

STARS AND STRIPES®

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Free to Deployed Areas



Focus on Jordan

Islamic State claims American killed as nation ramps up airstrikes

The Associated Press

BEIRUT — A statement by the Islamic State group claimed that an American female hostage was killed in a Jordanian airstrike on Friday.

The statement identified the woman as Kayla Jean Mueller and said she was killed during Muslim prayers — which usually take place around midday on Fridays — in airstrikes that targeted “the same location for more than an hour.” The statement said the airstrike occurred on the outskirts of the

northern Syrian city of Raqqa, the militant group’s main stronghold. No Islamic State militants were killed in the airstrikes, the statement further claimed.

It published photos allegedly of the bombed site, showing a severely damaged three-story building, but no images of the woman.

American officials said they were looking into the report. The White House said it did not have immediate comment.

The statement could not be independently verified. It appeared on a militant website commonly



Mueller

concerns for her safety.

SEE JORDAN ON PAGE 6

used by the Islamic State and was also distributed by Islamic State-affiliated Twitter users.

Mueller, 26, is an aid worker whose identity was never disclosed out

INSIDE

■ Jihadi cleric lashes out against Islamic State methods
 ■ Experts: Pilot video shows militants are raising stakes

Page 6

Fort Hood victims to be awarded Purple Heart

By Patrick Dickson
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Army announced Friday that it will award the Purple Heart and its civilian counterpart, the Secretary of Defense Medal for the Defense of Freedom, to victims of a 2009 shooting at Fort Hood, Texas.

Thirteen people were killed and more than 30 wounded in the attack by Maj. Nidal Hasan, who was convicted in August 2013, of 13 counts of premeditated murder and 32 counts of attempted murder. Hasan is being held on the military death row at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., while post-trial and appellate processes continue.

An Army statement said Secretary of the Army John McHugh has approved the awards following a change in the medals’ eligibility criteria mandated by Congress. “The Purple Heart’s strict eligibility criteria had prevented us from awarding it to victims of the horrific attack at Fort Hood,” McHugh is quoted as saying. “Now that Congress has changed the criteria, we believe there is sufficient reason to allow these men and women to be awarded and recognized with either the Purple Heart or, in the case of civilians, the Defense of Freedom medal. It’s an appropriate recognition of their service and sacrifice.”

Under Section 571 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2015, Congress expanded the eligibility for the Purple Heart by redefining what should be considered an attack by a “foreign terrorist organization” for purposes of determining eligibility for the Purple Heart, the Army release said.

Dozens of the Fort Hood shooting victims and their families have been lobbying for years for a Purple Heart. Besides the recognition, the medals would unlock much-needed compensation and back pay for those injured in the attack or for the widows and family members of those who died.



SEE MEDAL ON PAGE 5

Demonstrators, one with a Jordanian flag painted on his face and Arabic that reads “Muath” in honor of slain Jordanian pilot Lt. Muath al-Kaseasbeh, chant anti-Islamic State group slogans during a rally in Amman, Jordan, on Friday.

NASSER NASSER/AP

LIFESTYLE

Testosterone, needlework aren’t mutually exclusive

Page 18



MILITARY

Coalition conducts 1st Afghan airstrikes since end of combat mission

Page 5

SKIING

Bode Miller suffers career-threatening leg gash in crash

Page 30



QUOTE
OF THE DAY

"As far as I'm concerned, every last one of them can rot in hell, but as long as they don't do that, then they can rot in Guantanamo Bay."

— Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark, on a bill that would effectively ban most transfers from the prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, for two years, hindering President Barack Obama's effort to close it

See story on Page 4

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1. NBC's Brian Williams recounts Iraq story after soldiers protest
2. Brian Williams' apology draws mixed reviews from mission vets
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TODAY
IN STRIPES

- American Roundup 14
- Business 21
- Comics 23
- Crossword 23
- Health & Fitness 19
- Lifestyle 18
- Opinion 12-13
- Sports 24-32
- Television 15-17
- Weather 21

MILITARY

Ukraine, Mideast are key issues at security gathering

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

MUNICH, Germany — Participants at a conference here on global security issues agreed Friday that the Islamic State group and the conflict in Ukraine are among the most pressing threats, but ideas diverged on the best way forward, especially over possible lethal aid to Kiev.

"States are breaking up and conflict is at our borders." This conference has a dramatic backdrop." NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said at the opening Friday of the annual Munich Security Conference, which brings together policy-makers, business leaders and security experts. "Does this mean the international order is on the brink of collapse? My answer is no. Not as long as the guardians of the international order remain ready to act."

The question, however, is how to act.

In Ukraine, a key issue that is up for vigorous debate is whether the U.S. and its allies should begin arming Ukrainian forces with lethal, defensive weapons in their fight against well-armed, Russian-backed separatists in the country's east. Ashton Carter, the defense secretary nominee, has indicated an inclination to support such a move, and the matter is under close review at the White House. It would mark a sharp turn for the U.S. and could put it at odds with its allies that have staked out an opposite position.

Ursula von der Leyen, Germany's defense minister, cautioned that sending weapons to Ukraine could only worsen the violence, which has raged since Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimea peninsula last March.

"There are already far too many weapons in Ukraine and the region. Are we sure we will improve the situation for the

people in Ukraine if we deliver the weapons?" she asked. "Are we sure Ukraine can win against the military machinery of Russia?"

With sanctions pressuring a weak Russian economy, the West has leverage without sending in arms, von der Leyen argued. Meanwhile, the emphasis should be placed on bringing all sides in the conflict to the negotiating table, she said.

As she spoke, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Francois Hollande were in Moscow for talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin, a day after the two leaders met with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko in a push for a peaceful solution.

Numerous high-level officials are expected to participate in the Munich conference, where closed-door meetings will touch on issues such as the crisis in Syria and Iraq, and several bilateral meetings will be held on the sidelines. Among those attending are Merkel, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Poroshenko, who will likely make his case for getting arms to his troops.

Gen. Philip Breedlove, U.S. European Command chief and NATO's top military commander, suggested during a panel discussion Friday that arming Ukrainian forces shouldn't be rejected outright.

"As we look at Ukraine, some say there is not a military solution," Breedlove said. "And others at the same table would argue there is a military solution and Putin is prosecuting that solution in Ukraine."

Allies, he said, should keep all options on the table. And if measures now being taken aren't achieving desired results, then "conventional means should not be outwardly discounted," Breedlove said.



MATTHIAS SCHRADER/AP

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg answers journalists' questions as he arrives Friday for the annual Munich Security Conference in Munich, Germany.

Other discussions centered on how to contend with Russia's use of so-called hybrid warfare tactics, which the West has accused Russia of deploying in Ukraine. Hybrid warfare involves a mix of tactics short of a conventional invasion, such as propaganda campaigns, utilization of proxies and economic pressures to destabilize a country.

While hybrid warfare might not be new, Breedlove said, Russia's ability to "put together all the elements of national power—diplomatic pressure, information campaign, economic coercion — and then taking the military element and shrouding it in the lie," poses a unique threat, he said.

"It's put together in new and potent ways," he said. "What we face is the speed and the power of the lie."

But achieving consensus among allies in answering such threats could be complicated, particularly if they disagree on whether such actions — often murky and

hard to attribute — should require a collective NATO response.

What NATO needs to do is get better at recognizing such patterns in the early stages and be able to attribute them to a specific actor, "to close the political gap," Breedlove said.

Meanwhile, German officials reiterated a pledge made at last year's conference to boost its engagement in dealing with security threats on the global stage. But while von der Leyen said Germany has lived up to last year's pledge, she cautioned that Berlin also has its own view of leadership.

"It is leading from the center," she said. "Leading from the center as we understand it is to enable others to make vital contributions."

"No nation, whatever its size, even the biggest one, can successfully resolve conflicts on its own," she said.

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MILITARY

Apology draws mixed reviews from crew

Some say matter on NBC anchor Williams closed, others say discrepancies about mission remain

By Travis J. Tritten
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Apologies by NBC "Nightly News" anchor Brian Williams for a false claim of being on a helicopter forced down by Iraqi rocket fire in 2003 satisfied some soldiers who were there but left a few insisting that details were still misrepresented.

Williams admitted on air Wednesday that he was not aboard a Chinook struck by hostile fire on a flight from Kuwait in March 2003, saying instead he was aboard a "following aircraft."

In a Facebook apology to the soldiers, Williams said, "I was indeed on the Chinook behind the bird that took the RPG (rocket-propelled grenade)." He blamed the discrepancy on poor memory almost 12 years after the fact.

Since the 2003 incident, Williams has said on different occasions that he "came under fire" and that his helicopter was forced down due to the attack.

Former and active-duty soldiers who were on the same mission and said the anchor's aircraft landed in the Karbala area because of a blinding sandstorm, not hostile fire.

Williams' admission and his insistence that he had made an innocent mistake drew sharp criticism on social media, which subjected the veteran newsmen to enormous ridicule, including posts depicting him in other historical events.

Apology accepted

Among those who were part of the mission, reaction was less intense.

"I have a feeling that he didn't have a choice [but to apologize]," said David Luke, a former soldier and flight engineer with the 159th Aviation Regiment who was aboard a helicopter flying along with the one carrying Williams and his NBC crew.

Luke said he thought the apology came only because soldiers challenged Williams' version and otherwise, "he would have told that war story until he was on his dying bed."

Mike O'Keefe, who was a door gunner on the Chinook hit by RPGs, said he was generally satisfied with the apology and no longer wanted to press the issue by making public comments.

"I understand your interest and very much appreciate you getting the truth out there, but from my perspective, Mr. Williams has been outed and has enough to deal with," O'Keefe wrote in an email to Stars and Stripes.

"Guess I just don't want to kick the guy when he is down. Though he wordsmithed his apology to downplay what he did,



In this screenshot from an NBC "Nightly News" report broadcast on Jan. 30, news anchor Brian Williams and retired command Sgt. Maj. Tim Terpak stand and applaud at a Rangers hockey game at Madison Square Garden in New York City. Williams angered crewmembers last week when he claimed during NBC's coverage of a public tribute to Terpak that he had been aboard a Chinook in Iraq when it was attacked. Terpak provided ground security for the parked helicopters.

he did recant and I am satisfied," O'Keefe wrote.

Lance Reynolds, a sergeant and flight engineer on the attacked helicopter, also said he considered it closure.

"I appreciate the timely response by Brian Williams to correct the story and set the record straight," Reynolds wrote in a Facebook message, he shared with Stars and Stripes. "I would not want to speculate on why the mistake was made. I personally accept his apology."

Williams' admission was an embarrassment for the veteran journalist who has been the face of NBC News since he became anchor for its main news show in 2004. NBC has not said whether he will face discipline for perpetuating a false story.

Discrepancies

Despite Williams' effort to contain the damage, some former soldiers thought there were still discrepancies between his account and their own memory of the events.

Luke said it was "misleading" for Williams to say his aircraft was following the stricken Chinook. Luke told Stars and Stripes that Williams' Chinook was headed south, back toward Kuwait, when it passed another

March 24, 2003

During its first day of combat in the 2003 Iraq invasion, the Big Windy Chinook helicopter company with the Army's 159th Aviation Regiment was headed north from Kuwait toward a forward operating base outside Baghdad. Its mission was to deliver Apache helicopter parts to the front but it was hit by rocket-propelled grenade and small-arms fire and forced to land before completing the mission. Meanwhile, a second Chinook company called Hercules that was carrying Brian Williams and his NBC crew had completed its mission and was traveling south, returning to Kuwait after delivering bridge parts. Hercules Company, with NBC aboard, took no enemy fire during the mission and eventually was forced to return north and set down near the Big Windy aircraft due to a sandstorm.



Hercules Company	Big Windy Company
Chinook #1 David Luke, flight engineer	Lead Chinook Jerry Pearman, mission commander
Chinook #2 Joseph Miller, flight engineer Brian Williams and NBC crew	RPGs Lance Reynolds, flight engineer Mike O'Keefe door gunner
Chinook #3	Chinook #3

Stars and Stripes

white pickup truck they had seen minutes earlier.

Soon after the attack, Luke said, his helicopter and the one carrying Williams were forced to change course because of a sandstorm and land near a makeshift supply camp — Objective Rams — where the stricken helicopter had also put down.

Stars and Stripes compiled its account of what happened to the two helicopter companies that day — one based in Germany and the other in Savannah, Ga. — through interviews with five soldiers who were there, including a mission commander, retired Army Officer Jerry Pearman, of California, who was a lieutenant colonel at the time.

Recollections at odds

Their account, however, was disputed by another former Chinook pilot, Rich Krell, who told CNN that he was flying Williams' aircraft during the mission. Krell told CNN that Williams' plane did suffer minor damage from small-arms fire, but he did not say the damage was enough to force him to land.

"Yeah, he messed up some things and said some things he shouldn't have," Krell told CNN, referring to Williams.

Krell's version was at odds with the recollections of both Luke and Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Miller, who was the flight engineer on the aircraft carrying Williams and his crew.

Miller and Luke insisted separately that aircraft in their formation did not take ground fire that day and landed in Iraq only because of the sandstorm, which paralyzed coalition operations for days.

"No, we never came under direct enemy fire to the aircraft," Miller told Stars and Stripes on Wednesday.

Miller said the NBC crew affixed microphones to a helicopter headsets and recorded air traffic from the Chinook that had been hit.

Krell has since started to back off his assertions, according to CNN.

"[A]t this point, I am questioning my memories," he wrote to CNN media correspondent Brian Stelter, who posted a story on CNNMoney about how he came to talk to Krell.

Luke said that after the formation carrying the NBC crew landed at Objective Rams, Williams and the soldiers approached the stricken helicopter to ask the crew what had happened. They all ended up spending two or three days stranded at Objective Rams until the sandstorm passed and helicopter flights could resume.

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formation from a separate aviation company flying north. After the two formations passed each other, Luke's crew

heard on the radio that a northbound aircraft had been hit by an RPG and small-arms fire, presumably from gunmen in a

MILITARY

Internal Navy email: Safety of Sea Dragons in question

BY MIKE HIXENBAUGH
 NORFOLK, Va. — More than a year after a Navy helicopter caught fire and crashed off the coast of Virginia, killing three crewmembers, high-ranking military officials are now worried the tragedy could be repeated, according to confidential documents obtained by The Virginian-Pilot.

After an MH-53E Sea Dragon went down on Jan. 8, 2014, the military ordered crews to inspect every other Sea Dragon in the fleet — and every CH-53E Super Stallion, the Marine Corps variant — for signs of damaged fuel lines and wires like those that caused the crash.

There's now evidence that many of those inspections were conducted haphazardly, if at all, leaving dozens of potentially unsafe helicopters in service and sending officials scrambling to come up with a plan to fix the problems, according to a chain of emails circulating last week among leaders at Naval Air Systems Command, the Maryland-based office that oversees all Navy and Marine Corps aircraft programs.

"Engineering is very concerned that the original bulletin intent was not met," a Marine officer wrote in one email, referring to the fuel line and wiring inspections that were conducted almost a year ago. "We don't need another mishap as a result of chafing wir-

ing on a fuel line."

The emails included attachments detailing the seriousness of the situation, including a spreadsheet documenting discrepancies in the original inspection process and a PowerPoint presentation apparently used during a briefing last week by Col. Hank Vanderborght,

the Sea Dragon and Super Stallion program director.

Bottom line up front, Vanderborght wrote to begin the slides: "The risk of cabin fire was not mitigated and the hazard of chafing on fluid-carrying lines and wires was not eliminated."

A sample inspection of helicopters conducted two weeks ago produced disturbing results, according to the slides. Of 28 helicopters that were looked at, all but eight were found to have bad fuel lines or wiring, including at least one with chafing lines in the exact location that led to the deadly crash a year ago, when a worn-out wiring bundle released an electrical arc that connected with jet fuel, igniting an explosive fire.

The Navy estimated it would take 36 hours per aircraft to con-

duct the post-crash inspections and repairs, but on dozens of aircraft, according to maintenance records included in the emails, crews reported spending less than two hours on the work.

The emails and documents sound an alarming tone, yet more than two weeks after the discrepancies were discovered, Sea Dragons and Super Stallions continue flying here, at bases across the country and overseas. Further, there is little indication that maintenance crews who work on the helicopters or pilots who fly them have been fully briefed on the matter.

"It's all news to me," said one aviator from Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 14, who spoke on the condition of anonymity. "I find it deeply troubling."

Even as officials were trading emails about the renewed safety concerns last week, the newspaper had been actively questioning the command about its efforts to address wiring problems following a Jan. 15 incident over the Arabian Gulf. Two wires had chafed inside a Sea Dragon, causing an electrical arc that sparked a small fire and forced the crew to land in Kuwait.

When asked about the incident, the service responded by touting its work to fix bad wires and fuel lines. No mention was made of the newly discovered problems with those efforts.



MICHAEL STARKEY/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

An MH-53 Sea Dragon from Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 15 lands aboard the USS Iwo Jima.

Fiery debate continues in Senate over closing Gitmo



J. SCOTT APLENNETTE/AP

U.S. Capitol Police officers speak with activists from the antiwar group CodePink as the group gathers Thursday on Capitol Hill in Washington for the Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on the detention center in Guantanamo, Cuba.

BY DEB RIECHMANN
 The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The fiery debate over whether to close the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, prison sparked anew Thursday as the Obama administration pushed back against a bill to restrict it from transferring terror suspects to other countries, while protesters in orange jumpsuits shouted it should be shuttered posthaste.

Brian McKeon, principal deputy undersecretary of defense for policy, said a bill proposed by four powerful Republican senators would effectively ban most transfers from Guantanamo for two years, placing a roadblock in President Barack Obama's stepped-up effort to winnow the prison's population and eventually close it.

"Because this legislation, if enacted, would effectively block progress toward the goal of closing the Guantanamo Bay detention center, the administration

opposes it," McKeon told members of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Republican Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark., argued against closure.

"In my opinion, the only problem of Guantanamo Bay is there are too many empty beds and cells there right now," Cotton said. "We should be sending more terrorists there for further interrogation to keep the country safe. As far as I'm concerned, every last one of them can rot in hell, but as long as they don't do that, then they can rot in Guantanamo Bay!"

Nearly a dozen protesters — dressed in orange jumpsuits and T-shirts that read, "Shut down Gitmo!" — were just as passionate. One male protester stood up in the middle of the hearing and shouted that some of the detainees are innocent of their alleged crimes and should never have been held at all.

"Let's have the rule of law back," he yelled as he was led out

of the hearing.

When Obama took office six years ago, there were 242 detainees at Guantanamo Bay. Today, there are 112. Of those, 54 are eligible for transfer; 10 are being prosecuted or have been sentenced and the cases of the other 58 are being reviewed.

McKeon said Obama and his national security team think continued operation of the detention center drains U.S. coffers, damages America's relationship with key allies and provides fodder that violent extremists can use to incite violence and woo recruits.

Republican Sens. Kelly Ayotte, of New Hampshire, John McCain, of Arizona, Richard Burr, of North Carolina, and Lindsey Graham, of South Carolina, have introduced legislation that would, among other things, legally reinstate a ban on detainees being transferred to Yemen during Obama's remaining two years in office.

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WAR/MILITARY



ISMAEL PCMA/Courtesy of the U.S. Marines

Dangling over the deep

A U.S. Marine with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit practices fast-rope training at sea Feb. 4 aboard the USS Bonhomme Richard.

Medal: Army says attacker linked to foreign terror group

FROM FRONT PAGE

The legislation states that an event should now be considered an attack by a foreign terrorist organization if the perpetrator of the attack "was in communication with the foreign terrorist organization before the attack" and "the attack was inspired or motivated by the foreign terrorist organization."

In a review of the Fort Hood incident and the new provisions of law, the Army determined that there was sufficient evidence to conclude Hasan "was in communication with the foreign terrorist organization before the attack," and that his radicalization and subsequent acts could reasonably be considered to have been "inspired or motivated by the foreign terrorist organization."

Soldiers receiving the Purple Heart automatically qualify for

combat-related special compensation upon retirement. Recipients are also eligible for burial at Arlington National Cemetery.

Since the attack, victims' families and their allies in Congress had butted heads with the Army and the White House on whether this was a terrorist attack or "workplace violence."

Witnesses said Hasan shouted "Allahu akbar!" — Arabic for "God is great!" — before the attack in a crowded processing center in the Central Texas base. Most of the victims were either just returning from Iraq or Afghanistan or readying to embark to those combat zones.

The military has not executed an active-duty soldier since 1961. Five men are on the military death row, but none is close to an execution date.

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Coalition aircraft aid Afghan troops in fight with Taliban

Jan. strikes are first since combat mission end

By CARLO MUNOZ
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — U.S. and allied aircraft struck Taliban forces in eastern Afghanistan last month, according to a coalition spokesman, in the first confirmed airstrikes in support of Afghan forces since the end of the international combat mission.

The mid-January attacks were not announced by U.S. forces at the time but were confirmed when asked about them by Stars and Stripes.

The air attacks were carried out in the Dangam district of Kunar province in support of Afghan efforts to push back Afghan and Pakistani Taliban fighters, according to coalition spokesman Col. Brian Tribus and Afghan officials.

Gen. John Campbell, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, ordered the attacks in coordination with Afghan National Security Forces leaders who planned and led the operation, Tribus said in a statement last week. He would not say how many airstrikes were carried out nor what kinds of aircraft were used.

Afghan leaders in Dangam said the allied aircraft were instrumental in turning back the Taliban siege in the district.

In mid-December, about 2,000

Afghan and Pakistani Taliban fighters descended on the eastern Afghanistan district. Afghan militias battled the insurgents for weeks but were unable to stem the advance, according to Haji Muzamel, a leader of one of the pro-government militias.

Afghan officials said pro-government militias called for reinforcements, but they were bogged down by a large number of Taliban explosives planted along main roads.

Afghan security forces backed by international air support launched an offensive Jan. 16, or about two weeks after the end of the NATO combat mission, that broke the back of the Taliban push, Muzamel said.

About 12,000 foreign troops, nearly half from allied countries, remain in Afghanistan following the Dec. 31 end of the NATO combat mission. But they are in the country to train, advise and assist Afghan forces rather than to conduct combat operations.

Tribus said the airstrikes were "consistent with authorities under the NATO-Afghanistan Status of Forces Agreement" which was agreed by Washington and Kabul last year.

"According to our new agree-

ment, the NATO air forces will support Afghan security forces until the Afghan air force is sufficient," said Afghan Defense Ministry spokesman Gen. Azimi. He said the current goal is to have the Afghan air force fully operational by 2016.

The role of the coalition in post-war Afghanistan remains a sensitive subject. Some members of Congress question whether the rules are sufficient to prevent a collapse of Afghan forces similar to the rout suffered by the Iraqi army last summer in the face of an offensive by the Islamic State.

Secretary of Defense nominee Ashton Carter, during his Senate confirmation hearing this week, said he would weigh possible changes to the military strategy in Afghanistan if the security situation deteriorated.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz, head of the Senate Armed Services Committee, has repeatedly questioned the Obama administration's policy on Afghanistan, expressing concern the country's military and police are not ready to secure the country.

Zubair Babakarkhail contributed to this report.
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WAR ON TERRORISM



NASSER NASSER/AP

Demonstrators chant anti-Islamic State group slogans and carry posters with pictures of late King Hussein and slain Jordanian pilot, Lt. Muath al-Kaseasbeh, during a rally in Amman, Jordan, on Friday.

Prominent jihadi cleric lashes out at militants

By MOHAMMED DARAGHMEH
The Associated Press

AMMAN, Jordan — A prominent jihadi preacher lashed out Friday against Islamic State militants for burning to death a Jordanian pilot, saying this is “not acceptable in any religion.”

Abu Mohammed al-Maqdesi, considered a spiritual mentor for many al-Qaida militants, spoke a day after being released from more than three months in detention in Jordan.

His release and harsh criticism of the Islamic State group come at a time when the Jordanian government is trying to win broad popular backing for intensified airstrikes against the militants in response to the killing of the pilot.

Earlier this week, Islamic State militants released a video showing the pilot, Lt. Muath al-Kaseasbeh, being burned to death in a cage.

In an interview with the Jordanian TV station Roya, al-Maqdesi said that such an act “is not acceptable by any religion and by anyone.”

The cleric indicated that he had been involved in back-channel talks to arrange a possible prision-

“During my communication, they lied and they were evasive. They acted like they were interested (in a swap), but in fact they were not interested.”

Abu Mohammed al-Maqdesi
jihadi preacher

er swap to win the release of the pilot, who was captured after his plane crashed over Syria in December. Jordan offered last week to swap an al-Qaida prisoner for the pilot, but said after the release of the video that it became clear that the pilot had already been killed in early January.

Al-Maqdesi said he believed the militants were never serious about arranging a swap.

“During my communication, they lied and they were evasive,” he said. “They acted like they were interested (in a swap), but in fact they were not interested.”

He also criticized the Islamic State group for declaring a caliphate last year in the areas under its control in Syria and Iraq. Al-Maqdesi said a caliphate, or state run according to Islamic law, is

meant to bring Muslims together, but that the militants have been a divisive force.

A decade ago, al-Maqdesi was considered a mentor of the al-Qaida branch in Iraq, a precursor to the Islamic State group. However, the cleric fell out with his proteges over their methods, including attacks on fellow Muslims.

Jordan arrested the cleric in October, after he criticized Jordan’s participation in a U.S.-led military coalition against the Islamic State group. Jordan, which borders Syria and Iraq, joined the coalition in September.

In the wake of the killing of the pilot, Jordan said it would intensify its attacks. On Thursday, dozens of fighter jets struck Islamic State weapons depots and training areas, the military said.

Experts: Islamic State raising the stakes with video of pilot’s death

By ZEINA KARAM
The Associated Press

BEIRUT — A video of a Jordanian pilot being burned to death was exceptional in its brutality, even for the Islamic State group, and also was a sign that the militants intend to raise the stakes in their propaganda efforts, experts say. It also offered confirmation to the belief that the airman was killed days or weeks before its release.

The 22-minute clip that appeared on websites Tuesday was a complex, extravagant work that would have taken a significant amount of time and organization to script, stage, produce and distribute, they said.

It also suggested that the demands last week for a prisoner swap for the pilot, Lt. Muath al-Kaseasbeh, were a cynical charade to increase the drama around his killing because he most likely was already dead.

Jordanian state TV had said al-Kaseasbeh, who was flying missions for the U.S.-led campaign of airstrikes, was killed as long ago as Jan. 3, shortly after his F-16 came down in Islamic State-controlled territory in December.

“The more gruesome the executions are, the more attention they get,” said Brigitte Nacos, a professor of political science at Columbia University. “When President (Barack) Obama responds to each of their killing videos ... that gives them the feeling of being a powerful political actor that legitimate actors have to deal with.”

The video featured production techniques used in other clips from the militants. But unlike those that showed beheadings in which the hostages or their killer delivered a message before being killed, the pilot video is longer and involves a story-telling narrative and at least four cameras, along with advanced editing techniques.

Hassan Hassan, an analyst at the Abu Dhabi-based Delma center, said having a captive pilot from the U.S.-led coalition bombing campaign was a rare opportunity for the extremists to deliver a strong message.

“It was a chance to humiliate not only Jordan but the international community fighting against it,” he said.

Jordan: Woman had worked for relief agency in Syria

FROM FRONT PAGE

A family representative told The Associated Press last year that Mueller was working with humanitarian groups in Syria when she was captured in 2013.

Mueller, of Prescott, Arizona, had been working in Turkey assisting Syrian refugees, according to a 2013 article in The Daily Courier, her hometown newspaper. The 26-year-old told the paper that she was drawn to help with the situation in Syria.

“For as long as I live, I will not let this suffering be normal,” she said. “It’s important to stop and realize what we have, why we have and how privileged we are. And from that place, start caring and get a lot done.”

According to the local paper, Mueller had been working with the humanitarian aid agency Support to Life, as well as a local NGO that helped female Syrian refugees develop skills.

A 2007 article about Mueller from the same local newspaper said she was a student at Northern Arizona University and was active in the Save Darfur Coalition.

On Sunday, President Barack Obama said the U.S. was “deploying all the assets that we can” to find Mueller.

“We are in very close contact with the family trying to keep them updated,” he said in an interview with NBC’s Today Show. “Obviously this is something that

is heart-breaking for the family and we want to make sure we do anything we can to make sure that any American citizen is rescued from this situation.”

Her identity had not been disclosed out of fears for her safety.

Jordan, which is part of a U.S.-led coalition bombing Islamic State group targets in Syria, stepped up its attacks after IS announced it had killed a captive Jordanian pilot. The Syrian government said Thursday that dozens of Jordanian fighter jets had bombed Islamic State training centers and weapons storage sites. It did not say where the attacks occurred.

There was no word from the Jordanian government on whether its planes had struck Raqqa on Friday.

If her death is confirmed, she would be the fourth American to die while in the captivity of the Islamic State militants. Three other Americans, journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff and aid worker Peter Kassig were beheaded by the group.

The Washington Post reported that a U.S. intelligence official said authorities were mindful of the possibility that the Islamic State might claim that a hostage had been killed in an airstrike by the U.S.-led coalition. The official, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter, said there were no negotiations with the Islamic State.

NATION

Vaccine skeptics find unexpected allies in GOP

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI
The Associated Press

DENVER—As vaccine skeptics fight laws that would force more parents to inoculate their kids, they are finding unexpected allies in conservative Republicans.

Though the stereotype of a vaccine skeptic is a coastal, back-to-the-land type, it's generally been Democratic-controlled states that have tightened vaccination laws. This week, Democrats in two of those states — California, where a measles outbreak was traced to Disneyland, and Washington state — proposed eliminating laws that allow parents to opt out of vaccination for personal reasons.

Meanwhile, in Maine, Republicans are objecting to a similar effort. In Minnesota, only Democrats have signed or sponsored a bill to make it harder to avoid vaccinating children. And last year in Colorado, it was largely Republicans who squashed an effort to force parents to get a physician's approval if they chose not to inoculate their kids.

"This boils down to, does the government force everyone to conform, or do we empower everyone to make decisions on their own?" said Colorado state Sen. Kevin Lundberg, a Republican who did not fully vaccinate his children and led the fight against last year's bill.

This year, Colorado Republicans introduced a bill stating that

5 infants at Chicago day care have measles

By DON BABWIN
The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Five infants who attend a suburban Chicago day care center have been diagnosed with measles, and about 10 more children, including some also too young for vaccinations, could have been exposed to the disease, health officials said Thursday.

The Illinois and Cook County health departments said in a news release that lab tests confirmed measles in two infants who go to the KinderCare Learning Center in Palatine. Tests are pending for three others, but they have been diagnosed based on symptoms.

Officials had not identified the source of the infections at the center as of Thursday, but Dr. Terry Mason, chief operating officer for the county's health and hospitals system, told a news conference there is no

known link between the infants' measles and a recent outbreak at Disneyland that sickened dozens of people.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says there have been at least 102 confirmed measles cases in 14 states in 2015, not including the Palatine cases. Of those 102, 94 were related to the Disneyland outbreak.

Mason said children who have not been vaccinated — whether infected or exposed — should not return to the Palatine center until Feb. 24 or until they provide proof of vaccination or immunity to measles, which is spread through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

It's so contagious that 90 percent of people who aren't immunized are infected if exposed to the virus, according to the CDC.

parents have the right to make all medical decisions for their children, legislation that was cheered by vaccination opponents Thursday at a hearing.

American skepticism toward vaccinations dates back at least to the Revolutionary War, when George Washington was initially

reluctant to inoculate his troops against smallpox.

"There is a long history to the fight against vaccination, and it does seem to break down along liberal versus conservative lines," said Kent Schwirian, a sociology professor at Ohio State University. He surveyed people during a 2009

health officials do not recommend measles shots before a child turns 1, at which time the government recommends all children get a first dose of the measles vaccine, with a second dose between the ages of 4 and 6.

Illinois law requires one dose of measles vaccine for children in day care by age 2, or proof that they already have had the disease. Two doses are required for those entering kindergarten.

KinderCare spokeswoman Colleen Moran said that while the company, which operates facilities nationwide, follows local health department guidelines and encourages families to consult their doctors about vaccinations, "we realize some don't (have their children vaccinated) for health or religious reasons, and we do not exclude kids who haven't been vaccinated."

swine flu scare, asking whether they would get vaccinated, and found that conservatives who distrusted government were less likely to support inoculation.

Modern-day vaccine skeptics are hard to pigeonhole politically. "We're the bridge between the granaola moms and the stiletto

moms," said Dotty Hagmier, a nurse whose group Moms In Charge includes vaccine skeptics.

A Pew poll found that Republicans are slightly more likely than Democrats to oppose vaccine mandates. In legislatures, the issue has not been purely partisan, with some Democrats joining Republicans to fight vaccine requirements, and some members of the GOP pushing to increase vaccinations.

The administration of Michigan Republican Gov. Rick Snyder last year required parents to go to the state health department before they could skip vaccinations for their children. In Vermont, Democrats and Republicans alike scaled down a bill in 2012 that would have limited parents' options. Still, people on both sides see a divide forming.

Diane Peterson, of the Immunization Action Coalition, which tracks vaccination legislation nationwide, said she has had difficulty getting Republicans to sign a bill to expand vaccinations in her home state of Minnesota.

"I don't see that there can be a partisan issue in any way, and it's disturbing that it is," Peterson said.

Vaccination politics erupted into the national spotlight this week when three Republican presidential contenders — New

Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul and former Hewlett-Packard CEO Carly Fiorina — seemed to side with parents who oppose vaccinating their children.

When in path of oncoming train, driver panic, confusion common

By MEGHAN BARR
AND JENNIFER PELTZ
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Your car is trapped between the crossing gates, and a train is speeding down the tracks, its horn blaring, its lights blazing in your direction.

What do you do? Hit the gas pedal and crash through the gates, or more slowly start nudging, experts say. And don't waste any time deliberating over it.

The fiery collision between a train and an SUV that killed six people in suburban New York this week has no doubt left drivers contemplating such a chilling question — one that many of them may not know how to answer. Experts say that lack of awareness has led all too many times to hesitation, panic and death.

"Bash through the gates," said Robert Sinclair, a spokesman for AAA New York. "They're like breakaway gates. They're usually weak and sometimes heavy foam materiel, and they easily snap away."

If the car is stalled or you can't move it for any reason, abandon the vehicle and run, experts say. Many people make the fatal error of worrying about wrecking their car or trying to retrieve important items before escaping, Sinclair said.

"If you can't get away from the tracks, in the direction from which the train is coming, said Libby Rector Snipe of Operation Lifesaver, a nonprofit group that educates the public about safety at rail crossings.

"It may seem counterintuitive to run toward the train," she said. "But if you run into the oncoming train, you could be hit by flying debris."



SETH WENDEL/AP

Authorities wearing Federal Railroad Administration vests look over the wreckage of a Metro-North Railroad train and an SUV in Valhalla, N.Y., on Wednesday.

In the crash this week in Valhalla, N.Y., Ellen Brody, 49, was driving home Tuesday night when, according to a driver behind her, the crossing gates descended around her Mercedes SUV and one of them came down on the back end of her vehicle.

She got out to check on her vehicle, then got back in and, with no apparent urgency, pulled forward on the tracks just before she was struck by the train, according to the witness. Brody and five train passengers were killed.

Exactly what was going through her mind is unclear. Investigators are still trying to figure out how she ended up on the tracks

and why she didn't exit quickly.

The crash happened in the dark, in traffic backed up because of a nearby accident. Investigators said there were no immediate indications of any problems with the crossing gates.

Every year, 230 to 250 people die in collisions at highway-grade rail crossings in the U.S., according to the Federal Railroad Administration.

Sometimes the cause is driver confusion: A 2012 study for the Florida Department of Transportation said that signs and traffic signals sometimes confused drivers so much that they turned onto railroad

tracks instead of roads.

In other cases, the problem can be mechanical. A 2005 report for the Texas Department of Transportation noted there can be lags in synching up track signals and traffic lights, so sometimes crossing gates come down around drivers. Then the human element kicks in: "panic, confusion or other unsafe actions."

Sometimes the problem is foolish driver behavior — ignoring the warning lights and bells and trying to drive around crossing gates, for example.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., said safe driving at rail crossings needs to be addressed through public education campaigns similar to the ones waged against drunken driving.

Drivers need to know that these lights and bells and crossing-grade rails are not a drill. They're the real thing," Blumenthal said, "and that trying to get around them or beat them can cause death, tragedy, not only for themselves but for innocent victims on the train."

Drivers have died in railroad crossing crashes just in the last month in a number of cities, including Macungie, Pa.; Holgate, Ohio; and Kelsco, Wash.

Just a day after the tragedy in Valhalla, a commuter train hit an 18-wheeler stuck in the snow at a crossing in Braintree, Mass. The driver jumped out of the cab seconds before impact, and a few train passengers suffered minor injuries.

In December, an 80-year-old woman was killed by an Amtrak train after her minivan became boxed in by the crossing gates in Mebane, N.C. Witnesses said they called to her to get out of the car, but she froze up and didn't even try.

NATION

Change at the top of Sony Pictures

About 3 months after hack, head of studio to move new production venture

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Amy Pascal will step down as co-chairman of Sony Pictures Entertainment and head of the film studio, nearly three months after a massive hack hit the company and revealed embarrassing emails.

Pascal, one of the most powerful women in Hollywood and the force behind such critical and commercial hits as “The Social

Network” and “American Hustle,” will launch a major new production venture at the studio focused on movies, television and theater, Sony Pictures said Thursday. Her career with Sony has spanned nearly 20 years.

During the hack, Pascal came under fire for racist remarks about President Barack Obama’s presumed choice in movies that surfaced in leaked emails. She

apologized for “insensitive and inappropriate” comments in her emails that she called “not an accurate reflection of who I am.” Pascal also faced criticism for green-lighting the film that may have inspired the hacking to begin with: “The Interview,” which starred Seth Rogen and James Franco as bumbling journalists on a mission to kill North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

The outcome was not surprising, and will benefit both sides, said Damian Thong, an analyst at Macquarie Capital Securities in Tokyo where Sony Corp., the parent company of Sony Pictures, is based. “She’s a woman of many talents. She has great relationships that are valuable to Sony in the future,” he said.

Pascal will shift to the new venture in May. Sony Pictures will



Amy Pascal

finance Pascal under a four-year contract and retain all distribution rights worldwide to films it funds. The venture will be located at the Sony Pictures lot in Culver City, Calif.



JEFFREY COLLINS/AP

A plaque honoring World War I soldiers is shown in Greenwood, S.C., in January.

War memorial separates dead by race, divides Southern city

By **JEFFREY COLLINS**
The Associated Press

GREENWOOD, S.C. — In a small South Carolina city, a war memorial honoring fallen World War I and World War II soldiers divides them into two categories: “white” and “colored.”

Welborn Adams, Greenwood’s white, Democratic-leaning mayor, believes the bronze plaques are relics of the South’s scarred racial past and should be changed in the spirit of equality, replaced like the “colored” water fountains or back entrances to movie theaters that blacks once were forced to use.

Yet the mayor’s attempt to put up new plaques was blocked by a state law that brought the Confederate flag down from the Statehouse dome in 2000. The law forbids altering historical monuments without approval from legislators.

Historians, black and white, have reservations about replacing

the plaques, saying they should serve as a reminder of the once-segregated U.S. military.

“Segregation was the accepted social order of that time,” said Eric Williams, who spent 32 years as a historian with the U.S. Park Service. “If we alter the monument, we alter its historical integrity.”

The memorial is owned by the American Legion post in Greenwood and is on city property. On two of its sides, it lists soldiers who died in World War I and World War II from Greenwood County. A third side lists Korean and Vietnam War dead from the county without any racial distinction, because the U.S. military was integrated by that time.

About a year ago, American Legion post members asked the mayor if he thought he could raise \$15,000 privately to change the monument. Forty-three donors, almost all white, came through with the money. Adams donated

\$1,000. But there was opposition, in part because of a quote from the mayor. “I think if history offends people, it needs to be rewritten if possible,” Adams told a newspaper.

He later said he meant that while history doesn’t change, the way a community presents itself does.

Days before the ceremony, opponents threatened to try to have Adams arrested if he went forward with the new plaque.

“I wonder if some of the opposition is racism hiding behind history,” said Adams, who was elected mayor in 2008 in this city of 23,000, where about 45 percent of the population is black.

The Confederate flag law says no historical monument, erected by the state or by a local government, may be relocated, removed, disturbed, or altered without a two-thirds vote from state lawmakers.

Harvard bans sexual relationships between professors, undergrads

By **SUSAN SVRLUGA**
The Washington Post

Harvard University’s Faculty of Arts and Sciences now formally bans sexual relationships between professors and undergraduate students.

That’s not because they think there’s all kinds of professor-student dating on campus: The professor who led the panel that wrote the policy said she has never heard of it happening, in years of studying and teaching at Harvard. The new policy is there just to clarify that it would not be OK.

“We’re using this opportunity to reaffirm our priorities as teachers,” said Alison Johnson, a Harvard history professor, “and to imagine what we’re seeing when we’re looking at these students, and what we’re not seeing. We’re not seeing potential romantic partners. We are seeing students.”

A small but growing number of colleges, including Yale and the University of Connecticut, now have written policies banning such relationships, Bloomberg reported.

The new policy comes at a time when sex and gender issues — all the ways that people define themselves, their sexuality, their relationships, and how they interact with one another — are relentlessly discussed on college campuses.

Billie Dziedz, a professor at the University of Cincinnati who has

studied and written about relationships between professors and students, said policies about such relationships are evolving.

“Originally, there were no policies,” she said. “Institutions wouldn’t go near it, just wanted to avoid pushback from faculty. We’ve come a long way from that time. There are many institutions that have what I personally would describe as very weak policies. There are policies that don’t mention it at all. What Harvard and an increasingly long list of universities has done is to have prohibitionist policies.”

Dziedz said some policies have earned complaints from students who would say, “Oh, we’re grown-ups, we can choose with whom we have sex.” She said Harvard’s decision was courageous. “It sends a message: You don’t sleep with other people’s children — whether they agree to do it or not — because you’re abusing your power,” Dziedz said.

The American Association of University Professors stopped short of recommending a ban on relationships, but it sounded a similar warning, saying that professor-student romantic relationships can make voluntary consent by a student suspect because of the power dynamic. In a statement, the organization also said that sexual relationships can later make the faculty member and the institution vulnerable to allegations of sexual harassment.

Pope Francis to address Congress in September

WASHINGTON — Pope Francis will deliver an address to Congress in September, House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, said Thursday.

“It is my great privilege to announce that His Holiness Pope Francis will visit the United States Capitol on Thursday, September 24, 2015,” Boehner said in a statement. “On that day, he will become the first leader of the Holy See to address a joint

meeting of Congress. It will be a historic visit, and we are truly grateful that Pope Francis has accepted our invitation.”

The pontiff is also scheduled to visit Philadelphia for the World Conference on Families and New York to stop by the United Nations.

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif. — who, like Boehner, is Catholic — said in a statement that she is “honored and overjoyed” about the visit.

From wire reports

NATION

US jobs report strong

By Christopher S. Rugaber
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. employers added a vigorous 257,000 jobs in January, and wages jumped by the most in six years — evidence that the job market is accelerating closer to full health.

The surprisingly robust report the government issued Friday also showed that hiring was far stronger in November and December than it had previously estimated. Employers added 414,000 jobs in November — the most in 17 years. Job growth in December was revised sharply up, to 329,000 from 252,000.

Average hourly wages soared 12 cents in January to \$21.5, the sharpest gain since 2008. Over the past 12 months, hourly pay, which has long been stagnant, has now risen 2.2 percent. That is ahead of inflation, which rose just 0.7 percent in 2014.

Unemployment rate last month rose to 5.7 percent from 5.6 percent. But that occurred for a good reason: More than 1 million Americans — the most since January 2000 — began looking for jobs, though not all of them found work. A surge in job seekers suggests that Americans have grown more confident about their prospects.

“For the average American, it’s certainly good news — 2015 is going to be the year of the American consumer,” said Russell Price, senior economist at the financial services firm Ameriprise. “With job growth being strong, we’re going to see a pickup in wages and salaries.”

A sharp drop in gas prices has held down inflation and boosted demand for the past three months. Strong hiring also tends to lift pay as employers compete for fewer workers. A big question is whether last month’s jump in wages can be sustained.

Job gains have now averaged 300,000 for the past three months, the best three-month pace in 17 years. Just a year ago, the three-month average was only 197,000.

The stepped-up hiring in January occurred across nearly all industries. Construction firms added 39,000 jobs, manufacturers 22,000. Retail jobs jumped by nearly 46,000. Hotels and restaurants added 37,100, health care 38,000.

The Federal Reserve is closely monitoring wages and other job market data as it considers when to begin raising the short-term interest rate it controls from a record low near zero. The Fed has kept rates at record lows for more than six years to help stimulate growth. Most economists think the central bank will start boosting rates as early as June.



MERRILY CASSIDY, CAPE COD (MASS.) TIMES/AP

Officials lead Coast Guardsman Adrian Loy, of Chesapeake, Va., center, into District Court Thursday, in Falmouth, Mass., where he was arraigned in on charges he killed one woman, injured another and shot a police officer.

Coast Guardsman arraigned after shootings

The Associated Press

BOURNE, Mass. — A Coast Guard member is charged with shooting two colleagues at a Cape Cod condo complex early Thursday, lighting a car on fire to hamper police, planting fake bombs and then opening fire on officers, authorities said.

The episode, which the police chief in the town of Bourne called “crazy and hectic,” left one woman dead, another woman and an officer wounded, and the suspect in custody.

Coast Guard spokesman Ross Ruddell said both women involved were stationed on Cape Cod, while the suspected shooter was a man stationed in Virginia. Ruddell said he could not disclose their names or how they knew each other.

Massachusetts authorities later identified the suspect as Adrian Loy, of Chesapeake, Va., who turned 31 on Thursday. He pleaded not guilty to charges including murder, armed assault, home invasion and assault and battery of a police officer during an arraignment Thursday afternoon in Falmouth District Court.

A judge ordered Loy to be held without bail and to undergo a mental health examination. He also ordered the file sealed.

Cape and Islands District Attorney Michael O’Keefe and Loy’s attorney, J. Drew Segadelli, didn’t discuss details of the case dur-

ing the court hearing. Afterward, Segadelli said Loy and the two women had some type of relationship but said he couldn’t comment further because the file was sealed.

Loy appears to have had only one previous criminal case. Virginia court records indicate an Adrian Loy with the same month

and year of birth was paid a fine for a misdemeanor or “public swearing/intoxication” to case out of Gloucester County in 2008.

Loy a set Rear Adm. Linda Fagan fire to block U.S. Coast Guard the only road into the condo complex and

set up devices resembling bombs, authorities said. The state police bomb squad examined the devices and determined they were all fakes that contained no explosives, Massachusetts State Police spokesman David Procopio said.

Loy was taken into custody at gunpoint about a half-hour after the 2:15 a.m. attack. What started as a response to reports of a vehicle on fire turned into a “crazy and hectic scene,” Bourne police Chief Dennis

Woodside said. He said police also received a 911 call from one of the victims from inside a condo.

Officers made their way around the burning vehicle on foot and were pinned down by gunfire, O’Keefe said.

The wounded officer, shot in the back below his bulletproof vest, took cover between two vehicles, and his colleagues were unable to reach him. Woodside described the officer as a veteran with at least 10 years of service.

The officer lay wounded for about 15 minutes before the suspect was arrested. Even then, police remained wary because they were not aware if there were other gunmen.

Two colleagues grabbed the officer and carried him through the woods and snow so he could be taken to the hospital, where he was stabilized and improving, the chief said.

Just after 2:45 a.m., police apprehended Loy, officers made their way to the unit where they found the two women who had been shot, one fatally.

“Today the Coast Guard family suffered a tragic loss,” Coast Guard Rear Adm. Linda Fagan said in a statement. “We have chaplains and counselors on site to support friends and families affected by this crime. ... My thoughts and prayers are with everyone who has been touched by today’s sad event.”

Army vet threatens attack at US Capitol

By Lynh Bui
and Peter Hermann
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — An Army veteran was arrested this week after authorities say he threatened to shoot his wife and others at the U.S. Capitol.

Michael Bogoslavski, 33, had sent his wife, a federal employee working at the Capitol, a series of text messages Monday threatening to harm her and indicating that he would hurt anyone who got in his way, according to a criminal complaint filed in U.S. District Court in Greenbelt, Md.

Text messages quoted in the complaint released Thursday indicate that Bogoslavski accused his wife of being involved with another man, who court papers say is a U.S. Capitol police officer. In one message, the criminal complaint says, Bogoslavski threatened to shoot the officer in the face.

The wife responded: “You come to my job on some crazy PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), I will file for divorce. Your choice.”

Authorities said Bogoslavski wrote back: “Why do you divorce won’t help. Cause I’m making the news today.” He added, according to the criminal complaint, “Gun in each hand.” Then he allegedly wrote, “Probably won’t make it all the way up but I will get my last point I will ever make. Someone is going on by grieving for their family members today. Including my family, I PROMISE YOU THAT.”

Police detained Bogoslavski at a home in Chevy Chase, Md., the day the texts were sent and took him to Prince George’s Hospital Center for an emergency mental health evaluation, said Chevy Chase police Detective Bernard Jones. Officers from the U.S. Capitol Police arrested Bogoslavski after he was released from the hospital.

When they executed a search warrant at Bogoslavski’s home in Chevy Chase, law enforcement officers found two loaded handguns — a 40-caliber Taurus and a 45-caliber Springfield Armory — and additional ammunition, according to court papers.

“Considering we found two guns in the search ... and considering he has extensive combat training, this was a pretty credible threat,” Jones said. “Had we not intervened, I’m a little bit afraid of what could have possibly happened.”

Bogoslavski has been charged with making threats to commit violence, and if he is convicted, he faces up to five years in prison.

The complaint says that after his arrest, Bogoslavski told police that he suffered from PTSD, had trouble sleeping and “was feeling frustrated adjusting to civilian life after serving in the U.S. Army.”

He also said he had two handguns and two assault rifles at a friend’s home in North Carolina, according to federal authorities.

Today, the Coast Guard family suffered a tragic loss.

Rear Adm. Linda Fagan
U.S. Coast Guard

Judge: It’s OK if jurors saw ‘Sniper’

Los Angeles Times

STEPHENVILLE, Texas — A Texas judge told potential jurors in the murder trial of the man accused of shooting “American Sniper” author and Navy Seal Chris Kyle that reading the victim’s book or seeing the popular movie would not automatically disqualify them from the case.

The suspect, Eddie Ray Routh, 27, has been charged with two counts of murder and one count

of capital murder in connection with the shootings of Kyle, 38, and his friend, Chad Littlefield, 35, who were killed two years ago when the trio went to a firing range for target practice.

Routh appeared in court Thursday for the first day of jury selection looking nothing like the mug shot taken when he was arrested soon after the shootings.

The former Marine had shaved his shaggy brown hair and appeared to have gained some

weight. He wore glasses, a blue blazer and oxford shirt and appeared calm as he chatted with his attorneys in front of prospective jurors.

Courthouse security had been stepped up for the high-profile trial. Potential jurors had to leave cellphones and bags in their cars, pass through two metal detectors and police dogs. More than a dozen members of law enforcement stood in and outside the courtroom.

WORLD

Pentagon 2008 study suggests Putin has Asperger's syndrome

By RAY LOCKER
USA Today

WASHINGTON — A study from a Pentagon think tank theorizes that Russian President Vladimir Putin has Asperger's syndrome, "an autistic disorder which affects all of his decisions," according to the 2008 report obtained by USA Today.

Putin's "neurological development was significantly interrupted in infancy," wrote Brenda Connors, an expert in movement pattern analysis at the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, R.I. Studies of his movement, Connors wrote, reveal "that the Russian President carries a neurological abnormality."

The 2008 study was one of many by Connors and her colleagues, who are contractors for the Office of Net Assessment (ONA), an internal Pentagon think tank that helps devise long-term military strategy. The 2008 report and a 2011 study were provided to USA Today as part of a Freedom of Information Act request.

Researchers can't prove their theory about Putin and Asperger's, the report said, because they were not able to perform a brain scan on the Russian president. The report cites work by autism specialists as backing their findings. It is not known whether the research has been acted on by Pentagon or administration officials.

The 2008 report cites Dr. Stephen Porges, who is now a University of North Carolina



Russian President Vladimir Putin heads a cabinet meeting Wednesday outside Moscow.

psychiatry professor, as concluding that "Putin carries a form of autism." However, Porges said Wednesday he had never seen the finished report and "would back off saying he has Asperger's."

Instead, Porges said, his analysis was that U.S. officials needed to find quieter settings in which to deal with Putin, whose behavior and facial expressions reveal someone who is defensive in large social settings. Although these features are observed in Asperger's, they are also observed in individuals who have difficulties staying calm in social settings and have low thresholds to be reactive. "If you need to do things with him, you don't want to be in a big state affair but more of one-on-one situation someplace somewhere quiet," he said.

Putin's actions have been under particular scrutiny since early 2014, when Russian annexed Crimea from neighboring Ukraine.

Shiite rebels declare takeover of Yemen

By AHMED AL-HAJ
The Associated Press

SANAA, Yemen — Yemen's powerful Shiite rebels announced on Friday that they have taken over the country and have dissolved parliament, a dramatic move that finalizes their month-long power grab.

The development also plunges the impoverished country deeper into turmoil and threatens to turn the crisis into a full-blown sectarian conflict, pitting the Iran-backed Houthi Shiites against Sunni tribesmen and secessionists in the south.

It also could play into the hands of Yemen's al-Qaida branch, the world's most dangerous offshoot of the terror group, and could jeopardize the U.S. counterterrorism operations in the country.

In a televised announcement from the Republican Palace in the Yemeni capital of Sanaa, the Houthi rebels said they are forming a five-member presidential council that will replace Presi-

dent Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi for an interim two-year period.

The Houthis also said that "Revolutionary Committee" would be in charge of forming a new parliament with 551 members. The committee is the security and intelligence arm of the rebel group, led by Mohammed Ali al-Houthi, relative to the Houthis' leader, Abdel-Malek al-Houthi.

The statement in Sanaa, read by an unidentified announcer, claimed that it marked "a new era that will take Yemen to safe shores."

It comes after political parties failed to meet a Houthi-imposed deadline on Wednesday to agree on an acceptable way forward.

Houthis' rising dominance — which included a raid of the presidential palace and a siege of Hadi's residence — forced the president and all Cabinet members to submit their resignations in January.

The announcement did not give a timetable for elections and gave no indication on the fate of Hadi.



Petr David Josek/AP

A resident rides his bicycle past a destroyed building Friday in the town of Vuhlehirsk, Ukraine.

Leaders go to Moscow to push Ukraine peace effort

By FRANK JORDANS
AND SYLVIE CORBET
The Associated Press

BERLIN — In a top-level diplomatic dash, French President Francois Hollande and German Chancellor Angela Merkel flew to Moscow on Friday to seek a ceasefire and then a lasting peace for war-ravaged eastern Ukraine.

Their meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin comes a day after the two talked with the Ukrainian government in Kiev about how to salvage a peace plan agreed upon last year in Minsk, Belarus.

"Everyone is aware that the first step must be the cease-fire, but that it cannot suffice. We must seek a global solution," Hollande told journalists in Paris before heading to the airport.

Even getting the arms to fall silent would be a significant diplomatic breakthrough. Fighting between Russian-backed rebels and the government in Kiev has surged in the past month in eastern Ukraine. That has fueled fears the conflict is threatening Europe's overall security and prompted the U.S. to consider giving lethal weapons to Ukraine, an option opposed by European nations.

Russia has vehemently denied backing the rebels with troops and weapons, but the top NATO commander, U.S. Air Force Gen. Philip Breedlove, said Thursday that Russia continues to supply the separatists with heavy, state-of-the-art weapons, air defenses and fighters.

In Berlin, Merkel said she and Hollande would use "all our power with direct visits to Kiev and to Moscow today to stop the bloodshed as soon as possible and to fill the Minsk agreement with



IVAN SEKRETAREV/AP

German Chancellor Angela Merkel, right, arrives at Vnuukovo airport in Moscow on Friday.

life."

"We are convinced that there's no military solution to this conflict," Merkel added. "But we also know that it's completely open whether we will manage to achieve a cease-fire with these talks."

She rejected reports that she and Hollande were prepared to offer more territory to the Ukraine separatists, saying "I will never deal with territorial questions over another country."

In Brussels, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden questioned Putin's willingness to seek peace.

"(Putin) continues to call for new peace plans as his troops roll through the Ukrainian countryside and he absolutely ignores every agreement that his country has signed in the past and that he has signed," Biden said.

Biden insisted the 28-nation European Union and the United States needed to stand together and support the government of Ukraine with financial and political aid.

Meanwhile, the foreign ministers of Russia, Ukraine, Germany

and France were all expected at the Munich Security Conference, which starts Friday and is expected to be dominated by the conflict in Ukraine.

The head of the conference, former German diplomat Wolfgang Ischinger, called Merkel and Hollande's trip to Moscow a "last, resolute attempt to implement the Minsk cease-fire agreement."

"All sides know that fighting over every square meter won't help anyone. What's needed now is calm so there can be negotiations," Ischinger told German public broadcaster ZDF.

On the ground in eastern Ukraine, the rebels and the Ukrainian authorities agreed Friday on a humanitarian corridor to evacuate civilians from the epicenter of the fighting, Debaltsevo, a key railway hub between the two main rebel-controlled cities of Donetsk and Luhansk.

A local cease-fire held as several dozen buses drove from nearby Vuhlehirsk toward Debaltsevo, where residents have been trapped in the crossfire and left without power, heating or running water for almost two weeks.

Eduard Basurin, a rebel spokesman, said authorities expected to evacuate about 1,000 civilians Friday and they would be offered the choice of going to either rebel- or government-controlled territory.

But artillery duels between the rebels and government forces still rumbled through Donetsk, where one disenchanted resident had little hope for the success of the new European peace initiative.

"I don't expect anything. I'm so tired of this. It has been going on for so long," said retiree Esfira Papunova.

WORLD

Boko Haram attacks town inside Niger

The Associated Press

NAMEY, Niger — Islamic extremists from Nigeria attacked a border town inside the neighboring country of Niger, marking the second foreign country attacked by the group known as Boko Haram in several days.

The escalation in violence came as regional leaders meet for a second day in the Cameroonian capital

to finalize plans for a coordinated military response to the terror group blamed for killing 10,000 people during the past year.

On Wednesday and Thursday, Boko Haram fighters attacked a town inside Cameroon, leaving nearly 100 people dead and some 500 others wounded, according to Cameroon officials.

Abba Hassan, a pharmacist reached in the border town of

Bosso, Niger, said other Boko Haram militants attacked the community early Friday and that soldiers fought an hourlong battle with them that caused the Boko Haram members to withdraw, leaving the streets deserted.

“Niger and Chadlan planes are conducting surveillance at the moment in town and troops on the ground are combing through the

streets,” Hassan told The Associated Press by phone.

The region of Niger where the violence took place is an area where refugees already have arrived by the thousands seeking safety from Boko Haram attacks elsewhere.

After being bombed out of several Nigerian towns, hundreds of Boko Haram fighters responded

by attacking Fotokol in Cameroon earlier this week, razing mosques and churches and warning Nigeria’s neighbors not to join the battle against their insurgency.

Last week, African leaders authorized a 7,500-strong force to fight the extremists, including pledges of troops from Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Benin.

Slovakia to vote on restricting gay rights

The Associated Press

BRATISLAVA, Slovakia — A big billboard of Pope Francis hangs over the center of Slovakia’s capital, urging citizens to vote “Yes” in a referendum on restricting gay rights.

The vote this weekend in the predominantly Roman Catholic nation — which follows a similar one that succeeded in Croatia in 2013 — points to a cultural divide within the European Union in which more established western members are rapidly granting new rights to gays, while eastern newcomers entrench conservative attitudes toward LGBT people.

Last year, Britain became the latest EU nation to legalize gay marriage, joining nine others — all in the bloc’s west. Meanwhile, Croatia, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia in the EU’s east all have enacted constitutional bans on gay marriage.

In Saturday’s vote, Slovaks will be asked whether they agree to three points: that marriage can only be called a union between man and woman, that same-sex partners must be barred from adopting children; and that it’s up to parents to decide whether their children receive sex education. While the constitution already defines marriage as between man

and woman, the campaigners decided it was important to include the question in the referendum to reinforce traditional family values.

Slovakia’s anti-gay marriage movement has received massive support from the Catholic Church — and Francis this week even gave his blessing to the referendum in an address on St. Peter’s Square. A conservative group, the Alliance for Family, forced the Slovakian vote by gathering more than 400,000 signatures, well above the required 350,000.

Anna Veresova, a leader of the alliance, called moves to redefine marriage and family in western Europe and family in western Europe “nonsensical.”

She said it’s precisely because conservatives like her feel threatened by the West that the movement felt the need to act. “We can hardly say that Slovakia is an isolated island in the middle of an ocean that can’t be affected,” Veresova said. “That’s not true.”

Some 10,000 volunteers, from students to pensioners, have spread the alliance’s message across the country after major television networks — including the country’s public television network — refused to broadcast its campaign ad ridiculing the adoption of a child by a gay couple.

his narration of the film.

Gruder, 44, a father of six, gives the viewer a rare peek into private ultra-Orthodox lives, taking the camera into his own home, into ritual baths and circumcision ceremonies, to the religious school system and more.

Under Orthodox Judaism, masturbation is forbidden, seen as a violation of an age-old covenant with God that promotes and encourages procreation. Sex is viewed as a sacred act and intercourse is permissible only after marriage.

Talking freely and openly about sex is also taboo. Many Orthodox Jews do not touch members of the opposite sex except their spouses, and the sexes are usually separated in school and prayer.

The film already has been shown in Jerusalem, London and California and is touring the U.S. festival circuit, including Atlanta on Feb. 15.

From The Associated Press



WALLY SANTANA/AP

Relatives from mainland China react as they watch divers recover bodies at the site of the TransAsia Airways Flight 235 plane crash in Taipei, Taiwan, on Friday.

Both TransAsia plane engines lost power before Taiwan crash

The Associated Press

TAIPEI, Taiwan — One of the engines on TransAsia Airways Flight 235 went idle 37 seconds after takeoff, and the pilots apparently shut off the other before making a futile attempt to restart it, Taiwan’s top aviation safety official said Friday.

The details were presented at a news conference in Taipei by Aviation Safety Council Executive Director Thomas Wang as preliminary findings from the flight data recorder. Wednesday’s crash into a river in Taipei minutes after takeoff killed at least 35 people and left eight missing. Fifteen people were rescued with injuries after the accident, which was captured in a dramatic dashboard camera video that showed the ATR 72 propjet banking steeply and scraping a highway overpass before it hurtled into the Keelung River.

Wang said the plane’s right engine triggered an alarm 37 seconds after takeoff. However, he said the data showed it had not

shut down, or “flamed out” as the pilot told the control tower, but rather moved into idle mode, with no change in the oil pressure.

Then, 46 seconds later, the left engine was shut down, apparently by one of the pilots, so that neither engine was producing any power. A restart was attempted, but the plane crashed just 72 seconds later.

Wang said it was too early to draw firm conclusions about the reasons why the first engine ceased producing power.

“It’s only the third day so we can’t say too much,” Wang said. “We haven’t ruled anything out.”

It’s unclear why the second engine was shut down, since the plane was capable of flying with one engine. Several international aviation sites, including FlightRadar24, questioned whether the pilots may have turned off the wrong engine in an attempt to restart the idled one.

Taiwanese Vice President Wu Den-yih, mindful of the island’s reputation as a tourist destination and its tense relations with China where most of the flight’s passen-

gers were from, went to a Taipei funeral parlor for prayer sessions to pay respects.

At the parlor, where bodies are being stored, Wu expressed condolences and praised pilot Liao Chen-chung, who died in the crash. The pilots may have deliberately steered the plane away from buildings and into the river in the final moments.

“When it came to when it was clear his life would end, (the pilot) meticulously grasped the flight operating system and in the final moments he still wanted to control the plane to avoid harming residents in the housing communities,” Wu said.

“To the plane’s crew, the victims ... I here express condolences.”

Divers with a local fire agency found one female and three male bodies Friday along the muddy Keelung River bottom about 50 yards from the crash site, a Taipei City Fire Department official sur-named Chen said.

The agency suspects the eight bodies that are still missing may be in equally murky areas and has sent 190 divers to look for them.

‘Sacred Sperm’ explores ultra-Orthodox taboos

JERUSALEM — Like so many parents, Ori Gruder was grappling with how to talk to his 10-year-old son about sex. Being a member of Israel’s ultra-Orthodox religious community, which tends to keep discussions of sexuality to a whisper, made the task even more difficult.

So Gruder created “Sacred Sperm,” an hourlong documentary in which he tries to tackle the hard questions he can expect from his son. The film presents an intimate, informative and at times awkward look at the insular religious community and its approach to sexuality, fleshing out deeply entrenched taboos in the conservative society.

“What is it about that little sperm that looks like a tadpole and has everyone so hot and bothered?” Gruder ponders in

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OPINION

S&P fine justified for role in recession

By ARTHUR L. CYR

"I am shocked, shocked to find... gassing..." This famous line of the cynical Captain Renault to nightclub manager Rick in the film classic "Casablanca" comes to mind in reflecting on the practices of American credit rating agencies. Standard & Poor's of McGraw Hill Financial is a pre-eminent credit rating company. On Tuesday the company announced \$1.38 billion will be paid to settle federal fraud charges regarding ratings of mortgage-backed investments.

Collapse of these securities began the global financial meltdown and recession. The agreement comes almost exactly two years after the U.S. Justice Department began the prosecution. Authorities focused on March to October 2007, just before the market failed. The indictment alleged warnings from the industry's own analysts were ignored for at least three years.

When S&P was charged, company attorney Floyd Abrams responded immediately that his client was being singled out. He argued S&P was only guilty of optimism, along with other firms and indeed the U.S. Treasury.

This lawyer's shock was not heard 'round the world. Alleged wrongdoing by others does not absolve S&P. Additionally, government agencies have a limited authority to intervene in free markets.

Simultaneously, S&P was aggressively conducting pre-emptive maneuvers. In August 2011, the firm downgraded the standing of the United States from AAA. Meanwhile, global demand for U.S. government bonds increased even as the downgrade made international news.

Company officials declared that the downgrade reflected high and growing deficit and debt levels of the U.S. government, and doubts about capacity and will to correct the situation. With moralistic solemnity, the credit crunchers announced this was the first time in history their firm had moved the U.S. down from AAA.

When an NPR interviewer at the time asked a Standard & Poor's representative about shocking lapses in private-sector evaluations, the private respondent said that was handled by another section of the company. In "Casablanca" vernacular, the S&P guy played dumb and passed the buck.

Which brings us to President Harry Truman, who displayed a sign on his desk in the Oval Office stating "The Buck Stops Here." Truman and other Allied leaders of that time faced seemingly endless challenges, including World War II, the Cold War that began soon after defeat of the Axis, the Korean War, and U.S. debt greater than today. Few federal programs to aid the retired and unemployed, educate millions of returning veterans, and regulate labor and management were uncertain re-

garding either effectiveness or expense.

Yet S&P did not downgrade the United States at that time.

Why not? Because equating the U.S. national government, which commands vast actual and potential assets, with the balance sheets of even enormous commercial corporations is absurd.

In that turbulent earlier time, national unity was essential. A credit ratings company that downgraded our government would have rightly been ostracized.

S&P publications of that era reveal a Wall Street cheerleader, constantly exhorting people to buy stocks, described as undervalued. Yet people remained unconvinced. For years after the Great Depression, credit ratings of firms were widely regarded as shills of discredited Wall Street. Despite economic revival, stock prices did not rise to levels preating the 1929 crash until 1954.

Financial services firms today resent re-regulation by Washington and strike back by appealing to general public cynicism regarding government.

The Justice Department declined to bring criminal charges. Fortunate ratings companies including S&P should gratefully, honestly evaluate their practices and pursue self-reform, immediately.

Arthur L. Cyr is Clausen Distinguished Professor at Carthage College and author of "After the Cold War."

Obama policies weaken military, embolden enemies

By DOUG LAMBORN

"I believe in a smarter kind of American leadership. We lead best when we combine military power with state diplomacy; when we leverage our power with coalition building; when we don't let our fears blind us to the opportunities that this new century presents. That's exactly what we're doing right now — and around the globe, it is making a difference."

— President Barack Obama, Jan. 20

President Obama made that bold pronouncement in his State of the Union address. Unfortunately, the reality of the Obama administration is the exact opposite: Obama's weak foreign policy is masking how much damage his cuts to our military are doing.

The weakness of the president's foreign policy is painfully obvious. He won't stand up with our allies like France when they are hurting. He is sacrificing our relationship with Israel in a vain attempt to befriend Iran. He left our friends in Ukraine to their own devices as Russians invaded their country. Obama draws lines in the sand, and then immediately ignores them, making them meaningless to every nation in the world. Even his supposed foreign policy successes, like Libya, have devolved into disasters because of the politically motivated decision to lead from behind. Simply put, Obama is alienating our allies and aiding our enemies.

Even liberal foreign policy leaders are growing more critical of Obama's foreign policy. Leslie Gelb, a Carter and Clinton administration official and former president of the Council on Foreign Relations,

recently wrote: "The Obama team lacks the basic instincts and judgment necessary to conduct U.S. national security policy in the next two years. It's simply too dangerous to let Mr. Obama continue as is — with his current team and his way of making decisions."

The other dangerous facet to this failed foreign policy is how it is hiding the harm being done by the president's draconian cuts to our military. For example, previous presidents of both parties likely would have sent an aircraft carrier into the Black Sea or the Baltic Sea to respond to Russian aggression. However, Obama's budget cuts have made this extremely difficult — we simply don't have enough aircraft carriers today. In fact, as I write this, we have one aircraft carrier deployed in the Middle East, and that's it. We have no carriers in the Mediterranean Sea as Libya dissolves and the threat of al-Qaida grows across northern Africa. No carriers in the Indian Ocean. Even though there has supposedly been a "pivot" to the Pacific, reports now show that over a third of the time, there is no carrier in the Pacific Ocean. The bad actors in the western Pacific can sleep more easily, knowing that we are not there.

Unfortunately, what is true of aircraft carriers is also true of other vital military assets like bombers and advanced fighter aircraft, or missile defense and special operations units — because Obama has been decimating the defense budget, cutting the number of personnel in our military and cutting the aircraft, ships and equipment those men and women in uniform need to fight and win.

A smaller military can only be stretched

for so long before it becomes hollow, leaving soldiers without training, airmen without aircraft, and servicemen and women struggling with overly long deployments.

A smaller military means that the enemies of America have more freedom to plot, plan and execute destructive actions against our interests and allies.

In his State of the Union speech, Obama claimed to be connecting "military power with strong diplomacy." The truth is that the president is weakening our military and failing at diplomacy.

Even worse, Obama's incoherent foreign policy is hiding the true impact of defense budget cuts. The president fails to grasp that a weakened military will lead to weakened diplomacy, which will lead to increased risk to the United States. The purpose for a strong military is not to make war, but to prevent war by reinforcing diplomacy. As President Ronald Reagan famously said, we want peace through strength. The enemies of America will take diplomacy much more seriously if the United States and our allies have a powerful and credible military.

Congress must stand up in a bipartisan fashion against Obama's foreign policy and defense failures. The president's dangerous combination of failed foreign policy and devastating defense cuts must be opposed at every turn.

If we want true peace, we must be strong diplomatically and militarily. This has worked for America in the past and will work again in the future.

Doug Lamborn, a Republican, represents Colorado's 8th District in the U.S. House of Representatives. He serves on the House Armed Services and Veterans' Affairs committees.

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OPINION

US' good fortune invites long-term thinking

By DAVID IGNATIUS

WASHINGTON
Niccolo Machiavelli, perhaps the shrewdest political philosopher in history, believed that great events were shaped by luck — or “fortuna” as he called this unpredictable force of life. The same actions might produce success or failure, depending on the whims of the goddess Fortuna.

You wouldn't know it by listening to gloomy commentators, but the United States has been extremely lucky of late. Its inherent economic strength has become more obvious. Meanwhile, its adversaries have suffered reversals — some of their own making, others because of bad luck.

With this advantageous position, the U.S. can afford to think like a superpower. It shouldn't rush to make concessions to weaker nations, or to gain agreements that aren't fully ripe, as may be the case with the current nuclear talks with Iran. It shouldn't be shy about helping its friends, or making its adversaries pay the costs of their reckless behavior, as in dealing with Russia's aggression in Ukraine.

U.S. diplomats did a heck of a job, too, that the Islamic State, which poses a deadly threat in Syria and Iraq, has taken the hideous action of burning alive a Jordanian Muslim pilot. Millions of Arabs are outraged and calling for revenge. With this death-cult action, the extremists have done more to undermine their standing than a thousand U.S. bombing raids. The State Department propaganda tweets could have accomplished.

Americans are always asking why the Arabs don't denounce atrocities committed in the name of Islam. Well, it's happening now. “Barbarity,” screams the headline in the London-based Arabic newspaper Al-Hayat. “Vicious,” says the emir of Kuwait. A “brutal, heinous crime,” says Saudi



MARTIAL TREZZINI, KEYSTONE/AP

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, left, listens to Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif in Geneva during a bilateral meeting ahead of nuclear talks last month.

Arabia. The U.S. shouldn't raise its voice louder than the indignant Muslim world. Restrain the rhetoric; use force invisibly; act like a superpower.

To understand the current “correlation of forces,” as the Russians like to say, let's look at some evidence about American economic power gathered by Goldman Sachs last month in its 2015 outlook titled “U.S. Preeminence.”

First, GDP growth: From the peak before the 2008 financial crisis, the U.S. economy has grown a further 8.1 percent in real terms, compared with declines of 2.2 percent for the eurozone and 1.1 percent for Japan. The gap between GDP growth rates

in fast-rising emerging-market economies and the U.S. shrank from 6.5 percentage points in 2007 to 2.6 points in 2014, and it's expected to narrow further this year to 1.2 points as China slows.

When you look at business statistics, the gains are even more striking. The debt leverage of listed U.S. companies is lower than that of firms in any of its trading partners. U.S. labor productivity is substantially higher than that of the eurozone, Japan or any emerging-market country. In terms of average manufacturing costs, the U.S. has an advantage over every one of the 10 largest exporters, except China.

Finally, there's the remarkable growth

in U.S. energy production. In 2014, the United States surpassed Saudi Arabia to become the top oil and gas producer in the world, six years earlier than analysts had expected. Some of the incentive for producing shale oil and gas has declined, as oil prices have fallen about 50 percent from their peak in July. But that's great news for U.S. consumers.

Powerful countries such as the U.S. have the wind at their back. They don't need to rush things in the clamor of partisan politics and 24-hour news cycles. That's why I hope the Obama administration won't make too many concessions to Iran in its eagerness to reach a nuclear deal. If the Iranians are truly ready to turn away from confrontation and verifiably unplug their nuclear program, fine. If not, let's wait. In a world of low oil prices and an Iranian population desperate to end its isolation, time doesn't favor the Iranian hard-liners.

On Ukraine, a powerful U.S. has been wise to leave open the exit ramp for a reckless Russian President Vladimir Putin — and to accept the idea of a future Ukraine that accommodates Russian and Western interests. This effort continued Thursday in Kiev. But if Putin foolishly spurs compromise and the pro-Russian army war in eastern Ukraine, the U.S. should provide limited arms to Kiev, as argued this week by experts from the Atlantic Council, the Brookings Institution and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs. If Putin escalates further, at a time when Russia is still recovering from the economic ruinous war across Ukraine. His decision, not ours.

Fortune blesses strong nations, but only when they act with resolve. Squandering America's real advantage to gain short-term diplomatic success would be a big mistake.

David Ignatius is a member of Washington Post Writers Group.

CEO admits the obvious: Twitter has failed on abuse

By CAITLIN DEWEY

The Washington Post

Twitter chief executive Dick Costolo has never deigned to address rampant harassment on his platform, despite the frequency with which that subject makes the news.

But on Wednesday, in the wake of a blockbuster radio interview by the feminist writer Lindy West, Costolo at last admitted to a fatal flaw of his platform that hundreds of critics and troll-battered tweeters have pointed out already: Twitter has become an ideal platform for harassment, in large part because the site has done so little to combat it.

We're sick at dealing with abuse and trolls on the platform and we've sucked at it for years,” Costolo wrote, in a company memo obtained by the Verge. “It's no secret and the rest of the world talks about it every day. ... There's no excuse for it. I take full responsibility for not being more aggressive on this front. It's nobody else's fault but mine, and it's embarrassing.”

Embarrassing that it took so long, sure — but in the long battle for a safer and more equitable Internet, Costolo's statement is an almost unprecedented step forward. For one thing, it's candid and transparent to a degree that's pretty much unheard of, for any executive in any industry. (Twitter, specifically, has always been circumspect about its harassment initiatives and policies, something an advocacy group faulted it for at length in a September report.)

“Just the fact that this is finally being ac-

knowledged — even though it was leaked and wasn't meant to be public — is a huge relief for those of us who have been hibernating away at it for so long,” said West, who has suffered abuse and threats on Twitter for years.

But more important than that, even, Costolo's statement validates the very existence of online abuse — a ridiculous notion, maybe, given the legacy of incidents such as Gamergate but still very much a subject of ambiguity and dispute. After all, one of the most insidious things about harassment, online or off it, is that so many people continue to insist that it doesn't happen. That puts victims in an impossible situation, forced not only to demand redress but to prove that the abuse was legitimate in the first place.

West accurately sums up the response that victims often receive: get off the computer; grow a thicker skin; get over it; stop “legislating feels.” In a phrase, this is the Internet, ergo this is not real, ergo everything you say about it is also not legitimate or worth addressing.

Explicitly acknowledging abuse, and refusing to tolerate it, “doesn't seem like a radical stance to me,” West said. “But, I mean, apparently it took them actually hearing me cry on the radio to tip this critical mass that's been building.”

Twitter has long paid lip service to fixing abuse, of course. And over the past year and a half, the platform has made small changes to the way it handles moderation and reporting. But Twitter's general malaise on the subject of abuse has certainly led many

— including yours truly — to believe that it doesn't take victims very seriously.

In the summer of 2013, the British feminist Caroline Criado-Perez and Labor Party politician Stella Creasy both made headlines for the torrent of Twitter abuse they received after a campaign to get a woman on English currency. (Criado-Perez left home for her safety; a British court later sentenced one of her abusers to 18 weeks in prison.) Twitter quickly apologized to the women and added a new in-tweet reporting button that, the site said, would help make people “feel safe on Twitter.”

A year later, however, gruesome, high-profile incidents broke out again, first around the death of actor Robin Williams, whose daughter Zelda was heckled by trolls who claimed she drove her father to suicide, and then by the cultural calamity called Gamergate, in which several female game developers and journalists were threatened with rape or other violence. The FBI has said it's investigating those cases — and Twitter again promised that its policies would improve.

“What does a promise from Twitter really amount to, though? Even as the site claimed it would “not tolerate abuse of this nature,” it was outsourcing research on gender-based harassment to a two-person nonprofit and dedicating huge technical resources to features like an expanded archive. (“What if Twitter improved their privacy and harassment features instead of launching group DM (which no one even wants anyway),” Vice's Sarah Emerson asked.)

The tools Twitter did release in December — such as a “block page” that shows users who they've blocked in the past — did make the reporting process more pleasant but failed to address some of the core unpleasantness that harassment victims face. There is still no way, for instance, to report two of the biggest problems advocates have identified: sock puppet accounts and fake photos or quotes attributed to the victim to stir up further harassment.

West points out other problems, too, like the fact that rejected abuse reports are never explained, and the logistical difficulty of reporting coordinated abuse when it comes from a large mob of users. Each tweet, taken on its own, may not raise alarms with moderators, West says, but when a user receives hundreds of hostile messages, it can “be just as intimidating as one or two extremely explicit, violent ones.” She'd like to see Twitter and other platforms “develop mechanisms to recognize context and sustained abuse.”

At face value, at least, Costolo's statement would seem to represent some kind of substantive change. But the true test will be whether he backs up his words with actual actions. West certainly hopes that's the case.

“Talk is cheap,” West said — but she's optimistic. “This memo is an encouraging step, and hopefully the beginning of a sea change in the industry.”

Caitlin Dewey runs The Intersect blog for The Washington Post, writing about digital and Internet culture.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Bishop conducts Mass in church after robbery

IA CUMMING — An early January robbery at a historic church in suburban Des Moines compelled a bishop to conduct a special service meant to sanctify it.

Bishop Richard Pates and Father Dan Kirby led a congregation of about 75 people Monday through the 147-year-old church at St. Patrick's Irish Settlement in Cumming, flinging holy water up the walls in an effort to bless the sanctuary following the theft.

Kirby told the Des Moines Register the robbery was more spiritually detrimental than financially. The thief or thieves stole a chalice containing wafers that become the literal body of Christ for Catholics during Mass and several Bibles and prayer books.

Pates said the wafers are "the most sacred element" in the Catholic faith, so their disappearance made the so-called Mass of reparation necessary.

Bill to raise speed limit to 80 mph withdrawn

OK OKLAHOMA CITY — A bill to increase the speed limit on Oklahoma turnpikes to 80 mph has been withdrawn from consideration and may not be heard this year.

Oklahoma City Republican Sen. Ralph Shortey said Thursday that his bill to increase the maximum allowable speed on turnpikes from 75 to 80 mph needs to be rewritten and he may not have time to do so this session.

The bill had been scheduled for a hearing Thursday before being withdrawn.

Oklahoma Turnpike Authority spokesman Jack Dammill said the agency opposes the bill because the turnpikes aren't designed for drivers to go that fast.

Shortey said he wants to rewrite the bill to allow the Turnpike Authority to raise the speed limit if it would be safe to do so.

Ex-dentist is suspected in bank robberies

CA SANTA ANA — The FBI says a former Orange County dentist is suspected of being the "rolled-sleeves bandit" responsible for stealing more than \$21,000 from seven California banks.

The Los Angeles Times reported Wednesday that Damian Newhart was arrested last week after someone recognized him from a video of video distributed to local media.

Newhart is being held at a Los Angeles County jail with bail set at \$50,000.

The newspaper said the bandit in the seven robberies got his nickname because he wore button-down shirts with the sleeves rolled up.

The latest robbery happened last month in Huntington Beach.

State officials revoked Newhart's dental license last year after they determined that he wrote fraudulent prescriptions for painkillers and other drugs for his own use.

THE CENSUS

79

The percentage of respondents who support Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam's program to make community college and technical schools free for upcoming graduates, according to a new poll by Middle Tennessee State University. The poll showed 12 percent were against the program, known as Tennessee Promise, 8 percent were unsure and the rest gave no answer. The telephone survey of 600 Tennesseans 18 and over was conducted from Jan. 25-27.



JAMES BORCHUCK, TAMPA BAY (FLA.) TIMES/AP

Kickball, or 'duck'ball?

Heather Mager ducks during a kickball practice game Tuesday at Gadsden Park in Florida. Members of the four branches of the military have been invited to take part in the first Gasparilla kickball tournament Saturday.

Police: Suspect used wheelchair, pellet gun

PA CONNELLSVILLE — Police said two men — including one using a wheelchair and armed with a pellet pistol — broke into a southwestern Pennsylvania home and tried to rob the residents.

Connellsville police Chief James Capitos said officers were called about 11:30 p.m. Monday during the incident, and arrived to find Dean Firestone, 22, and Asa Thompkins, 25, — who uses a wheelchair — in the home, with Thompkins holding one person at gunpoint. The pellet gun resembled a Glock pistol.

Firestone remains in the Fayette County prison on burglary, robbery and other charges, though Thompkins was allowed to remain free on unsecured bail until their preliminary hearing Feb. 26.

Capitos said, "I've been here 37 years, I've never seen anybody in a wheelchair commit an armed robbery."

Robbery suspect held after wallet left behind

FL CAPE CANAVERAL — It was easy for authorities in central Florida to find

a robbery suspect. They said he left his wallet at a Cape Canaveral convenience store he's accused of robbing.

The Brevard County Sheriff's Office said Benjamin Alexander Shaw, 25, demanded money from a Circle K store clerk Monday night, threatening to return with a gun if he refused.

An arrest report said Shaw got \$40 and left the store. Police arrived and the clerk handed them Shaw's wallet with an ID inside.

Florida Today reported Shaw was found a few blocks away and was arrested. The clerk identified him and the incident was caught on surveillance video.

Shaw remains in the Brevard County Jail, charged with robbery and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Bill would OK concealed guns without a permit

ID BOISE — Idaho residents would be able to carry concealed weapons without a permit under a new bill introduced by the House State Affairs Committee on Thursday.

Greg Pruitt with the Idaho Second Amendment Alliance said the legislation, dubbed the "Constitutional Carry" bill, would not affect enhanced permits like

those required to carry concealed weapons on college and university campuses.

The panel voted to introduce the bill along party lines, with its four Democrats voting no.

Democratic Rep. Elaine Smith from Pocatello raised concern that the bill did not require any formal training to carry a weapon. Pruitt responded that Idaho residents are generally very responsible with their guns.

Five other states have similar legislation.

Muslim Day to be held at Oklahoma Capitol

OK OKLAHOMA CITY — Muslims from across Oklahoma will come to the state Capitol later this month to learn about the legislative process and join panel discussions on issues important to their community.

The Oklahoma chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations announced its first ever "Muslim Day" will be held at the Capitol on Feb. 27. Executive Director Adam Soltani said he expects more than 100 people to attend the event.

Soltani said the event is designed to encourage members of the Muslim faith to be civically engaged and communicate with

their lawmakers.

A similar event at the state Capitol in Texas last week sparked outrage after a group of vitriolic protesters heckled Muslim participants. One woman grabbed the microphone and yelled about Islam.

Officials: Teen's Hitler image posed no threat

NJ JACKSON — Authorities here have decided that pictures posted on social media by a teenager of herself dressed like Hitler and of a popular Orthodox Jewish gathering spot were not criminal.

A spokesman for the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office told the Asbury Park Press that there was never a danger posted to the community.

Authorities said the girl posted a picture of a spot where Orthodox Jews go with the caption "perfect bombing time."

The girl is the daughter of a New Jersey state police sergeant. Ocean County Prosecutor's Office spokesman Al Della Fave said that the teen's connection to law enforcement did not lead to special treatment.

From wire reports

TELEVISION

By **DAVID BAUDER**,
LYNN ELBER
and **FRAZIER MOORE**
The Associated Press

Kanya Barris, creator of ABC's "black-ish," was motivated to write the comedy about an African-American family's efforts to honor its heritage in part by the unreality of what he grew up watching on television.

"I saw 'Friends' and 'Seinfeld' and thought, 'What part of New York is this?'" recalled Barris, who is black. "It's not about being diverse. It's about being true to the world."

His show comes 15 years after civil rights groups, galvanized by a lineup of new network series almost entirely devoid of minority characters, sought and ultimately won agreements from major broadcasters to put programs on the air that better reflect the nation's population.

An AP analysis of regular cast members of prime-time comedies and dramas on ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox found progress since then in hiring black actors, but slighted other minorities. Casts at three of the four networks are still whiter than the nation as a whole.

That's in contrast to a fall season that seemed to signal broad change. Besides "black-ish" and a trio of shows from black megaproducer Shonda Rhimes, it offered Asian-American crime fighters and Latino families.

Among the key findings of the AP analysis:

- ABC, NBC and Fox now have a higher percentage of blacks in prime time than there is in the general population — a significant change over 1999. The difference is most dramatic at Fox: 6.5 percent of characters in lead or supporting roles were black in 1999 to 21 percent black this past fall, a number that notched up again with January's premiere of the black drama "Empire."

- Other ethnic groups don't do nearly as well. While Latinos are the nation's largest minority group at more than 17 percent of the population, only Fox and ABC have Latino representation of as much as 10 percent.

- CBS, the nation's most popular network, had the most diversity 15 years ago and now has the least. CBS programs are whiter now than they were then.

Time has not made broadcast's role moot. Network fare remains dominant for most consumers despite the broad array of alternatives. What Americans see — or fail to see — has a powerful impact on how individuals regard themselves as part of the nation's mosaic.

Gina Rodriguez, the Golden Globe-winning star of the CW's new telenovela-inspired comedy, "Jane the Virgin," knows what it's like to be left out of the TV picture.

"Ten years ago, when I was looking at that screen and didn't see myself at all, I knew there was no place (for me)," she said.

TV history contains minority success stories. Desi Arnaz loved Lucy in the 1950s; The "Roots" miniseries set viewership records in the 1970s; and Bill Cosby was TV's father figure in the 1980s.

SEE MINORITY ON PAGE 17



MINORITY REPORT

Networks make unequal progress toward TV diversity



Clockwise from top: Anthony Anderson, left, and Tracee Ellis Ross star in ABC's "black-ish"; Jerry Washington stars in ABC's "Scandal"; Viola Davis, center, stars in ABC's "How to Get Away with Murder"; Lucy Liu, left, and Jonny Lee Miller star in CBS' "Elementary"; Lucille Ball, left, and Desi Arnaz starred in "I Love Lucy," which aired on CBS from 1951-57.

TELEVISION



Fair representation on TV a long struggle for blacks

By FRAZIER MOORE
The Associated Press

More than 60 years ago, a new comedy boasted an all-black cast populating a Harlem community with characters that included an attorney, a small businessman and a civic-club president.

"Amos 'n' Andy" was an instant hit in June 1951, when it made the leap to television after decades on radio.

But not everyone loved it. It was blasted by the NAACP for perpetuating black stereotypes with what, at best, were broad characterizations — particularly Kingfish Stevens, its underhanded mastermind, whose mission in life was avoiding work while cooking up ways to fleece Andy, his dim-witted chum.

For two years, "Amos 'n' Andy" remained a fixture on CBS. Its episodes then went into syndication for a successful run that didn't end until the mid-1960s, when CBS finally yielded to detractors, including the NAACP with its continued pressure, and yanked the reruns from the air.

Even today, the show is vilified by some as a display of racism. But "Amos 'n' Andy" also stands as TV's first all-black series, indeed the only one until "Sanford and Son" was introduced by Norman Lear in 1972 during a renaissance of black-oriented sitcoms.

Since TV's infancy, the march toward fair representation for various races and ethnicities has been circuitous and rocky. Most minorities remain underrepresented, while African-Americans found their place in TV's version of the world routinely shorthanded or disparaged by producers, networks and sponsors.

Consider singer Nat King Cole, who in 1956



Sitcoms such as "Amos 'n' Andy," above, "Good Times," below, and "The Cosby Show," top, helped pave the way for black actors on the small screen.



became the first prominent black performer to host a network variety series. Even with the impressively loyal support of NBC (and big-name guest stars, black and white, rallying to join him), Cole got little love from skittish advertisers. "The Nat King Cole Show" lasted only a year.

Comedian Flip Wilson got a much warmer reception in 1970 when his NBC comedy-variety show scored as that season's second-highest-rated series. It ran for four years.

Shortly after, Lear unveiled a slate of hit sitcoms that addressed hot-button issues of the day, particularly racial equality as depicted in "Sanford and Son" as well as CBS' "Good Times" and "The Jeffersons."

Bill Cosby also helped pave the way. His legacy as a TV trailblazer is taking a beating with the recent surge of sexual abuse allegations. But through the decades, he repeatedly punctured TV's color barrier.

Back in 1965, he made history co-starring with a white man (Robert Culp) on NBC's "I Spy," the pioneering buddy drama about two fast-living spies who masqueraded as a tennis pro and his trainer.

And, from 1984-92, he starred in "The Cosby Show," a smash hit for NBC where he played an upscale family man and obstetrician. Cosby's eight seasons as Dr. Cliff Huxtable clinched his identity as "America's Dad."

But there was no denying the distance traveled in the portrayal of black characters on TV.

The first comedy to star a black woman (ABC's "Beulah" in 1950) set its leading lady in the home of a white middle-class family, where she jovially toiled as their maid. But in 2014, the NBC drama "State of Affairs" premiered with a black woman as president of the United States.

Non-black minority actors face even larger challenges

While minority actors have made on-again, off-again progress through the years, advances on TV aren't the same among all groups seeking greater representation.

ABC Fox and NBC can claim a higher percentage of blacks on scripted prime-time shows than there are in the general population, but black characters outnumber Latinos on those networks as well as on CBS — despite there being more Latinos (17.1 percent, according to 2013 U.S. Census Bureau figures) than blacks (13.2 percent) in the United States.

"What I found over the years is that networks are so committed to developing diversity, but they're very, very scared about actually programming it," said Mexican-American actress Eva Longoria, the "Desperate Housewives" star who is producing "Devious Maids" for Lifetime and will star in the upcoming sitcom "Telenovela" for NBC.

When Fox and the now-defunct UPN started, they aired a handful of series with all-black casts in the hope of gaining a foothold with that audience before broadening their appeal. While many of those shows didn't survive, they introduced new talent to the industry.

For Latinos, there was no similar pipeline, said Adam Moore, SAG's national director of affirmative action. Moreover, outsiders have difficulty navigating differences within the Latino community; the experiences of people with different ancestry are markedly different. And while the CW's "Jane The Virgin" won its star, Gina Rodriguez, a Golden Globe, another freshman series that appeared to represent a breakthrough, the ABC comedy "Cristela" which centers on an ambitious Latina and her family life, was slammed by some critics as perpetuating stereotypes.

Asian-Americans who make up 5.3 percent of the U.S. population, have fallen short with TV networks as well. Except for CBS, which matches that Census figure, the other networks' fall lineups included no more than 2.6 percent Asian-American characters.

Their status has improved since 1999, when the numbers fell under 1 percent at two networks, and there is excitement about ABC's upcoming family comedy "Fresh Off the Boat," which stars a Taiwanese family, said Daniel Mayeda, co-chairman of the Asian Pacific American Media Coalition.

A low point was Fox's short-lived melodrama "North Shore," which was set in Hawaii with only whites as its stars. When Mayeda asked a casting person why, he said, he was told the best person was hired for each part, and many of them had to appear in bikinis for beach scenes.

Mayeda was flummoxed. "Asian-American women can get breast implants just as well as white women can," he observed. "It was astonishing."

Even more slighted: Native Americans and Alaska natives, who the Census Bureau in 2013 put at about 1.2 percent of the population but who, year after year, are rarely seen on TV, said Sonny Skyhawk, an actor and founder of American Indians in Film and Television.

His exchanges with industry members are routinely frustrating as well, he said.

"You're going to tell me that after thousands of programming hours, after thousands of roles, that you can't find one small role, whether a judge or a cabdriver or even a homeless person that could be a Native American?" he recalls asking.

"They give me the boilerplate: 'We're color blind, and skin and color and race doesn't make a difference' in casting," Skyhawk said.

— The Associated Press



LIFETIME TELEVISION/AP

From left, Roselyn Sanchez, Edy Ganem, Ana Ortiz, Dania Ramirez and Judy Reyes star in "Devious Maids," a new series about the lives of domestic workers and their wealthy bosses.

TELEVISION



Melissa Fumero, left, and Stephanie Beatriz star in the TV comedy series, "Brooklyn Nine-Nine."
Fox/AP

Minority: Advocates push for more diversity off screen, too

FROM PAGE 15

But by the fall of 1999, ABC, NBC and Fox each had prime-time casts that were 86 percent white — at a time the U.S. Census put the non-Latino white population at 71.9 percent.

In fall 2014, with the non-Latino white population estimated at 62.6 percent, CBS' series cast and characters were 79.2 percent white; ABC's were 72.7 percent; and NBC's were 69.7 percent. In contrast, Fox's slate stands at 60 percent white.

The Census Bureau counts blacks as 13.2 percent of the U.S. population. Blacks make up 19 percent of cast members in fall shows on Fox and 15 percent on ABC and NBC.

Although CBS pledged improvement in 1999, the number of white characters on its fall 2014 series was up and black representation had slipped to just under 7 percent, less than half what it was in 1999, according to the AP's tally from the network's own cast lists.

"We are victims of our own success to a certain extent," CBS Entertainment President Nina Tassler said. The network has been the most-watched in prime time for much of the past decade and, as a result, has had less programming churn.

CBS, which does have prominent minority stars including Asian actresses Maggie Q in the lead role on "Stalker" and Lucy Liu on "Elementary," is not complacent about the issue, said Tassler, who is Latina.

Jennifer Salke, NBC's entertainment president, says shows with all-white casts "would just never fly" at NBC. All 13 of the network's scripted shows this fall had at least one minority cast member.

None of the minority cast members on those shows, however, enjoy marquee status: Alfred Wodard is the U.S. president on "State of Affairs," but the show's star is Katherine Heigl. On ABC, which has a nearly identical percentage of blacks on the air as NBC, Kerry Washington of "Scandal" and Viola Davis of "How to Get Away With Murder" are the leads.

People who follow the issue say a key way to boost a minority presence on screen is to step it up off screen. But too often that isn't part of the equation. Recent studies have shown the extent to which whites are dominant as writers and directors.

Still, Jason George, an actor who works on diversity issues for the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, said he's seen progress with minority actors getting more well-rounded roles.

"You're suddenly a person and not just a representative of a culture," he said. "As an actor, that's what you want."

REALITY CHECK

Producers made sure 'Brooklyn Nine-Nine' reflected real world

By LYNN ELBER
The Associated Press

Stephanie Beatriz was preparing for her second-round audition for "Brooklyn Nine-Nine" when she heard that another Latina actress, Melissa Fumero, had won a role in the Fox sitcom. Beatriz's heart sank.

"I thought, 'That's it. The network is not going to allow there to be two Latinas in one show,'" Beatriz said. "I was so used to, 'There's only room for one.'"

Beatriz was wrong. The "Brooklyn Nine-Nine" cast includes both of the actresses, along with two African-Americans and five whites.

Making sure "Brooklyn Nine-Nine" reflected the melting-pot world it's drawn from was key for Daniel J. Goor and Michael Schur. The veteran writers and producers, whose credits include "Parks and Recreation," were mulling a joint project when they quickly settled on a New York-based police comedy.

"Police deal with people of all types: races, genders, sexualities, which allows for an unbelievable number of stories," Goor said. "And when you look at the NYPD itself, it's an incredibly diverse police force."

Added Schur: "It seemed like the more diverse, interesting-looking group of people you had, the more fun the show would be."

The payoff for "Brooklyn Nine-Nine" so far includes a 2014 Golden Globe best comedy series trophy and solid ratings that earned it a sophomore season.

Diversity also provided more than a wealth of lively material for the show's

nine-member writing staff, which includes black, Indian-American and gay writers, along with Goor and Schur, both of whom are white. "From a practical point, it meant we could open up the casting process really to anyone, which is a tremendous advantage," Goor said. "We could say to the casting director (Allison Jones), we want to have two male cops and two female cops of this age, and we can audition anyone."

Word of Andy Samberg's decision to leave "Saturday Night Live" came after Goor and Schur had a deal in place with Fox, and they pursued him for the role of free-wheeling police detective Jake Peralta.

Terry Crews, the NFL player turned actor, was hired shortly after to play Sgt. Terry Jeffords. Crews' audition was so impressive that "we came up with a character named Terry, which was really a bad negotiating tactic," Goor joked.

Andre Braugher was brought on as stern precinct Capt. Ray Holt, a move notable for the multiple Emmy Award-winning actor's shift from drama to comedy. Tough black bosses are a TV staple, often limited to nothing more than barking orders, but Holt's personal life comes into play on "Brooklyn Nine-Nine" and Braugher is far from marginalized.

Other top roles went to Joe Lo Truglio, Dirk Blocker and Joel McKinnon Miller as, respectively, white detectives Boyle, Hitchcock and Scully, and Chelsea Peretti as an administrator and assistant to Holt.

Then came a rare move for a network series, with two of the three major female roles going to Fumero (Detective Amy Santiago) and Beatriz (Detective Rosa Diaz).

"Again, we were searching for the best (people)," Goor said.

Added Schur: "When we told the network of our choices, the reaction was, 'That's good, let's move on.'"

Painting the world of such a police department as "having all white faces would be ridiculous," said Dana Walden, chairman and CEO of the Fox Television Group. Beatriz considers the fact that she and Fumero were cast together to be "incredible," adding that the two "still look at each other sometimes and go, 'This is crazy!'"

The actors not only measure up to their real-life NYPD counterparts, part of a force that's more than half minority officers: They have been recognized by their industry peers with a 2015 Screen Actors Guild Award nomination for best TV comedy ensemble.

While none of the show's characters is window dressing, they also are not treated as fodder for jokes or stereotypes about race or, in the case of the gay Holt, sexual orientation, Goor and Schur said.

When he considers his own colleagues, Goor said, the basis for their contributions to the workplace "isn't their background. It's an influence of it, but it's not the starting point of every sentence they say or every thought they have. That's what I like about how we write Capt. Holt: He wants to have the best precinct there is. That's his goal and where he comes from."

And that's where producers aim to start and end as well, making Holt — as with the other characters — a man who's the sum of all his parts.

"You don't reduce people to one thing in the modern age. That's our No. 1 rule of writing," Schur said.

LIFESTYLE

MAN-MADE

Male quilters pushing aesthetic boundaries and notions of virility in their art quilts

By JESSICA GELT
Los Angeles Times

“How would a guy make a quilt?” Joel Otterson asked himself when he began his foray into the craft.

“He would make it out of concrete and stone,” he answered. And so he did.

Otterson’s “quilts” consist of interlinking blocks of concrete, stone and ceramics that are meant to be walked and danced on rather than slept under. One is 19 feet by 22 feet and made from six tons of concrete and 500 dinner plates cut into 4,000 pieces. There’s even a “crazy quilt” made from the scraps of his concrete projects.

Otterson is one of eight artists involved in “Man-Made: Contemporary Male Quilters,” that opened Jan. 25 at the Craft & Folk Art Museum in Los Angeles and is curated by CAFAM Executive Director Suzanne Isken. Cluttered with heavy metal iconography and images of guns, basketballs, caustic political commentary and the occasional expertly executed log cabin pattern, the “Man-Made” quilts prove that testosterone and needlework aren’t mutually exclusive.

Men have been quilting since the dawn of the 19th century, but these artists express a fresh and irreverent sense of masculinity and in some cases sexuality through mismatched patches of fabric like never before. For them, quilting is not an attention-grabbing stilet. Isken says the pieces on display fall in the category of fine art based on their technical acumen and their ability to push aesthetic boundaries and upend accepted themes of the traditional medium.

The art quilts of “Man-Made” seek to sweep gender paradigms into history’s dustbin, showing how the modern men joining the global sewing circle add a boisterous voice of virility to a traditionally soft conversation, with intergenerational wrinkles.

In addition to his work with concrete, Otterson sews fabric quilts.

“I put a big naked cowboy in the middle of it, just because I could,” he says, giggling over a quilt in his colorful downtown L.A. studio. “When in doubt, put some nudity in it. I always say.”

He calls it his queer aesthetic. Moreover, he says, if women can become CEOs of major corporations, he can sit at home and sew.

“I’m a big, burly guy, and I’m making quilts,” he says.

Cluttering nearly every surface of his light-filled space overlooking the damp concrete cavity of the L.A. River: beads, a riot of fabric, a kiln, a vintage black Mayd’s Best sewing machine on a wooden table with a knee pedal and piles of books, including a worn copy of “Woman’s Day Book of American Needlework.”



PHOTOS BY ANNE CUSACK, LOS ANGELES TIMES

Luke Haynes poses with his quilt, which will be displayed in the “Man-Made: Contemporary Male Quilters” exhibit at the Craft & Folk Art Museum in Los Angeles. The event runs through May 3.



Joel Otterson, one of eight exhibiting artists, is known for hard quilts, made out of cement and pieces of plate, as well as soft, fabric quilts.

Otterson, 55, says in his “old age” he has come to prefer needlework. He thinks of it as his own brand of feminism. Or is it feminist-lite?

The question of gender and gender identity is a source of debate when it comes to male quilters, curator Isken says. It began when Michael James, a leader of the art-quilt movement that blossomed in the 1970s, wrote to the editor of Quilters Newsletter magazine, suggesting the need for a new form of quilting, one that dismantled tradition. Dozens of female readers immediately criticized him, saying his ideas would likely strip the craft of its female and community-driven identity.

“But it turned out that a lot of male quilters had tried to address their maleness and otherness in the quilt world, and it was really interesting,” says Isken, adding that the work in “Man-Made” is particularly noteworthy for its reflection of contemporary urban life. The unconventional quilts are in no way, their creators stress,

she got to know the work of the men in the show.

“We’re not showing this because we think one is better,” she says. “We’re showing one moment and one idea. There’s a place for that amazing (feminist) history and also a place for this.”

For his part, Luke Haynes, who wields an industrial long-arm sewing machine like a chain saw on the second floor of his L.A. loft, says there is no gender bias in his quilting. Home economics isn’t just for girls anymore, just like shop isn’t only for boys. Plus, rabid consumer culture has made the idea of buying a blanket more attractive and much easier than making one, so mothers and grandmothers don’t generally pass down the art form to their daughters the way they once did.

“Because there was a break in tradition, we’ve seen a huge jump in male quilters. It’s not moms to daughters, it’s YouTube to whoever is interested,” he says, sitting in a cat-scratched yellow chair beside a TV

intended to make fun of or reduce the importance of women practicing the art.

Isken said she was nervous about staging the show at first, because CAFAM is known for championing the work of women, but that feeling lessened as

Haynes is straight, but the Brooklyn Museum once referred to him as gay on a placard featuring one of his quilts — which tickled him.

“I love this projection of ideas on object and material and medium,” he says. “Plus, how fun is it to come out as a straight, white man?”

Haynes likes to work with recycled fabric and used clothes, as does San Francisco artist Ben Venom.

Working out of his Mission District studio, Venom is known for quilts made of heavy metal T-shirts.

“I fully recognize that what I do is a little bit absurd,” Venom says, noting the thrill that comes from an idea that on a scale of 1 to 10 is “so absurd or ridiculous that you’re pushing past 10.”

He points to the public’s fascination with NASCAR and monster trucks as an example.

The former is just cars driving in circles, Venom says, but the nonsensical qualities are precisely what make it attractive to some.

Venom’s friends and family donate their old clothes to him for use in quilts. “You can see a piece of the community at large. Rips and tears are there for everyone to look at,” he says. “It’s a large woven history of personal memories.”

HEALTH & FITNESS

For the love of hiking

Consider type of activity, terrain, season when choosing footwear

By LEANNE ITALIE
The Associated Press

A big, bad pair of hiking boots and the bloody hurt they inflicted on Cheryl Strayed in her book "Wild," as they were for Reese Witherspoon in the popular movie adaptation that earned the actress an Oscar nomination.

Toenails were taken by the too-small monsters, and both of the boots with the flat red laces wound up at the bottom of a cliff on the Pacific Crest Trail in the opening scene, to be replaced later with a brand-new proper-fitting pair at her next rest stop.

A newbie to thru-hiking, Strayed's story of her 1,100-mile trek has not only boosted her profile but also reinforced the importance to novices of protecting and supporting their feet.

Danner Boots in Portland, Ore., created the "Wild" boots for Witherspoon, though the company didn't make the kind Strayed actually wore. That honor goes to Raichle, later rebranded as Mammut. Danner certainly is reaping the benefits. Its Mountain Light Cascade style for women, the official name, has enjoyed a sales boost, said company spokesman Will Pennartz.

But uninitiated thru-hikers should tread lightly when it comes to footwear; shoes instead of boots might be a better choice.

"You have to respect your feet. Fit and break-in period are two of the most important aspects of finding the right pair of hiking boots. We hope newbie hikers not only take inspiration from Cheryl's story, but also learn from her initial mistakes," Pennartz said.

These days, footwear options for long-distance hikers abound. When choosing, consider that your feet are not those of Strayed, Witherspoon or your best friend who raved about a certain brand or style.

It was painful to watch those scenes with her feet," said Austin Williams, who hiked 1,600 miles



Reese Witherspoon portrays Cheryl Strayed in "Wild." Strayed, a novice hiker, began her 1,100-mile trek with a massive amount of unnecessary gear and ill-fitting shoes. AP

of the PCT in 2008 wearing an ultralight pack and running shoes. Key to choosing the right footwear, Williams and others advise, is to try on as many different kinds as possible and to be open to changing them up for a different size or type as you go along.

Denise Friend, a footwear expert and merchandising manager for the outdoor retail supplier REI, said a common mistake among newbies is not choosing the right footwear for the right activity: short hike versus backpacking trip, for instance, along with incline, season and terrain.

"Classic and traditional styles still sell well, but the next generation of boots offer better comfort,



PHOTOS BY RICK BOWMER/AP

These days, footwear options for long-distance hikers abound. When trying on footwear, take a stroll through the store. Walk up and down stairs and on an inclined plane to determine whether or not the shoe will work for you, according to REI.com, an outdoor retail supplier.

lighter weight and flexibility," she said from company headquarters in Kent, Wash. "These new styles require less break-in time and are trail-ready out of the box."

Williams put up lots of advice for the feet on his PlanYourHike.com after he completed his nearly three-month trek.

"The classic hiking footwear has always been hiking boots. If you have a heavier pack and you roll your ankle and you're not wearing boots, you're screwed," he said from Mendocino, Calif. "But if you're wearing a really light pack, a lot of people are finding you don't really need boots if you're on a trail. If you're going off trail it's still good to wear boots."

Gear tests for footwear abound if you're in search of recommendations. A few things to keep in mind:

Weight: What you have on your feet makes a huge difference when you're hiking 20 to 30 miles

a day, Williams said. Lightweight trail shoes, running shoes or ultralight boots will not sap energy nearly as fast as full-blown, clunky hiking boots.

Time: Footwear rarely lasts for more than 500 miles. You could go through six or seven pairs by the end of a thru-hike. Budget accordingly.

Swelling: This is inevitable when you hike for 10-plus hours a day nearly every day, week after week, Williams said. The growth can be from a half size to one-and-a-half sizes, especially in desert areas. If you plan to buy all your footwear at once for resupply boxes sent to you along the way, buy a size bigger than your foot no matter what the salesperson tells you, he said.

Adjusting sizes: Wiser than buying all footwear at once is leaving support people with money and telling them the exact kind you like. When it's time for replacements you can tell them

what size to include in your next resupply box.

Socks: They fall apart fast, Williams said. Every single resupply box should have at least one pair of new socks. Two or three pairs in each box would be great. Most hikers carry three or four pairs of reasonably fast-drying socks. Change socks at least once a day to let feet dry and help prevent blisters. Cotton takes forever to dry and more technical smart wool socks are pricey.

Shoes versus boots: Shoes are better than boots when your base pack weight is less than 25 pounds, you're hiking a maintained trail and you don't require mega-ankle support, Williams said.

Gaiters: These coverings that attach to footwear come in waterproof, lightweight versions. Williams is a huge proponent of gaiters as a way to keep feet dry and debris out of your shoes.

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VIETNAM

AT

50

Explore **STARS AND STRIPES** new feature section: Vietnam at 50.

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

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

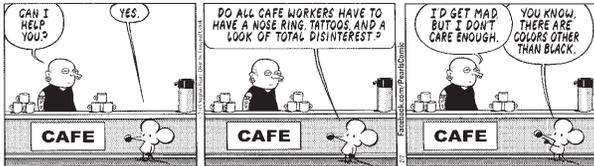
Frazz



Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



Candorville



Get Fuzzy



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	
12					13					14			
15					16					17			
					19					20			
			21	22			23	24					
25	26	27					28			29	30	31	
32							33						
34						35		36					
						37		38					
39	40	41			42	43				44	45	46	47
48						49				50			
51						52				53			
54						55				56			

ACROSS

- 1 Jacobs of fashion endorsement
- 5 Passport card
- 9 Mobile-phone territory
- 12 Mormon in pain
- 13 In Commotion
- 15 Muriel Spark's "Memento —"
- 16 Hear
- 17 Solidify
- 18 Detail, for short
- 19 Singer DiFranco
- 20 "The Wind in the Willows" character
- 21 Barbie's companion
- 23 Winter ailment
- 25 Prepare lovers
- 28 Bull's-eye
- 32 Senescence
- 33 Flat fish
- 34 Extinct birds
- 36 Boil
- 37 Grecian container
- 38 Ironic
- 39 Modern message
- 42 — pro nobis
- 44 Small branch
- 48 Work smoothly
- 49 Italy's silhouette
- 50 "The Amazing —"

- 51 Geological time
- 52 Craving
- 53 It takes the cake
- 54 Yr. divisions
- 55 Youngster
- 56 Criterion

- 24 Surgical implement
- 25 "Awesome!"
- 26 Swelled head
- 27 Stashed
- 29 Roscoe
- 30 Biblical verb ending
- 31 Ball-bearing gadget
- 35 Disdainful
- 36 Wrap
- 39 The opposition
- 40 100 cents
- 41 Present day
- 43 Corical Chris choreography
- 45 Bleacherites' desserts
- 46 Summertime
- 47 Courteous chap
- 49 Morsel

DOWN

- 1 Roundish
- 2 Surmounting
- 3 Exceptional
- 4 Lose your nerve
- 5 Empty
- 6 PC picture
- 7 Make short — of
- 8 Nay opposite
- 9 Palm starch
- 10 Concept
- 11 Shape
- 20 Ragtime dance
- 22 Impatient, maybe

Answer to Previous Puzzle

AWL	ITEM	SPAS	SAPS
MOI	NEMO	OLLA	
PENDULUM		NOON	
CURE		MATTE	
TAHOE	SKIT		
ALPS	PENTAGON		
ROTI	ARGOT	ORE	
PENCHANT	BREW		
	YOYO	LOGOS	
BAGGY	SOLE		
IRON	PENelope		
RILE	AVOW	URN	
DAFT	RABE	SOD	

2-7

CRYPTOQUIP

JE EJXON TMVF V NSMYCK

GOYSJYCVX MGNZYCNG EMYO

WJGFGMN, IYQ BYQXT NVI

SDGI'MG OYWJCK ZJBSQMG.N.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: AFTER SINGER SILLS GAVE THE POLICE OFFICER MEDICINE, MANY HEADLINES READ "BEVERLY HEALS COP."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: I equals Y

SPORTS BRIEFS/NFL



ROSS D. FRANKLIN/AP

In this Sept. 27 photo, Wade Miley pitches against the St. Louis Cardinals in Phoenix. The Red Sox announced a \$19.25 million, three-year contract with the left-hander that avoided salary arbitration on Thursday.

Briefly

LHP Miley agrees to 3-year deal with Red Sox

The Associated Press

BOSTON — Red Sox general manager Ben Cherington is pretty much done adding for this offseason.

"I would expect the group we have for spring training is in place," he said Thursday after the Red Sox announced a \$19.25 million, three-year contract with left-hander Wade Miley that avoided salary arbitration.

Miley is part of a new-look trio along with right-handers Rick Porcello and Justin Masterson, joining holdovers Clay Buchholz and Joe Kelly.

Boston's rotation transformation began last July when the 2013 World Series champions traded four members of the group that started the season: Jon Lester, John Lackey, Jake Peavy and Felix Doubront. The Red Sox negotiated to bring Lester back after they finished last in the AL East, but the left-hander signed with the Chicago Cubs.

■ Tigers slugger Victor Martinez needs surgery on his left knee after injuring it during his offseason workout program for the second time in four years.

The team said Thursday that Martinez tore the medial meniscus in his knee and is scheduled for surgery Tuesday with Dr. James Andrews in Pensacola, Florida.

Clippers guard Paul critical of female ref

CLEVELAND — Clippers All-Star guard Chris Paul was critical of referee Lauren Holtkamp fol-

lowing a 105-94 loss to the Cavaliers on Thursday night.

Paul was assessed a technical foul in the third quarter by Holtkamp, who worked with officials Ken Mauer and Eric Lewis. Los Angeles was given five technicals — four in the third quarter, three of them in a 52-second span.

"The tech I got was ridiculous," Paul said. "That's terrible. There's no way that can be a technical. We try to get the ball out fast every time down the court. When we did that, she said, 'Uh-uh.' I said, 'Why uh-uh?' and she gave me a technical. That's ridiculous. If that's the case, this might not be for her."

In other NBA news:

■ Golden State guards Stephen Curry and Klay Thompson will join Atlanta's Kyle Korver and five other players in the Three-Point Contest before the NBA All-Star game.

The NBA said Thursday that Houston's James Harden and Cleveland's Kyrie Irving also will compete along with defending champion Marco Belinelli of San Antonio, Portland's Wesley Matthews and the Los Angeles Clippers' J.J. Redick.

Obit blames Seahawks' play call for death

SPOKANE, Washington — The family of a Seattle Seahawks fan who died after the Super Bowl says he would have enjoyed the job at the team they put in the last line of his obituary:

"We blame the Seahawks lousy play call for Mike's untimely death."

The obituary for Michael Vedvik appeared on Thursday in The Spokesman-Review.

His wife, Stephanie, says he would have found the line hilarious.

The 53-year-old Kent man actually didn't see the game. He recorded it, intending to watch later, and went to sleep not feeling well, thinking it was indigestion or stress. He died in bed after a heart attack.

His brother-in-law added the line about Seattle's unsuccessful last play to the obituary, and Stephanie Vedvik approved.

US bobsledder Taylor wins 5th World Cup

IGLS, Austria — American Elana Meyers Taylor won her fifth bobsled World Cup of the season on Friday to extend her lead in the standings.

Meyers Taylor and pusher Lauren Williams trailed Anja Schneiderheinze and Annika Drazek by 0.06 seconds after the opening heat, before winning the final run and edging the Germans on combined time by 0.07 seconds.

Jamie Grubel Pouser and Cherrille Garrett of the United States finished 0.97 behind in third, with Americans Jazmine Fenlator and Lauren Gibbs another 0.02 back in fourth.

With one World Cup remaining — in Sochi, Russia, next week — Meyers Taylor leads Schneiderheinze by 104 points. A win is worth 225 points.

Union heads to court in hopes of reinstating Peterson

By Dave Campbell
The Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — The latest attempt by star running back Adrian Peterson to get back on the field will come in a federal courtroom.

Attorneys for the NFL Players Association were scheduled to argue Friday for the Minnesota Vikings standard's reinstatement from a suspension levied by the league under its divisive personal conduct policy. The punishment, stemming from the child abuse case involving Peterson and one of his young sons, has widened the divide between the NFL and the NFLPA over player discipline.

The effort on behalf of Peterson, who is suspended through at least April 15, is the legal equivalent of fourth-and-really-long.

When Peterson's appeal was denied Dec. 12 by an arbitrator appointed by the league, the union sued. Its petition to overturn the decision contends that the suspension, guided by Commissioner Roger Goodell's enhanced punishments for players involved with domestic violence after the Ray Rice case, strayed from the collective bargaining agreement. The NFLPA also argued the decision is unfair and arbitrator Harold Henderson was biased and exceeded his authority.

"Courts are not impotent bystanders to miscarriages of arbitral justice," the NFLPA's lawyers wrote last week in reply to the NFL's request that U.S. District Judge David Doty toss out the case.

Peterson and the union found a potentially friendly courtroom, given Doty's history of ruling in favor of players over three decades of refereeing the league's labor disputes. But he has not exclusively sided with the union, which has a difficult case to make.

It acknowledged as much in the first sentence of the initial filing: "This Petition presents the Court with the rare Arbitration Award that must be set aside."

Federal labor law typically prevents judges from trumping the arbitration process in collectively bargained workplaces.

"I would go a step further than saying it's 'rare,'" said Justin Eller, a management-side labor and employment lawyer for the Baltimore-based Miles and Stockbridge firm. "I would say it's incredibly rare for these decisions to be reversed. They've got some compelling arguments to make, but I do think they've got an uphill battle on this."

Peterson, originally charged with felony child abuse, avoided the possibility of jail time by pleading no contest to a misdemeanor charge of reckless assault for using a wooden switch

to discipline his 4-year-old son.

As part of a revamped personal conduct policy approved Dec. 10, Peterson essentially received a six-game unpaid suspension. But he played in only one game in the 2014 season, spending most of it on paid leave through a special exempt list controlled solely by Goodell while his case played out in Texas.

Peterson's best hope for a court-ordered reinstatement might be retroactivity. The injuries he caused occurred in May, and Goodell didn't announce the increased penalty until August.

"There's something about that that doesn't feel right," Eller said.

In its Jan. 26 reply, the NFLPA wrote that the CBA "could not be clearer in expressly limiting" Goodell's disciplinary authority. But that's a matter of interpretation for Doty.

"The CBA gives him pretty broad authority to discipline players," Eller said. "Part of this is their own contract that's going to work against them with some of these arguments they want to make."

Peterson's status with the Vikings has been complicated by the expiration date on the suspension. If they decided to keep him on his current contract, he would draw a \$1.275 million salary in 2015 and carry a salary cap hit of \$15.4 million that's by far the biggest of any running back in the league.

With plenty of other needs to address on the roster, allocating that much money to that position is almost unfathomable for a team that hasn't hesitated to cut a veteran player despite popularity and production.

The free agency and trading period begins March 10, just 11 days before Peterson's 30th birthday. That's also more than a month before the earliest he could be reinstated by Goodell, unless Doty were to beat him to it.

The Vikings drafted Jerick McKinnin in the third round last season, and general manager Rick Spielman said last month he sees the rookie running back class this year being as deep as it's been in a while. Even if they weren't interested in signing a free agent to replace Peterson, they could also try to deal him for draft picks.

Simply releasing Peterson would cost \$2.4 million in dead money against the team's salary cap for 2015 and nothing thereafter, but letting him leave without any compensation would be a big blow to the organization.

"He's going to play at a very high level when he comes back," Spielman said recently. "I don't know if there's a team in the NFL that wouldn't want Adrian Peterson on their football team."

NBA

Disappointing Magic fire coach Vaughn

GM Hennigan: Team is in a 'bit of a rut'

By KYLE HIGHTOWER
The Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — For several weeks, Orlando Magic general manager Rob Hennigan has felt the team has been stuck in a rut. He's hoping a change of leadership on the bench will get them out of it.

Citing a "stalled" growth process, the Magic fired Jacque Vaughn as coach Thursday after two and half seasons, ending the tenure of the first-time head coach brought in to help rebuild the franchise.

The Magic made the move following a 15-37 start to the season and after a series of lopsided losses during a 10-game losing streak. It is the Magic's second skid of at least five games since the start of 2015. Orlando was also 15-37 through 52 games last season.

Assistant James Borrego had been named interim coach. Hennigan wouldn't disclose a timeline for naming Vaughn's successor, but said the team is "100 percent" behind Borrego, and that he would have an opportunity to vie for the job on a full-time basis.

"We went into this season wanting to see some progress," Hennigan said Thursday afternoon. "We wanted to see growth. We just didn't feel like we were seeing the type of growth that we wanted to see. So that led us to this point.



John Raoux/AP

The Orlando Magic fired head coach Jacque Vaughn on Thursday after two and half seasons, ending the tenure of the first-time head coach brought in to help rebuild the franchise.

"We find ourselves in a little bit of a rut... but it's a road bump, not a road block. We will get through this."

Assistant coaches Brett Gunning, Wes Unseld Jr., and advanced scouting manager Zack Guthrie were also fired. Laron

Profit and Jay Hernandez, who both formerly worked in player development, were elevated to serve as Borrego's assistants.

Borrego said he plans to focus on improving the Magic's defense. Despite being as healthy as the Magic have been all sea-

son, they have given up 100 or more point in 14 consecutive games. They've also lost five of their last six at home, where they are just 5-17 this year.

"I'm ready for the challenge," Borrego said.



DARRON CUMMINGS/AP

Pacers guard Paul George, left, talks with center Roy Hibbert on Wednesday. The Pacers are leaving the door open for Paul to return this season from a gruesome leg injury he suffered this summer.

Pacers' star George hopeful he could return this season

By MICHAEL MAROT
The Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Two-time All-Star Paul George said Thursday he is hopeful of returning to play for the Indiana Pacers this season after suffering a gruesome leg injury, though he remains uncertain it will actually happen.

George took Larry Bird's playful jabs for months and he said he was pleasantly surprised when the Pacers' president of basketball operations suggested George should play this season if he could.

"I always talk to Larry about the situation. He always tells me how bad I look, being out there, so for him saying March, I was just playing off that," George said referring to a one-word Tweet "March?" he sent out after Bird's comments on Tuesday.

"Ideally, that's a great time where I want to be there. I'm obviously a long ways away from it because I've got so many steps that I've got to take," he said. "But that's when I want to be back."

George had not taken questions since late November when he was just doing some light shooting work.

Even then, it seemed unfathomable that George could contemplate a return this season after his right leg snapped in a collision with a basketball stanchion during the U.S. national team's Aug. 1 scrimmage in Las Vegas. George left the court on a stretcher and had surgery that night to repair the

compound fracture.

Bird, coach Frank Vogel and George took turns answering questions in mid-August about the long road back, but nobody ruled out the possibility of a return this season and they still haven't. Bird's comments raised the idea once again.

Team doctors told the Pacers it would take seven months for George's injured leg to heal completely, making a possible return in March plausible.

Vogel said the latest update he's gotten is that the bone is almost completely healed.

George's activity also has picked up. He's now participating in some one-on-one drills and has increased his shooting tempo at practice, and George went even further Thursday by saying he's able to do everything except contact work. He's hoping that changes in the next several weeks.

Bird acknowledged that George would only play if he was cleared and felt like he could play. Vogel said getting into game shape could take an additional one to two months and he said the playoff picture would have no impact on a

decision regarding George's return.

But George is weary of sitting, and doesn't want to have to wait any longer than necessary to get back.

"I want to be back out there. Playing. I want to play, that's just my competitive side. I just want to be out there and continue to play," George said. "But again, I know it's not a likelihood at this point, but I'm definitely pushing and working hard to make it possible."

'I want to be back out there. Playing. I want to play, that's just my competitive side. I just want to be out there and continue to play. But again, I know it's not a likelihood at this point, but I'm definitely pushing and working hard to make it possible.'

Paul George
Pacers guard

NBA

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	17	17	.500	—
Brooklyn	20	28	.417	12
Boston	18	30	.375	14
Philadelphia	11	39	.220	22
New York	10	40	.204	23

Southeast Division

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	4	9	.820	—
Washington	20	20	.500	10 1/2
Charlotte	22	27	.449	18 1/2
Miami	21	28	.429	19 1/2
Orlando	15	37	.288	27

Central Division

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
Cleveland	20	10	.668	—
Chicago	20	20	.500	1/2
Milwaukee	22	22	.500	1/2
Detroit	19	31	.380	11 1/2
Indiana	18	32	.360	12 1/2

Western Conference

Southwest Division

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
Memphis	37	12	.755	—
Houston	14	35	.286	16 1/2
Dallas	34	18	.654	4 1/2
San Antonio	31	18	.633	6
New Orleans	16	23	.411	11

Northwest Division

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
Portland	49	16	.680	—
Oklahoma City	25	24	.510	8 1/2
Denver	17	31	.353	16
Utah	17	32	.347	16 1/2
Minnesota	10	48	.208	24 1/2

Pacific Division

Team	W	L	Pct	GB
Golden State	39	8	.830	—
L.A. Clippers	13	13	.500	7 1/2
Phoenix	28	23	.549	13
Sacramento	31	25	.554	23 1/2
L.A. Lakers	13	36	.265	27

Thursday's games

Charlotte at Washington 87
 Cleveland 105, L.A. Clippers 94
 Dallas 101, Sacramento 78
 Portland 102, Phoenix 87

Friday's games

L.A. Clippers at Toronto
 L.A. Lakers at Orlando
 Cleveland at Indiana
 New York at Brooklyn
 Golden State at Atlanta
 Denver at Detroit
 Philadelphia at Boston
 New Orleans at Oklahoma City
 Milwaukee at Houston
 Memphis at Minnesota
 Utah at San Antonio

Saturday's games

Miami at New Orleans
 Brooklyn at Washington
 Charlotte at Philadelphia
 Golden State at New York
 Portland at Dallas
 Boston at Milwaukee
 Sacramento at Utah

Trail Blazers 108, Suns 87

PHOENIX — Tucker 2-7 0-0 6, Mark Morris 8-19 1-3 18, Len 2-3 1-5, Biedsoe 6-10 6-7 17, Zdravica 4-11 0-0 5, Wright 1-3 0-0 2, Thomas 2-9 2-2 6, Green 4-11 0-0 9, Murrain 4-9 0-0 8, Plumlee 0-4-2 1, Zdravica 1-2 0-0 2, Bullock 0-0 0-0 0, Goodwin 1-1 2-2 4, Totals 34-88 13-17 87.

PORTLAND — Batum 13-15 20, Aldridge 7-18 5-6 19, Lopez 1-6 1-0 12, Lillard 6-15 1-2 12, Barton 1-1 0-0 5, McCollum 3-2 2-8, Blake 2-5 0-0 5, Crabbe 0-0 0-0 0, Robinson 0-0 0-0 0, Claver 1-1 0-0 3, Totals 40-90 20-23 108.

PHOENIX 20 30 22-87
Portland 20 19 20-102-108

Three-Point Goals—Phoenix 5-23 (Tucker 2-8, Biedsoe 2-6, Zdravica 1-3, Mark Morris 1-4, Green 1-6, Zdravica 0-1, Marc Morris 1-2, Thomas 0-2), Portland 4-31 (Batum 2-6, Matthews 2-8, Barton 4-11, Claver 1-4, Blake 1-3, McCollum 1-4, Leonard 0-1, Aldridge 0-2, Lillard 0-5). Fouled Out—None. Rebounds—Phoenix 36 (Mark Morris 13, Barton 10, Wright 13), Assists—Phoenix 20 (Dzragovic 5, Barton 2), Turnovers—Phoenix 21, Portland 14. A.—19,488 (19,980).

Roundup

Hornets have sniping Wizards fifth consecutive loss

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Gerald Henderson scored 27 points and Charlotte defeated Washington for the second time this week, 94-87.

Henderson was 10-for-15 from the field as the Hornets beat the Wizards for the fifth straight time. Charlotte won at Washington 92-88 on Monday night.

The Wizards have dropped five in a row overall.

Brian Roberts had 12 points and provided a huge spark late in the third quarter after Charlotte fell behind by 11. Lance Stephenson, Michael Kidd-Gilchrist and Jason Maxiell added 11 points apiece for

Mavericks 101, Kings 78

DALLAS — Parsons 2-9 0-0 6, Aminu 1-6 0-2, Chandler 7-9 2-3 16, Barea 7-12 0-0 15, Ellis 9-16 0-0 21, Powell 2-5 0-4, Smith 0-1 0-0 0, Villanueva 4-14 0-0 8, Harris 4-8 0-1 15, Jefferson 5-11 1-3 14, Fetton 0-3 0-0 0, Ledo 0-2 0-0 0, Totals 41-96 7-10 101.

SACRAMENTO — Gay 2-13 7-8 11, Thompson 0-1 0-0 0, Cousins 8-16 7-8 23, Collison 3-3 0-0 6, McLemore 2-9 0-0 5, Stausskas 1-10 0-0 0, Sessions 3-4 1-2 7, Williams 3-4 0-0 7, Casspi 2-1-1 5, Landry 1-3 1-3 3, McCallum 2-10 0-4, Miller 0-1-0-0, Hollins 2-2 0-4 0, Totals 29-78 22-78.

Dallas 23 37 18-101
Sacramento 23 30 17 80-78

Three-Point Goals—Dallas 12-34 (Harris 3-5, Jefferson 3-6, Ellis 3-6, Parsons 2-4, Barea 1-5, Ledo 0-1, Aminu 0-1, Villanueva 0-6), Sacramento 3-21 (Williams 1-1, Stausskas 1-6, McLemore 1-7, Miller 0-1, McCallum 0-2, Gay 0-4). Fouled Out—None. Rebounds—Dallas 55 (Chandler 16), Sacramento 58 (Cousins 11), Assists—Dallas 25 (Ellis 6), Sacramento 13 (Gay 4), Total Fouls—Dallas 19, Sacramento 18. A.—16,953 (17,317).

Cavaliers 105, Clippers 94

L.A. CLIPPERS — Barnes 2-5 0-0 4, Griffin 7-17 2-3 16, Jordan 3-4 2-4 8, Paul 4-14 1-2 10, Crawford 6-14 0-0 13, Rivers 4-11 1-2 10, Hawes 4-6 2-2 11, D.Jones 2-4 1-2 5, Turkoglu 0-0 0-0 0, Davis 3-9 1-2 7, Willcox 2-6 1-1 6, Udoh 1-1 2-2 4, Totals 38-91 13-20 94.

CLEVELAND — James 8-14 6-7 23, Love 6-14 1-0 12 24, Mozgov 5-7 1-2 12, Irving 1-5 7-7 10, Smith 6-10 0-16, Shumpert 1-5 2-4 2, Thompson 2-4 5-6 9, DelaVedova 0-2 2-2 4, Miller 0-2 1-2 1, Marion 1-3 0-2 0, Hayward 0-1 0-0 0, J.Jones 0-2 0-0 0, Totals 37-127 35-44 105.

L.A. Clippers 20 22 21 31-94
Cleveland 30 35 29 115-105

Three-Point Goals—L.A. Clippers 5-22 (Rivers 1-2, Hawes 1-2, Paul 1-4, Willcox 1-5, Crawford 1-6, Davis 0-1, Barnes 0-2), Cleveland 8-30 (Smith 4-8, Love 2-6, James 1-2, Irving 1-3, Marion 0-1, J.Jones 0-2, Shumpert 0-2, Miller 0-5). Fouled Out—None. Rebounds—L.A. Clippers 53 (Jordan 14), Cleveland 57 (Thompson 10), Assists—L.A. Clippers 24 (Paul 9), Cleveland 23 (James 9), Total Fouls—L.A. Clippers 29, Cleveland 21, Technicals—Barnes 2, Jordan, Paul, L.A. Clippers Coach Rivers. Flagrant Fouls—Paul. Ejected—Barnes. A.—20,862 (20,562).

Hornets 94, Wizards 87

WASHINGTON — Pierce 7-13 3-4 19, Nene 5-10 1-2 12, Gortat 2-10 4-4 11, Wall 6-13 3-14 15, Beal 0-6 1-2 1, Temple 3-5 0-0 7, Humphries 2-9 0-0 4, Blair 2-5 0-0 4, Porter 3-5 0-1 7, Butler 5-9 0-1 11, Totals 35-84 12-37.

CHARLOTTE — Kidd-Gilchrist 2-4 7-8 11, Zeller 0-3 0-0 0, Jefferson 3-12 2-4 8, Roberts 5-13 1-1 12, Henderson 10-15 7-8 27, Stephenson 4-11 0-1 11, M.Williams 3-7 0-0 8, Maxwell 3-4 5-6 11, Neal 3-7 0-0 6, Totals 33-76 22-79.

Washington 30 24 10-87
Charlotte 15 20 25-84

Three-Point Goals—Washington 5-20 (Pierce 2-4, Porter 1-2, Butler 1-2, Temple 1-2, Wall 0-1), Charlotte 6-25 (Stephenson 3-8, M.Williams 2-5, Roberts 1-7, Henderson 0-2, Neal 0-3). Fouled Out—None. Rebounds—Washington 43 (Gortat 7), Charlotte 59 (Jefferson 10), Assists—Washington 20 (Wall 13), Charlotte 15 (Roberts 5), Total Fouls—Washington 26, Charlotte 19, Technicals—None, Charlotte Coach Clifford Zeller. A.—17,019 (19,077).

Calendar

Feb. 13-15 — All-Star weekend, New York.

Feb. 15 — Trade deadline (3 p.m. EST).

Feb. 16-18 — Last day of regular season.

April 18 — Playoffs begin.

Cavs win 12th straight



Cleveland cruises past LA behind LeBron, Love

By Tom Withers
The Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Iman Shumpert softly played a harmonica in the locker room as his teammates dressed following a surprisingly easy victory. In one corner, LeBron James slipped on a tight black T-shirt with RW7 on the front.

The initial stand for "Roll With the Winners"

Right now, no team in the NBA is rolling like the Cavs. James scored 23 points, Kevin Love bounced back from a bad game with 24 and Cleveland pushed its winning streak to 12 games Thursday night with a 105-94 victory over the Los Angeles Clippers, who also lost their composure.

The Cavs built a 32-point lead in the third quarter, allowing James and Love, who scored a season-long five in his previous game, to sit out the fourth and rest for Friday's game at Indiana.

With their longest winning streak since a franchise-best 13-gamer in 2010, the Cavs moved into first place in the Central Division.

"Long-term," said James, "that's exactly how we want to play. A very, very good win for us."

The Clippers were whistled for five technical fouls, including four in a contentious third quarter when they lost their California cool and forward Matt Barnes was ejected.

Blake Griffin scored 16 and Jamal Crawford 13 for Los Angeles, whose subs made it respectable in the fourth by outscoring Cleveland's reserves 31-11.

"We just got our butt kicked," said Clippers coach Doc Rivers, who considered pulling his starters at halftime. "It's on all of us. We have to do a better job. Clearly, I didn't do my job. We weren't prepared from the beginning. I thought when they jumped on us early it was over."

The Cavaliers' Kevin Love shoots over the Los Angeles Clippers' Matt Barnes during Thursday's game in Cleveland. Love scored a team-high 24 points in the Cavaliers' 105-94 win.

Trail Blazers 108, Suns 87: LaMarcus Aldridge had 19 points and 13 rebounds for his team-record 220th double-double in host Portland's victory over Phoenix.

Nicolas Batum scored 20 points and Robin Lopez, playing his second game after missing 23 with a broken right hand, had 11 points and 12 rebounds for the Blazers, who won their second straight after a three-game skid.

Markieff Morris had 18 points for the Suns, who dropped their third in a row. Phoenix climbed back into the game in the third period after trailing by 19 in the first half, but ultimately the Blazers thwarted the rally with a dominant fourth quarter.

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DeMarcus Cousins had 23 points and 11 rebounds for the Kings, who have lost two straight and 10 of 11. Sacramento missed 18 of 21 attempts from three-point territory and shot 36.7 percent overall.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL



MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/AP

Gonzaga's Domantas Sabonis shoots over Santa Clara's Emmanuel Ndomanya on Thursday in Santa Clara, Calif. The No. 2 Bulldogs rallied past the Broncos 77-63 for their 16th straight win.

No. 2 Gonzaga rallies to 16th consecutive win

By **JOSH DUBOW**
The Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — As soon as Gonzaga stopped giving the ball away, the Bulldogs shot their way to another victory.

Byron Wesley scored 17 points and keyed a crucial second-half run that helped No. 2 Gonzaga rally for its 16th straight win with a 77-63 victory over Santa Clara on Thursday night.

Kyle Wiltjer led the way with 22 points and Gary Bell Jr. added 16 for the Bulldogs (23-1, 11-0 West Coast Conference), who shot a season-high 69 percent from the field to overcome a sloppy first half and win the game.

"We had 10 turnovers in the first half," Wesley said. "That's unlike us. We knew once we started taking care of the ball and make them take tough shots, we'd be fine."

Jared Brownridge scored 25 points to lead the Broncos (11-13, 5-7), who have lost 26 straight games against ranked teams and 10 straight to the Bulldogs.

"We have to understand that if we play that hard all the time, we'll win some games," coach Kerry Keating said.

Gonzaga fell behind by six early in the second half on a three-pointer by Brandon Clark despite

Did you know

Santa Clara last beat a ranked team on Nov. 18, 2004, when it defeated eventual national champion North Carolina 77-66.



SOURCE: The Associated Press

shooting better than 70 percent from the field.

The Bulldogs then tightened up on defense while still converting at a torrid pace offensively and tied the game at 47 when Kevin Pangos hit a three-pointer for his first points of the game with 14:37 left.

Wesley then scored the next five points to give Gonzaga the lead for good. The Bulldogs went on a 16-3 run overall as the Broncos missed eight of nine shots to end their upset bid.

"In the first half, they were hitting a lot of shots," Wiltjer said. "What really made the difference was our defensive efficiency.

We got stops in the second half. That's what really changed the momentum."

Bell started the game quickly, making three straight three-pointers to give Gonzaga a 21-10 lead less than 7 minutes into the game. But the Broncos rallied behind Brownridge and a string of Bulldogs turnovers to take the lead at halftime.

Brownridge hit a three-pointer to cap a 10-0 run that gave Santa Clara its first lead of the game. Brownridge scored the final 12 points of the half for Santa Clara, including a layup that made it 36-34 at the break.

"They're the No. 2 team in the country coming in, so we had some extra energy and we were able to feed off the fans," Brownridge said. "Now we have to keep this going into our next game."

Despite leading the team in scoring, Wiltjer would have rather had two fewer points. He dunked at the buzzer, drawing boos from the crowd and the ire of coach Mark Few about the needless exclamation point.

"I feel really bad for that," Wiltjer said. "I apologize to the fans and the coaches. It's the heat of the moment. Someone said something on the sideline and I took it personal. That's not me."

Cincinnati finishes strong, knocks off No. 23 SMU

By **STEPHEN HAWKINS**
The Associated Press

DALLAS — Once Cincinnati settled down and got away from an early turnover-per-minute pace, everything turned out OK against No. 23 SMU.

So far, the Bearcats are the only American Athletic Conference team to beat coach Larry Brown's squad. And they have done it twice.

Jermaine Sanders scored 15 points, including one of two huge three-pointers for Cincinnati as it started to pull away late in a 62-54 win Thursday night over a Mustangs team playing its first game since getting back into the Top 25.

"We shot ourselves in the foot by throwing the ball away so much. Once we got past that, then we were fine," associate head coach Larry Davis said. "It could have been a disaster. We could have been down 20 the way we were turning the ball over."

Cincinnati (16-6, 7-3 American Athletic) didn't miss a shot in the first 10 minutes of the game, but took only three shots while committing 10 turnovers in that span.

After being plagued by all those miscues and down only 25-20 at halftime, the Bearcats pulled out the game that featured nine lead changes and eight ties after that. They led for good after Octavius Ellis made two free throws to make it 45-44 with 7½ minutes left, then Sanders and Shaq Thomas hit big threes late.

"Players made plays in the second half," Davis said. "Guys jumped up and made



TONY GUTIERREZ/AP

Cincinnati's Shaquille Thomas (3) and Jermaine Sanders (15) combine to stop a dunk attempt by SMU's Yanick Morsira on Thursday in Dallas. The Bearcats rallied to a 62-54 victory, beating the Mustangs for the second time this season.

shots, but again, we kept defending. I can't say enough about the kids' character and how they just kept fighting when they were turning it over, and it wasn't going right for them."

Sanders swished a three-pointer from the right corner with 4:40 left to put Cincinnati up 53-46.

SMU (18-5, 9-2), which was up by eight points early, pulled to 55-52 after Sterling Brown had a putback of his own shot after he had rebounded a Cincinnati miss and drove the court only to miss a layup.

But with the shot clock running down after the Bearcats got the ball back, Thomas hit from the right wing.

Brown can only hope that his Mustangs have the same response to another loss to Cincinnati.

SMU has now won 16 of its last 18 games. The only losses in that span are both against Cincinnati, including one on the road the first weekend of January before the eight-game winning streak that was snapped at Moody Coliseum.

"As a coaching staff, we've got to coach them better and have confidence that our kids are going to go out the next game and be better," Brown said. "That's what happened the last time we played Cincinnati. We've got to learn from this and move on."

Farad Cobb and Troy Caupain each added 14 points for the Bearcats, who shot 57 percent overall (21-for-37) and finished with 17 turnovers.

Canner Cunningham led SMU with 14 points while Sterling Brown had 12.

SKIING

Austria's Reichelt captures super-G

By Pat Graham
The Associated Press

BEAVER CREEK, Colo. — Bode Miller snacked a gate so hard he crashed, opening a deep gash on his right leg and tearing a tendon that required surgery Thursday night after the super-G race at the world championships.

Norway's Kjetil Jansrud hit another panel and needed his left shoulder checked out.

This demanding and daunting course took a toll on some of the biggest names in skiing. Not Hannes Reichelt, though. The Austrian tamed this tricky terrain, winning the super-G after Miller tumbled down the hill.

Reichelt finished in 1 minute, 15.68 seconds — 0.11 seconds faster than Canada's Dustin Cook, who made a surprise run from back in the pack. Adrien Theaux of France earned the bronze.

Miller wasn't the only skier to get caught up in a gate. Jansrud crashed through one with his left shoulder, but kept going and tied for fourth. The Norwegian team later said the shoulder appeared OK, but he was in pain.

Jansrud, the Olympic super-G champion at the Sochi Games, is still looking for his first medal at the worlds.

This is Reichelt's first world championship gold medal. He's made himself right at home on this course, winning a World Cup super-G at Beaver Creek in December.

"That's sounds really good — world champion," said Reichelt, who had herniated disk surgery a year ago that knocked him out of the Sochi Olympics. "I'm feeling relaxed. The pressure before was really high. Not from outside, but from my side."

"I said, 'OK, you have to repeat the success of December.' To repeat something is so difficult."

Cook started as racer No. 28, but used a fast run to finish a surprising runner-up.



JOHN LOCHER/AP

Bode Miller loses his edge Thursday during the men's super-G at the alpine skiing world championships in Beaver Creek, Colo.

Bode may be finished

Miller's career in jeopardy following injury

By Pat Graham
The Associated Press

BEAVER CREEK, Colo. — Bode Miller's world championships are now over. His career? On hold for the moment.

Miller underwent surgery to fix a torn right hamstring tendon when his ski appeared to slice him after a gruesome crash in a super-G race Thursday.

The injury is supposed to sideline the 37-year-old for at least two months.

Might be longer. Maybe even for good. The six-time Olympic medalist was on the fence about a return to ski racing next season long before the crash. He had back surgery in November and his aim was to return in time for worlds.

He did. But in his first race this season, he wiped out. A bad wipeout, too.

Miller's not the kind to return to the World Cup scene simply for a farewell tour or anything. That's not his style.

"If this is it, then I'll talk to my wife and make a plan," Miller said last month after squeezing in some training at Beaver Creek to test his back. "If my body feels good, maybe I keep skiing?"

"I've had a remarkable run and put my body through so much. To expect it to come back again and not run into the same things you see 21-, 22-year-old kids running today? I'm not delusional. It's a risk."

On the course, he's all about risks. And for the first half of his race Thursday, he was vintage Miller.

"Bode was skiing outstanding," U.S. men's coach Sasha Rearick said. "He was going for it."



MARCO TOMBA/UP

Bode Miller waves to the crowd after crashing during the men's super-G. He suffered a torn right hamstring tendon and didn't finish the race.

Then Miller's left arm hooked a gate, sending him spiraling out of control. Both of his skis popped off and he rolled head-over-ski-boots down the hill.

After coming to a stop, he slowly got up, gathered his skis, clicked back in and finished his run, even with a deep gash on his leg.

He waved to the crowd, perhaps one final nod to the fans who've always rooted for him because of his gambler's mentality.

"Bode is an exciting racer to watch," teammate Ted Ligety said. "He knew he had to put it on the limit in order to get on the podium today."

Here are things to know:

Moving tribute: Before the super-G on Thursday, there was a moment of silence for two U.S. Ski Team prospects killed in an avalanche in Austria last month. There were green-painted signs honoring Ronnie Berlack, 20, and Bryce Astle, 19, saying, "Ski in Peace." The tributes touched Berlack's father. "Bryce and Ronnie were two bright stars and sometimes the bright stars leave the night sky first," Steve Berlack said. "That's just sadly what happened here." Sam Morse, a good friend of Ronnie Berlack, was one of the forerunners for the race and skied with "RB" and "BA" stickers on his helmet and with his friends on his mind.

Making friends: Tina Maze of Slovenia had a fast downhill training run Thursday, finding the right line. Her secret? "Finally, I became friends with this slope," said Maze, who tied Dominique Gislin of Switzerland for the Olympic downhill gold medal in Sochi.



MARCO TOMBA/UP

Austria's Hannes Reichelt holds a flag up behind him on the podium Thursday after he won the men's super-G at the world championships in Beaver Creek, Colo.

GOLF



LENNY IGONELZI/AP

Tiger Woods hits from the green-side bunker on the par-five 14th hole of the north course Thursday at Torrey Pines during the first round of the Farmers Insurance Open in San Diego. Woods made par, but wound up withdrawing from the tournament.

Back pain sidelines Tiger

Woods withdraws for third time in eight tournaments

By DOUG FERGUSON
The Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — New season, same old story with Tiger Woods.

Only it's no longer a happy tale. For the third time in his last eight PGA Tour events, Woods got into a cart in the middle of his round and was driven to the parking lot because of back pain. Most troubling about Thursday in the Farmers Insurance Open was he spoke only a week ago of feeling "great" physically, and this was only his second event of the year.

He blamed this one on the weather, which caused his "glutes" to shut off.

Woods walked off the course after 11 holes on the North Course at Torrey Pines, citing tightness in his lower back from standing around for more than an hour in the cool Pacific air during a fog delay in the morning. He never looked comfortable, and Billy Horschel noticed it right away. Woods was reaching for his back at the turn. Horschel tried to help by picking up the tee for Woods on their 10th hole and the ball from the cup when Woods made birdie.

"I was ready to go," Woods said. "I had a good warmup session the first time around. Then we stood out here and I got cold, and everything started deactivating again. And it's frustrating that I just can't stay activated. That's just kind of the way it is."

Woods now has gone 12 straight PGA Tour events without a top 10, dating to his runner-up finish in The Barclays in 2013 when back pain dropped him to his knees. This was his first round since a career-high 82 last week in the Phoenix Open to



GREGORY BULL/AP

Tiger Woods speaks to reporters after withdrawing from Farmers Insurance Open.

tie for last with a club pro and miss the cut by 12 shots.

"It's tough to see a guy I look up to, a guy I consider a friend, to have issues with spasms," Horschel said. "It's tough to see him go, but he was in quite a bit of pain."

Nicholas Thompson had an 8-under 64 on the North Course and had a one-shot lead over Michael Thompson when play was suspended by darkness. Brooks Koepka, coming off his victory in the Phoenix Open, had a 66 on the North. The best score on the tougher South Course belonged to

Jhonnatan Vegas, who shot 67.

Dustin Johnson, playing for the first time since his six-month leave for "personal challenges," holed out for eagle on No. 4 on the South Course as his lone highlight. He had five bogeys and was 2 over with one hole remaining.

But this day was all about Woods, which would be typical at Torrey Pines because he has won the tournament seven times. Thursday was different. Several players came out of the scoring area and said, "What happened to Tiger?"

Roundup

Pancake shoots 67, leads by 1

The Associated Press

PARADISE ISLAND, Bahamas — Brooke Pancake shot a 6-under 67 on Thursday to take a one-stroke lead in the suspended first round of the Bahamas LPGA Classic.

Play was suspended for the day at 2:47 p.m. and more than an inch of rain fell on Atlantis Resort's Ocean Club course. In May 2013, the inaugural event was reduced to three 12-hole rounds because of flooding. Playing in calmer morning conditions, Pancake birdied six of her first seven holes in her bogey-free round.

"I luckily got to get out early this morning," Pancake said. "I gave myself a lot of birdie looks and I really took advantage of those."

Second-ranked Inbee Park was tied for second with Natalie Gulbis and Brittany Lincicome. Gulbis is making her first start since having hip surgery in November.

"I hit it good," Gulbis said. "It's been like any other getting ready for the season. I didn't play last week. I wasn't quite ready last week. I'm just happy to be back."

Lincicome played in wind gusting around 20 mph.

"It was different out there," Lincicome said. "Every time I was with a left-to-right wind, I either snap-hooked it way left or blocked it way right. But when the wind was right to left, I crushed it and I did really well."

Lydia Ko, playing her first event since taking the No. 1 spot in the world ranking, was 1 under through eight holes. The 17-year-old New Zealander tied for second last week in the season-opening event in Florida, to break Tiger Woods' record as the youngest player to reach No. 1.

"We've still got 10 more holes and I know there are birdie opportunities," Ko said. "The 18th is a par 5, too. We've just got to stay patient. Hopefully, I will make a couple more birdies down the stretch."

PGA European Tour: Defending champion Lee Westwood was joined by a fast-finishing Alejandro Canizares of Spain to top the Malaysian Open leaderboard by three shots after the second round on Friday.

Westwood followed his opening 6-under-par 66 with a 67, at one stage holding a three-shot lead at Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club.

But Canizares caught him with birdies on three of the last four holes in a bogey-free 65, the best score of the tournament. He has shot in the 60s in eight of his last 10 rounds.

At 11-under 133 overall, they lead by three from Bernd Wiesberger, the Austrian who has been threatening a third European Tour win in the past month. On the desert swing, he tied for sixth in Abu Dhabi, was third in Doha, and tied for fourth in Dubai.

Wiesberger was a shot ahead of Paul Waring of England (68), and Peter Lawrie of Ireland (66).

"I was leading this time last year, and I'm leading again," Westwood said after rolling in a 15-foot birdie putt on the 18th green.

"I feel like I'm capable of a lot of low scores, my swing is feeling towards where I want it, and I'm feeling comfortable on the greens."

SPORTS

Tiger's troubles continueCiting back pain, Woods withdraws from tournament » **Golf, Page 30**

SKIING



End of the line?

Violent crash ends Miller's season and, possibly, his career

Page 30

Bode Miller crashes Thursday during the men's super-G at the alpine skiing world championships in Beaver Creek, Colo. Miller was seriously injured during the crash.

Shinichiro Tanaka, Pentaphot/AP

Blues stretch point streak to 13 games
NHL, Page 29

Cavaliers' winning streak reaches 12 straight
NBA, Page 27