

STARS AND STRIPES®

Volume 73, No. 76 © SS 2014 MIDEAST EDITION

FRIDAY, AUGUST 1, 2014

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Free to Deployed Areas

Inside

IRAQ

Outrage over razing of Mosul shrines sparks resistance to militants

Page 14



FACES

Chadwick Boseman takes on James Brown role in 'Get on Up'

Page 18



MILITARY

Kerry calls for unity between Afghanistan's presidential contenders

Page 4

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Prestige, pain come with SEC pipeline of underclassmen to NFL

Back page



ALEX BRANDON/AP

Nick Benson engraves the letter "S" on a wall of the American Veterans Disabled For Life Memorial in Washington. Benson's father designed the lettering for the memorial, which is scheduled to be dedicated in October.

The Associated Press

A WASHINGTON Army Lt. Dawn Halfaker was on patrol 10 years ago in Baqouba, Iraq, when a rocket-propelled grenade tore through her military vehicle and exploded inside.

When she woke up from a coma, the West Point graduate found out her right arm was gone and her career as a military officer was over at age 24. It's the kind of sacrifice millions of U.S. soldiers have made dating back to the American Revolution.

FOREVER CHANGED

Memorial honors sacrifice of America's disabled veterans

Veterans groups say there are as many as 4 million living today with the scars of war.

Now Halfaker will be among those pictured in a new memorial rising near the National Mall within view of the U.S. Capitol. The American Veterans Disabled For Life Memorial will be the first memorial in Washington dedicated to veterans who come home with life-changing injuries. It's a project 16 years in the making and is set to be dedicated Oct. 5.

SEE MEMORIAL ON PAGE 3

NATO general calls for action on new brands of threats

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

GAZIANTEP, Turkey — NATO's top military commander on Thursday said the alliance should redefine its core commitment to defend its members from external aggression by factoring in new and unconventional threats such as cyberwarfare and irregular militia operations. "We need to mature the way we

think about cyber, the way we think about irregular warfare, so that we can define in NATO what takes it over that limit by which we now have to react," Gen. Philip Breedlove, NATO supreme allied commander, said during a stop at a U.S. Patriot antimissile site in southern Turkey. For NATO, Article 5 of the alliance's founding treaty has long served as the bedrock of the 28-na-

tion pact, ensuring that an attack on one member demands a collective response from all. Its roots are in the Cold War when the threat was singular — overt military action from the Soviet Union. Now, Russia's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine and its involvement in eastern Ukraine show how threats in Europe have morphed, Breedlove said.

SEE THREATS ON PAGE 2



Breedlove

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“Words just don’t describe the degree to which their acts have brought discredit.”

— Police Commissioner Charles H. Ramsey, on corruption allegations a group of officers face in Philadelphia

See story on Page 11

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TODAY IN STRIPES

- American Roundup 19
- Business 20
- Comics 21
- Crossword 21
- Faces 18
- Faith 17
- Opinion 22-23
- Sports 24-32
- Weather 20

MILITARY

Threats: General says nations should change with times

FROM FRONT PAGE

Though Ukraine is not a NATO member state, Russia’s arming and backing of separatists there as a way to create instability must be factored into how NATO plans its responses in the future, said Breedlove, who also serves as head of the U.S. European Command. “We see Russian leadership in Ukraine,” Breedlove said. “Russian supplies, armament, financing, everything inside Ukraine. What does that mean as it relates to how we define Article 4 and Article 5? It is illustrative for us to look at this form of warfare we’re seeing from Russia and how we will react to it in the future.”

Article 4 of the NATO treaty allows members to ask for consultations on any issue it feels may affect security.

Breedlove’s comments come as NATO is preparing for a major summit in September, when heads of state will assemble in Wales with the aim of restructuring elements of the military alliance to better prepare for potential threats emanating out of Russia.

Russia denies that it has intervened in the conflict in Ukraine. Moscow has also dismissed as “ridiculous” allegations that it represents a threat to the security of any NATO country.

Still, a report from a British parliament defense committee, looking ahead of the NATO summit Britain is hosting, said NATO must take swift action to transform itself, especially in light of unconventional Russian tactics in Ukraine.

A crippling cyberattack in 2007 on Estonia — a NATO member once under Soviet domination — which was believed by Western officials to have been conducted by Russia, also raises questions about NATO’s capacity to respond to assaults even on its territory.

“A Russian unconventional attack, using asymmetric tactics (the latest term for this is “ambiguous warfare”), designed to slip below NATO’s response threshold, would be particularly difficult to counter,” the U.K. report stated. “And the challenges, which NATO faces in deterring, or mounting an adequate response to, such an attack poses a fundamental risk to NATO’s credibility.”

NATO must adapt to become more responsive to such threats, according to the report by Britain’s House of Commons Defence Committee, which recommends:



Michael Abrams/Stars and Stripes

Supreme Allied Commander Europe Air Force Gen. Philip Breedlove talks to the media Thursday after visiting a Patriot missile battery of the 5th Battalion, 7th Air Defense Artillery Regiment in Gaziantep, Turkey. He urged NATO to redefine its commitment to defend member states from aggression by adding new and unconventional threats such as cyberwarfare and irregular militia operations.

■NATO make dramatic improvements to the existing rapid reaction force.

■Pre-positioning equipment in the Baltic states.

■Maintaining a continuous presence of NATO troops to conduct training and exercises in the Baltics;

■Re-establishment of large-scale military exercises, including representatives from all NATO states.

NATO also must examine the circumstances in which the Article 5 mutual defense guarantee will be invoked in the face of asymmetric attack, the report stated.

In the past, many west European members of the alliance have been reluctant to station forces close to Russia’s borders, fearing that might antagonize Moscow.

Breedlove, who has spoken of the need for NATO to reorganize various headquarters and transform the NATO Response Force into a more rapidly deployable force, said NATO is reviewing a broad range of measures to deal with such shortcomings. Among the measures being looked at is forward positioned equipment closer to potential hot spots in the east and a more constant presence of NATO forces in the region.

What is not yet clear is how NATO will deploy forces in the east and whether those measures would be a permanent or a rotational presence. That is a matter for political leaders, Breedlove said.

“The most important thing is, we are going to work on measures that will make NATO more responsive,” Breedlove said.

“I believe this is a very important time here in Europe, perhaps the most critical since the end of the Cold War.”

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MILITARY

VA, immigration bills part of pre-break crush

By DONNA CASSATA
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Rushing toward the exits, Congress on Thursday scrambled to wrap up legislation addressing the troubled Veterans Affairs Department and a looming shortfall in highway money. House Republicans sought to win over reluctant tea party conservatives on a border security bill.

On the final day before a five-week summer break, Congress was leaving a long list of unfinished business after 18 months of bitter partisanship. Democrats cast Republicans as the obstacle; Republicans said President Barack Obama has been missing in action.

"We've not had a productive Congress," acknowledged Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev.

Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said Obama has chosen to raise money in Hollywood rather than work with Congress.

The institutional split of a Republican-led House and Demo-

For updates on Congress' work before the August recess, go to stripes.com

cratic-controlled Senate has added up to inaction, especially in a midterm election year with control of the Senate at stake.

House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, underscored the political divide, describing any attempt by Senate Democrats to add parts of a year-old comprehensive immigration bill to the border security measure as a "nutso scheme."

Lawmakers have struggled to compromise on a handful of bills to deal with the nation's pressing problems, sometimes having to negotiate within their own ranks.

In a last-minute push for votes for a \$659 million border bill, House Republican leaders sought to throw down the party hammer stirred by Texas Sen. Ted Cruz. The leaders scheduled a companion vote on legislation that would block Obama from extending deportation relief to any more immigrants living here illegally.

Rep. Hal Rogers, R-Ind., chairman of the Appropriations Com-

mittee, spoke of a need to turn back "the tide of illegal immigrants" and said the problem had been exacerbated by Obama administration policies.

White House officials have indicated plans to unilaterally expand that program, perhaps to millions more people, because of the House's failure to act this year on a comprehensive immigration overhaul bill passed by the Senate. Republicans warn that that would provoke a constitutional crisis, and a few conservatives have said it would be grounds for impeachment.

Boehner told reporters it would "seal a legacy of lawlessness."

The White House issued a statement assailing House Republicans for their inaction on comprehensive legislation and then willingness to target a program that "has benefited more than 500,000 young people who are Americans in every way except on paper."

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., complained of a "mess on the floor of the House" in its final days of work before the

recess. She said Republican leaders added the companion bill "to sweeten the pie" for immigration reform opponents and "intensely the harm for children."

The fast-moving developments would seem to ensure House passage of the border bill that would allow migrant youths to be sent home more quickly and would dispatch National Guard troops to the border, yet do nothing to change the overall stalemate in Congress over the border crisis in South Texas.

The Senate's version of the bill — a \$3.5 billion package that also includes money for Western wildfires and Israel — faces opposition from Republicans and some Democrats, who argue the measure amounts to a blank check for Obama with no policy changes.

That left no apparent path for a compromise bill to reach Obama's desk before Congress' recess, even as lawmakers in both parties said they wanted to act.

Congress is poised to send Obama legislation revamping the VA, with a Senate vote expected Thursday. Lawmakers also are

working on a path forward for highway and transit projects. The sweeping, \$16.3 billion VA bill would overhaul the scandal-plagued department after reports of patients dying while awaiting treatment and long delays in scheduling appointments.

The legislative effort came against the backdrop of a partisan House vote to sue Obama for unilateral changes in his signature health care law. Republicans accused him of shredding the Constitution, while Democrats described the vote as a veiled attempt at impeachment.

The near party-line vote on Wednesday was 225-201.

Determined to help Israel amid weeks of deadly fighting in Gaza with Hamas, the House and Senate also were expected to approve \$225 million for Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system that intercepts short-range rockets and mortars.

Support for Israel is strongly bipartisan in Congress. Immigration, on the other hand, causes sharp splits.

Memorial: Planners made sure tribute to disabled vets will be seen by lawmakers

FROM FRONT PAGE

Glass walls will carry inscriptions and photographs telling veterans' stories from different eras. Bronze silhouette sculptures will represent their service. A ceremonial flame will burn on the water's surface in a star-shaped fountain representing the five branches of military service, surrounded by a grove of trees. The idea was inspired by the camaraderie of soldiers' campfires and the flame as a symbol of renewal, designer Michael Vergason said.

"I think it will bring it home for visitors," Halfaker said. "I think it will give people a better understanding of how somebody's life is forever changed and really help them understand the sacrifice a little bit more. It's hard to explain to somebody what being in combat is like."

Halfaker created a consulting business after leaving the military and serves as chairwoman of the Wounded Warrior Project. The only thing she doesn't like about the memorial, she said, is the term disabled. She doesn't think of herself that way.

Construction has been underway for nearly a year, and the memorial plaza was taking shape. The Associated Press had a look at its progress. Workers have been installing black stone elements for a fountain and reflecting pool. A Rhode Island stone carver is working to hand-carve inscriptions from George Washington and Dwight Eisenhower in the site's marble Wall of Gratitude.

Those who planned the memorial near the Capitol wanted to ensure lawmakers and their staffs see the memorial each day "and realize there's a human cost when you send our troops into harm's way," said project executive W. Barry Owenby, who is also a veteran.

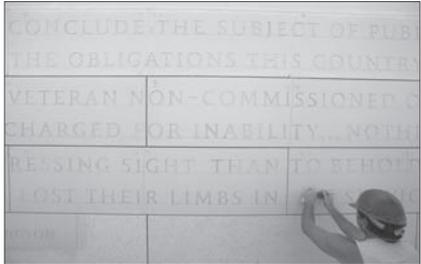
While controversies have arisen over other memorials honoring Eisenhower, Martin Luther King Jr. and World War II veterans, this project has not drawn the same scrutiny or criticism. It has gone through the same oversight reviews as any other memorial project.

"Who could take issue with honoring those who have given a life sacrifice?" said Arthur Wilson, a disabled Vietnam veteran and co-founder of the Disabled Veterans' Life Memorial Foundation that is building the memorial. "It's a reminder that needs to be there every day."

The project is even more timely now, he said, considering the revelations of health care problems in the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The idea began in 1998 with Florida philanthropist Lois Pope, former Veterans Affairs Secretary Jesse Brown and Wilson, and quickly gained support in Congress. By 2000, the authorizing legislation was signed by President Bill Clinton.

While some memorial projects rely on federal dollars, this memorial has been funded almost entirely with privately raised funds. Organizers raised about



\$80 million from more than 1 million donors. The Disabled American Veterans organization contributed about \$10 million. Pope and her foundation also contributed about \$10 million.

A federal grant of about \$6 million was secured to remove a road that crossed the site. The memorial will eventually be operated by the National Park Service. Once it's finished, Vergason,

the site's designer, said the fall will be a perfect time to visit. The memorial includes a grove of ginkgo trees that turn yellow in early November, just in time for Veterans Day.

Clockwise from top left: W. Barry Owenby, left; project executive for the American Veterans Disabled For Life Memorial, talks as he walks around the under-construction memorial, with the U.S. Capitol in the background, during a tour for The Associated Press on July 9; Andy Del Gallo, working with the John Stevens Shop, works on the stencil for an inscription of a quote by President George Washington to be sand-blasted into stone at the memorial, which is scheduled to be dedicated in October; Owenby at the center of activity at the memorial site.

PHOTOS BY ALEX BRANDON/AP

MILITARY

Kerry urges Afghan rivals to work in unity

By KAREN DEYOUNG
The Washington Post

Secretary of State John Kerry appealed to both candidates in Afghanistan's disputed presidential election to translate the broad power-sharing agreement they reached with him early this month into a working relationship they can carry into a new government, "whoever wins."

"The time for politics is over," Kerry wrote in an op-ed published online Wednesday by Afghanistan's TOLONews in English as well as in Dari and Pashto, the two official Afghan languages. "The time for cooperation is at hand," he wrote. "There is no time to waste."

Kerry's intervention came amid a crescendo of what a senior Obama administration official called "misinformation and

background noise" about the terms of the still-secret accord they reached in their July 12 emergency talks with him.

The agreement came after Afghanistan's elections board declared Ashraf Ghani the winner in the June vote to replace longtime President Hamid Karzai, and the declared loser, Abdullah Abdullah, cried fraud. To avoid a national meltdown, Kerry flew to Kabul and negotiated a deal to recount all 8 million ballots and establish a unity government.

The vote count was slow to get started, but is now underway. A parallel process to flesh out the unity agreement has been stalled while rumors fly among the two candidates' camps about its terms.

"What likely happened is that each campaign, each leader, promised all kinds of positions, jobs, to their constituents," said a

senior official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity about ongoing negotiations. "Whoever wins is not going to be able to dish out as many jobs as they had hoped, because of this unity government concept."

Responding to conflicting reports that the winning president will have little power over a new prime minister, or vice versa, Kerry wrote: "I was there in the room, and I can tell you what is not in that one-page document."

"It respects Afghan institutions and the role of the president as the head of government. It does not establish a parliamentary system," he said. "It creates a new position of chief executive who will report to the president until the president convenes a loya jirga to determine whether a permanent change is in the best interests of the country."

The loya jirga, or mass meeting of Afghan ethnic, tribal and political leaders, is to take place within two years.

"What the agreement does provide is a critical opportunity for both candidates to move beyond political competition to real statesmanship," Kerry wrote. "Every democracy reaches a decisive moment where the interests of the country must outweigh the interests of politicians. Afghanistan is at that critical point today."

The U.S. administration would like Ghani and Abdullah to "sign the document they agreed to, and publish that," the senior official said. "Then they need to put meat on the bones of that agreement" and "talk to their constituents about what this means and what it doesn't mean."



LISA TOURTELLO, COURTESY OF THE U.S. MARINES/The Washington Post

Marines familiarize themselves with the Kaman K1200, or "K-Max," unmanned helicopter during initial testing in Helmand province, Afghanistan, in 2012. The helicopter was used in Afghanistan for three years and is now back in the United States.

Lauded 'K-Max' ends Afghan tour

DAN LAMOTHE
The Washington Post

The Marines turned this spring to an awkward-looking helicopter with a needle nose to help perform a complicated mission: testing down bases in violent sections of Helmand province, Afghanistan, while Taliban insurgents launched repeated attacks on Afghan troops charged with maintaining security.

It was one of the "K-Max" helicopter drone's last major missions, as it turns out. Lockheed Martin and Kaman Aerospace Corp. announced Thursday that the revolutionary aircraft has returned to the United States following a three-year deployment.

The K-Max first deployed to Afghanistan in 2011, one year after the Navy Department awarded a \$45.8 million contract to the two companies to provide a pair of unmanned helicopters and three ground control stations.

The Navy Department wanted

the helos to try unmanned cargo resupply missions in a combat zone. Doing so, the logic went, would allow the Marines to cut back on the size and number of vehicle convoys needed over Afghanistan's treacherous, explosive-riddled roads.

The Marines eventually deployed a third K-Max. The experimental aircraft had its hiccup — one of the helicopters was destroyed in a crash in June 2013 — but generally the Marines raved about its utility and dependability.

The K-Max can lift about 6,000 pounds at sea level. Loads in Afghanistan's heat and higher elevations probably cut that back some, but the aircraft was still in heavy demand. It performed thousands of missions between late 2011 and now, carrying more than 4.5 million pounds of supplies, Lockheed officials said Thursday.

The K-Max already is getting a look for other missions. The U.S. Army plans to test it in coming

months at Fort Benning, Ga., in part to see how well it operates with a drone vehicle built by Lockheed and called the Squad Mission Support System, Aviation Today reported last week from the Farnborough Air Show in London. The idea is to show that unmanned equipment is capable of moving other unmanned equipment, potentially allowing U.S. troops to deliver the drone vehicle to U.S. troops in a war zone.

The K-Max also has been used in the United States to help squelch wildfires.

In a conference call with reporters Thursday, Marine Maj. Kyle O'Connor, who led the first K-Max detachment in Afghanistan, said the Marines were less concerned with the drone helos being hacked than with them getting hit by small-arms fire. To avoid that, they mostly flew it at night "using altitude as our friend," O'Connor said, according to Seapower magazine.

Commander cites RIMPAC benefits

By WILLIAM COLE
The Honolulu Star-Advertiser

Rim of the Pacific war games were wrapping up with dozens of ships heading back to Pearl Harbor on Wednesday and Thursday after spending several weeks at sea working on interoperability in an increasingly interconnected Asia-Pacific region.

Twenty-two nations, 49 surface ships, six submarines, more than 200 aircraft and 25,000 personnel participated in RIMPAC off Hawaii and Southern California.

"During RIMPAC we have benefited tremendously from working with (anti-submarine warfare) forces from Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, New Zealand and the Republic of Korea, each of whom brings unique skills and perspectives to the table," Rear Adm. Phil Sawyer, commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet submarine force at Pearl Harbor, said in a Navy news story.

"The ability to work in coalitions is a very big deterrent to those who would use undersea warfare for aggression," added Japan Maritime Self Defense Force liaison Lt. Cmdr. Tomoyuki Amanuma.

The combined skills honed during RIMPAC also can be used during disasters in the Pacific and stand in contrast to the threat to stability that nations such as North Korea continue to pose. North Korea is test-firing more missiles and other weapons than in the past, and over the weekend threatened nuclear strikes on the White House and Pentagon.

Adm. Samuel J. Locklear III, head of U.S. Pacific Command at Camp H.M. Smith, said Tuesday in a news conference at the Pentagon that "their (North Korea's) desire for nuclear missiles and nuclear capabilities, as we've said over and over again, is highly threatening to the global security environment."

There is "wide debate throughout the intelligence community about how much capability they

have, the ability to weaponize it, the ability to put it into warheads."

Denuclearization of North Korea "is an essential part of the way ahead in this part of the world," Locklear said.

China's first-ever participation in RIMPAC garnered accolades for the professionalism of the crews of the four warships that were invited and disdain for the uninvited spy ship that China also sent into the U.S. 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone, or EEZ, off Hawaii.

"The arrival of the surveillance ship was 'a little odd,' but it 'hasn't created any difficulties in the exercise,'" Locklear said.

"The good news about this is that it's a recognition, I think, or an acceptance by the Chinese of what we've been saying to them for some time — is that military operations and survey operations in another country's EEZs, where you have your own national security interest, are within international law and are acceptable," Locklear said.

China, by contrast, has sought to keep the U.S. Navy out of its EEZs.

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MILITARY

War College to make final decision on Walsh

HELENA, Mont. — The U.S. Army War College will have the final say over whether any punishment is warranted in a plagiarism investigation against Sen. John Walsh, D-Mont.

Spokeswoman Carol Kerr said Wednesday that the Department of Defense and U.S. Army Inspector General will be notified before the release of the findings, but the authority to take disciplinary action remains with the college.

Provost Lance Betros previously said the Defense Department has jurisdiction over the investigation because it involved a member of Congress, and the department would decide any sanctions.

The college asked for and received clarification about that jurisdiction after an Associated Press story reporting Betros' comments.

A New York Times story showed Walsh used others' work without attribution in a 2007 research paper.

The school's investigation begins Aug. 15.

Former sailor admits to pimping underage girl

A former Navy sailor who kept an underage HIV-positive girl in his barracks admitted in court Wednesday that he prostituted her in Virginia and in other states.

Jeffrey C. Wright, 25, pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court in Norfolk to crossing state lines for sex trafficking of a child. He faces up to five years in prison when he is sentenced in November.

Wright, who was discharged from the Navy in March, was arrested in April after local authorities caught him with a 17-year-old runaway. The girl, who had been living with foster parents in the region, is the former Honey B, Pink China and Naomi C.

They met online about a month after the girl was arrested in Georgia on a prostitution charge. Wright began prostituting her on backpage.com last fall, prosecutors said. He drove her to customers around the region, and in Maryland and North Carolina.

Wright remains in jail pending sentencing.

Afghan officials to restart vote audit

KABUL, Afghanistan — In the latest setback to the Afghan presidential election, officials said Thursday that they will resume an audit of millions of votes this weekend to resolve disputes between the presidential candidates over how to disqualify ballots amid allegations of massive fraud.

The recount is likely to take weeks, stalling an already much-delayed announcement of a new president to replace Hamid Karzai, the only leader the country has known since the 2001 U.S.-led invasion that ousted the Taliban.

Preliminary results from the June 14 runoff vote showed former Finance Minister Ashraf Ghani well ahead of his rival, former Foreign Minister Abdullah Abdullah, but both sides alleged fraud.

AF clarifies 2011 Afghan airport attack report

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Eight U.S. airmen and a contractor gunned down in 2011 by an Afghan officer at the Kabul Airport didn't die because of a lack of fighting spirit, the final Air Force investigation of the matter has concluded.

Additionally, an earlier Air Force report's conclusion that the gunman, Col. Ahmed Gul, had killed himself was incorrect, the report stated.

The investigation finished in May 2013 was first reported by the Air Force Times, which

obtained it Wednesday through a Freedom of Information Act Request.

The 2011 attack inside a training facility for the Afghan air force was the deadliest insider attack of the war. The rampage inside a supposedly secure facility helped focus intense attention on the challenges of keeping U.S. and allied troops safe as they worked closely with Afghan troops as advisers.

A 2011 investigation concluded Gul committed suicide after murdering his nine victims. But the

new report says he was killed by Afghan security forces, the Air Force Times reported.

"The evidence and witness statements indicate Col. Gul was most likely killed by the Afghan Quick Reaction Force," the final investigation stated.

The report also contradicts earlier suggestions that victims failed to fight back. Because of the way the attack played out, they had no chance to return fire, the investigator wrote.

"Secondly, I find that the evidence does not indicate that a

'lack of warrior ethos' accounts for why the eight American victims did not touch their weapons in response to Col. Gul opening fire," the report said.

There's no evidence that other Afghans present when Gul went on his rampage were involved, the report stated.

The investigation was ordered last year in response to unanswered questions stemming from the original investigation, as well as questions from Congress and the victims' families, the newspaper reported.

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MILITARY



DAVID COLEMAN/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

Petty Officer 2nd Class Christopher Younklin sorts mail aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS Ross. In November, servicemembers will be able to update their change of address online.

Servicemembers soon will use Web for new address

By JAMES KIMBER
Stars and Stripes

Servicemembers stationed overseas will soon see much of their forwarded mail arrive faster at their new duty station when they transfer. Military Postal Service Agency officials say.

By November, servicemembers moving back stateside or to another overseas location will be able to log in to USPS.com to change their address and can expect the U.S. Postal Service to immediately reroute mail.

While this service is standard in the States, it isn't yet available for APO and FPO addresses.

The new process conforms to services provided by the USPS since 2003.

Following a business study, MPS began standardizing APO-FPO address conversions to add overseas military addresses to the USPS National Change of Address database.

The standardized addresses allow the Postal Automated Redirection System to automate military mail forwarding domestically.

Under the current process, a transferred servicemember's mail goes to the post office serving their old duty station. Military post office employees then manually sort and redirect it to the new address.

"As it relates to the Internet Change of Address and Postal Automated Redirection System, we are automating the redirec-

tion process of first class military mail," James Clark, chief of the agency's operations division, said in a July 24 statement. "It will improve transit times. It would save costs in both transportation and labor overseas, and improve overall services."

The MPESA estimates savings of \$4 million annually.

"The annual cost avoidance throughout DOD is related to reduced man-hours and mail volumes associated with manual redirection of First Class Mail," Clark said in an email to Stars and Stripes. "We don't see opportunities to reduce manning or actual employees since other mail classes are not currently affected by this service improvement."

Clark noted that despite the reduction in manual redirect mail volumes, the function still exists for all non-first class mail categories.

Just as their stateside counterparts, overseas servicemembers can expect a one-time \$1 per filing fee for submitting an Internet change of address.

"It is important to us that we stay in lockstep with USPS as they develop their technologies and service improvements," Clark said. "We want equitable service for our servicemembers and their families overseas, because they deserve it."

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Setting record straight on VA health care changes

By TOM PHILPOTT

Veterans reading only headlines, hearing only sound bites, might have a few misconceptions about how Congress and the VA plan to use non-VA health care providers to ensure more timely and convenient access to care.

A magical sounding item called a "Veteran's Choice Card," for example, won't be a limitless credit card given qualified veterans to cover whatever health services they receive from whatever physician they use.

And veterans not already enrolled in VA health care won't gain accelerated access to outside care as promised by the legislation — unless they serve in areas of combat operations within five years of enrollment.

The centerpiece of the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of (HR 3230) is a special \$3 billion Veterans' Choice Fund. Over the next three years, VA is to use the fund as needed to buy care from non-VA care providers for veterans if they face long waits for VA care — defined initially as more than 30 days — or if they reside more than 40 miles from VA care.

The intent is to eliminate VA patient wait lists that some VA health administrators and staff conspired to hide in recent years, thus compromising the integrity of performance reports and putting patients' health at risk.

VA leaders and veteran service organizations prefer to attack wait times through improved resourcing. They want VA spending raised to meet actual patient demand from wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, from the expansion of diseases presumed caused by defoliants used in Vietnam, and from higher costs of caring for aging veterans.

So HR 3230 also authorizes VA to spend \$5 billion more to expand its own capacity to deliver care, by hiring more medical and support staff and also building and leasing more space.

House-Senate conferees, in shaping the final bill, categorized the Choice Fund as emergency money to deliver care by getting added to the nation's debt but not to VA budgets. The \$5 billion for more VA-delivered care is to be paid through cuts elsewhere in VA, including executive bonuses and by deferring planned rate cuts for some types of VA home loans.

The legislation mandates use of a new Veteran's Choice Card but it isn't a golden key to private

MILITARY UPDATE

sector care. It will be more like an informational insurance card to be presented to non-VA health care providers to identify the veteran and to verify eligibility for episodes of care that, sometime earlier, were arranged through and approved by a VA care coordinator.

The administrative challenges ahead for VA in coordinating a vast expansion of private sector care, monitoring outside care quality and integrating those medical records back into VA health care will be profound. But the bill is said to set aside only \$300 million for these added tasks.

Indeed, in reviewing the new law's requirements, VA officials are weighing whether current Veteran Identification Cards, which are issued when veterans enroll in VA health care, might be modified to serve as the "choice card" that the new law mandates.

Other details in the reform package will disappoint reformers who seek to fully "privatize" VA care. The bill is a series of compromises between near-term action to address the patient wait-time scandal and steps to shore up the integrated VA health care system so prized by many veterans.

Here's more on how non-VA care will grow:

ELIGIBILITY: The hurdles to gain easy access to non-VA care go beyond how far veterans reside from a VA clinic or how long their wait for care. To be eligible, veterans must have enrolled in VA health care by Aug. 1, 2014, or, if they enroll later, they must have served on active duty in a theater of combat operations within five years of enrolling.

These fiscal conservatives cost concerns first surfaced last after the Congressional Budget Office projected that up to 2 million more veterans would drop current health insurance and enroll with VA if given the chance to use current doctors and have VA foot the bill.

NO FIRMS 30-DAY GOAL: Architects of HR 3230, Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., and Rep. Jeff Miller, R-Fla., would like non-VA care offered to any vet who can't get a VA appointment within 30 days. But their legislation allows VA to set a different wait-time goal if

The Congressional Budget Office was recalibrating the bill's cost a press time. For the latest figures, go to stripes.com

they can defend it. What VA finally decides will be part of interim rules for implementing the law, to be published within 90 days of President Barack Obama signing the bill into law.

The bill would require that if VA can't offer a timely appointment then it must inform the veteran electronically or, if the veteran chooses, by mail, and explain that outside care is authorized. Last year, VA spent \$4.8 billion on non-VA health care but half of that involved emergency services.

40 MILES AS CROW FLIES: Veterans who reside more than 40 miles from a VA medical facility or who must travel by air, boat or ferry to access VA care are to be offered non-VA care instead. VA is to use "geodesic distance" or the shortest route between two points on Earth, or, if you like, "as the crow flies." VA's early estimate is that 500,000 vets will qualify.

However, House-Senate conferees in their explanatory report on HR 3230, say they do not intend the 40-mile criteria "to preclude veterans who reside closer" to a VA facility "from accessing care through non-VA providers, particularly if the VA facility ... provides limited services." So VA will have to clarify in regulation what 40 miles really means.

CHOICE OF PROVIDER: Not all veterans who become eligible for non-VA care will get to choose their outside provider, and not every non-VA care provider will opt to treat veterans through the VA coordinated care program, even if the vets are existing patients. One issue for physicians will be the level of reimbursement and another the timeliness of VA payments.

VA has existing contracts with individual physicians and with pools of private sector providers. Many more such arrangements are expected. But VA cannot pay rates higher than Medicare allows, with exceptions possible if care is delivered in very rural areas.

Timeliness of VA payments to non-VA care providers has been a significant concern for years. The reform bill has language urging VA officials to improve their payment procedures.

Send comments to Military Update, P.O. Box 231111, Arlington, Va. 20120, email mlupdate@stripes.com

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PACIFIC

Japanese racing to help find US remains

By CHRIS CAROLA
The Associated Press

SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y. — Racing against time, members of a Japanese organization are combing a New York military museum's World War II records for information they hope will lead to the graves of American servicemen still listed as missing in action on Saipan.

The reason for the urgency: A developer plans to begin construction in the fall on a condominium near the beach where scores of Americans were killed on July 7, 1944, during Japan's largest mass suicide attack of the war.

Kuentai-Japan, a nonprofit group that searches Pacific islands for Japan's war dead, found the remains of at least two American fighting men near the construction site in 2011 and 2013, and believes as many as 16 others are buried nearby. In April, Kuentai-Japan formed a sister organization, Kuentai-USA.

"This is urgent," said Kuentai founder Usan Kurata, 58, a journalist who is visiting the New York State Military Museum this week with another group leader, both from Kyoto. He said the Japanese organization believes that returning Americans' remains to their

families is the right thing to do.

The Pentagon agency in charge of searching foreign battlefields for America's dead says about 20 U.S. servicemen are unaccounted for on Saipan, part of the Northern Mariana Islands, a U.S. commonwealth 1,400 miles from Japan.

Maj. Jamie Dobson, a spokeswoman for the Hawaii-based U.S. Joint POW-MIA Accounting Command, said developers must follow Saipan's stringent historic preservation laws and if a probable burial site is found to be in imminent danger, the U.S. will send a recovery team.

Kuentai said it has an agreement with the Russian developer of the condo project to excavate the property for remains, but the group is still awaiting final approval from local officials.

The researchers' visit to the U.S. comes 70 years after more than 3,000 Japanese troops launched the assault that killed or wounded more than 900 soldiers in the Army's 105th Regiment, part of the 27th Infantry Division, a former New York National Guard unit.

Many of the Americans killed in the "banzai" attack were from New York state. The museum holds many of the 27th Division's

records, including enlistment cards, rosters, regimental yearbooks, photographs and other documents.

Using battlefield photos published in Life magazine in August 1944 and military maps at the National Archives in Washington, Kuentai located a mass grave containing the skeletal remains of nearly 800 Japanese troops. The bones were cremated and the ashes brought back to Japan for burial.

During its excavations, the group also discovered the remains of five probable American soldiers. JPAC said two have been identified so far as MIAs from the 105th Regiment, and they were returned for burial in their home states of Kentucky and Pennsylvania.

JPAC and the Defense Department's other casualty accounting agency, the Defense POW-MIA Office, are the subject of a Pentagon inspector general's investigation of potential fraud and waste.

In March, after The Associated Press reported the failings of the military's MIA accounting effort, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel announced a shake-up that includes combining the functions of the two entities into a new agency.



Mike Groll/AP

Yukari Akatsuka, left, and Usan Kurata, of Kuentai-USA, look at World War II photographs of Saipan at the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., on July 23. They are looking for information they hope will lead them to the burial places of U.S. MIAs killed during a bloody attack on Saipan on July 7, 1944.

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NATION



The HealthCare.gov website is seen in Washington on March 1.

GAO probe exposes flaws behind rollout of HealthCare.gov

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Management failures by the Obama administration set the stage for computer woes that paralyzed the president's new health care program last fall, nonpartisan investigators said in a report released Wednesday.

While the administration was publicly assuring consumers that they would soon have seamless on-line access to health insurance, a chaotic procurement process was about to deliver a stumbling start. After a months-long investigation, the Government Accountability Office found that the administration lacked "effective planning or oversight practices" for the development of HealthCare.gov, the portal for millions of uninsured Americans.

As a result the government incurred "significant cost increases, schedule slips and delayed system functionality," William Woods, a GAO contracting expert, said in testimony prepared for a hearing Thursday by the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

Spokesman Aaron Albright said the administration takes its responsibility for contract oversight seriously and has already started carrying out improvements that go beyond GAO's recommendations. The investigators recommended a cost-control plan and other changes to establish clear procedures and improve oversight.

But Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, one of the lawmakers who requested the investigation, said, "Millions of taxpayer dollars were wasted to build a website that didn't work, all because of bureaucratic incompetence."

Investigators found that the administration kept changing the contractors' marching orders for the HealthCare.gov website, creating widespread confusion and adding tens of millions of dollars in costs. Changes were ordered seemingly willy-nilly, including 40 times when government officials did not have the initial authority to make additional requests. The report faults the Centers for

'Millions of taxpayer dollars were wasted to build a website that didn't work, all because of bureaucratic incompetence.'

Sen. Orrin Hatch
R-Utah

Medicare and Medicaid Service for ineffective oversight. Known as CMS, the agency is part of the Health and Human Services Department and was designated to administer Obama's health care law.

The GAO concluded:

■ Contractors were not given a coherent plan, and instead jumped around from issue to issue.

■ The cost of a glitchy computerized sign-up system for consumers ballooned from \$56 million to more than \$209 million from September 2011 to February 2013. The cost of the electronic backroom for verifying applicants' information jumped from \$3 million to almost \$85 million.

■ CMS, representing the administration, failed to follow up on how well the contractors performed.

■ A third contract, for fixes to the website, grew from \$91 million in January to \$175 million as of last month.

The consumer end of the system locked up the day it was launched, Oct. 1, and was down most of that initial month. The electronic back office had fewer problems.

A few months before the launch, the CMS agency notified CGI it was so dissatisfied that it would start withholding payments. Then it rescinded that decision.

CMS ultimately paid nearly all of CGI's \$12.5 million in fees, withholding only \$267,000, the report said. The agency later ended its contract with CGI. Another contractor, Accenture, was brought in to make website fixes.

Ex-IRS official's email: some in GOP 'crazies'

By STEPHEN OHELMACHER
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congressional investigators say this is why they want all of Lois Lerner's emails.

Newly released emails show the former IRS official referring to some right-wing Republicans as "crazies" and more, a revelation that is fueling GOP claims of a political conspiracy at the tax agency to target conservative groups.

Lerner headed the IRS division that handles applications for tax-exempt status. In a series of emails with an associate in November 2012, Lerner made two disparaging remarks about some members of the GOP, including one remark that was vulgar.

Rep. Dave Camp, who chairs the House Ways and Means Committee, released the emails Wednesday as part of his committee's investigation. The Michigan Republican says the emails show Lerner's "disgust with conservatives."

In one email, Lerner called some conservatives crazies. In the other, she called them a harsher term.

Lerner retired from the IRS last fall. Lerner's lawyer, William W. Taylor III, did not respond to a request for comment. His office said he was traveling.

Congress and the Justice Department are investigating whether the IRS improperly scrutinized applications for tax-exempt status from conservative groups during the 2010 and 2012 elections.

In June, the IRS told Congress that an untold number of Lerner's emails were lost when her computer hard drive crashed in 2011. The revelation set off a new round of hearings on Capitol Hill, as well as a new push by Republicans for a special prosecutor to investigate.

The Obama administration is resisting calls for a special prosecutor, noting the numerous on-going investigations. Both the Justice Department and the IRS inspector general are investigating the lost emails as part of wider probes.

Despite the lost emails, the IRS says it is providing congressional investigators with 67,000 emails to and from Lerner.

In the newly released emails, Lerner apparently was traveling in Britain in November 2012 when she used her BlackBerry to send a series of emails to a personal associate who did not work at the IRS.

Camp said Lerner was using her government e-mail account. Lerner told the person that she overheard some women say America was bankrupt and "going down the tubes."

"Well, you should hear the

whacko wing of the GOP," replied the person, whose name was blacked out by Camp's office. "The US is through; too many foreigners sucking the teat; time to hunker down, buy ammo and food, and prepare for the end. The right wing radio shows are scary to listen to."

Lerner replies: "Great. Maybe we are through if there are that many assholes."

The other person replies: "And I'm talking about the hosts of the shows. The callers are rabid."

Lerner: "So we don't need to worry about alien terrorists (sic). It's our own crazies that will take us down."

In a letter to Attorney General Eric Holder, Camp said, "This email shows that Ms. Lerner's mistreatment of conservative groups was driven by her personal hostility toward conservatives."

Lerner has been served as a central figure in several congressional investigations into the tax agency's handling of applications for tax-exempt status by tea party and other conservative groups.

Twice Lerner refused to answer questions at congressional hearings, invoking her constitutional right against self-incrimination.

In May, the House voted to hold her in contempt of Congress.

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NATION

9/11 report: 'No American is proud' of CIA tactics

By Ken Dilanian
and Eileen Sullivan
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The State Department has endorsed the broad conclusions of a harshly critical Senate report on the CIA's interrogation and detention practices after the 9/11 attacks, a report that accuses the agency of brutally treating terrorism suspects and misleading Congress, according to a White House document.

"This report tells a story of which no American is proud," says the four-page White House document, which contains the State Department's preliminary proposed talking points in response to the classified Senate report, a summary of which is expected to be released in the coming weeks.

"But it is also part of another story of which we can be proud," adds the document, which was circulating this week among White House officials and which the White House accidentally emailed to an As-

"[I]t leaves no doubt that the methods used to extract information from some terrorist suspects caused profound pain, suffering and humiliation. It also leaves no doubt that the harm caused by the use of these techniques outweighed any potential benefit."

State Department
response to Senate report on the CIA's interrogation and detention practices post-9/11

sociated Press reporter. "America's democratic system worked just as it was designed to work in bringing an end to actions inconsistent with our democratic values."

It's not clear who wrote the document or how influential it will be in tailoring the Obama administration's ultimate response to an investigation that has been the subject of bitter disputes. It is common practice for the White House to solicit talking points from key agencies involved in responding to a major news event, which the release of the Senate report will be.

The Senate report concludes that CIA's techniques on al-Qaida detainees captured after the 2001 attacks were far more brutal than previously understood. The tactics failed to produce life-saving intelligence, the report asserts, and the CIA misled Congress and the Justice Department about the interrogation program.

Current and former CIA officials hotly dispute those findings, as do some Senate Republicans. The fight over the report has poisoned the relationship between the CIA and Democrats on the Senate Intelligence

Committee, and left the White House in a delicate position. President Barack Obama has branded some CIA techniques torture and ordered them stopped, but he also relies heavily on the spy agency, which still employs hundreds of people who were involved in some way in the interrogation program.

The report does not draw the legal conclusion that the CIA's actions constituted torture, though it makes clear that in some cases they amounted to torture by a common definition, two people who have read the report said. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the still-classified document publicly by name.

The Senate report, the State Department proposes to say, "leaves no doubt that the methods used to extract information from some terrorist suspects caused profound pain, suffering and humiliation. It also leaves no doubt that the harm caused by the use of these techniques outweighed any potential benefit."

Poll: Obama get low marks on Gaza conflict dealings

By Scott Clement
and Peyton Craighill
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama gets mediocre marks for his handling of international conflicts flaring up this summer, according to a new Washington Post-ABC News poll. Yet another overseas crisis has emerged as a headache: the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

When it comes to how Obama has dealt with the increasing tensions in Gaza, the survey shows, 39 percent approve and 52 percent disapprove, with one-third disapproving "strongly."

The negative marks come as Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry urged an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, where Israeli airstrikes followed by a ground invasion have pummeled Hamas militants but also killed hundreds of civilians. The push to rein in Israel is risky for the Obama administration, given the United States' long-standing alliance with Israel — support that was confirmed in a separate Pew Research Center survey released Monday that found that more people blame Hamas for the current violence.

The reason Obama is weak on the Israeli-Palestinian issue: Subpar support in his party and among younger people — a key Democratic Party constituency in recent years. Sixty-five percent of Democrats approve of the president's efforts, far lower than the 77 percent who approve of his foreign policy overall. Likewise, although respondents ages 18 to 39 split evenly on Obama's general handling of foreign policy (47 percent apiece), this age group disapproves of his efforts

in the Middle East by a 21-point margin, 54 to 33. Separate surveys from the Pew Research Center and Gallup have found that younger Americans are significantly more skeptical of Israel's actions than are older Americans.

Even as Obama struggles with yet another overseas issue, though, his overall approval rating on foreign affairs has recovered somewhat. The Post-ABC poll finds that 46 percent approve of his handling of international affairs. That's up from 41 percent approval in June and better than his overall job ratings in other public surveys. An additional 50 percent disapprove — a number that is unchanged in the past month (accounting for the difference in approval: Fewer in the new survey volunteered "no opinion").

As with many things, though, Obama's detractors are more passionate than his supporters. More than twice as many "strongly" disapprove as "strongly" approve of his performance — 36 percent to 16 percent. The poll was conducted July 23-27 among a random national sample of 1,026 adults reached on conventional and cellular phones; overall results have a margin of sampling error of 3.5 percentage points.

Obama also receives narrowly positive marks — 46 percent approval and 43 percent disapproval — for his handling of the controversy surrounding Malaysia Airlines Flight 17, which was shot down over Ukraine. Last week, the Obama administration released satellite images and other sensitive intelligence that it said demonstrated Russian complicity in downing the airliner.

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NATION

6 Philly cops charged with robbery, extortion

The Philadelphia Inquirer

PHILADELPHIA — Stories of shakedown, brutality, kidnapping and theft have dogged a group of the city's Narcotics Field Unit officers for nearly a decade. But despite multiple investigations, cases against them never stuck.

That changed Wednesday, as federal prosecutors unveiled a sprawling racketeering conspiracy case against six of the unit's former members. The charges paint them as rogue cops running roughshod over the rights of their targets, confident that few

would believe anyone who dared complain.

As the years went on, the 26-count indictment against them suggests, Officers Thomas Li-ciardello, Brian Reynolds, Michael Spicer, Perry Betts, Lindwood Norman and John Speiser only became more brazen.

Between February 2006 and November 2012, the document states, they stole more than \$300,000 in cash, drugs and personal property — all while using extreme force and falsifying police reports to downplay their takes.

Targets who resisted, prosecu-

tors say, were dangled over balconies, threatened with the seizure of their homes, held in dank hotel rooms for days or brutally beaten as the officers kept score on who could inflict the most debilitating injuries.

Speaking at a news conference Wednesday, Police Commissioner Charles H. Ramsey described the allegations as "one of the worst cases of corruption I have ever heard."

"Words just don't describe the degree to which their acts have brought discredit," he said. He blamed the city's contract with its officers for his inability to trans-

fer the six years earlier despite suspicions that emerged as early as 2005.

Their arrests, during pre-dawn raids Wednesday, now threaten to throw dozens of their past cases into doubt and reopen a pipeline of civil rights lawsuits from suspects they arrested that has already cost the city at least \$777,000.

The District Attorney's office has sought the dismissal of hundreds of cases so far tied to the six indicted officers.

"Our clients have been waiting for this day for some time now," said Jonathan James, a civil

rights lawyer who represents clients in dozens of suits against the men. "They look forward to the day when these officers are punished by the very law they hid behind in their efforts to illegally charge our clients."

Lawyers for the six officers denied the allegations against their clients at an initial appearance in federal court Wednesday. All of the officers entered not guilty pleas to charges including racketeering conspiracy, civil rights violations, robbery and extortion and were ordered held without bond pending a hearing scheduled for Monday.

Liability murky in UCLA pipe break

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Hundreds of cars submerged below murky water. A landmark basketball court, newly refurbished, showing signs of buckling. Soaked and stained carpets. An athletic track coated in mud.

The cost of the damage hasn't been pegged from the rupture of a pipeline that spewed more than 20 million gallons of water, but officials Wednesday were beginning to assess its soggy aftermath at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Rich Mylin, associate director of events and facilities, led a tour of damaged areas for Los Angeles Department of Water and Power workers in hard hats. UCLA officials said six facilities were damaged and about 960 vehicles remained trapped in garages, with many below water level behind by the rilled flood.

DWP spokesman Joe Ramallo said people who suffered damage from the flooding can file claims

with the agency, which will work with UCLA on settling losses.

If a claim ends up in court, a plaintiff would have to show negligence on the part of the agency to establish liability, said Loyola Law School law professor John Nockleby. For example, if someone could show the aging steel pipe should have been replaced long ago "that could be an indicator something should have been done about it."

The 30-inch steel main that burst Tuesday was still gushing 1,000 gallons a minute Wednesday before it was shut off completely in the evening. Repairs were expected to take until Friday night or Saturday morning.

At its peak, water was streaming out of the break at a rate of 75,000 gallons a minute. The amount of water spilled could serve more than 100,000 Los Angeles Department of Water and Power customers for a day.



J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP

Anna, center, a survivor of sexual assault, with her mother, Susan, right, joins Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., on Capitol Hill on Wednesday to discuss the Campus Accountability and Safety Act.

Bill requires colleges to do more for sex assault victims

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Colleges and universities could be more accountable to rape victims under legislation introduced Wednesday by a bipartisan group of senators.

Sens. Claire McCaskill, D-Mo., and Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., led the effort, with lawmakers from both parties saying they have heard too many stories of campus assault and hanged cases. More than a half-dozen senators stood with campus sexual assault victims on Capitol Hill as they announced the legislation.

At least two senators — Dean Heller, R-Nev., and Mark Warner, D-Va. — said that as fathers of college-age daughters, they want campuses to track the problem more effectively.

"Sometimes a victim is treated worse than the person who committed the crime," said Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa.

The action on Capitol Hill further escalates the dialogue in Washington on an issue long handled locally. Earlier this year, a White House task force on campus sexual assault recommended a series of actions schools should take, and the Education Department took the unprecedented step of releasing the names of schools facing federal investigation under Title IX for the way they handle sexual abuse allegations.

This bill would require campuses to designate advocates who would confidentially discuss available options with victims and to develop an agreement with local law enforcement over how

such cases are handled. It would also increase penalties for universities that did not comply.

To encourage victims to come forward, the bill stipulates that schools will no longer be allowed to sanction a student who reveals a violation, such as underage drinking, in "good faith." It also would require schools to use one uniform process for campus disciplinary proceedings.

Terry Hartle, senior vice president at the American Council on Education, said the bill has some good ideas, such as defining a confidential victim's advocate. But he said it takes a pretty heavy-handed approach and potentially adds more intervention to already confusing and overlapping federal laws that govern the way schools should handle such cases.



BRIAN MELLEY/AP

A worker adjusts a championship banner drying in the corridor leading to the basketball court in Pauley Pavilion at UCLA in Los Angeles on Wednesday after a pipe burst Tuesday near the campus.

Ruling upholds Wis. law on collective bargaining

MADISON, Wis. — The Wisconsin Supreme Court on Thursday upheld the 2011 law that effectively ended collective bargaining for most public workers,

sparked massive protests and led to Republican Gov. Scott Walker's recall election and rise to national prominence.

The 5-2 ruling upholds the signature policy achievement of Walker in its entirety and is a major victory for the potential 2016 GOP presidential candidate,

who is seeking re-election this year. The ruling also marks the end of the three-year legal fight over the union rights law, which prohibits public worker unions from collectively bargaining for anything beyond base wage increases based on inflation.

The Associated Press

WORLD

Pentagon releases weapons to Israel

By JON HARPER
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — In a rare move, the Pentagon criticized the Israeli military Thursday, while proceeding to give its ally more ammunition as it presses its fight against Palestinian militants.

"The civilian casualties in Gaza have been too high," Defense Department spokesman Col. Steve Warren told reporters. "And it's become clear that the Israelis need to do more to live up to their very high standards ... for protecting civilian life."

Warren's comments came a day after the White House and State Department issued similar criticism for the Israeli Defense Forces to take greater precautions.

More than 1,300 Palestinians are believed to have been killed since Israel launched its latest military operation against the militant Islamist Hamas, which weeks ago in response to missile fire from Gaza. More than 70 percent of those killed have been civilians, according to United Nations estimates.

On Wednesday, Israeli artillery hit a Gaza school being used as a shelter by thousands of Palestinians. At least 16 died in the attack, including women and children, according to the U.N.

The Israeli government has insisted that it is trying to avoid civilian casualties, while accusing Hamas of using civilians as human shields.

Dozens of Israeli soldiers have also been killed in the ongoing fighting.

On Wednesday, the Pentagon announced that it was resupplying munitions to the Israeli Defense Forces at Tel Aviv's request.

The Israeli Defense Ministry requested the munitions July 20, and the U.S. government approved the request July 23.

Warren said 120mm tank rounds and 40mm illumination rounds are being transferred from a special war reserve stockpile in Israel. The munitions have been stored there for a few years, according to a statement by Pentagon Press Secretary Rear Adm. John Kirby.

"Issuing munitions from the WRS-I stockpile was strictly a sourcing decision and White House approval was not required," he said.

The value of the overall stockpile is about \$1 billion, according to Warren. He would not disclose all the types of munitions that are stored there, and he declined to discuss other Israeli ammunition requests until they are approved.

The United States has been Israel's close military ally for decades and provides billions of dollars' worth of foreign military sales to Tel Aviv each year. The U.S. helped fund Israeli's Iron Dome missile defense system, which Israeli Defense Forces have been using to shoot down Hamas rockets launched from Gaza.

Warren was asked why the Pentagon was providing ammunition to the Israeli military while criticizing it for inflicting too many civilian casualties and calling for a cease-fire.

"This is part of our ongoing and our long-standing cooperative defense agreement with the Israelis. When they request to purchase ammunition or munitions, we sell it to them," he said.

In his statement Wednesday, Kirby said, "The United States is committed to the security of Israel, and it is vital to U.S. national interests to assist Israel to develop and maintain a strong and ready self-defense capability. This defense sale is consistent with those objectives."

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ADEL HANA/AP

A man passes a van after two people were killed in it during an Israeli airstrike in Gaza City on Thursday.

Israel vows to destroy Hamas tunnel network

By PETER ENAV
AND IBRAHIM BAZEK

The Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Thursday that Israel will destroy the Hamas tunnel network in the Gaza Strip "with or without a cease-fire," as the military called up another 16,000 reservists to pursue its campaign in the densely populated territory.

Netanyahu's vow came as international efforts to end the 23-day-old conflict seemed to sputter despite concern over the mounting death toll, with more than 1,300 Palestinians, mostly civilians, and more than 50 Israelis, almost all of them soldiers, killed since July 8.

"We have neutralized dozens of terror tunnels and we are committed to complete this mission, with or without a cease-fire," Netanyahu said. "Therefore I will not agree to any offer that does not allow the military to complete this important mission for the security of the people of Israel."

An initial Israeli aerial campaign against Hamas was widened into a ground offensive on July 17. Since then the campaign has concentrated on destroying more than 30 cross-border tunnels that militants have constructed to carry out attacks on Israeli territory.

Israel says that most of the 32 tunnels it has uncovered have now been demolished and that getting rid of the remainder will take no more than a few days.

The new reserve call-up follows another day of heavy fighting, in which tank shells struck a U.N. school where Palestinians were sheltering and an airstrike



MAJED HANIDAN/AP

Smoke rises after an Israeli strike in Gaza City on Thursday.

through a crowded Gaza shopping area. At least 116 Palestinians and three Israeli soldiers were killed Wednesday.

Speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not permitted to discuss the matter with the press, an Israeli defense official said the purpose of the latest call-up was to provide relief for troops currently on the Gaza firing line. However, Israeli officials have also said they do not rule out broadening operations in the coming days.

Fifty-six Israeli soldiers and three civilians on the Israeli side have been killed since the offensive began, as Palestinians have fired hundreds of rockets at Israel — some reaching major cities — and carried out attacks through tunnels beneath the heavily guarded frontier.

Israel has called up a total of 86,000 reserves during the Gaza war, which it launched to try to end rocket fire from Hamas and

other armed groups. Thursday marked a third day of particularly heavy Israeli air and artillery attacks, at a time when Egyptian cease-fire efforts appeared to have stalled. Israeli media said late Wednesday that Israel's Security Cabinet decided to press forward with the operation.

Egyptian officials, meanwhile, met with an Israeli envoy about Israel's conditions for a cease-fire, including disarming Hamas, according to a high-ranking Egyptian security official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not allowed to discuss the delicate diplomatic efforts.

Hamas has said it will halt fire only after it receives guarantees that a Gaza border blockade by Israel and Egypt — tightened after the Islamic militant group seized power in Gaza in 2007 — will be lifted.

Palestinians considering war crime charges against Israel

The Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip — Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas is seeking virtual pledges of support from all political factions, including rival Hamas, before making any attempt to press for possible war crimes charges against Israel, senior officials said Thursday.

Abbas hesitated in the past because such a step would transform his relations with Israel from tense to openly hostile and could put him on a collision course with the United States.

But with nearly 1,400 Palestinians killed in Israel-Hamas fighting in Gaza in the past 24 days, according to health officials, Abbas is under growing domestic pressure to turn to the International Criminal Court to try to make a case against Israel.

Israeli officials have said Israel is acting in self-defense by target-

ing Hamas' military arsenal and rocket-launching sites and have accused Hamas of using Gaza civilians as human shields.

Earlier Thursday, the U.N.'s top human rights official accused both Israel and Hamas of committing war crimes in the current Gaza fighting.

U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay said Hamas is committing war crimes by firing rockets from heavily populated areas and storing them in schools and hospitals.

She said Israel has defied international law in Gaza by attacking civilian areas with schools, hospitals, homes and U.N. facilities.

"None of this appears to me to be accidental," Pillay said of Israel at a news conference in Geneva to mark the end of her six-year term. "They appear to be defying deliberate defiance of — obligations that international law imposes on Israel."

WORLD



DMITRY LOVETSKY/AP

Soldiers from the Ukrainian army rest near their tank at a checkpoint in the village of Debal'tsevo, Donetsk region, eastern Ukraine, on Thursday.

Investigators reach site of Ukraine plane crash

By MYSYSLAV CHERNOV
The Associated Press

ROZYSYPNE, Ukraine — As fighting continued to rage in eastern Ukraine, an international team of investigators on Thursday managed to reach the crash site of the Malaysia Airline Flight 17 for the first time since it was brought down by a missile two weeks ago.

Clashes along routes to the wreckage site between government troops and pro-Russia separatist rebels had kept the delegation from reaching the area to retrieve bodies that have been lying in open fields.

The investigators were allowed through a checkpoint leading to the crash site at the village of Rozysypne early Thursday afternoon by a rifle-toting militiaman who then fired a warning shot to prevent reporters from accompanying the convoy.

The militiaman, who gave his name only as Serget, told Associated Press journalists that fighting was still ongoing in Rozysypne.

The team of police and forensic experts, which comprises members from the Netherlands and Australia, are expected to initially focus their efforts on retrieving bodies still on the site and collecting victims' belongings.

Security for investigators has been a major concern as the Ukrainian army continues in its offensive to take back swathes of territory from the rebels.

National security spokesman Andriy Lysenko said a "day of quiet" was declared Thursday in response to a call for a cease-fire from UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

Ukraine has created all the conditions for the foreign experts to work," but the separatists con-

More senators seek military aid to Ukraine

WASHINGTON — Democratic senators joined their Republican colleagues Wednesday in calling for some U.S. military aid to Ukraine after receiving a closed-door briefing from senior Obama administration officials.

Sens. Carl Levin, the Armed Services Committee chairman, and Bill Nelson added themselves to the small but growing chorus of lawmakers favoring weapons deliveries to Ukraine's military to fight Russia-backed rebels in the

east of the country. Thus far the Obama administration has said it doesn't believe U.S. military assistance is necessary.

Levin said he supported transferring certain types of defensive equipment.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, a Republican, said he noted widespread bipartisan "unease" with the current U.S. policy at the briefing.

The belief of the administration, he said, is that Russia is prepared to join the war to protect Ukraine's separatists. In contrast, he says, the U.S. doesn't have a strategy.

From The Associated Press

time to block access, he said.

Ukrainian authorities insist they are concentrating on securing highways surrounding the wreckage site. The aim, they have said, is to gradually squeeze out rebels forces.

But AP reporters near the crash site confirmed Thursday that clashes are taking place in the immediate vicinity of where the Boeing 777 came down.

Reporters who attempted to reach the crash site by another route were warned by local residents that some nearby roads have been mined. And AP journalists saw a mortar round land near Hrabove, another village around which fragments of the plane remain uncollected.

A monitoring mission from the Organization for Security and Cooperation spent Wednesday and early Thursday exploring safe routes from their base in the rebel-held city of Donetsk.

Thursday's drive took the convoy of investigators and OSCE of-

ficials from Donetsk through the town of Debal'tsevo, which was earlier this week retaken by the government, and later back into rebel territory.

Armored personnel carriers waving the blue-and-yellow Ukrainian national flag could be seen in and around Debal'tsevo.

At one entrance to Debal'tsevo, local residents walked along a pontoon erected over the remains of a blown-up bridge.

It remains unclear precisely how many bodies remain at the Malaysia Airlines crash site and what condition they are in after being exposed for so long to the elements.

Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, speaking to the Australian Broadcasting Corp. from Ukraine, said she has been informed up to 80 bodies are still on the site.

A delegation from Russia's state aviation body said Thursday it also hoped to visit the site, an agency spokesman said.

Mudslide swallows small Indian village, killing at least 30

By MANISH MEHTA
The Associated Press

MALIN, India — Rescuers using earth-moving equipment and their bare hands dug through heavy mud and debris Thursday after a landslide engulfed an entire village in western India, killing at least 30 people and leaving about 100 missing and feared dead.

More than 24 hours after the Wednesday morning landslide, authorities said the chances of survival were slim for anyone still trapped under the mud in Malin, a village of some 700 people in Pune district of Maharashtra state.

Suresh Jadhav, a district official, said around 40 homes were wiped out.

Two days of torrential rains triggered the landslide, which continued to pound the area as rescuers brought bodies covered in soaked white sheets to waiting ambulances while relatives stood by, weeping. Bad communications, dangerous roads and debris delayed national rescue personnel from the stricken area for several hours Wednesday.

The disaster came to light only when a bus driver passed by and saw that the village had disappeared under masses of mud and earth.

"The driver returned to a nearby city and alerted authorities," Jadhav said. "Everything on the mountain came down."

Thirty bodies had been recovered and eight people pulled out alive, said rescue official Sachin Tamboli.

Suresh Dhonde, who was working in another town when the landslide ripped through his village, said only two people managed to get out of his home alive.

"The other six are buried under the mud," he said.

Crowds of people from nearby areas were helping rescuers, using their bare hands to move fallen trees and rocks. About 250 disaster response workers and at least 100 ambulances were involved in the rescue effort, officials said.

Overnight, emergency workers used flood lights mounted on jeeps to illuminate the disaster area, where the tangled roofs of homes poked up through thick mud.

Rescuers expected the death toll to rise in the village at the foothills of the Sahyadri Mountains. Sandeep Kar Rathore, a top official of the National Disaster Response Force, estimated that around 100 people were missing and feared dead.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi mourned the loss of lives and said all possible efforts must be made to help the victims, according to a statement from his office. He sent Home Minister Rajnath Singh to the disaster area.

Landslides are common in the area during the monsoon season, which runs from June through September. The area around the village has been deforested extensively, increasing its vulnerability to landslides. Similar deforestation and environmental damage have caused floods and landslides in other parts of India.

Pune district is about 95 miles southeast of Mumbai, India's commercial capital.

On Thursday, heavy rains hit a remote mountainous village in northern India and six members of a family were feared dead, said police officer Pravin Tamta. Police have recovered two bodies and were searching for four others in Tehri district in the hilly Uttarakhand state, Tamta said. The village is 200 miles north of New Delhi.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA/AP

An elderly woman cries as she searches for surviving family members in the debris of her home destroyed by landslide in Malin village, in the western Indian state of Maharashtra, on Wednesday.

WORLD

'Now they are blowing everything up'

Destruction of Mosul shrines sparks first signs of resistance against Islamic State

By **LOVEDAY MORRIS**
The Washington Post

BAGHDAD — As al-Qaida-inspired militants have reduced Mosul's ancient religious shrines to rubble in recent weeks, their support has also crumbled, with popular outrage producing the first signs of resistance in the Iraqi city.

A newly formed militant group calling itself the Mosul Battalions claims to have killed nine members of the extremist Islamic State in recent days in knife and sniper attacks as retaliation for the destruction of the religious sites.

Meanwhile, residents say they have protested attempts to destroy the city's most iconic landmark — an 800-year-old minaret known locally as al-Hadba, or "the Hunchback," because of its distinctive lean.

Many Mosul residents had initially welcomed the Sunni militants when they took over in early June, praising them for expelling the largely Shiite Iraqi army, which had been accused of mistreating the city's majority Sunni population. But local dissatisfaction with the new overlords has been increasing.

The city has suffered from severe electricity, fuel and water shortages, and the smashing of shrines and statues. But the expulsion of thousands of Christians from the city and the destruction a week ago of a highly prominent religious site — the tomb of the prophet Jonah, who, according to Islamic, Jewish and Christian scriptures, survived being swallowed by a whale — brought a new level of resentment.

"It was truly shocking for the people of Mosul," said a 37-year-old resident who spoke on the condition of anonymity for fear

of reprisals. "The people feel deceived by Islamic State. When they first came, they told us, 'We will set you free,' but they have turned against everyone."

He said as residents gathered at the tomb of Jonah to see what had happened, some started shouting at the militants in anger.

Nonetheless, the following day, the mosques and shrines of the prophets Seth and George were also destroyed. Axel Plathe, the Iraq representative for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, described the actions as "deliberate and systematic destruction" on a scale never seen before in Iraq's modern history.

In total, at least seven sacred shrines have been razed, said an official with the city's Sunni endorsement authority, which manages religious affairs.

"At first, we expected them to only blow up places for Shiite people," said the official, who declined to be identified for security reasons. "Now they are blowing up everything."

At least three Shiite mosques have been destroyed in Mosul, and more in nearby areas, he said.

Islamic State militants argue that it is idolatrous for Muslims to revere shrines and tombs.

Mosul has some of the most diverse cultural history in Iraq, said Plathe. "There are mosques built on churches, built on synagogues," he said. "It's a city that has all these layers, where cultural diversity and religious diversity has been existing for so many hundreds of years."

The destruction of the religious sites has spurred an increasing backlash.

"Because of what has happened with the shrines, the population



People inspect the destroyed old Mosque of The Prophet Jirjis in central Mosul, Iraq, on Sunday. The revered Muslim shrine was destroyed by militants who overran the city in June and imposed their harsh interpretation of Islamic law.

has completely turned against Islamic State," said Atheel al-Nujaifi, the former governor of Nineveh province who fled the city when the militants took control.

The imam of a Sufi mosque in the city was arrested by Islamic State when he and other worshippers protested the destruction of a shrine there, Nujaifi said. He was released on Tuesday after being held for two days, he said, and the mosque and shrine are still intact. Sufis are followers of a mystical branch of Islam.

The militants took their extreme doctrine a step further when they rigged the ancient Hadba minaret with explosives Saturday, residents said. Just last month, UNESCO had begun urgent restoration work to stabilize the minaret on the city's oldest mosque.

"When people heard, they quickly gathered around and prevented it from being destroyed," the

37-year-old Mosul resident said. "They were very, very angry."

That anger has fueled armed resistance to Islamic State, said Nujaifi, who said that at least five Islamic State members have been killed in recent days by the Mosul Battalions. Two were stabbed, while others were killed by sniper fire, he said.

"The people in the city of Mosul are busy forming armed groups and small brigades to work against Islamic State," he said. He said he was not directly involved with the Mosul Battalions, but is in contact with its leaders, who include former army officers from Saddam Hussein's regime.

Local insurgent groups, including the Nqashbandi army and other Sunni militants who had formerly fought U.S. soldiers, have yet to lend support to the battalions, he said. The killings could not be independently verified and

have not been acknowledged by Islamic State.

In a statement on its Facebook page, the Mosul Battalions group says it began forming soon after Islamic State seized the city, but that the destruction of Mosul's sacred shrines had sped up its military activities. It lists nine killings of Islamic State members in the past week.

It stressed that it was not looking for the Iraqi army to return, saying the government forces are as bad as the militants.

"People are rising up, but the resistance is based on sniping at them from a long distance," the Sunni endorsement authority official said. "That's all we can do."

That the Iraqi army did not allow Mosul residents to keep arms makes it even more difficult to turn on the extremists, he said. "But we are now against them, 100 percent."

Ebola fears prompt Peace Corps to pull out of 3 African nations

By **ELAHE IZADI**
The Washington Post

The spread of the deadly Ebola virus has prompted the Peace Corps to evacuate volunteers from three West African countries, the organization announced Wednesday.

Two Peace Corps volunteers have been placed in isolation after being exposed to someone who later died of the highly contagious virus, according to an agency spokeswoman. While not showing symptoms, the volunteers are awaiting medical clearance to return to the United States. CBS News reports the volunteers are in Liberia.

The Ebola virus is spread through direct contact with bodily fluids, and people are considered contagious when they start

'The likelihood of this outbreak spreading outside of West Africa is low.'

Stephan Monroe
CDC's National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases

showing symptoms. It can take as long as 21 days before a person infected with the virus starts showing symptoms, according to the World Health Organization.

While the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has said that the odds that Ebola will reach the United States are slim, it has advised American health care workers to be cautious.

"The likelihood of this outbreak spreading outside of West Africa is low," Stephan Monroe, deputy director of CDC's Nation-

al Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases, said on a recent conference call with reporters. But, he added, "the CDC has to be prepared for the remote possibility."

The Peace Corps will temporarily remove its 102 volunteers in Guinea, 108 in Liberia and 130 in Sierra Leone. The group had released a statement saying that it was monitoring the outbreak in consultation with the CDC and the State Department.

The CDC has issued a Level 2

travel health alert in response to the outbreak. The agency has advised U.S.-based health care workers to be aware of the symptoms of Ebola and the travel histories of their patients.

Health care workers are among the most vulnerable to the virus. Sierra Leone's top Ebola doctor fell victim to the virus and died. Two American health care workers, volunteers with the Christian aid group Samaritan's Purse, have contracted the virus. The group has evacuated some workers from Liberia, but medical staff members have been left behind to treat patients.

Meanwhile, Liberia's president ordered the nation's schools to shut down and most civil servants to stay home as fears deepened over the virus, the Associated Press reported.



Youssef Ban/AP

Medical personnel work at the Doctors Without Borders facility on Sunday in Kailahun, Sierra Leone, where Dr. Sheik Humarr Khan risked his own life to treat dozens of Ebola patients. He died Tuesday from the disease, officials said.

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NATION

'I just can't deal with this'



KIM BRENT, MONROE (MICH.) NEWS/AP

Kathy Jay and Michael Shufelt and their new Great Dane, Buddy, visit the gravesite for Doc, their 7-year-old Great Dane who passed away in early May, in Raisinville Township, Mich., last month. The couple utilized pet hospice services for Doc, who had a large cancerous tumor on his leg.

Pet hospice comforts animals and owners by blunting panic and prepping for proper goodbyes

By DANIELLE PORTEUS
Monroe (Mich.) News

MONROE, Mich. — When her beloved dog was diagnosed with bone cancer, Kathy Jay was stunned.

The veterinarian asked whether she wanted to euthanize the animal that same day.

"I was numb," the Raisinville Township resident told the Monroe News. "I thought, 'I just can't deal with this.'" With her head spinning, Jay said she wasn't ready and neither was Doc, her 175-pound Great Dane.

The veterinarian asked whether she wanted to euthanize the animal that same day. "I was numb," the Raisinville Township resident told the Monroe News. "I thought, 'I just can't deal with this.'" With her head spinning, Jay said she wasn't ready and neither was Doc, her 175-pound Great Dane.

Doc lived for several months after his diagnosis with the help of pet hospice and services provided by Four Paws Vet Wellness and Dr. Monica Turenne.

"He was a big dog and took up lots of room, but in my heart, when he was gone, there was a big void," Jay said. "Hospice was a way to give him good quality of life, not necessarily quantity."

Jay first noticed something was wrong with her dog's front paw in February. She thought it might be a sprain from the animal jumping in and out of the car.

Instead, 7-year-old Doc had a

'Hospice requires people to be dedicated and present for their pet in a lot of ways. The care is both physical and emotional. It's not just about pills.'

Dr. Monica Turenne
a veterinarian who operates Four Paws Vet Wellness, a mobile pet practice based in Ann Arbor, Mich.

small tumor. Amputation was not an option for such a large breed.

"We knew there was no way he'd learn to maneuver on three legs," she said.

A few days after the diagnosis, Jay called the vet and asked whether there was an option besides euthanasia. The staff initially didn't seem to have one. Then one of the workers told her about Turenne, who operates a mobile pet practice based in Ann Arbor that travels as far south as Monroe.

"My dog was my whole world, and I just wasn't ready to give up," Jay said. "He rescued me when I had my two small strokes, and I needed to do what I could

for him."

Jay's partner, Michael Shufelt of Monroe, also was attached to Doc. He would watch baseball games with the dog and take him to watch trains.

To Jay, though, Doc was like her child.

"If a child is sick, a parent will do what they can," she said. "For pet owners, we don't always have other places to turn to for support."

As part of hospice treatment, Doc received massages and Reiki treatments. Jay learned the types of medication to give, the foods to feed and how to keep Doc comfortable during his final months of life. His tumor became as large

as a melon before he died.

"Some days, he would be sick and then other days, not sick at all," Jay explained. "Up until his last day, he still had the sparkle in his eyes."

When the dog wouldn't eat, Jay called the vet, who offered advice on ways to keep fluids in the animal's body.

"The entire time, Dr. Monica was always available to talk," she said. "She told me Doc would pass when he was ready, and that's what he did."

Doc died in May at home just hours before Turenne was scheduled to euthanize him.

Turenne said she works with dogs and cats, but pet hospice is not for everyone. She begins with a consultation and explains what hospice is for animals.

"Hospice requires people to be dedicated and present for their pet in a lot of ways," the vet explained. "The care is both physical and emotional. It's not just about pills."

People who work outside the home or leave their pets for long periods of time likely would not fit the hospice clientele, Turenne

said.

"If they have a terminally ill pet, in some situations, hospice isn't feasible," she said. "We talk about the optimal choice for the animal."

Although Jay loved Doc deeply, she didn't want to keep him around just for her sake.

"I wanted to keep him around forever, but I knew that wasn't fair to him," she said.

The length a pet is under hospice care varies. Pets can live for just a few days or up to a year, depending on the circumstances.

Jay — who now has a new companion, 13-month-old Buddy, also a Great Dane — said she wants to bring awareness to the Monroe area about pet hospice. Next May, close to the anniversary of Doc's death, she plans to host a walk at Munson Park.

In the future, if she has a dog close to the end of its life, Jay said she would use pet hospice service again.

"I'd use it in a heartbeat," she said. "It was such a beacon of hope. We were truly lost in the storm, but we were able to see what was best for him."

FAITH

Saving the symbol of their savior

China's Christians seek to protect crosses from government demolition

By DIDI TANG

The Associated Press

WUXI VILLAGE, China — The battle started when a government-hired crew tore down the metal cross atop the one-room church in this village surrounded by rice paddies last month.

The next day, a church member used his own welding torch to put it back. He was promptly detained and questioned for 10 hours on the charge of operating a welding business without a license.

A week later, the crew came back to remove the cross. Once again, church members put it back up, now tattered and a little shorter.

The church in the eastern village of Wuxi, about 300 miles south of Shanghai, has had its water and electricity cut off. Officials have attempted to install surveillance cameras and inquired about several church members' work and their children's schooling — a veiled threat that jobs and education might be at risk. But the congregation is not giving up.

"I won't let them take down the cross even if it means they would shoot me dead," said Fan Liang'an, 73, whose grandfather helped build the church in 1924.

Across Zhejiang province, which hugs China's rocky southeastern coast, authorities have toppled — or threatened to topple — crosses at more than 130 churches. In a few cases, the government has even razed sanctuaries.

Authorities say the churches in question had violated building codes, even though they generally won't specify which ones. They also deny that they are specifically targeting churches, and point to the demolition of other tens of thousands of other buildings, religious and non-religious, that have apparently broken regulations.

But experts and church leaders in Zhejiang, the only province where the incidents are happening, believe there is a campaign to repress Christianity, which has grown so rapidly as to alarm the atheist Communist government.

It comes at a time when Beijing has been tightening ideological controls, placing more restrictions on journalists, rights lawyers — many of whom are Christians and political activists since President Xi Jinping took office in early 2013.

The incidents speak to the power of symbols, and the emotions they evoke.

The cross is the glory of us Christians," said Cai Tingxun, who left his cosmetics shop in Shanghai to protect his hometown church in rural Zhejiang after hearing authorities warned they would tear down the cross. "Jesus was nailed to the cross for us. My heart ached to learn that the government wanted to remove the cross."

Estimates on the numbers of Christians in China vary widely because the government does not count religious affiliation. Official 2010 figures put them at 23 million. These are registered members of the state-sanctioned churches, which are closely monitored by the government.

But China also has vast numbers of underground believers who meet in secret. The Pew Research Center estimated there were 58 million Protestants in China in 2011, along with 9 million Catholics in the year before. Other experts say there could be more than 100 million.

These estimates are up from the widely accepted figure of 1 million Christians in 1950, and may even rival the size of the 85 million-member Communist Party.

The church's dramatic growth — and Christians' loyalty to God above all else — has alarmed authorities, said Yang Fenggang, a Harvard University professor and leading expert on religious matters in China.

A possible reason Zhejiang province has come under scrutiny is that it is home to Wenzhou, a city of 8 million that has so many churches dotting its streets and hillsides that it is called "China's Jerusalem."

More than a tenth of Wenzhou's residents are Protestant Christians — some fourth-generation believers — the highest proportion of any major Chinese city, according to Gu Nianlai, an anthropologist who has studied and written a book about Christianity in Wenzhou.

The high percentage is largely due to early missionary efforts and the city's relative isolation, nestled between the sea and mountains. Half the province's 4,000 churches are located here.

The city is known for its entrepreneurial vigor, and has tens of thousands of family-run workshops making shoes, toys, furniture and other products. The believers here appear to have applied that same eagerness to starting new churches, Cao said.

For years, the city's Christians had close relationships with local authorities, and many believers, ironically, are also members of the ostensibly atheist Communist Party or hold civil servant jobs, he said.

City officials even encouraged churches to build big as a way to draw attention and investment from Chinese Christians abroad. In the last few years, however, they began asking churches not to light up their crosses at night. The reason given was to help reduce carbon emissions, pastors and church members say. The orders appeared to be coming from the province's government, but were carried out by city officials.



PHOTOS BY DIDI TANG/AP

Pastor Tao Chongyin, left, speaks with church member Fan Liang'an at the Wuxi Christian Church, which has the words "Church of Jesus" in red. The red banner reads "Protect the cross, at all cost."



A member of Zengshan Village Christian Church stands near rocks piled in front of the gate to prevent government workers from moving in equipment to demolish the cross. The red banner says the church and the cross are protected by the Chinese law.

Then in April, the local government in Yongjia county suddenly demanded that an unapproved portion of a large church be torn down — even though officials had tacitly allowed the church to build five times the approved square footage. Decades of unbridled development and onerous red tape has made it the norm to build before obtaining pages of approval stamps from myriad government agencies.

Despite protests from the congregation and supporters, demolition crews tore down the entire structure, and the hillside where it was located is now covered in tree saplings.

Since then, rooftop crosses at many churches along major roads in and around Wenzhou have been removed, and vaguely-worded notices against unspecified illegal

structures have been delivered to churches in outlying areas.

Pastors and church elders say government workers have told them in private that the goal is to remove the crosses. Officials have promised they will stay away from churches if the symbols are removed but have threatened those who resist with demolition.

"This is clearly discrimination against our religion and to crack down on our belief," said Wang Yunxian, a church elder in Wenzhou.

Yang, the Purdue professor, said it was difficult to imagine what sort of building codes the crosses would violate.

"The only reason I can think of is that the Zhejiang authorities intend to humiliate Christians by taking down the symbol sacred to them," he said. The campaign

could be tacitly approved by Beijing, which has not interfered publicly, or it might merely be a political gamble by the provincial leadership to win praise, he said.

A senior Zhejiang government official insisted that authorities weren't targeting churches, "but only structures in violation of codes."

"Those with ulterior motives are singling out churches, but we also have torn down temples and nunneries, and we have strictly followed the law in removing illegal structures," said the official, who insisted on anonymity.

In Yongjia county, the government says it has demolished thousands of illegal structures totaling 3 million square meters, including businesses, residences and religious sites.

Some churches have taken steps to protect their crosses.

Cai, the man who left his cosmetics shop in Shanghai, now takes turns with other members to guard Yayu Christian Church in Yaxia village around the clock.

They are camped out on a balcony overlooking an expanse of ripening rice paddies to spot any demolition crew coming down the road.

In nearby Zengshan village, after church members received a government warning in early July to remove its cross, members piled up rocks in front of the main gate and dumped a couple of sheds behind it. It also raised banners urging the authorities to respect Chinese law on religious freedom and proper procedures for demolition.

"The cross is our life, and there is no room for compromise," said Pastor Xie Zuokua. "With no other means, we are resorting to our own abilities to defend the cross."

FACES

'This is déjà vu'

Actor Chadwick Boseman takes on another historical figure in James Brown biopic 'Get on Up'

BY JAKE COYLE
The Associated Press

A year after playing Jackie Robinson in "42," Chadwick Boseman was back in biopic spring training.

To become James Brown for the film "Get on Up," Boseman needed to rely on an entirely different skill set. But the preparation necessary to transform into a tireless performer like Brown — "the hardest-working man in show business," after all — was oddly reminiscent of working out on the baseball diamond.

"I was like, 'This is déjà vu,'" says Boseman. "I'm waking up in the morning and lacing them up. Doesn't matter whether it's cleats or if it's leather shoes."

For the second time, Boseman has stepped into some very big ones. A largely unknown actor previously, the 32-year-old Boseman has emerged with back-to-back biopics of 20th century titans: one the revolutionary breaker of baseball's color line, the other the Godfather of Soul. Both were unstoppable forces that blazed across civil rights-era America. One could steal home; the other could do the Mashed Potato.

Tackling one such historical figure is daring, two is audacious. It wasn't Boseman's idea.

"There's no way in the world," Boseman says was his initial reaction to playing Brown, still sounding genuinely resistant to the idea. Not only was playing such a complicated, iconic personality like Brown a



Chadwick Boseman stars as James Brown in the movie "Get on Up."

fearsome challenge, it also could potentially typecast Boseman in a biopic bubble.

"I felt like if I keep doing this biopic thing, then all I'm going to get is biopics," says Boseman. "I was already getting all biopic scripts."

But director Tate Taylor ("The Help") pressed. He brought Boseman in to read a scene in the movie of Brown at 63 and was immediately won over by the fresh-faced Boseman's ability to transform into the legend late in life. "I thought: This is the guy. Please let him be able to learn how to dance," said Taylor. But it took weeks of coaxing: "Chad's point of view was, 'Nobody should do this. It's just not even possible.'"

"Get on Up," produced by Brian Grazer, had gone through other iterations. At one time, Spike Lee was to direct. Later, Mick

Jagger, who frequently crossed paths with Brown and took much inspiration from him, came aboard as a producer. (Jagger is also producing an upcoming documentary about Brown, directed by Alex Gibney.)

The film, which opens Friday in the U.S. and some installation theaters, skips across Brown's expansive life, from the Georgia poverty of his hard upbringing to his more cartoonish and violent later years. (Brown died in 2006.) "Get on Up," written by the brothers Jez and John-Henry Butterworth, attempts to synthesize all of James' many dimensions: tyrannical bandleader, musical visionary, funk preacher, domestic abuser.

Brown's vocals are used during performances in the movie, but the part required Boseman to play Brown across time and pompadours. He had to find the voice, the moves, the posture and the persona, and hope somewhere in there was the man, too.

"It was all daunting, to be honest with you," Boseman says with a sigh.

With so much research and dance training to fit into two months before shooting began, Boseman had to make a quick study. "They gave me the whole catalog of music and I just sat and listened to every song," he says. "I started with the music because it was so visceral."

Whereas most biopics travel a familiar path, Brown's life resists a typical arc. One memorable early scene shows James, at his label's request, accepting top billing over his early band, the Flames.

"There is a certain amount of cutthroatness to him," says Boseman. "But it's like what Little Richard says in the movie: When you see the moment, you have to seize it."

It took some time for Boseman's moment to come. He first got into theater, acting and writing plays, as an undergrad at Howard University. Boseman had roles on little-known TV shows like ABC Family's "Lincoln Heights" and NBC's "Persons Unknown," but before "42" he had acted in only one film (2008's football drama "The Express").

The actor recently shot a supporting role in the big-budget fantasy adventure "Gods of Egypt" and has been rumored as a possibility to play Marvel's Black Panther.



CBS/AP

The cast of "The Big Bang Theory" — which includes Johnny Galecki, left, and Jim Parsons — is trying to finalize new contracts with CBS.

Dispute stalls production of CBS sitcom

The Associated Press

Production on a new season of "The Big Bang Theory" is being delayed because of a contract dispute with its top actors.

The Warner Brothers Television studio, which makes television's most popular comedy, said that Wednesday's scheduled first day of shooting after summer hiatus was postponed. There's no word on when "The Big Bang Theory" team will be back at work.

The CBS series is heading into its eighth season, and the studio is trying to hammer out new deals with actors Jim Parsons, Johnny Galecki, Kaley Cuoco, Simon Helberg and Kunal Nayyar.

Contract disputes aren't unusual at popular, long-running TV series, and CBS Entertainment Chairman Nina Tassler seemed to take it in stride when asked about the negotiations two weeks ago.

"I just love being able to answer these questions year after year, primarily because we have successful shows," she said. "And when you have successful shows, you have renegotiations. We're feeling very confident that everything will work out. These deals manage to get done somehow miraculously year after year."

CBS had no additional comment on the negotiations Wednesday.

It's considered far too early for such a dispute to affect the timing of a show's season premiere. "The Big Bang Theory" opens its new season in the U.S. on Sept. 22.

Allison Williams headed skyward as Peter Pan

NBC has picked its Peter Pan: high-flying "Girls" star Allison Williams.

The network announced Wednesday that Williams will play the boy who refused to grow up in NBC's new staging of "Peter Pan Live!" The live telecast of this musical classic will air Dec. 4.

The 26-year-old actress-comedian plays Marlene Michaels on HBO's comedy "Girls," for which she has recorded several songs. She is the daughter of NBC News anchor Brian Williams. NBC recently announced that Oscar winner Christopher Walken will play the villainous pirate Captain Hook.



Williams



Chadwick Boseman

DAN HALLMAN, INVISION/AP

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Police: Naked intruder found in couple's bed

NM ALBUQUERQUE — A New Mexico man faces charges after authorities say a couple found him naked and sleeping in their bed.

Investigators said Freddy Shelby, 30, of Albuquerque was arrested Sunday after the homeowners called police to report their unwanted mystery guest.

According to a criminal complaint, Shelby broke into the couple's home through a window and grabbed a Sprite from the refrigerator before falling asleep in the master bedroom. Authorities said the homeowners found a disrobed Shelby in a deep sleep.

Officers arrived and called to the man, but he slept through it. Authorities say Shelby woke up only after an officer ripped the blankets off him. Shelby told officers he thought he was at his girlfriend's house.

He was charged with breaking and entering.

Motion filed to dismiss penis amputation suit

AL BIRMINGHAM — An attorney for two U.S. doctors accused in a lawsuit of amputating a man's penis in what was supposed to have been a routine circumcision filed a motion Tuesday seeking to dismiss the claims.

Attorney Mike Florie said his clients, Dr. Michael Bivins and Dr. Alan Aikens, never performed a circumcision on Johnny Lee Banks Jr. that involved the removal of tissue or the amputation of the man's penis. He said the suit's claims are false.

Banks' attorney, John Graves, filed the lawsuit on July 22, accusing the doctors and their medical groups of malpractice, negligence and other wrongdoing. It seeks an unspecified amount of money.

Graves said he stands firmly by the allegations but would not comment on specifics of the case. "I don't file frivolous lawsuits," Graves said.

Live meat market approved for city

NE OMAHA — Omaha residents will soon be able to select live farm animals for future meals and watch them get slaughtered.

The Omaha City Council on Tuesday approved the creation of a live meat market in the southern part of the city. The council debated for more than an hour on whether to grant a special use permit for Tom's Live Market.

The business will process animals such as sheep, pigs, rabbits, goats and small cattle. Customers can pick animals from pens at the business and wait while they're slaughtered, processed and packaged.

Council members have required owner Tom Meyer to post signs warning off children under 12 from areas where they could see the animals processed.

Meyer said the concept is new for Omaha but familiar in cities around the country.

THE CENSUS

\$995

What it will cost pet owners for a memorial space flight for their deceased four-legged loved ones, courtesy of a Houston company that already sends human remains out of this world. Celestis Inc. on Wednesday announced a service that would send pets' cremated remains on a rocket trip into space as a way for owners to honor their pets "with a journey to the stars ... because your pet loved to explore." The next launch is scheduled in October. Celestis for years has offered a rocket service that takes partial human remains into space and brings them back, including ashes of "Star Trek" TV show creator Gene Roddenberry.



TARIQ ZAHAWI, NORTHERSEY.COM/AP

Not clowning around

Westwood Police Officer Niko Pieratos talks with Jack "Poppi T Clown" Erstein at an accident site, where a car struck a utility pole in Westwood, N.J., on Monday. Erstein said the driver, a fellow clown, veered off the road when she was reacting for a GPS device, and he and other clowns, who were all leaving a school event in separate cars, came to her aid. Police said the 65-year-old driver sustained minor injuries.

Man gets 7 years in accidental shooting

AK JUNEAU — A 50-year-old Skagway man will serve seven years in jail after accidentally shooting his girlfriend during a suicide attempt.

Carl Timothy Forester was sentenced Tuesday for assault.

The Juneau Empire reported Judge Philip Pallenberg also ordered Forester's firearms be surrendered to the state for destruction after the November shooting, which he said was "6 inches away" from being a homicide.

Authorities said he was depressed and put the shotgun in his mouth. His girlfriend tried to stop him by hitting him in the head with the butt of another gun, but that caused him to involuntarily squeeze the trigger and shoot her in the upper chest.

The victim, who is permanently disfigured, begged the judge for a more lenient sentence, saying

there was no intent to harm her.

Lab cancels Southern accent reduction class

TN OAK RIDGE — Some employees at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee complained about a class aimed at teaching them how to reduce their Southern accents. Now, managers are calling the whole thing off.

The course had been advertised as a way to feel confident in meetings, when one might need to speak with a more neutral accent. The class was touted as a way to "be remembered for what you say and not how you say it."

Carolyn Ward of Oak Ridge's Learning and Development Services told the Knoxville News Sentinel that an employee requested the class, so it was offered to other toos.

Oak Ridge spokesman David Keim said the class "probably wasn't presented in the right way" and managers decided to

cancel it after other employees complained.

Dad accidentally delivers baby into toilet

CT WEST HAVEN — A Connecticut baby has arrived with a splash, right into a toilet bowl.

The baby's father, David Davis, told WVIT-TV that he was forced to deliver the newborn in the bathroom of his West Haven home Friday morning after his wife, Lillie, went into labor.

He said the baby slipped through his hands during the delivery, but luckily went into the water. He said she began crying and it was the best sound he'd ever heard.

Davis said the couple had gone to a hospital earlier that morning, but had been sent home after it was determined his wife was not ready to give birth.

She began feeling strong labor pains a few hours later. Livia weighed in at 7 pounds, 6 ounces — soaking wet.

Officer stops driver for speeding, saves his life

ME KENNEBUNK — Not many people can say they owe their lives to a near speeding ticket.

But Gavin Falconer, 86, can. He was pulled over Saturday by a police officer in Kennebunk. But shortly after handing over his license and registration, Falconer suffered an apparent heart attack and slumped without a pulse.

Police said Officer Michael Harrington quickly transitioned from writing out a warning for the speeding infraction to administering CPR.

A second officer then arrived with a defibrillator.

Falconer was brought to a hospital where he is recovering. He told WVIT-TV that he hopes to see the officer again and thank him.

Harrington said the incident is proof there is no such thing as a "routine" traffic stop.

From wire reports

BUSINESS/WEATHER

As economy accelerates, Fed is cautious

The Associated Press
WASHINGTON—After a grim start to 2014, the U.S. economy has rebounded with vigor and should show renewed strength into next year.

That was the general view of analysts Wednesday after the government estimated that the economy grew at a fast 4 percent annual rate in the April-June quarter. Consumers, businesses and governments combined to fuel the expansion. The government also

said growth was more robust last year than previously estimated.

Whether the healthier expansion will lead the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates sooner than expected is unclear. The Fed offered a mixed message on the economy Wednesday: Growth is strengthening, and the unemployment rate is steadily falling. Yet by some measures, it suggested, the job market remains subpar.

A statement the Fed issued after a two-day policy meeting

signaled that it wants to see further improvement before it starts raising its key short-term interest rate. It offered no clearer hint of when it will raise that rate.

Instead, the Fed reiterated its plan to keep short-term rates low "for a considerable time" after the end of its monthly bond purchases. The Fed said it will slow the pace of its purchases by another \$10 billion to \$25 billion a month. The purchases, which have been intended to keep long-term bor-

rowing rates low, are set to end in October. Most economists think a rate increase is about a year away.

The economy sprang back to life last quarter after a dismal winter in which it shrank at a sharp 2.1 percent annual rate. The government upgraded that decline from a previous estimate of a 2.9 percent drop. But it was still the biggest contraction since early 2009 in the depths of the Great Recession.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (Aug. 1)	\$1.3748
Dollar buys (Aug. 1)	€0.7274
British pound (Aug. 1)	\$1.73
Japanese yen (Aug. 1)	100.00
South Korean won (Aug. 1)	999.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3771
British pound	\$1.6878
Canada (Dollar)	1.0908
China (Yuan)	6.1742
Denmark (Krone)	6.966
Egypt (Pound)	7.1525
Hong Kong (Dollar)	\$1.3390/7468
Hungary (Forint)	234.03
Israel (Sheqel)	3.4299
Japan (Yen)	102.86
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.2837
Norway (Krone)	6.2854
Philippines (Peso)	43.65
Poland (Zloty)	3.12
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7506
Singapore (Dollar)	1.2475
South Korea (Won)	1,028.25
Switzerland (Franc)	0.9085
Thailand (Baht)	32.16
Turkey (Lira)	1.4437

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., non-U.S. dollars), contact your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to the dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

MARKET WATCH

July 30, 2014	
Dow Jones Industrials	-31.75
Nasdaq composite	20.20
Standard & Poor's 500	0.12
Russell 2000	4.93
	1,146.57

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	3.25
Discount rate	7.00
Federal funds market rate	0.09
3-month bill	0.03
30-year bond	3.31

EUROPE GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel
Germany	\$4.262	\$4.191	\$4.191	\$4.161
Change in price	-.54 cents	-.50 cents	-.50 cents	-.11
Netherlands	...	\$4.887	\$5.179	\$5.017
Change in price	...	-.27 cents	-.29 cents	-.28
UK	...	\$3.966	\$4.161	\$4.131
Change in price	...	-.50 cents	-.50 cents	-.11
Azores	\$4.137	...
Change in price	-.50	...
Turkey	...	\$4.188	\$4.396	\$4.343
Change in price	...	No change	No change	No change
Italy	\$4.632	\$5.042*
Change in price	-.04	No change
France
Change in price

PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Unleaded	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel
Japan	...	\$3.709	...	\$3.849
Change in price	...	-.50 cents	...	-.10
Okinawa	...	\$3.779	...	\$3.849
Change in price	...	No change	...	-.10
South Korea	...	\$3.669	...	\$4.019
Change in price	...	-.50 cents	...	-.10
Guam	...	\$3.659**	\$3.859	\$3.999
Change in price	...	-.50 cents	-.50 cents	...

* Diesel EFD ** Midgrade
 For the week of Aug. 1-8

WEATHER OUTLOOK



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

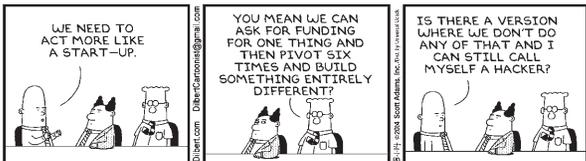
Friday's US temperatures

City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr
Ablene, Texas	86	65	Cldy	Chatanooga	82	64	Cldy	Fort Wayne	80	59	Cldy	Louisville	87	64	Cldy
Akron, Ohio	80	59	Cldy	Cheyenne	78	53	PCldy	Fresno	104	74	Cir	Lubbock	85	64	Cldy
Albany, N.Y.	83	57	Cldy	Cincinnati	81	62	Cldy	Goodland	86	57	Cir	Macon	86	70	Cldy
Albuquerque	83	66	Cldy	Cleveland	81	61	Cldy	Grand Junction	88	64	Cldy	Madison	80	61	Rain
Allentown, Pa.	83	60	Rain	Columbia, S.C.	85	70	Cldy	Green Bay	79	57	Rain	Medford	99	66	Cir
Anchorage	67	53	Cldy	Columbus, Ga.	86	70	Cldy	Great Falls	91	59	Cir	Mempphis	83	66	Cldy
Ashville	83	57	Rain	Columbus, Ohio	81	60	Cldy	Greensboro, N.C.	79	67	Rain	Miami Beach	81	79	Cldy
Atlanta	81	67	Cldy	Concord, N.H.	84	55	PCldy	Hartford Springfld	83	62	Cldy	Miami	88	63	Rain
Atlantic City	85	65	Cldy	Concord, N.H.	84	55	PCldy	Helena	92	59	PCldy	Milaid-Odesa	87	66	Cldy
Austin	73	73	Cldy	Corpus Christi	94	76	Cldy	Helena	92	59	PCldy	Milaid-Odesa	87	66	Cldy
Baltimore	82	67	Cldy	Dallas-Ft. Worth	87	70	Cldy	Honolulu	83	77	Cldy	Mpls-St. Paul	82	64	PCldy
Baton Rouge	89	72	Rain	Dayton	80	60	Cldy	Houston	90	75	Cldy	Mobile	93	59	PCldy
Birmingham	83	60	PCldy	Daytona Beach	81	76	Cldy	Huntsville	83	65	Rain	Montgomery	88	69	Cldy
Bismarck	85	57	PCldy	Denver	82	58	PCldy	Indianapolis	80	62	Cldy	Nashville	85	62	Cldy
Boise	95	69	Cldy	Des Moines	83	61	PCldy	Jacksonville	85	67	Cldy	New Orleans	91	74	Cldy
Boston	81	65	PCldy	Detroit	81	62	Cldy	Jacksonville	85	67	Cldy	New York City	84	68	Cldy
Bridgport	83	64	Cldy	Duluth	77	56	PCldy	Janeau	69	47	Cir	Newark	85	68	Cldy
Brownsville	84	79	PCldy	El Paso	89	72	Rain	Kansas City	83	63	PCldy	Norfolk, Va.	82	71	Cldy
Buffalo	81	60	PCldy	Elkins	75	55	Rain	Key West	91	81	PCldy	North Platte	87	57	Cir
Burlington, Vt.	82	56	PCldy	Erie	78	61	Cldy	Knoxville	80	62	Rain	Oklaoma City	84	64	PCldy
Caribou, Maine	78	56	PCldy	Eugene	90	56	PCldy	Lake Charles	87	75	Rain	Omaha	84	62	PCldy
Charleston, S.C.	88	73	PCldy	Fairbanks	64	56	Rain	Lansing	79	61	Cldy	Orlando	93	75	Rain
Charleston, W.Va.	80	60	Cldy	Fargo	83	59	PCldy	Las Vegas	105	85	PCldy	Paducah	84	62	PCldy
Charlotte, N.C.	79	68	Rain	Flagstaff	81	53	Cldy	Lexington	85	62	Cldy	Pendleton	96	67	PCldy
				Fort Smith	83	61	Cldy	Lincoln	86	61	PCldy	Pennaria	81	63	Cldy
							Little Rock	83	62	Cldy	Philadelphia	84	68	Cldy	
							Los Angeles	89	68	Cir	Phoenix	107	90	Cldy	
											Pittsburgh	80	56	Cldy	
											Pocatello	89	58	Cldy	
											Portland, Maine	78	57	PCldy	
											Portland, Ore.	86	61	Cir	
											Providence	82	65	Cldy	
											Pueblo	81	57	Cldy	
											Raleigh-Durham	82	67	Cldy	
											Rapid City	87	59	PCldy	
											Reno	94	62	PCldy	
											Richmond	84	67	Cldy	
											Roanoke	74	66	Rain	
											Rochester	83	58	PCldy	
											Rockford	80	61	Cldy	
											Rockford	80	61	Cldy	
											Sacramento	88	64	Cir	
											St. Louis	85	66	PCldy	
											St. Petersburg	89	79	Rain	
											St. Thomas	89	67	PCldy	
											Salem, Ore.	80	68	Cldy	
											Salt Lake City	90	78	Cldy	
											San Antonio	90	67	Cldy	
											San Diego	81	70	PCldy	
											San Francisco	88	61	PCldy	
											San Jose	87	82	Cir	
											San Juan, P.R.	86	77	PCldy	
											Santa Fe	79	59	Cldy	
											St. Marie	70	50	Cldy	
											St. Petersburg	90	73	Cldy	
											Seattle	82	60	PCldy	
											Shreveport	83	69	Cldy	
											Sioux Falls	81	56	Cir	
											Spokane	93	66	PCldy	
											Springfield, Ill.	81	62	Cldy	
											Syracuse	83	57	PCldy	
											Tallahassee	84	67	Cldy	
											Tampa	90	76	Rain	
											Toledo	81	59	Cldy	
											Topeka	81	61	PCldy	
											Tucson	99	79	Cldy	
											Tulsa	85	61	PCldy	
											Tupelo	82	66	Cldy	
											Waco	89	70	Cldy	
											Wichita Falls	86	66	PCldy	

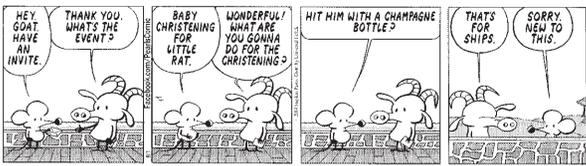
Frazz



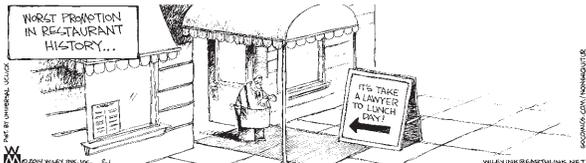
Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



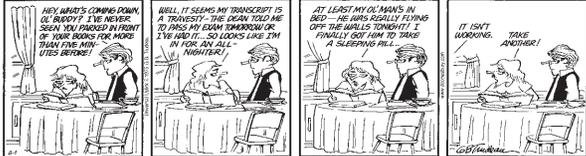
Candorville



Get Fuzzy



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								
53						54				52	
56						57				58	

ACROSS

- 1 Scrooge's cry
- 4 TV ministry letters
- 7 "Star Wars" gangster
- 12 Raw rock
- 13 Motorists' org.
- 14 Flynnt of old Hollywood
- 15 Coffee vessel
- 16 NFL highlight
- 18 Heavy weight
- 19 Deceive
- 20 Clear the decks?
- 22 Lead to a seat, singly
- 23 "M.A.S.H." carrier
- 27 "— Misérables"
- 29 Valencia, for one
- 31 Stogie
- 34 Heat
- 35 Punish a wrongdoer
- 37 "See ya"
- 38 "Champagne music" man
- 39 Eco-friendly org.
- 41 Moist
- 45 Not sharp
- 47 Prohibit
- 48 Big name
- 52 Soccer cheer
- 53 Ritzy violin
- 54 Inseparable
- 55 Badly (Pref.)
- 56 Lady's address

DOWN

- 5 Unfavorable vote
- 8 — relief
- 24 Conclusion
- 25 Id counterpart
- 26 Apiece
- 28 Work unit
- 30 Shaft of light
- 31 Cornfield call
- 32 "— Got a Secret"
- 33 Solidity
- 36 Slithery swimmers
- 37 Cereal fruit
- 40 Produce a play
- 42 Enola Gay payload
- 43 Sasha's sister
- 44 Iron
- 45 Fedora feature
- 46 Deuce beater
- 48 Muppet eagle
- 49 Actress Thurman
- 50 Cushion
- 51 Greek H

Answer to Previous Puzzle

M	A	C	S	H	O	P	S	H	O	W
I	R	A	W	A	S	A	T	O	J	O
S	I	T	T	I	G	H	T	A	D	A
	F	O	P	A	C	C	L	A	I	M
S	W	I	V	E	L	H	A	L		
T	A	G	D	A	M	R	E	E	S	E
E	C	H	O	W	A	R	D	Y	E	R
P	O	T	T	S	P	I	P	E	A	R
			H	A	N	B	E	A	S	T
W	E	B	E	L	O	S	E	L	I	
I	D	O	L	T	W	I	L	I	G	H
G	I	L	L	R	A	C	E	H	U	R
S	T	L	O	E	M	I	R	T	E	Y

8-1

CRYPTOQUIP

O PKCSFZ SGF PKSFIJ BKBBKY

S W T F JFAFQSFZ KR K

ANZXF, TNS SGOR PKR KC

WSSFJ O QWNYZC'S JFQNR.F

Yesterday's Cryptquip: SINCE I HAVE TO SPLIT DIGITAL IMAGES INTO VARIOUS PIECES, I USE A PROGRAM CALLED PHOTOCHOP.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: T equals B

STARS AND STRIPES

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Richard Braun, General Manager, Europe
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Lt. Col. Brian Choate, Pacific command center
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Ernie Gates

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Stars and Stripes (USPS 0471900) is published weekdays (except Dec. 25 and Jan. 1) for 50 cents Monday through Thursday and for \$1 on Friday by Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, APO AP 96338-5002. Periodicals postage paid at San Francisco, CA. Postmaster: Send address changes to Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, APO AP 96338-5002.

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OPINION

We can end veteran homelessness

By MICHELLE OBAMA

Special to McClatchy Washington Bureau

At the beginning of June, 85 mayors, governors and county officials from across the country — and across the political spectrum — signed on to the Mayors Challenge to End Veterans' Homelessness. Today, we're announcing that in the two months since then, 97 more state and local leaders have signed on — meaning that a total of 182 local leaders have pledged to end homelessness among the veterans in their communities by the end of 2015.

I know that might sound like a pipe dream. After all, veteran homelessness is a problem we've faced for decades — in fact, almost 90 percent of all homeless veterans served prior to 9/11. And as a country, we've never been able to rally the resources and the public will to get all of our veterans off the streets and into stable housing.

So why do all these state and local leaders believe that things are any different today? The answer to that question is simple: because today — thanks to federal, state and local leadership and the determined, daily work of advocates on the ground — we're finally seeing that ending veteran homelessness is not just something we should strive to achieve — it's something we actually can.

For example, in recent months, Phoe-

ny and Salt Lake City effectively ended chronic homelessness among their veterans. New Orleans is on track to end all veteran homelessness within the next six months. Last year, New York City helped more than 2,000 veterans get into safe and stable housing. St. Paul and Minneapolis have cut veteran homelessness in half over the last five years, and between the two cities there are just 18 veterans left on the streets.

Any number of veterans left out in the cold is too many, but those numbers show us that even in some of our largest metropolitan areas, ending veteran homelessness is eminently achievable.

My husband has believed this from the moment he took office. That's why he not only vowed to end veteran homelessness, he committed to pledge with new and innovative strategies to get it done. We know that through solutions like "housing first" — an evidence-based strategy to get our veterans into permanent housing before tackling issues like mental health, substance abuse or employment — we can not only do right by our veterans but also save taxpayer money. Quite simply, it's cheaper to pay someone's rent than to pay for hospital bills, law enforcement and so many other services if they're living on the street.

By employing that strategy, even in the midst of a historic recession, we've seen tremendous progress. Since 2008, we've

helped more than 73,000 veterans through the HUD-VASH program, which provides housing vouchers to help homeless veterans pay for permanent, stable housing. And last year alone, under a program called Supportive Services for Veteran Families, we kept more than 60,000 veterans and their family members from falling into homelessness. Next year, we expect that number to grow to more than 100,000.

But we know that this problem can't be solved by Washington alone. It takes local leaders to implement community-wide plans. It takes advocates and service providers who know our veterans by name and can connect them with the services and support that they need. And it takes folks from all across the country making their voices heard and dedicating their time and energy to help these veterans find a place to call home.

So if your mayor hasn't signed on to the mayors challenge, light up their phone lines and ask them why not. If you've got a free minute, contact a local organization in your neighborhood and ask when you can volunteer or where you can donate.

Our veterans have given so much to this country — time and again, with their service and sacrifice, they've shown us who they are. Now it's up to the rest of us to show who we are. It's up to us to show these veterans we've got their backs and end veteran homelessness first and for all.

Michelle Obama is the first lady of the United States.

Is English getting dissed ... or is it growing?

By AMMON SHEA

Is the English language being sacrificed by the young, the linguistically unimpaired and anyone who uses the Internet? Absolutely.

Is that anything new Hardy.

Many words and expressions in common parlance today would have raised the hackles of language scolds in the not-so-distant past. For evidence, let's look at some examples from recent newspaper articles.

Take this sentence from a Toronto Star piece about preparing dinner for a magician. "He tells me about a bogus seance he used to host in his Cabagetown home."

That sentence would have appalled Alfred Ayres, author of the 1894 book "The Verbalist." He considered the word "bogus" to be "incompatible with dignified diction."

Ayres would also have disapproved of an article in the New York Daily News about policing on Staten Island, in which one resident was described as believing "the police were overly aggressive." In Ayres' view, "overly" was a word "used only by the uneducated."

American journalist and short story writer Ambrose Bierce, author of the opinionated 1909 tome "Write It Right," would have quibbled with that New York Times book review last week that called Dan Chiasson's poetry "genially brainy." Bierce dismissed the word "brainy" as "pure slang, and singularly disagreeable."

A writer from the Saturday edition of the Canadian paper the Globe and Mail would have been harshly judged by Emily Post for writing about an area in Detroit that was "lined with mansions belonging to

former auto executives." The writer's sins? In 1945 Post wrote that one should never say "mansion" (big house was preferred) or "auto" (automobile or motor were considered correct).

There was no shortage of examples of this next transgression, so I chose one from the Dubuque Telegraph Herald, which ran a story stating that "A store window sustained \$500 in damage." The 1909 book "Etiquette for Americans" insists that using "the word 'store' for 'shop' is grossly incorrect."

As a further example of how easily words can slip from shunned to accepted, see if you can spot the problems with each of the following three sentences:

■ "Both genders will benefit from the strategic advice on clear communication." (From the Atlanta Journal-Constitution)

■ "Howland ... said her three-year wait for a garden was 'absolutely' worthwhile — for reasons in addition to the peace and joy she experiences from its beauty each day." (From the Boston Globe)

■ "Designed by Soutra Gilmour, this 'Richard III' takes place entirely in the confines of a dilapidated, linoleum-floored office, suggesting a Whitehall run to seed." (From The New York Times)

Stumped? The first example would have run afoul of Henry Fowler, who in his much beloved and hugely influential Dictionary of Modern English Usage (first published in 1926) wrote that the word gender was "a grammatical term only," and that using it to refer to a person's sex was erroneous, unless the author was being jocular.

For a critique of the second example, we turn to Henry Alford, author of the 1864

language guide "The Queen's English." Alford felt that "in the best English, experience is a substantive" — meaning a noun — rather than a verb, which comes as a surprise to all of us who have been experiencing it as a verb all these years.

And in the last instance, our curmudgeonly old friend Ambrose Bierce would have been put out by the use of "dilapidated" to refer to any structure that was not made of stone, since the word contains the Latin root lapis, meaning stone.

Yet all these once-reviled usages have now entered the upper registers of the English language, as evidenced by their recent appearances in respected newspapers that employ editors and copy editors to avoid mistakes.

We should take heart that the changes have come without Western civilization coming to a screeching halt. And I'd go a step further and assert that the flexibility of our language is a sign of health, rather than degeneration.

The fact that we are creating new words, and adding meanings to existing ones, indicates that English is flourishing. Think of that the next time you bristle at the word "friend" being used as a verb or "selfie" used to mean a self-portrait taken with a phone.

English is a fairly young language, as languages go — a teenager, if you will. And it is behaving as most teenagers do: trying out new things, doing its best to annoy anyone over the age of 30, and putting things in its mouth that most people would consider ill-advised.

Ammon Shea is the author of "Bad English: A History of Linguistic Appropriation." This column first appeared in the Los Angeles Times.

Tell us what you think

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OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

Ebola victims are courageous (Raleigh, N.C.) News and Observer

To be a missionary or a health care worker who tends to the poor has always required an admirable level of compassion, but now in West Africa it also requires remarkable courage.

An outbreak of the terrifying Ebola virus in several West African nations is putting those who care for its victims at great risk. Some, such as Liberia's top health official, Dr. Samuel Brisbane, have already paid with their lives.

Others have contracted the disease and are struggling to survive. Two are Americans affiliated with the Boone, N.C.-based missionary group Samaritan's Purse.

One of them is Nancy Writebol, of Charlotte. Writebol and her husband, David, had been working in Liberia and chose to stay on despite the Ebola threat.

Nancy Writebol, a biologist, decontaminated those entering and leaving the Ebola care area at the hospital. She is now gravely ill and being treated in the Liberian capital of Monrovia. She is being kept in isolation, and her husband cannot directly comfort her.

Also infected is Dr. Kent Brantly, 33, medical director for the Ebola care center on the outskirts of Monrovia run by Samaritan's Purse. Brantly, of Fort Worth, Texas, is in serious condition but recognized his symptoms early and has a better chance of surviving. The highly contagious virus has killed nearly 70 people in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone since the outbreak surfaced earlier this year.

In a painful contrast to the compassion and courage showed by Writebol and Brantly, fear of Ebola has panicked some local residents who blame health workers for the spread of the disease. Health workers have been threatened and blocked from entering some villages where infected people are. Despite the threats of disease, Writebol and Brantly stayed to help. May their good deeds be matched by the good fortune of recovery.

Hamas gave Israel no choice (The Miami Herald)

When Hamas decided to initiate rocket attacks on Israel, it invited the furious response that it reaped in July. Three times since 2006, Israel has responded to aerial assaults on its citizens with fierce counterattacks, and each time the fighting has come to an inconclusive end that allows its enemies to replenish their arsenals and start planning for the next round.

Israel's decision to fire three times was unanimously rejected a U.S. proposal for a cease-fire on July 25, though Israel agreed to a 12-hour pause for Saturday. The images from the funerals of Israeli troops are heart-rending. The scenes of horror and destruction in Gaza, gut-wrenching. No one can blame the people of Gaza to endure prolonged misery.

But it was Hamas that wished for the fighting. First, by attacking Israel, and then by rejecting an Egyptian cease-fire proposal because it wanted its own narrow demands addressed first. That included the better restrictions and the terror of dozens of former prisoners Israel rearrested in a crackdown on the West Bank after the abduction and killing of three Israeli teenagers.

Throughout the fighting, Hamas has used the civilian population of Gaza as hostages. That is one big reason the terrorist group has worn out its welcome there.



MOLLY RILEY/AP

World War II veteran and former Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole waves after taking part in a 10th anniversary ceremony for the WWII Memorial in Washington in May. Dole joined Sen. John McCain, Kelly Ayotte, Mark Kirk and Tom Harkin at a news conference last week to promote an equal rights treaty for the disabled around the world.

It uses populated areas to fire deadly rockets into Israel. U.N. officials have also said they twice found Hamas using abandoned schools to conceal dozens of rockets.

The refusal to agree to a cease-fire more than one week ago, along with the discovery of an extensive network of tunnels leading into Israel, triggered the Israeli ground assault and the determination of its government to achieve a twofold aim: destroy the tunnels and degrade Hamas' arsenal to render it ineffective.

Without that, Hamas would be exposed as dangerous and useless. Its control of Gaza has only worsened the lives and prospects of Palestinians who live there.

Israel must also do a better job of avoiding civilian casualties. As mentioned earlier, Hamas thrives amid reports of the deaths of women and children under Israeli attacks. It's an integral part of Hamas' strategy. Thus, Israel has both a moral necessity to avoid civilian casualties and an enormous self-interest in ensuring that mistakes resulting in more civilian killings don't happen.

Marginalizing Hamas and reducing its support among Palestinians is another strategic imperative. The ultimate challenge for Israel is to help provide a better life for Palestinians in the West Bank, giving them a glimpse of a more-peaceful future — including the return of the Palestinian Authority, led by Mahmud Abbas, to power in Gaza. That, of course, requires victory over Hamas and an end to its destructive power.

No more delay ratifying treaty (Los Angeles Times)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities should not be controversial: It requires equal access for the disabled and bans discrimination against them in all countries that sign on. There is no question that the Senate should ratify it. The only issue is why it has any opponents at all.

Modeled after the landmark Americans With Disabilities Act, the treaty has been ratified by 146 countries and the European Union, and has legions of supporters in the United States — veterans groups of different governments, business and civic leaders. It also has bipartisan roots: The George

W. Bush administration participated in drafting it, and President Barack Obama signed it. Although there are a number of Republicans who oppose it, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., is an outspoken advocate, as is former Republican Sen. Majority Leader Bob Dole, who was disabled during his service in World War II. Now 91 and using a wheelchair, Dole recently made his second poignant trip to the Capitol to promote the treaty, urging former colleagues to vote for what he called "not a Republican or a Democrat treaty."

In late 2012, many did vote to ratify it — 61 senators, in fact. But treaties need 67 votes, a two-thirds majority of the Senate. The treaty was opposed by 38 Republican senators, many of whom argued that it would undermine U.S. sovereignty and cede too much decision-making authority to the United Nations. Strong opposition also came from vocal advocates for home schooling who were alarmed by a passage in the treaty that they believe might overrule parents' ability to make decisions about their own disabled children. In fact, the treaty does nothing of the sort.

The bottom line is that the treaty does not trump or alter U.S. laws or those of individual states. And if there is any lingering doubt of that among skeptics, the treaty's backers in the Senate say they will add clarifying language as part of the ratification process to make sure there are no ambiguities. Senate ratification will bring U.S. influence and innovation to other countries that are in the process of expanding access and opportunity for the disabled. This treaty isn't about parents losing authority over their kids or the U.S. losing sovereignty over its citizens. It's about access for the disabled, and a world in which they can travel and thrive without facing discrimination. That's something we all should want.

Russia sanctions no panacea (Boston Herald)

European leaders are now convinced that imposing harsher sanctions on entire sectors of the Russian economy is worth the price they'll pay (literally) on the homefront. And the White House this week announced the U.S. is also preparing sanctions targeting the broader Russian economy. President Barack Obama says the sanctions with "bigger bite" will make a weak Russian economy even weaker.

We'd like to think it will all make a difference to Vladimir Putin, but that view seems optimistic in the extreme. Sanctions imposed thus far have done

little to deter Putin or his proxies battling in eastern Ukraine, even in the wake of global condemnation for the downing of a civilian passenger jet by Russian-backed separatists.

The U.S. upped the pressure this week by releasing images that point to the locations inside Russia from which artillery has been fired over the border into Ukraine. Russia responded to the release by labeling the satellite images "fakes." But really, what else can Putin's minions say?

The announcement of the sanctions was accompanied by new demands that Russia end its aggression in eastern Ukraine. But Secretary of State John Kerry himself said the Russians have indicated not "a shred of evidence that they really have a legitimate desire to end the violence and end the bloodshed." Leaving the rest of us with barely a shred of hope.

Shorter drug sentences help (The Dallas Morning News)

America's effort to use our prisons to stem the illegal drug problem has largely failed.

Incarceration of drug offenders has seen prison and jail populations skyrocket, even as public opinion has shifted away from harsh sentences for nonviolent drug crimes.

That's why the U.S. Sentencing Commission was right to decide in July that some 50,000 federal drug trafficking offenders could be eligible for reduced sentences. The amendment to federal sentencing guidelines, approved in April, is already in effect for offenders facing sentencing in the future, creating an issue of fairness: Why should the length of a sentence be determined by the date of sentencing?

The commission's unanimous decision could see inmates get an average of two years off their prison terms, according to a report in The Washington Post.

America's approach to its drug problem is in evolution. Marijuana is now legal for recreational use in Colorado and Washington. Sentences for peddling crack cocaine are now no more severe than those for peddling powdered cocaine.

Many Americans agree that the nation lost its way with its war on drugs.

Still, the prospect of so many prisoners being released back into society properly raised the concern of a large number of prosecutors and judges who opposed the commission's decision.

The sentencing commission was sensitive to this concern and set an effective date of Nov. 1, 2015, for the release of any prisoner. Prisoners may begin applying for sentence reductions in November.

That demonstrated a fair understanding of the complexity of the issue.

The changes apply to traffickers of all drugs, but it's not yet clear exactly how many of the estimated 60,000 eligible prisoners will actually see their sentences reduced.

Drug offenders will certainly apply for the reductions, but judges will still have to determine whether the person is a danger to the streets sooner than they shuffle out of an illegal drug problem that has destroyed the fabric of large swaths of the country.

Mandatory minimum sentences for some drug offenses remain in place. But the amendment to the guidelines does offer judges flexibility to review offenders' cases and decide whether they deserve the chance to return to society sooner.

SCOREBOARD

Sports

Go to the American Forces Network website for the most up-to-date TV schedules. myafn.net

Golf

Champions Tour statistics

Through July 27

1. Bernhard Langer, 68.20, 2. Jay Haas, 68.47, 3. Colin Montgomerie, 69.00, 4. Fred Couples, 69.56, 5. Kirk Triplett, 69.58, 6. Kenny Perry, 69.83, 7. Joe Durant, 69.98, 8. Tom Lehman, 70.00, 9. Michael Allen, 70.02, 10. Bart Yarnall, 70.05.

Driving Distance

1. John Regier, 292.5, 2. Fred Couples, 291.3, 3. Kenny Perry, 287.7, 4. Doug Garwood, 287.3, 5. Sandy Lyle, 282.1, 6. Jeff Hartwig, 281.3, 7. Billy Anderson, 280.2, 8. Marco Dawson, 278.4, 9. Wes Short, 278.1, 10. Tom Pernice Jr., 278.1.

Putting Average

1. Joe Durant, 81.75%, 2. Jeff Hartwig, 80.41%, 3. Fred Funk, 80.36%, 4. Morris Hatfield, 79.40%, 5. Tom Watson, 79.12%, 6. Bob Gilder, 78.99%, 7. Mark McNulty, 78.75%, 8. Wayne Grine, 78.61%, 9. Hale Irwin, 77.69%, 10. John Olin, 77.47%.

Winning Percentage

1. Bernhard Langer, 79.17%, 2. Tom Lehman, 79.12%, 3. Joe Durant, 75.39%, 4. Kenny Perry, 74.60%, 5. Jay Haas, 73.26%, 6. Steve Pate, 74.69%, 7. Russ Cochran, 73.99%, 8. Fred Couples, 74.07%, 9. Jeff Sluman, 73.36%, 10. John Cook, 73.33%.

Total Driving

1. Joe Durant, 19, 2. Bernhard Langer, 25, 3. Tom Lehman, 32, 4. Russ Cochran, 39, 5. John Regier, 40, 6. Fred Couples, 50, 7. Tom Watson and Michael Allen, 52, 8. Bart Yarnall, 53, 9. Marco Dawson, 56.

Putting Average

1. Jay Haas, 1.712, 2. Fred Couples, 1.717, 3. David Frost, 1.721, 4. Mark McNulty, 1.727, 5. Bernhard Langer, 1.730, 6. Michael Allen, 1.737, 7. Mark O'Meara, 1.740, 8. Kirk Triplett, 1.743, 9. Hale Irwin, 1.750, 10. John Olin, 1.751.

Arnie's Round

1. Bernhard Langer, 5.02, 2. Fred Couples, 4.73, 3. Colin Montgomerie, 4.39, 4. Joe Durant, 4.36, 5. Kenny Perry, 4.36, 6. Kirk Triplett, 4.03, 8, 4. Kirk Triplett, 4.04, 7. Kirk Triplett, 4.03, 8, 4. Kirk Triplett, 4.03, 8, 4. Kirk Triplett, 4.03, 8.

Eagles (holes per)

1. Kirk Triplett, 0.43, 2. Fred Funk, 0.78, 3. Tom Watson, 0.94, 4. (tie), Fred Couples, 0.95, 5. Joe Durant, 0.90, 6. Kenny Perry, 1.02, 7. (tie), Steve Pate, 1.03, 8. Steve Pate, 1.32, 9. Tom Pernice Jr., 1.35, 10, 2. Fred Couples, 1.35, 10, 2. Fred Couples, 1.35, 10, 2.

Sand Save Percentage

1. Jay Haas, 69.57%, 2. Brad Faxon, 67.24%, 3. Chen Soon Lu, 64.71%, 4. Duffy Waldorf, 61.82%, 5. Brian Henninger, 60.97%, 6. Willie Wood, 60.29%, 7. Bobby Clampett, 60.00%, 8. Jim Gallagher Jr., 58.39%, 9. Steve Sniot, 57.14%, 10. Corey Pavin, 56.00%.

Around Running

1. Jay Haas, 90.2, 2. Tom Lehman, 106.3, 3. Fred Couples, 127, 4. Bernhard Langer, 129, 5. Kenny Perry, 132, 6. Tom Lehman, 146, 7. Colin Montgomerie, 149, 8. Bart Yarnall, 150, 9. Joe Durant, 157, 10. Kirk Triplett, 160.

Champions Tour

Charles Schwab Cup leaders

Through July 27

1. Bernhard Langer, 3,075, 2. Colin Montgomerie, 3,107, 3. Fred Couples, 3,129, 4. Fred Couples, 3,133, 5. Kirk Triplett, 3,142, 6. Kenny Perry, 3,152, 7. Fred Couples, 3,157, 8. Fred Couples, 3,162, 9. Gene Sauer, 3,167, 10. Tom Pernice Jr., 3,172, 11. Tom Pernice Jr., 3,177, 12. Michael Allen, 3,180, 13. Russ Cochran, 3,185, 14. David Frost, 3,190, 15. Tom Watson, 3,195, 16. Mark Calavecchia, 3,200, 17. Tom Lehman, 3,205, 18. Bart Yarnall, 3,210, 19. Duffy Waldorf, 3,215, 20. Willie Wood, 3,220, 21. Jeff Maggert, 3,225, 22. Fred Couples, 3,230, 23. Scott Dunlap, 3,235, 24. Fred Couples, 3,240, 25. Rocco Mediate, 3,245, 26. Fred Funk, 3,250, 27. Fred Couples, 3,255, 28. Mark Brooks, 3,260, 29. Fred Couples, 3,265, 30. Barry Lane, 3,270, 31. Doug Gibson, 3,275, 32. Doug Gibson, 3,280, 33. Mark McNulty, 3,285, 34. Fred Couples, 3,290, 35. Vijay Singh, 3,295, 36. Bob Tway, 3,300, 37. Fred Couples, 3,305, 38. Esteban Toledo, 3,310, 39. Chen Soon Lu, 3,315, 40. John Cook, 3,320, 41. John Cook, 3,325, 42. Jeff Hart.

AP sportlight

1936 - The Olympic Games open in Berlin. The opening ceremonies are presided over by Adolf Hitler.

1960 - The Olympic Games open in Rome. The opening ceremonies are presided over by Pope John XXIII.

1972 - Nate Colbert of the San Diego Padres drives in 13 runs in a double-no-run conference, saving the Padres' year tie to the troubled Southwest Conference.

2010 - Yani Tseng of Taiwan makes a hole-in-one on the 18th hole to win the 2010 ANI Open in Australia. It's the first time Tseng has won a major title and second of the year to go along with the Kraft Nabisco.

2011 - Mike Tyson wins the undisputed heavyweight championship with a knockout over Evander Holyfield in Las Vegas.

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Tennis

Bank of the West Classic

A U.S. Open Series event

Wednesday

At The Taubman Center Tennis Center, Stanford, Calif.

Purse: \$710,000 (Premier)

Surface: Hard (outdoor)

Singles

Sachia Vickery, United States, def. Monica Puig, Puerto Rico, 6-7, 4-1, 6-2, 6-3, 6-4, 6-3.

Varvara Lepchenko, United States, def. Agnieszka Radwanska, (2), Poland, 6-3, 6-6, 4-4.

N. Pietrangeli, Italy, def. J. J. Wu, China, 6-3, 6-4, 6-3.

Serena Williams, (1), United States, def. Caroline Garcia, Czech Republic, 7-5, 6-2.

Doubles

First Round

Daniela Hantuchova, Slovakia, and Arantxa Parra Santonja, Spain, def. Daria Gavrilova, Russia, and Xu Yi-Fan, China, 6-2, 7-2, 10-8.

Paulina Kucna, Poland, and Katarina Siniakova, Czech Republic, def. Chan Hao-ching, Taiwan, and Andrea Petkovic, (4), Germany, 6-2, 3-6, 10-8.

Garbine Muguruza and Carla Suarez Navarro, def. Sania Mirza and Peng Shuai, China, 6-0, 7-5.

Quaterfinals

United States, 6-4, 5-7, 6-4.

Spain, 7-6 (6), 6-4, 6-3.

France, 6-4, 6-3, 6-4.

United States, 6-2, 7-6 (3), 6-3.

Pro soccer

MLS

Eastern Conference

Washington, D.C., 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

New York Red Bulls, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Columbus Crew, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Philadelphia Union, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Chicago Fire, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Montreal Impact, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Seattle Sounders, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Real Salt Lake, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Los Angeles Galaxy, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Colorado Rapids, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

FC Dallas, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Portland Timbers, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

San Jose Earthquakes, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.

Western Conference

Seattle Sounders, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

New York Red Bulls, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Philadelphia Union, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Chicago Fire, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Montreal Impact, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Seattle Sounders, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Real Salt Lake, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Los Angeles Galaxy, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Colorado Rapids, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

FC Dallas, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Portland Timbers, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

San Jose Earthquakes, 11, 5, 4, 4, 16

Note: Three points for victory, one point for tie.

MLS

Washington, D.C.,

NFL

'Burner' sidelines Giants RB Wilson

By JIM HAGUE

The Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — New York Giants running back David Wilson will not practice for the rest of the week and is out for Sunday's Hall of Fame game after suffering what the team called a "burner" in practice on Tuesday.

Late in Tuesday afternoon's practice, Wilson took a short pass from backup quarterback Curtis Painter and ran with his head down into the back of reserve guard Eric Herman.

Soon after, Wilson was taken off the field by an assistant trainer.

After practice, Giants coach Tom Coughlin said that Wilson suffered a "burner."

Wilson underwent fusion surgery to repair vertebrae and a herniated disc in his neck in January.

He had just received clearance to return to full action when the Giants began training camp last week before the most recent injury.

On Wednesday morning, on the team's scheduled day off from training camp, a team spokesman said that Wilson underwent tests at the Hospital for Special Surgery and that the 23-year-old former first-round selection would not practice for the remainder of the week.

Wilson will also not play when the Giants face the Buffalo Bills in the first preseason game of the year, the Hall of Fame Game in Canton, Ohio, on Sunday night.

According to team spokesman Pat Hanlon, Wilson will be "examined and evaluated" by Dr. Frank Cammisia of the Hospital for Special Surgery on Monday.

Cammisia, the chief of spine services at HSS, was the specialist who performed the fusion surgery on Wilson on Jan. 16.

Wilson is entering his third season after the Giants selected him in the first round (32nd overall) of the 2012 draft out of Virginia Tech.

He had a solid rookie season, rushing for 353 yards and scoring four touchdowns, while gaining 1,533 yards in kickoff returns, including a 97-yard return for a score.

In a game against the New Orleans Saints, Wilson set a team record for all-purpose yards, accumulating 327 yards in a 52-7 win.

Wilson returned four kickoffs for 227 yards, including a 97-yarder for a touchdown, while



BILL KOSTRUN/AP

New York Giants running back David Wilson had just received clearance to return to full action when the Giants began training camp last week following fusion surgery in January to repair vertebrae and a herniated disc in his neck.

rushing for 100 yards on 13 carries and two more touchdowns. He became the first player in NFL history to have 200 kick return yards and 100 yards rushing in the same game.

Wilson did not have a successful second season. After being counted on to be the team's No. 1 running back, Wilson rushed for only 146 yards on 44 carries (3.3 yards per rush) and lost three fumbles.

He left the game against Philadelphia Oct. 6 with what was first believed to be a "stinger," but was later diagnosed as being spinal stenosis, ending his season and forcing the January fusion surgery.

The surgery was believed to be career-threatening at that time, but Wilson, who claimed he never felt any pain at all through the process, was determined to return.

"I was staying positive and not hearing any of that," Wilson said earlier this year. "It was weird, because it was hard to worry because I felt nothing. I did my research, weighed the pros and cons, and had the surgery. But I never felt any pain."



LENNY IONELZI/AP

San Diego Chargers wide receiver Keenan Allen hauls in a long pass in seven-on-seven drills during a July 24 practice at the team's training camp in San Diego.

Tough love works for Allen

Chargers' wide receiver considered quitting as a rookie

By JAY PARIS

The Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Keenan Allen really did think about quitting last summer.

"It was just a thought," the San Diego Chargers' top wide receiver said. "But it was tough."

Allen was referring to his initial training camp, when the third-round pick from California could do little right. He heard often from coach Mike McCoy, and it was mostly for what Allen wasn't doing.

His mistakes compounded, he didn't play in the season opener and Allen considered ending an NFL career before it really got started.

"Last year I wasn't real comfortable in camp," Allen said. "It was tough getting over to the coach's good side. Being a rookie, he was just talking down to you every time but that was just part of the game. But the plays didn't feel comfortable and it was hard to get the terminology down."

Allen rebounded and compiled one of the most impressive rookie seasons in Chargers history. He set franchise rookie marks in receptions (71) and receiving yards (a team-high 1,046). He led all NFL rookies in catches, yards and touchdowns (eight).



LENNY IONELZI/AP

San Diego Chargers wide receiver Keenan Allen set team rookie marks in receptions and receiving yards. He also led all NFL rookies in catches, yards and touchdowns last season.

McCoy's tough love paid off.

"It took him some time last year to get adjusted to the pro game and practice the way he should with the talent he has," McCoy said after Saturday's workout.

Now Allen is a big cog in the Chargers' offense.

"I had a good year last year," Allen said. "And I'm going to get a lot of attention this year. But with Malcom (Floyd) over there, teams aren't going to be able to double-

team me."

When Floyd suffered a sprained neck Sept. 15 at Philadelphia, that opened the door for the 6-foot-2, 211-pound Allen. He responded in a way few thought possible after an uneven training camp and mediocre showings in preseason games.

"Ever since the Philadelphia game he hasn't skipped a beat," McCoy said.

With Floyd sidelined, Allen's role quickly expanded.

"He is sort of like a veteran now because he was thrown into the fire last year," Floyd said.

Floyd's return takes some pressure off Allen. However, Allen is now known commodity, unlike last year when he battled for early season snaps and quarterback Philip Rivers' attention.

"I just want to come out, get better every day and don't take any step backward," Allen said. "Just stay consistent and keep building that chemistry with Philip."

Allen is focusing on his burst and said he's added a few pounds as well.

"I really attacked my speed this offseason and I'm just trying to get quicker off the ball," Allen said. "I want to be a deep threat ... I just want to build off last year and be the best I can be."

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NFL

'I couldn't go without my wingman'

Humphrey to savor HOF induction with grandson

By CHARLES ODUM
The Associated Press

Claude Humphrey wishes he could have made the Pro Football Hall of Fame "a long time ago where I could have actually enjoyed it more."

Even so, there's a bonus for Humphrey, the former defensive end for the Atlanta Falcons and Philadelphia Eagles. Now that he's 70, it's the perfect time for Humphrey's 12-year-old grandson to savor the honor with him.

Humphrey's daughter, Cheyenne Humphrey-Robinson, will make the introductory speech at the ceremony. Sitting in the audience will be her son, Archie Robinson Jr.

"I couldn't go without my wingman," Humphrey said.

"It's a legacy for my only grandson. He gets a chance to learn a little something about his granddad. It's something I don't have to tell him. Other people can tell him. He won't think I'm telling him a lie."

The young Robinson will learn Humphrey was one of the game's most feared pass rushers during a career that began in 1968 and spanned three decades, including the 1979-81 seasons in Philadelphia.

Humphrey is credited with 94½

sacks for a loss of 557 yards for the Falcons from 1968-78. Each total is a team record, but because sacks weren't officially recorded until 1982, Humphrey is convinced

the numbers should be higher.

"Before they started keeping records of sacks, man, I was getting sacks left and right," he said. "That statistic they have has got to be wrong. ... The thing about me, I didn't care so much about getting the sack. A sack was just a tackle back then. Tackling the quarterback or tackling the ball-carrier on a running play was all the same."

Humphrey is only the second player drafted by the Falcons to make the Hall, following Deion Sanders.

"Having Claude in is great because he represents the old guys," said longtime Falcons linebacker Greg Brezina, who was a rookie with Humphrey in 1968.

"He was a great athlete. One of the best things about him was his winning attitude. He was a team player and, of course, he's prob-

ably one of the best defensive ends that there was out there. It's just a shame he played so long with a team that didn't win much. He didn't get the recognition."

By the Falcons' count, Humphrey set a career high with 15 sacks in 1976. STATS doesn't list his sacks because the records are incomplete.

That's OK with Humphrey, who wants to be remembered as more than a sacks specialist.

"The thing about my career is I just didn't concentrate on sacking the quarterback," Humphrey said. "I concentrated on being the total football player. Like batting the balls. Now it's considered a 'hurry,' but back then it was just a batted ball. I would always be in competition with the defensive backs to see if I could get as many batted balls as they got."

Falcons coach Mike Smith remembers Humphrey as "an all-around defensive end who could single-handedly wreck the game."

"I remember Claude really before they had pass-rush specialists and all that," Smith said, adding Humphrey posted two five-sack games with Atlanta.

"It speaks volumes of what kind of player he is," Smith said.

Humphrey temporarily retired after four games in 1978 — missing his only chance at the playoffs with Atlanta. He returned with



Humphrey



NFL Photos/AP

Defensive end Claude Humphrey, shown here in a 1978 photo moving in on Los Angeles Rams quarterback Pat Haden, played 13 seasons in the NFL with the Atlanta Falcons and Philadelphia Eagles.

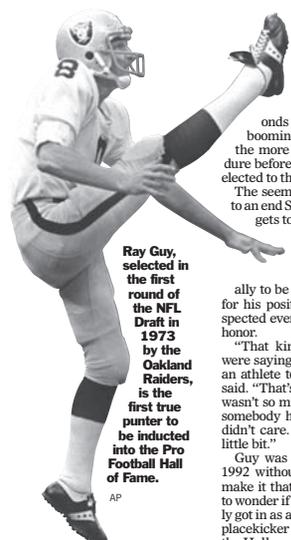
the Eagles and finally reached the Super Bowl in the 1980 season, when he had 14½ sacks.

The Eagles lost to the Raiders in Super Bowl XV, but at least Humphrey had his long-awaited chance to play in the biggest game after so many losing seasons in Atlanta.

"It was the most exciting thing that could have ever happened to me," he said. "I went to Philadelphia to try to get on a winning team and experience what I experienced in college at Tennessee State. We were national champions two years in a row."

Guy's long wait for Hall of Fame comes to an end

By JOSH DUOH
The Associated Press



Ray Guy, selected in the first round of the NFL Draft in 1973 by the Oakland Raiders, is the first true punter to be inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Ray Guy built a Hall of Fame career of making other people wait.

Those anxious seconds for punt returns awaiting his booming kicks were nothing compared to the more than two decades Guy had to endure before finally getting the call that he was elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

The seemingly interminable wait will come to an end Saturday in Canton, Ohio, when Guy gets to put on the Hall of Fame blazer for the first time as he becomes the first true punter to get inducted into the exclusive club.

As much as Guy wanted personally to be a Hall of Famer, he also wanted it for his position, which he believed got disrespected every time he was passed over for the honor.

"That kind of bothered me because they were saying that's not a position, it doesn't take an athlete to do that, it's not important," Guy said. "That's what really got under my skin. It wasn't so much whether I did or didn't. I wish somebody had. It was just knowing that they didn't care. That's what kind of frosted me a little bit."

Guy was a finalist seven times starting in 1992 without being voted in and didn't even make it that far countless others, leaving him to wonder if the call would ever come. He finally got in as a senior's nominee this year, joining placekicker Jan Stenerud as the only kickers in the Hall.

Guy is the perfect player for the honor because he is credited with revolutionizing the position after being the only punter taken in the first round when Raiders owner Al Davis took him 23rd overall in 1973.

His kicks went so high that one that hit the Superdome scoreboard 90 feet above the field in a Pro Bowl helped put "Haven't I got it into the football vernacular. His ability to pin the opponent deep with either high kicks or well-positioned ones was a key part of the success for the great Raiders teams of the 1970s and 80s.

"It was something that was given to me. I don't know how," he said. "I'm really blessed in that category. It's something I really appreciate and I advanced it and made it into something great."

Guy's statistics look somewhat pedestrian compared to today's punters. His career average of 42.4 yards per kick ranks 61st all-time and his net average of 32.2 yards (excluding his first three seasons when the statistic wasn't kept by the NFL) isn't even in the top 100. Yet, he still is considered by many as the best to ever play the position and is widely respected



Guy



Hall of Fame induction ceremony

AFN-Sports
1 a.m. Sunday CET
8 a.m. Sunday JKT

in the fraternity of punters, including about 20 who plan to attend the induction.

"He should be first because he played his position in an outstanding manner in his era, and more important than that, he brought great notoriety to the position," said Sean Landetta, an NFL punter for 22 seasons. "You're talking about the Hall of Fame and the most famous punter is Ray Guy."

Guy also earned the respect of his teammates on the Raiders, who considered him much more than a specialist and a key component on three Super Bowl champions with his ability to change field position every time he kicked the ball.

"It should not have taken this long to recognize him," former Raiders defensive back George Atkinson said. "He was quite a weapon for us. Not only could he get the ball up high with hang time, but he also had great placement."

Those are some of the reasons why Davis bucked conventional wisdom and took Guy out of South Mississippi in 1973. One of the sad byproducts of Guy's long wait to get into the Hall of Fame is that one his biggest backers, Davis, won't be there to see it. The former Raiders owner died in 2011. Guy also said he will be emotional thinking of his deceased parents and his college coach, P.W. Underwood.

With Davis not there, Guy has chosen his Hall of Fame coach, John Madden, to introduce him. Guy also said it is comforting to know that Davis' wife, Carol, and son, Mark, will be in the audience, along with many of his former teammates.

"That will make it a little bit easier, but the leader won't be there," he said. "But he will be. All he's gonna say is, 'Just win, baby.'"

NFL



faking the bad with the good

Playing on struggling teams only made Williams stand out more

By **BOB BAUM**
The Associated Press

APHOENIX eneas Williams spent most of his NFL career on bad teams. But that didn't prevent him from pursuing excellence, becoming one of the best cornerbacks in the league and earning a spot in the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

In his 10 seasons with Arizona, the Cardinals had one winning season.

But despite that, he either led or shared the NFL lead in interceptions three times and made six Pro Bowls. Williams never missed a game and started all but one. He had a streak of 157 consecutive starts.

And he never let the poor play around him affect his performance.

"Just refuse to become a loser even though we weren't winning a whole lot of games," Williams said.

He finally made it to the playoffs with the Cardinals in 1998, then intercepted two passes as Arizona stunned the Cowboys in Dallas in the first round.

"I really saw the makings of what

the current (Cardinals) organization is experiencing now," Williams said.

But the Cardinals slipped back into their inept ways and, after a decade in the desert, Williams left to join a winner.

On draft day of 2001, the Cardinals traded him to St. Louis for draft picks.

He started at left cornerback, helping transform a woeful Rams defense, and St. Louis reached the Super Bowl, where it lost to Tom Brady and the New England Patriots 20-17.

Williams had 55 interceptions, including eight seasons with at least four. He made the Hall of Fame in his third time as a finalist.

He carries with him a congratulatory note he got from Jay Zygmunt, former Rams president of football operations.

Williams read it aloud, his voice cracking a bit with emotion.

Zygmunt started by saying he had been associated with many great players in his 27 years with the Rams.

"You're at the top of that list with your incredible play," Williams read. "But your exemplary life as a man even surpasses your performance and accomplishments on the field."

St. Louis' Aeneas Williams celebrates breaking up a pass against San Francisco on Dec. 9, 2001 in St. Louis. Williams spent most of his pro career on bad teams, but made it to the Super Bowl after being traded to the Rams in 2001.

Bill Boyce/AP

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Big Ten teams just looking for chance

Conference favorites, underdogs excited about playoff possibilities

By Andrew Seligman
The Associated Press

CHICAGO — As he watched the BCS championship game last season, Michigan State quarterback Connor Cook could not help but wonder:

What if a playoff system were in place? Would the Spartans be the player for the biggest prize?

No need to wonder anymore. The old BCS system is out. A four-team playoff to determine a national champion is being implemented this season, and that could open some more opportunities for the Big Ten and the other four power conferences.

"Hopefully, this will give everyone an equal opportunity to play for a national championship, which everyone wants," Cook said Tuesday as the Big Ten wrapped up its two-day media event.

It was a chance the Spartans would have loved last season.

They went 13-1, beat Ohio State in the Big Ten championship game and knocked off Stanford to capture the Rose Bowl. But when the BCS matchup arrived, it was Florida State taking on Auburn.

"You're watching Auburn and Florida State and [thinking], 'You know what? If we were playing either one of these teams, we feel like we could have won,'" Cook said.

The last Big Ten team to win a national championship was Ohio State in 2002, and no one from the conference has played for one since the 2007 season, when the Buckeyes lost their second straight BCS title game.

Michigan State comes into this season with big goals. So does Ohio State after going 23-2 overall and 16-0 in regular-season

New system could have minuses, too

The new system probably won't solve everything. There will be that fifth — and sixth, seventh or eighth — team that feels it deserves to be in the field.

For fans, travel could be an issue. If they go to the first playoff game, will they be able to afford a second trip? And if they decide to wait a round, their team might be eliminated.

The playoffs could also be a grind for the players, Ohio State coach Urban Meyer said. Ohio State could go from playing rival Michigan to the Big Ten title game, a semifinal and a national championship.

"That's a tough road," said Meyer, who's in favor of the playoffs. "I think the teams that play a rival, then a championship game ... at Florida, we played FSU and then played the SEC championship game, then played the title game. Now you add one more after that. I'm not sure you've got enough steam in the engine to finish that game."

— The Associated Press

conference play its first two years under coach Urban Meyer, but it's not just the traditional powerhouses. Competitive programs that aren't quite marquee names see an opportunity now that a playoff system is in place.

How about a national champi-



PAUL BEATY/AP

Michigan State QB Connor Cook talks to the media during the Big Ten Football Media Day in Chicago on Monday. Cook is very much in favor of college football's new four-team playoff. "Hopefully, this will give everyone an equal opportunity to play for a national championship, which everyone wants," he said.

onship for Northwestern at some point? To coach Pat Fitzgerald, that's now a possibility and his reasoning goes beyond unbridled enthusiasm.

He sees a more even field and a bigger opportunity for his program under the new system. A big reason is the initial Top 25 released by the selection committee in late October will be based solely on performance to that point. The BCS Top 25 was released around the same time, but it incorporated the coaches and Harris polls, which had pre-season rankings. That, in turn, might have skewed the strength of schedule component.

"Up until this year, I don't know if we did [have a shot]," Fitzgerald said. "I don't know if we did.

I'm not sexy. We're not sexy, you know? Our fans don't click on websites enough, on dot-com sites. All that nonsense is gone. It's all gone, and I'm not saying the BCS was bad. You've got to win, period, and I like it. I think everybody in this room should feel real confident that if you win the Big Ten championship game with a competitive schedule [you'll be in the playoff]. And you've got to win now. Don't think in any of these conferences that you're going to be a nine-win conference champion or a 10-win conference champion and you're going to be in the final four; it ain't gonna happen."

Under the new system, Fitzgerald said, strength of schedule becomes a more fluid element. Playing an opponent that is un-

expectedly struggling could hurt it. Then again, a team on the loss might give it a boost. And what about a team that's short-handed because of injuries?

"We play a team in November that may have won eight games already but lost two or three of their star players in one of those games, and now we beat them by three touchdowns," Fitzgerald said. "Now, the narrative from you guys is Michigan didn't have A, B and C, that's why Northwestern won by three touchdowns. That's what's going to be interesting to me, how those things influence it as opposed to what the strength of your conference has been in the past."

SEC: LSU has lost more underclassmen to draft than any other program over past 2 years

FROM BACK PAGE

It also creates some potential headaches for those who have — sometimes unexpectedly — more job openings leading into August, not that coaches around the country have much sympathy.

LSU has lost 18 underclassmen to the draft over the past two years. Since the league's title run began in 2007, the SEC has had nearly as many early departures drafted (109) as the next two leagues combined. The Pacific-12 (57) and Atlantic Coast Conference (54) rank second and third, according to research by STATs, Inc.

The 49 first-round selections among underclassmen during that span tops the Pac-12, ACC and Big Ten combined (44).

The exodus can affect the quality of play at certain positions even with a new wave of four- and five-star recruits coming in annually around the SEC, which had its seven-year run of producing BCS champions halted by Florida State in January.

Alabama had three junior cornerbacks picked in the first round from 2010-2013,

Big gains

Some of the players who should benefit from teammates leaving early for the NFL:

- Texas A&M quarterback Kyle Allen is competing to replace 2012 Heisman Trophy winner Johnny Manziel.
- LSU tailback Leonard Fournette, considered the nation's top-rated prospect, should carve out a role for himself after Jeremy Hill and Alfred Blue both left with eligibility remaining.
- Alabama's Cam Robinson is the apparent front-runner to replace left tackle Cyrus Koussior.

and a position of strength became a weak link last season with several young players thrust into big roles.

"I think we recruit a lot of good players in this league," said Crimson Tide coach Nick Saban, who played 14 freshmen last season. "What it does for me, and what it does for our team, I guess is what I should

say, is the players turn over more quickly so you play more players.

"It's not that those players aren't good players, but in some cases they might be playing a little bit before they're ready to play."

Alabama will have five-star freshmen Tony Brown and Marlon Humphrey vying for playing time at cornerback when camp starts.

The SEC has had 60 underclassmen enter the draft the past two years, counting players who graduated but had eligibility remaining. Not all have been hot commodities.

The latest group had six juniors picked in the first round and nine go undrafted, nearly one-third of the 28 SEC players who declared for the draft.

Former LSU and NFL defensive lineman Marcus Spears said the players leaving creates a big challenge in having enough depth to overcome injuries and other issues, and forces coaches like Miles to plan ahead in recruiting.

"You have to be able to look out maybe

a year or two years in advance and kind of start honing in on those guys that can come in and replace them and play right away," said Spears, now an analyst for the SEC Network. "When you lose those guys, it is a huge void, especially those underclassmen that apply for the draft. Having guys in the stable is very important."

The good news for newcomers: There are plenty of opportunities for playing time, partly because of players not sticking around for senior seasons.

Some prospects are weighing their career options long before they arrive on campus.

"I've had three (prospects), and these guys are like 16 years old, they're saying, 'I'll go out and don't make it, you're going to put me back on scholarship if I want to come back, right?'" Saban said. "I'm saying this guy just got his driver's license and he's got this figured out already ... But still they've really minimized in some cases their chances of being successful, having a career as a football player."

SPORTS BRIEFS/MLB



MICHAEL DWYER/AP

Jon Lester is headed to Oakland after the Red Sox dealt their ace to the A's for outfielder Yoanis Cespedes. Lester is 10-7 and has a career-best 2.52 ERA in 21 starts this year.



TONY GUTIERREZ/AP

Slugger Yoanis Cespedes follows through on a home run against Texas on Saturday. Cespedes was traded to Boston for Jon Lester, the top pitcher on the market, and Jonny Gomes.

Briefly

A's get Lester from dealing Red Sox for OF Cespedes

The Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — The Oakland Athletics acquired left-hander Jon Lester along with outfielder Jonny Gomes from the Boston Red Sox for slugging outfielder Yoanis Cespedes before Thursday's trade deadline, in a deal confirmed by both teams.

The acquisition is yet another blockbuster deal by A's general manager Billy Beane to win the Lester sweepstakes. Oakland, with the best record in baseball at 66-41, also receives cash from Boston. The Red Sox get a draft pick.

That was not the only deal for either team.

The Red Sox also traded right-hander John Lackey to the St. Louis Cardinals for right-hander Joe Kelly and outfielder Allen Craig, a person with knowledge of the deal said.

The Athletics traded left-hander Tommy Milone to the Minnesota Twins for outfielder Sam Fuld.

Lester is announcing the deal Thursday morning. Lester is having an outstanding season with a 10-7 record and a career-best 2.52 ERA in 21 starts. He's allowed seven earned runs in his last eight games with 54 strikeouts and nine walks. But the Red Sox put him on the trading block because he can become a free agent after the season.

He was sought by many teams, including the Pittsburgh Pirates and the Los Angeles Dodgers. The 30-year-old, three-time All-Star originally was scheduled to start Wednesday night for the slumping Red Sox, who instead scratched Lester ahead of the trade deadline.

It's unclear what day Lester would start. Sonny Gray (12-3) is scheduled for Friday, but manager Bob Melvin has discussed the idea of giving some pitchers extra days between outings to keep them fresh in the second half.

Beane believes in starting pitching depth, and the A's sure have it. Lester joins Gray, Scott Kazmir and recently acquired Jeff Samardzija and Jason Hammel, each dealt by the Chicago Cubs on July 4.

The 28-year-old Cespedes won the past two Home Run Derby titles at the All-Star Game.

The Cuban left fielder is in the third season of a \$36 million, four-year contract he signed before spring training in 2012. Cespedes is batting .256 with 17 homers and 67 RBIs, 26 doubles and three triples.

Lackey was 11-7 with a 3.60 ERA as the No. 2 starter in Boston's rotation.

Fuld began the season with Oakland. The A's liked

Fuld coming out of spring training but designated him for assignment April 12. The Twins claimed him off waivers eight days later.

He and Gomes are likely to compete for time in left field in place of Cespedes.

Nadal out of 2 events because of wrist

Rafael Nadal withdrew Wednesday from U.S. Open tuneups in Toronto and Cincinnati because of a right wrist injury, putting in doubt his status for a title defense at the year's last Grand Slam tournament.

The second-ranked Nadal plays left-handed, but he uses a two-handed backhand.

He said in a statement issued by the Toronto tournament that he injured himself Tuesday.

In a posting on Facebook, Nadal said he is "disappointed" that he can't play the next two weeks but adds, "I expect to be well for the U.S. Open."

The Toronto tournament begins Monday, and the Cincinnati tournament starts Aug. 11. Nadal won both of those events last year.

■ Two-time major champion Li Na pulled out of the U.S. Open on Thursday because of a knee injury which she said has bothered her for several months.

The only tennis player from China to win a Grand Slam singles title also withdrew from hard-court tournaments in Montreal and Cincinnati over the next two weeks.

Cowboys sign OT Smith to extension

OXNARD, Calif. — Tyrion Smith has a new contract that will probably make him the most important blocker for the next Dallas quarterback after Tony Romo.

The Pro Bowl left tackle signed an eight-year, \$98 million extension Wednesday that pushes the total value of his deal to \$110 million over 10 years, locking him up through 2023.

The extension includes a \$10 million signing bonus and \$40 million in guaranteed money. Smith joins Romo as the only Cowboys with contracts valued at more than \$100 million.

In other NFL news:

■ Bengals cornerback Chris Lewis-Harris was suspended for two games Wednesday for violating the NFL's substance abuse policy.

Roundup

Nationals hold on to lead this time

The Associated Press

MIAMI — As the Washington Nationals prepared to take the field with a three-run lead in the ninth, they braced themselves for another comeback but by the feisty Miami Marlins.

This time the Nationals held on — barely. Drew Storen allowed two runs before securing the final out for his first save since August 2013, and Washington averted a series sweep by snapping Miami's six-game winning streak with a 4-3 victory Wednesday.

"It's not always going to be pretty," Storen said. "It's about getting it done. That's all that matters."

Manager Matt Williams decided to rest closer Rafael Soriano, who hasn't pitched since he blew a three-run ninth-inning lead in Washington's loss Monday. That left Storen to try to finish off the Marlins, who had won nine of their past 10 games to rejoin the playoff race.

"That's a good team over there," the Nationals' Ian Desmond said. "In the dugout going out for the bottom of the ninth we were telling each other, 'Hey, we've got to focus and finish this thing out.' For a while we've seen the Marlins getting better. This series was evidence of that. That bottom of the ninth was evidence of that."

NI RBI leader Giancarlo Stanton led off the ninth with his 24th homer, and Adeiny Hechavarria doubled home a run. Storen retired Reid Johnson on a forceout with two on for the final out.

"I was happy to see us come back and put some pressure on them," Stanton said. "I really envisioned us staying that game up."

Giants 7, Pirates 5: Reliever Jean Machi and San Francisco took advantage of a huge baserunning blunder by their visiting opponent, tagging out two runners who were sent away on the same play and beating Pittsburgh to end a six-game losing streak that matched its longest of the season.

The Pirates, who had won three in a row, led 5-4 in the sixth when Chris Stewart drew a one-out walk with runners on second and third.

Machi (6-0) got the ball back from the catcher and noticed Travis Snider had left second base, thinking it was a bases-loaded walk. Machi threw to shortstop Brandon Crawford to trap Snider in a rundown. Crawford tagged out Snider, then threw to Machi to catch Gaby Sanchez in a rundown when he broke home from third. Machi tossed back to third baseman Pablo Sandoval for the tag.

Justin Wilson (3-2) took the loss. Santiago Casilla, San Francisco's fifth reliever after Tim Lincecum's short start, earned his eighth save in 11 chances.

Indians 2, Mariners 0: Corey Kluber pitched a three-hitter for his first career shutout, outdueling Felix Hernandez and leading host Cleveland over Seattle.

Hernandez gave up four hits in seven innings. He has allowed two runs or fewer and pitched at least seven innings in 14 consecutive starts, a major league record.

Rockies 6, Cubs 4: At Chicago, Brandon Benuit hit a tiebreaking RBI single in the 10th inning for Colorado.

Brewers 5, Rays 0: Yovani Gallardo gave up four hits in seven innings and Martin Maldonado equaled a career high with four RBIs as NL Central-leading Milwaukee averted a three-game sweep by beating David Price and Tampa Bay.

Astros 5, Athletics 1: Dallas Keuchel pitched a four-hitter and Robbie Grossman homered to cap a six-run first inning that sent host Houston over Oakland.

Tigers 7, White Sox 0: Max Scherzer pitched seven impressive innings and host Detroit scored six runs in the first inning to beat Chicago.

Rangers 3, Yankees 2: Colby Rasmus hit a final 13 batters in seven strong innings as host Texas clinched its first series victory in a month.

Mets 11, Phillies 2: Daniel Murphy hit a three-run homer to back up Zack Wheeler's sixth straight strong start as New York routed visiting Philadelphia.

The Mets sent 10 men to the plate in the seventh inning, scoring five insurance runs off the Philadelphia bullpen to take two of three in the series. Lucas Duda homered and had three RBIs.

Diamondbacks 5, Reds 4: At Cincinnati, Paul Goldschmidt hit a two-run homer that kept Alfredo Simon winless since the All-Star Game as Arizona held on to take a series between two teams struggling to score runs.

Padres 4, Twins 2: Salvador Perez triggered a go-ahead rally with a double in the sixth inning and made several spectacular plays behind the plate, helping host Kansas City top Minnesota.

Jason Frasier (2-1) earned his first win since arriving from Texas by striking out Chris Colabello to leave the bases loaded in the sixth inning.

All-Star closer Greg Holland survived two wild pitches that sent Eduardo Nunez to third base by striking out Sam Fuld for his 28th save.

Phil Hughes (10-8) took the loss.

Padres 12, Cardinals 1: Rookie Jesse Hahn held St. Louis to one run and four hits in seven innings, and Jedd Gyorko and Will Venables each homered and drove in four runs to lead host San Diego.

MLB

Kemp heating up as Dodgers top Braves

By BETH HARRIS
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Matt Kemp has suddenly found his power, and it's helping keep the Los Angeles Dodgers atop the NL West.

Kemp singled in the winning run in the bottom of the 10th inning after homering in consecutive games for the first time over an year and the Dodgers beat the Atlanta Braves 3-2 Wednesday night for their season-best fifth straight victory.

"Boy, he is locked in right now," Atlanta starter Alex Wood said.

Los Angeles leads San Francisco by three games.

Zack Greinke struck out a season-high 13 and departed with the lead, but didn't factor in the decision. He is 14-3 at Dodger Stadium with a 2.27 ERA in 23 home starts with the team.

"All the pitches were working," he said. "A lot of stuff came together."

Kemp scored the Dodgers' first two runs of the game, including his 11th homer leading off the second.

"He's been swinging the bat pretty well now," Greinke said of Kemp. "The biggest difference is the power that comes with it. The past week the ball's been driven. It's pretty exciting to see."



MARK J. TERRILL/AP

The Los Angeles Dodgers' Matt Kemp, left, hits the game-winning single as Atlanta Braves catcher Evan Gattis looks on in the 10th inning as the Dodgers beat the Braves 3-2 on Wednesday in Los Angeles.

Kemp notched his ninth career walk-off hit, and first since July 18, 2012, against Philadelphia. He hadn't homered in consecutive games since last July.

"It's a great feeling knowing you helped the team win a game," he said. "We're pretty confident every day. It feels good to be in position to score a run or take

that extra base. I'm not as fast as I want to be, but it's coming."

Pinch-hitter Justin Turner singled to open the 10th and took second on a wild pitch by David

Hale (3-3). Kemp followed with the winning single to left.

J.P. Howell (3-3) got the win in relief, walking two and striking out one in one inning.

The Braves tied the game 2-2 on Justin Upton's home run off closer Kenley Jansen leading off the ninth. Upton's three hits tied a season high.

"As soon as it left my hand I just prayed for Justin not to hit it," Jansen said.

Upton's brother, B.J., struck out four times.

Juan Uribe gave the Dodgers a 2-1 lead in the eighth on a hard-hit single with two outs to shortstop Anderson Simmons, whose throw home sailed wide as Kemp crossed the plate.

Greinke allowed one run and five hits in eight innings while walking one. He was making his first start at home since June 28.

Kemp, who homered twice on Tuesday night, tied the game 1-1 on his 11th homer of the season.

Simmons had an RBI single that gave Atlanta a 1-0 lead in the second.

Wood gave up one run and six hits in seven innings. He struck out eight and walked two.

"Greinke's pretty impressive," Wood said. "I was happy I was able to go toe-to-toe with him for seven innings."

Jays remain hot, sweep Red Sox

By JIMMY GOLEN
The Associated Press

BOSTON — As his winless streak stretched toward a third month and his ERA continued to climb, Mark Buehrle began to have doubts.

At 36, was he at the end of what had been a steady major league career? Would he eventually snap out of the slump and contribute to Toronto's surge in the AL East? Would he ever even win another game?

"I guess the older you get, you get a little bit concerned," he said after earning his first victory in 10 starts since June 1, beating the Boston Red Sox 6-1 on Wednesday night. "I didn't pitch good, and I didn't want anyone giving up on me. ... There's a thought in the back of your mind: 'Am I done?' Maybe it's just myself thinking and driving myself crazy. But it definitely feels good (to win)."

Buehrle (11-7) allowed one run on six hits and a walk, striking out two in 6½ innings to snap a six-game losing streak that matched the longest of his career. Dioner Navarro had three hits and three RBIs to lead the Blue Jays to their fifth consecutive victory and complete a sweep of the slumping Red Sox.

Toronto has won eight of its last nine and trails first-place Baltimore by 2½ games. And it finally got a contribution from Buehrle, who had won nine in a row to improve to 10-1 before falling into his skid just four wins short of 200 in his career.

"That 11th win was tough to get," Blue Jays manager John Gibbons said. "He needed that. I don't care how good he's been, how long he's been in the game."

Brandon Workman (1-4) fell behind quickly after being called up from Triple-A to replace Jon Lester, who was reportedly headed to the Oakland Athletics in a trade before Thursday's non-waiver trade deadline.

A person with knowledge of the deal said the Red Sox sent Lester (10-7 with a 2.52 ERA in 21 starts) and outfielder Jonny Gomes for slugger outfielder



ELISE AMENDOLA/AP

The Toronto Blue Jays' Melky Cabrera, left, slides past Boston Red Sox catcher Christian Vazquez to score on a fielder's choice grounder by Juan Francisco during the first inning of Wednesday's game in Boston. Toronto won 6-1.

Yoanis Céspedes. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because neither club had announced the deal.

Lester was sought by many teams, including the Pittsburgh Pirates and the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Workman said the team called him at about 10 p.m. on Tuesday to let him know he would be starting.

"I had heard it might happen with all the rumors and stuff," he said, adding that it was a bit of a strange night. "But I kept my mind on throwing."

The game marked a milestone in Boston's woeful World Series title defense, coming a day before the trade deadline and in the middle of a streak in which the Red Sox have lost eight of nine games, fallen into last place and dropped 13 games behind the East-leading Orioles.

After shipping Jake Peavy to San Francisco on Saturday, the Red Sox sent demoted starter Felix Doubront to the Chicago Cubs on Wednesday along with the Lester deal.

Next out of Boston could be John Lackey, who is scheduled to make the minimum next season.

O's Gausman sharp in victory over Angels

By DAVID GINSBURG
The Associated Press

BALTIMORE — For much of the first half of the season, the Baltimore Orioles were selective and cautious with their use of rookie Kevin Gausman.

Now that things are getting serious, Gausman has become a fixture in a starting rotation that has thrust the Orioles into first place in the AL East.

Gausman pitched seven innings of three-hit ball, Adam Jones honored and the Orioles beat the Los Angeles Angels 4-3 on Wednesday night for their seventh win in nine games.

From April through mid-July, Gausman bounced between Baltimore and the minor leagues to keep his innings count down. Those restrictions are no longer in place, and the 2012 first-round draft pick looks rather comfortable being part of a pennant push.

Gausman (5-3) retired the first 14 batters he faced and ended up allowing three runs and three walks in his first career start against the Angels.

"I was just establishing my fast-

ball in and out," he said. "I think they had a little bit of trouble with that, especially (when) I was getting some pitches down in the zone that I loved, which was great for me. I just felt in rhythm and in control and I was able to slow it down when I needed to and speed it up when I wanted to."

Angels leadoff hitter Kole Calhoun said of Gausman: "He threw his pitches well. He obviously has electric stuff. He's got some good off-speed pitches to complement the good fastball. He threw the ball well, he kept the ball down and they made some great plays behind him, too."

Darren O'Day struck out two in a perfect eighth and Zach Britton gave up a single in the ninth before earning his 21st save.

The victory lifted the AL East-leading Orioles to 14 games over 50 (61-36) to the first time since July 22, 2013.

"We've been able to stay where we are because of the pitching," manager Buck Showalter said.

Garrett Richards (11-4) gave up four runs and six hits in seven innings. It was his second straight defeat following a seven-game winning streak.

Jones put the Orioles up 2-0 with a two-run homer, his second in two nights. It was his 21st of the season and 11th in the first inning.

In the Baltimore fourth, David Lough picked up his first RBI since June 17 with a double and scored on a single by Ryan Flaherty.



Gausman

SPORTS



Athletics add another arm
 Oakland acquires Red Sox ace
 Lester for OF Cespedes | **Sports briefs, Page 29**

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Three AND ouch!

SEC quickest route to NFL,
 but early departures can
 create headaches for
 league's coaches

The Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — The Southeastern Conference has become the most popular jumping-off point for underclassmen looking for a head start on NFL careers, creating more spots to fill around the league with preseason camps approaching.

No league has had nearly as many players leave early to pursue NFL careers over the past eight years, and LSU has had the most of any program two years running.

"We do lead college football in three-and-outs," Tigers coach Les Miles said.

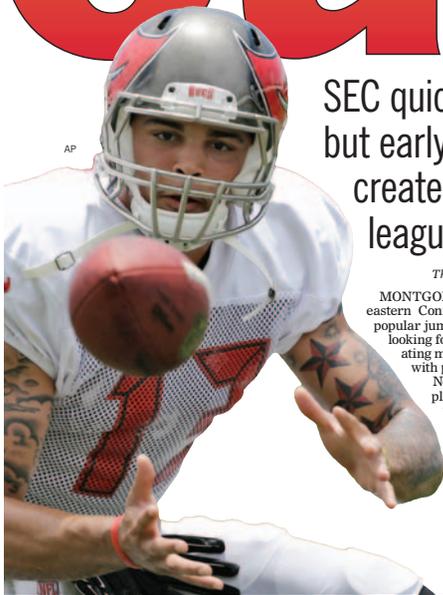
It's not a distinction coaches particularly covet — except perhaps to juice the sales pitch to teenage recruits already dreaming of their first NFL paycheck.

SEE SEC ON PAGE 28

Tampa Bay Buccaneers WR Mike Evans, left, and Cleveland Browns QB Johnny Manziel both left Texas A&M early to enter this year's draft.

Inside:

■ Big Ten teams could reap rewards of new playoff system, Page 28



Kemp finding power at right time for Dodgers

MLB, Page 31

Hang time nearly over for HOF punter Ray Guy

NFL, Page 26