 27**

US blanks Azerbaijan in friendly  
**Soccer, Page 25**

