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# STARS AND STRIPES®

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MIDEAST EDITION

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Free to Deployed Areas



Capt. Nicholas Ingham shows his scars as he waits to be discharged from Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md. The 27-year-old Marine was injured during a car explosion set off by an insurgent.

PHOTOS BY NIKKI KAHN/The Washington Post

## Last casualties

As long war in Afghanistan winds down, risks still prove real

By ERNESTO LONDONO  
*The Washington Post*

Shortly after midnight on this frigid night, Capt. Nicholas Ingham arrived at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, in the belly of an Air Force C-130. As the back door swung open, flooding the cabin with light, the heavily sedated Marine, strapped onto a stretcher, blinked away a tear. A black-and-white American flag tattooed on his chest rose and fell gently as a ventilator pumped air into his collapsed lung.

A team of doctors, nurses and medical technicians assigned to the trauma center here gently offloaded Ingham and a handful of other injured troops with mechanical precision, the first stop on their journey home.

It would be the same journey thousands of wounded warriors had made before them.

These days, 12 years after the start of America's longest war, far fewer U.S. troops are being killed or wound-

ed in Afghanistan. The military's draw-down has picked up pace, and Afghans have begun to shoulder the brunt of the fighting. But the war continues to churn out American casualties by the dozen each week. Their injuries rarely make headlines.

Still, military health care experts say those wounded in battle are coming home more severely injured than at any time since 2006, a sobering sign of the strength of the insurgency at the twilight of the war. Many of the injured arrive on the medical evacuation flights that land twice a week at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland physically intact but mentally wrecked, struggling with the demons of multiple deployments over the past decade.

Their caretakers, part of a massive wartime medical evacuation system that is being wound down, have a rare and often grim vantage on the final chapter of the Afghan War—a conflict that is increasingly being endured, rather than fought, largely out of sight.

SEE LAST ON PAGE 3

Marine Lance Cpl. Paul Shupert's family has found comfort in the fact that Shupert's sense of humor hasn't waned after suffering injuries in war.



## DOD offers ideas for retirement makeover

By CHRIS CARROLL  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Amid attempts to reduce military personnel spending, the Pentagon on Thursday presented its official thinking on the politically touchy issue of how to remake the military retirement system.

If enacted, the proposals would result in lower benefits for future troops who retire after full careers, but as a trade-off, could also make many more troops eligible for some retirement pay.

The Pentagon prepared the report, "Concepts for Modernizing Military Retirement," for the congressionally mandated Commission on Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization, which is conducting a broad study of how the department pays its current troops and retirees. The commission's report is due in February 2015.

"This is not a proposal, it's not a plan, and it's not a recommendation," Pentagon spokesman Lt. Cmdr. Nate Christensen said. "It's something we're required to submit to the commission for their use as they work toward an ultimate recommendation to Congress and the president."

The Military Times was the first to report on the paper Thursday.

Officials say the options were prepared under the principle that changes would not apply to currently serving troops or to current retirees.

SEE RETIREMENT ON PAGE 5



# QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I thought it would be better than if I lived my whole life as an employee, with all of my efforts going toward benefiting others, and not myself."

— Adel Abd ElSadek, on running one of Egypt's informal businesses that run outside the control of the government

See story on Page 11

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5. Report: Afghanistan veteran William Kyle Carpenter to receive Medal of Honor

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# MIDEAST



Stars and Stripes

The burn pit at Balad Air Base, Iraq, was in full operation in 2008.

# Soldiers' suits over waste disposal revived by court

By LARRY O'DELL  
The Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. — A federal appeals court on Thursday revived dozens of lawsuits by soldiers and others who claim they were harmed by improper waste disposal while serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The lawsuits claim Houston-based contractors KBR and Halliburton Co. exposed soldiers to toxic emissions and contaminated water when they burned waste in open pits without proper safety controls. U.S. District Judge Roger W. Titus in Maryland dismissed the lawsuits last year, ruling that the contractors could not be sued because they were essentially an extension of

the military.

But a three-judge panel of the Richmond-based 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said in its unanimous decision that the contractors are protected only if they were following explicit instructions from the military. The court said Titus improperly tossed the case without sufficient evidence on that issue.

"In short, although the evidence shows that the military exercised some level of oversight over KBR's burn pit and water treatment activities, we simply need more evidence to determine whether KBR or the military chose how to carry out those tasks," Judge Henry F. Floyd wrote for the appeals court.

The consolidated cases now

go back to Titus for further proceedings.

"We are pleased with the decision and look forward to our day in court," said Susan L. Burke, attorney for the soldiers. "The 4th Circuit clarified the law in a way that's quite helpful. The decision makes it clear nobody can stand in the shoes of the sovereign and get immunity if they're doing things contrary to what the sovereign directed them to do."

The two sides disagree on whether the contractors were following military instructions.

The lawsuits claim that the open burning of waste by the contractors caused serious physical injuries, including cancer and permanent respiratory damage.

## Afghan official: Bomb at market kills 5

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — An Afghan provincial official said a motorcycle bomb was remotely detonated in a crowded market in the country's south, killing five people and wounding eight.

Omar Zawaq, the spokesman

for the governor of southern Helmand province, said the motorcycle exploded Friday in the center of the market in Marjah. It's a restive district, about 15 miles from the provincial capital of Lashkar Gah.

No one immediately took responsibility for the bombing, but the area has a heavy presence of

Taliban insurgents.

Marjah was the site of one of the largest U.S. and Afghan offensives in 2010. However, the Taliban have returned slowly to areas from which they previously were driven out. Local residents say Taliban rule in nearly 80 percent of the province.

From The Associated Press

# USS Taylor being towed to Crete for repair work

By STEVEN BEARDSLEY  
Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — A Navy frigate moored off Turkey's coast since it ran aground in the Black Sea last month is being towed to Crete for repairs.

The USS Taylor will have its propeller hub and blades replaced at the Navy base in Souda Bay, a process expected to take several weeks, said a spokesman for U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa. The ship then will finish its deployment in European and Middle Eastern waters.

A contracted tug boat began moving the ship Friday.

The Taylor ran aground while attempting to moor in Samsun, Turkey, on Feb. 12, and has remained pier-side for damage inspection since the incident. No one was injured during the grounding.

Cmdr. Dennis Volpe, the ship's commanding officer, was relieved of duty after an initial inquiry into the incident, with another officer taking interim command.

The guided-missile frigate entered the Black Sea on Feb. 4 with the amphibious command ship Mount Whitney. The Navy called the visit routine, although it was timed around the Sochi Olympic Games and was announced by the Pentagon in January after terrorist groups threatened to disrupt the events at the Russian Black Sea resort.

As the Taylor departed Samsun on Friday, another Navy warship entered the Black Sea. The guided-missile destroyer USS Truxtun passed the Bosphorus Strait on the way to training with the Bulgarian and Romanian navies, according to a photo tweeted by France Presse.

The Truxtun, part of the George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group, enters the Black Sea at a time of heightened tensions on Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula, where Russian troops have taken over key military installations. The Navy has called the Truxtun visit routine and unrelated to the crisis.

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MILITARY

# Last: Injury severity score in Afghanistan has risen gradually since '06

FROM FRONT PAGE

"Are you feeling any pain?" Maj. Scott Zlatunsky, a surgeon at Bagram's hospital, asked Ingham as his colleagues inspected the gashes torn into his back, arms and legs by shrapnel from a suicide bombing. Looking miserable, Ingham, 27, opened his eyes slightly and shook his head.

In Washington, among policymakers, the Afghan War is increasingly discussed with exasperation, like a curse. It is the type of warfare the United States must avoid at all cost. President Barack Obama argued during his State of the Union address.

"We must fight the battles that need to be fought," Obama told those in attendance, among them a soldier disfigured by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan. "Not those that terrorists prefer from us — large-scale deployments that drain our strength and may ultimately feed extremism."

Also in the House chamber that night was Rep. Adam Kinzinger, R-Ill., a former Air Force pilot who flew intelligence and medevac missions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"I think there is a sense in the military that Americans are not paying attention anymore," he had told a reporter a few weeks earlier, shortly after returning from a visit to Kabul. "I think they're right, to be honest. There is a sense that it's over, but it's not."

There are roughly 33,700 U.S. troops in Afghanistan, down from a peak of more than 100,000 in spring 2011. Those who have been wounded in Afghanistan have had a better chance at survival than in any previous U.S. war — a result of stunning achievements in battlefield care.

But in some ways, combat medicine, the work in Afghanistan has become more challenging. The injury severity score, a measure that takes into account the extent of a patient's wounds, has gone up gradually in Afghanistan since 2006, according to data compiled by the military.

Col. Kirby Gross, a physician who studies trauma care for wounded troops and who is deployed at Bagram, struggled to find the right words to explain such a need as he became so proficient at killing and maiming American servicemembers.

"They're nimble," was as much of a compliment as he was willing to pay.

Medical professionals say the combat evacuation system that sprang to life at the height of the Iraq War to care for the wounded is being pared down. In December, Bagram became the only base in Afghanistan with a top-tier trauma center, which means that patients across the battlefield are sent to specialists at the face longer journeys. As the footprint becomes smaller in coming months, the margin of error will widen, said Lt. Col. Mary Danko, the chief Air Force flight nurse in Bagram.

"Right now, it's a great process in a way that you worry about the one life you won't



NIKKI KAIN/AP

Marine Lance Cpl. Paul Shupert, 22, waits to be carried off the plane at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland. Shupert lost part of a leg after stepping on a land mine in Afghanistan's Helmand province.

be able to save because of the lack of resources."

At the U.S. military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany, the three miles of hallways that were once brimming with war victims are now largely empty. Air Force Lt. Col. David Zonies, the chief of trauma and critical care at Landstuhl, expressed longer-term concerns on this morning, noting that when his tour is up, he won't be replaced. The same goes for his partner.

"There's a very serious concern that we will potentially not learn the lessons of this war for the next one," he said. "After Korea and Vietnam, the money ran out, the resources ran out, skills started to wane. Are we going to make the same mistake after this conflict?"

Ingham had deployed twice before to Afghanistan during periods when U.S. troops battled insurgents every day. His last wartime assignment was to lead a group of Georgian soldiers tasked with preventing militants from firing rockets into a sprawling NATO base in Helmand province, in southwestern Afghanistan.

Early in the afternoon of Dec. 14, a lone driver in a blue sedan

steered his vehicle toward a patrol he was leading. The Georgian soldiers appeared edgy, and Ingham worried that if they overreacted, he could have a civilian casualty incident on his watch. So he walked toward the driver, alone, hoping to wave him off.

"Civilian casualties in Afghanistan are a particularly touchy subject," he said later. "I was trying to prevent something that could have turned into a very bad event."

As Ingham moved toward the car, the driver pressed on toward him. The lance captain raised his rifle in a final effort to get him to back off. By then, he was close enough to hear the man at the wheel utter "Allahu akbar," or "God is great," words that could have meant only one thing in that context. Ingham opened fire, pumping 18 bullets into the driver, whose vehicle continued to inch toward him.

"I turned around and got a step and a half and it exploded," Ingham said, comparing the fury of the blast to a massive wave that thrusts you from behind. The explosion sent the car's engine flying 100 meters and dug out a massive crater in the ground. As he limped away from the plume

of smoke toward his men, Ingham took a breath and realized he had been badly hurt.

"I felt my lung bubbling," he said, recounting the attack and its aftermath weeks later at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md. "I knew something had gone through my chest."

Ingham's doctors expect he will make a full recovery and could soon lead Marines in combat again. But as he spoke on this morning, he was surrounded by servicemembers who won't. One, Lance Cpl. Paul Shupert, who had been deployed in the same province as Ingham, had arrived at Walter Reed a few weeks before, missing part of his right leg.

"It's a shame you guys are coming home hurt," Ingham told the 22-year-old Marine, shaking his head.

"We know what we signed up for," Shupert replied quietly, his legs draped by a heavy black blanket with leopard-print edges.

There was no sense talking Shupert out of following in his father's footsteps when, at 17, he persuaded his parents in Jefferson City, Tenn., to sign a waiver allowing him to join the Marines. When he deployed to Afghanistan for the first time last summer, his mother was paralyzed by fear.

"Everyone was thinking I was taking it too hard," Tonya Shupert said. "They think the war's over."

Tonya Shupert is nothing if not a patriot, often donning "Marine Corps Mom" T-shirts. But like many in military families, she struggled to understand why men such as her son were still being sent to Afghanistan.

"I think there are some things we shouldn't be involved in," she said one evening while doing laundry at the patient living quarters. "Some of those people have been fighting for years and years, and us going there is not going to change that."

The war changed her son permanently the afternoon of Nov. 25, after he volunteered to help explosive ordnance disposal ex-

pects search a compound. Shupert had carefully followed the footsteps of the Marine in front of him, mindful that the compound could be surrounded by land mines.

"I guess I must have missed a spot," he would say later. "I did back flips through the air and remember landing on my back and looking at my legs. My pants were blown off, and I saw it had taken off the foot."

Shupert has not allowed himself a moment of self-pity since that day, arguing that dwelling on his loss will not make the limb grow back. When he first saw his family at Walter Reed after being evacuated, they were comforted that he had not lost his sense of humor. The ordeal was a perfect excuse for a new tattoo. Shupert told them. He would ink the words "Part A" on his thigh and label his prosthetic leg "Part B."

After each flight arrives at Andrews, Army Col. Michael Worth writes a report with tiny narratives about each wounded warrior he has debriefed.

Worth writes, for instance the ordeal of a female lieutenant nurse who was accidentally shot in the foot by her boss.

"She doesn't know precisely what her boss was doing to cause the discharge," wrote Worth, who is tasked with making sure patients get to the right final destination for additional care.

Some of the narratives are haunting. Only after failing to get a young soldier to talk after one flight did Worth realize that the Army Ranger had sustained serious wounds to his genitals.

It is perhaps the mental wounds that trouble the colonel the most. He recently welcomed home an Army couple. The wife, a staff sergeant assigned to a transportation unit who had been deployed seven times, shot herself in the abdomen in an apparent suicide attempt. Her husband was relieved to be home but ashen as he escorted his unconscious spouse off the plane.

Like most military officers, Worth does not focus on the mission and not dwell on the politics of war.

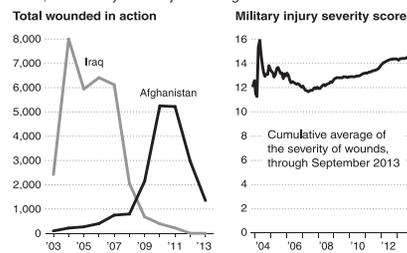
"We execute the lawful orders of the president," he said. "What I see on the airplane is a consequence of that, and I'm here to help them and not dwell on them. Any thoughts I have as a private citizen will have to wait until I leave."

There was staid silence among the military personnel awaiting Shupert's flight on a cold, windy evening in early December when the plane turned on its landing lights and tipped its nose down, it was commanded to turn back skyward and circle overhead for more than 30 minutes. Vice President Joe Biden's team was ready to take off for a trip to Asia, so authorities at Andrews froze all other movement on the airfield.

On the ground, some in the medical team awaiting Shupert shivered, but they kept their thoughts to themselves. The Marine never knew the flight was diverted. Told about it later, his only reaction was: "Oh."

## Fewer wounded, but more severely

Although the number of troops wounded in action has gone down, the severity of the injuries has grown.



SOURCE: Department of Defense

## MILITARY

## Say what?

A sample of reader comments from stripes.com



## Porn, hair, and the wayward general

On Thursday, Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Sinclair pleaded guilty to adultery, improper relationships with three other female officers, impeding an investigation and watching pornography on his personal computer on a military base in Afghanistan. The trial at Fort Bragg, N.C., continues.

## Readers respond:

Busted to bird, dismissal from service, no retirement benefits, but that's in a perfect world.

— Bill Volks

That's in a world with accountability. We all know there's no accountability in the American military unless you are low ranking.

— BigEasy01

When is she going to be charged under the U.C.M.J.?

— Piishti

Actually, she's facing a board of inquiry and will probably be separated from the service. All of the whining about "immunity" is based on conjecture, rather than fact. The perception is that she got immunity, but that is simply not the case.

— RangerJoe12

As a part of her immunity, she accepted a written letter of reprimand, which would kill her career, and submitted her resignation papers.

— bwjjs18d

Lives destroyed, reputations shattered, and a heck of a lot of taxpayer dollars down the drain. The sooner this disaster is over and done with the better.

— Unexpected View

Consensual sex by a married General with a subordinate is against policy at any rate. The man deserves to be drummed out.

— SempliceCittadino

What's up with that hair? :O

— lewis courtney

Join the fray at: [stripes.com/go/sinclair](http://stripes.com/go/sinclair)

## Sexual assault prosecution bill fails

Effort to change military's process for assault, rape cases fails to clear Senate

By CHRIS CARROLL  
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A Senate measure to strip military commanders of authority over prosecutions of sexual assaults and other serious crimes failed Thursday in a procedural vote.

The bill known as the Military Justice Improvement Act needed 60 votes under Senate rules in order to end debate and move to a final vote, but received 55. Even if the bill had passed, however, a similar measure is considered highly unlikely to pass the House of Representatives.

It was championed by Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., who said placing prosecution authority with independent military prosecutors, rather than with the chain of command, would encourage reporting by victims now intimidated to do so because of retaliation from superiors.

The Defense Department estimated fewer than 20 percent of victims of unwanted sexual contact in 2012 actually reported the incidents. DOD leaders have lined up to strongly oppose the measure, which they said could damage morale and the reputation of the military.

Meanwhile, a competing measure passed unanimously and will be voted on Monday. That measure, backed by Sen. Claire McCaskill, D-Mo., would enact new protections for sexual assault victims while making less radical changes to the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Gillibrand's long-debated bill received strong endorsements as well as passionate

criticism in the hours of debate leading up to Thursday's vote.

Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., said she would support McCaskill's bill because it made some useful changes in military law to support sexual assault victims. But Gillibrand's bill goes further and was "the one opportunity to bring about the changes that survivors of rape and the survivors of sexual assault are asking for."

But Sen. Lindsay Graham said passage of the bill would be like telling military commanders they were "fired" from the job of policing sexual assault in the ranks.

"The worst thing that can happen in a unit is for the commander to say 'this is no longer my problem,'" an animated Graham said.

He attributed the bill, which had received bipartisan support from a majority of senators, to "liberal people wanting to gut the military justice system — social engineering run amok."

Gillibrand said the opinion of military victims of sexual assault on the matter was clear.

"It's not whether anyone in this chamber trusts the chain of command," she said. "The people who do not trust the chain of command are the victims."

An advocate for military sexual assault victims who supported Gillibrand's bill blasted the result, but said that supporters would continue to lay the ground for its eventual passage.

"It is a travesty that this very practical, conservative measure, supported by a substantial majority of the Senate and 60 percent of Americans was blocked by a procedural filibuster," said Nancy Parrish, president of Protect Our Defenders. "We may have lost this battle due to political maneuverings, but effective reform

will be accomplished. It is only a matter of time."

The debate came at a time of growing frustration and outrage over the military's seeming inability to reverse an apparently growing number of sexual assaults in the ranks. About 5,400 instances of sexual assault or "unwanted sexual contact" were reported within the U.S. military last fiscal year, a 60 percent rise from 2012, the Pentagon said last week.

Also Thursday, Stars and Stripes reported that the Army had recently suspended its top sexual assault prosecutor, Lt. Col. Joseph "Jay" Morse, after another sexual assault prosecutor said he had groped and tried to kiss her against her will at a sexual assault legal conference in 2011.

How the Morse matter will play into the debate is unclear, however. While Gillibrand and her supporters argue rising reports of sexual assault in the military and consequent low reporting of assaults makes reform necessary, opponents say giving authority over prosecutions to independent prosecutors won't help the problem.

One powerful opponent of Gillibrand's bill, Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin, D-Mich., said commanders have to solve the problem.

"I believe that the strongest, most effective approach we can take to reduce sex assault is to hold commanders accountable for establishing and maintaining a command climate that does not tolerate sexual assault," he said before the votes.

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## Prosecutors: Gen. Sinclair coerced captain into affair

By MICHAEL BRESECKER  
The Associated Press

FORT BRAGG, N.C. — On the verge of tears, the captain whose sexual assault accusations triggered the prosecution of an Army general took to the witness stand Friday, testifying that the two had frequent trysts and that she thought her commander's wife knew about her.

Asked by a prosecutor to identify her abuser, the woman's eyes darted quickly to the direction of Brig. Gen. Jeffrey A. Sinclair, seated at the defense table. She pointed at the man with whom she admits violating military law by having a three-year-long affair.

The trial begins as the Pentagon is under intense scrutiny over revelations of rampant rape and sexual misconduct within the ranks. Sinclair, 51, is believed to be the highest ranking U.S. military officer to ever face court-martial on sexual assault charges.



JAMES ROBINSON, THE FAYETTEVILLE (N.C.) OBSERVER/AP

Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Sinclair leaves court on Tuesday at Fort Bragg, N.C.

The Associated Press generally does not identify those who say they were sexually assaulted.

In opening statements Friday, lead prosecutor Lt. Col. Robert Stelle painted Sinclair, 51, as a man who used his authority to intimidate and coerce a female officer nearly 20 years his junior into

sex and then threatened to kill her and her family if she told anyone.

Twice, according to the prosecution, he ended arguments about their relationship by unbuttoning his pants and forcing her head into his lap to perform oral sex.

The former deputy commander of the 82nd Airborne, Sinclair

could be sentenced to life in prison if convicted of sexual assault.

Defense lawyers portray Sinclair as the victim of overzealous prosecutors under political pressure to make an example of him, despite weak evidence and an accuser with a history of telling lies.

Defense attorney Ellen C. Brotman began opening statements by reading the jury — composed of five two-star generals — excerpts from the woman's diary, written during the affair. Even after he is alleged to have threatened to kill her loved ones, she wrote of desire for him, Brotman said, and the only fear she expressed was that he might still love his wife.

"I'm so in love with him," Brotman read from the diary. "I do know that I love him incredibly...I love him almost unconditionally."

On Thursday, Sinclair pleaded guilty to three lesser charges that could send him to prison for up to 15 years — a move sure to end his military career.

## Sergeant sentenced for taping female cadets

FORT DRUM, N.Y. — An Army sergeant who had been accused of secretly photographing and videotaping at least a dozen women at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point has pleaded guilty in a court-martial, officials said Friday.

Sgt. 1st Class Michael McClendon agreed to a plea bargain Wednesday that includes a 33-month sen-

tence, loss of pay, a reduction in rank to private and a bad-conduct discharge, according to officials at Fort Drum in northern New York.

McClendon was charged last year with dereliction of duty, mistreatment, entering a women's bathroom without notice and taking and possessing inappropriate photos and videos of women who were naked or in various states of undress.

From The Associated Press

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## MILITARY

# Two Marines relieved in fatal Calif. explosion

By JENNIFER HLAJ  
Stars and Stripes

CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. — Two Marines have been relieved after a report found that the explosion that killed four explosive ordnance disposal Marines here in November likely was caused when a 40 mm round was “dropped, kicked or bumped” in the demolition pit.

Staff Sgt. Matthew R. Marsh, Gunnery Sgt. Gregory J. Mullins, Sgt. Miguel Ortiz and Staff Sgt. Eric W. Summers died Nov. 13 after the explosion at Zulu impact area. The investigation could not establish exactly what caused the round to go off, said Capt. Ryan Welsh, a spokesman for the base. “We’ll never know the exact cause,” Welsh said.

The officer in charge and the staff noncommissioned officer in charge, a Marine captain and master sergeant, have been relieved for a “loss of trust and confidence in their ability to ensure proper preparation for and conduct of EOD proficiency training and lack of adherence to the established norms,” according to the Marines news release.

The four Explosive Ordnance Disposal Marines were clearing the range of unexploded ordnance and were consolidating it as part of an annual training exercise, according to a Marine report about the results of the investigation. The Marines moved 40 mm rounds into one area sur-

rounding an M60 105 mm white phosphorous round that could not be moved safely, the investigation found. They were moving rounds from the consolidation point to the demolition pit when one of the rounds exploded in the demolition pit, causing the other 40 mm rounds at the consolidation point and the demolition pit to explode, the investigation found.

The M430/A1 40 mm high-explosive dual purpose round is fired from a Mark 19 grenade launcher.

Brig. Gen. John Bullard, commanding general of Marine Corps Installations West-Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, initiated the command investigation. He also has called for an immediate review and revision of policies and procedures for EOD training at all ranges under the Marine Corps Installations West umbrella.

“Many of the training evolutions we conduct are inherently dangerous, especially when dealing with explosives and munitions,” said Bullard. “We are deeply saddened by the tragic loss of four Marines during a training evolution; their loss is felt throughout the Marine Corps. We offer our heartfelt prayers and thoughts to the family members, and will continue to support them through this difficult time.”

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# Retirement: Pentagon proposal combines lower payments with bonuses, savings plan

## FROM FRONT PAGE

In January, top Pentagon officials came out against a 1 percent reduction in the annual cost-of-living calculation for current working-age retirees.

And in a memo to Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel that accompanied the new report, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey wrote, “Any new retirement system should include a ‘grandfathering clause’ of the existing retirement system of the existing retirement system to cover all military personnel currently serving and retirees at the time of enactment.”

The proposal delivered Thursday keeps some distinct aspects of the current program, while delivering options DOD analysts say could lower the overall yearly cost to the government between \$1.4 billion and \$4.1 billion. The current system cost about \$25 billion in 2013.

As reported by Military Times, the proposal retains the “cliff-vesting” pension that provides a defined benefit after two decades of service. But yearly payments under the new proposals would be lower than the current ones, which provides 20-year retirees with 50 percent of the average of their basic pay during their three highest-earning years.

And, in a major departure from the current system, the options outlined in the report would provide only partial benefits for working-age retirees, reserving

full-size payments until traditional retirement age.

To offset the financial loss and to encourage retention, the DOD paper grafts on new incentives, including two new payments. One is a bonus called “continuation pay” at midcareer that could range up to 19 months of basic pay and would vary by service and whether a member is an officer or is enlisted. The other is an active-component transition pay to encourage separation.

The system also would include a federal Thrift Savings Plan, similar to a civilian 401(k) plan. Under the plan, the military would contribute an amount equal to 5 percent of annual pay to a retirement account, from which troops could begin to take payment before age 60.

Unlike the current system, troops would be vested after just six years of service. That means many more servicemembers eventually would be entitled to retirement benefits from the military than under the current plan.

According to the report, analysts used sophisticated computer modeling and calculated retention and force structure would not be hurt by the new plan.

Still, devising changes to the retirement system requires complex trade-offs, the paper acknowledged.

“(If) a primary goal is to generate large up-front savings, it will necessitate a substantial re-

duction in the retirement benefit, which in turn will translate into less retention and thus requires more up-front costs in the way of retention incentives and bonuses,” the paper’s authors wrote.

“Conversely, if a primary goal is to provide more robust benefits in retirement, up-front savings will be less, and, depending on the retirement enhancements, could actually result in increased costs.”

Congress generally rebuffs Pentagon requests that would lower military pay and benefits, and how seriously the current proposals will be weighed is an open question.

Veterans’ groups, meanwhile, said they were analyzing the proposals. An official from the Military Officers Association of America said the concepts, if enacted, appear as if they could hurt retention.

“These concepts provide considerable sums to servicemembers who leave short of 20 years of service at the expense of those that stay for two decades or more,” said Mike Hayden, director of government relations for the organization. “From our perspective, this does not provide a sound retention formula nor provide equity by taking from the pockets of those that stay to provide a benefit for those that leave.”

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# Lawmakers seek extension of veterans’ jobless benefits

From staff reports

A bill that would continue training assistance for unemployed veterans has been introduced in the House.

The Help Hire Our Heroes Act was announced Wednesday by California Democrats Rep. Julia Brownley and Rep. Mark Takano, according to a statement from Brownley’s office. The bill aims to extend the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program through Sept. 30.

The bill now goes to the House Veterans Affairs Committee. Funding to pay for it would come from cutting \$270 million from the Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund, said Brett Morrow, a spokesman for Takano.

The program, which began in

2012, provided up to 12 months of training benefits at community colleges and technical schools in high-demand occupations for unemployed veterans between the ages of 35 and 60 who are no longer eligible for the GI Bill.

Due to funding limitations, the VA stopped accepting new VRAP applications Oct. 1, and is scheduled to stop paying benefits April 1.

“Far too many veterans in Ventura County and across the country are unemployed, and we owe it to them to help them re-train for new high-skilled jobs and careers,” Brownley said in the statement. “The Veterans Retraining Assistance Program has succeeded in helping many veterans re-train and find employment, and it should not be allowed to lapse.”

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# UKRAINE UNREST

# Top lawmaker: Russia would welcome Crimea

By LAURA MILLS  
The Associated Press

MOSCOW — Russia rallied support Friday for a Crimean bid to secede from Ukraine, with a leader of Russia's parliament assuring her Crimean counterpart that the region would be welcomed as "an absolutely equal subject of the Russian Federation."

Across Red Square, 65,000 people waved Russian flags, chanting "Crimea is Russia!"

The strategic southern peninsula has become the flash point in the battle for Ukraine, where three months of protests sent President Viktor Yanukovich fleeing to Moscow. Moscow calls the new Ukrainian government illegitimate and has seized control of Crimea, where it has a major naval base on the Black Sea.

Crimea's parliament has called a March 16 referendum on whether the semi-autonomous region should join Russia outright, a move President Barack Obama has called a violation of international law.

Although President Vladimir Putin said Tuesday that Russia has no intention of annexing Crimea, he insisted that its residents have the right to determine the region's status in the referendum.

Valentina Matvienko, the speaker of Russia's upper house of parliament, made clear Friday the country would welcome Crimea if it votes in the referendum to join its giant neighbor. About 60 percent of Crimea's population identifies itself as Russian.

If the decision is made, then Crimea will become an absolutely equal subject of the Russian Federation, Matvienko said during a visit from the chairman of the Crimean parliament, Vladimir Konstantinov. She spoke of mistreatment of Russian-speaking residents in Ukraine's east and south, which has been Moscow's primary argument for possible intervention in Ukraine.

## Paving the way

The Russian parliament is scrambling to make the way for Crimea to join Russia. Russia's constitution allows the country to annex territory only by an agreement "initiated ... by the given foreign government." That would entail signing an agreement with the new authorities in Kiev, whom Moscow doesn't recognize.

New legislation would sidestep that requirement, according to members of parliament, who initially said a new bill could be passed as soon as next week but have since indicated that they will wait until after the referendum.

In the other side of Red Square from the parliament building, 65,000 people gathered at a Kremlin-organized rally in support of Crimea.

"We always knew that Russia would not abandon us," Konstantinov shouted from the stage. He also called on Moscow not to forget the Russia-leaning regions in Ukraine.



ALEXANDER ZEMLIANCHENKO/AP

A pro-Putin demonstrator holds a poster that says "We believe Putin!" as others gather near Red Square in Moscow on Friday.

## Heavier sanctions on Russia could backfire

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Underlying talk about taking harsh punitive measures against Russia for its military incursion into Ukraine are economic complications and worries that sanctions levied against Moscow could backfire on the U.S. and Europe.

Heavier U.S. and European Union sanctions could sting Russia's already slow-growing economy and hurt its financial sector. But Moscow could retaliate and seize American and other foreign assets or cut exports of natural gas to Europe, which is heavily dependent on Russia for energy.

Declaring this determination not to let the Kremlin carve up Ukraine, President Barack Obama on Thursday slapped new visa restrictions on Russian and other opponents of Ukraine's government in Kiev and authorized wider financial penalties against those involved in the military intervention or in stealing state assets.

On Capitol Hill, both chambers of Congress looked to advance legislation imposing hard-hitting sanctions on Russia.

Europe's presidents and prime ministers remain divided on taking more drastic steps such as freezing assets and issuing travel bans on Russian officials. European hesitancy reflected the reality that targeting influential Russian businessmen or major Russian companies would also harm Europe's economic interests. U.S. trade with Russia is less than one-tenth of Europe's.

Russian investors hold assets worth billions in European banks, particularly in Britain, which is highly protective of its financial sector, and major exporters such as Germany and the Netherlands have far more at stake than the United States in Russia's consumer economy.

Showing greater caution than Obama on sanc-

tions, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said European penalties against Russia depend "on how the diplomatic process progresses." EU President Herman Van Rompuy said travel bans, asset freezes and the cancellation of an EU-Russia summit could still come.

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk acknowledged "no enthusiasm" in Europe for economic sanctions.

In some ways, the debate over sanctions echoes the Cold War doctrine of military strategy in which if two opponents fired off nuclear weapons, both sides would be annihilated.

"There is a kind of mutually assured destruction relationship here," said Steven Pifer, a former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine and analyst at the Brookings Institution.

The Brookings Institution think tank in Washington, "Russia could say, 'Well, we're going to cut off your gas and you guys can now scramble and buy extra gas and pay big prices.'" It would hurt the Europeans, but it also would cut off the biggest source of cash that flows into Russia today," he said, referring to oil and gas sales that account for about 60 percent of Russia's exports and half of its government revenue.

"So the Russians may threaten some things, but they also have to consider that if they do that what it would do to the Russian economy," he said.

**"Russia could say, 'Well, we're going to cut off your gas and you guys can now scramble and buy extra gas and pay big prices.'"**

finances and failing economy, got encouraging news Friday from the International Monetary Fund, which said economic assistance was on the way.

"I am positively impressed with the authorities' determination, sense of responsibility and commitment to an agenda of economic reform and transparency, Reza Moghadam, the IMF's European Department director, said in a statement after a two-day visit. "The IMF stands ready to help the people of Ukraine."

The referendum on Crimea's status will be conducted with what Crimean leaders have said are more than 11,000 pro-Russian forces in the region. The troops control all access to the peninsula and have blockaded all Ukrainian military bases that have not yet surrendered.

## Russia's denials

Russia has denied that its forces are active in Crimea, describing the troops who wear green uniforms without insignia as local "self-defense forces." But many of the troops, who are armed with advanced heavy weaponry, are being transported by vehicles with the Russian license plates.

Moscow belittled moves by the United States and the European Union to pressure Russia. Vladimir Chizhov, the Russian ambassador to the EU, told Russian news agencies: "If someone thinks that they can scare us with such horror stories, then they are deeply mistaken."

Putin was in Sochi on Friday for the opening of the Paralympics, where he was shown on television telling the head of the International Paralympic Committee, Philip Craven, that he hoped the games "will lower the heat of passions over Ukraine."

Crimea would be the first territory to join Russia since the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991. South Ossetia and Abkhazia, which broke away from Georgia after a brief 2008 war with Russia, have been recognized as independent by Moscow, but there have been few serious moves to enable them to join Russia.

For Putin, Crimea would be a dazzling acquisition and would help cement his authority with a Russian citizenry that has in recent years shown signs of restiveness and still resents the loss of the sprawling empire Moscow ruled in Soviet times.

In the Crimean capital, Simferopol, 75 people turned out Friday for a rally at the local monument to 19th-century Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko. They spoke both Ukrainian and Russian, but waved Ukrainian flags and released white doves into the rainy sky.

One of those at the protest was native Russian speaker Anton Romanov, who said he opposes the occupation of Crimea by Russian troops.

The new government, which is struggling to stabilize Ukraine's economy, "isn't against being forced to live in a different country," he said.

"We must not leave the Ukrainian people at the mercy of those Nazi bandits," he said, referring to the new government in Kiev. Russian state gas company Gazprom also increased the

pressure on Ukraine's new government, which now owes \$1.89 billion for Russian natural gas. Gazprom Chief Executive Alexei Miller said if Ukraine doesn't pay off its debt, "There is a risk of re-

turning to the situation of the beginning of 2009," when Russia cut off supplies to Europe because of a pricing dispute with Ukraine. The new government, which is struggling to stabilize Ukraine's

# UKRAINE UNREST



Left: Ukrainian oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky, center, plays soccer in Kiev, Ukraine, in February 2010. Right: Oligarch Serhiy Taruta visits a metallurgical plant in Donetsk, Ukraine, in August 2005.



AP photos

# Ukraine to compete in Paralympics in Russia

The Associated Press

SOCHI, Russia — Ukraine will compete in the Winter Paralympics in Sochi despite Russia's military moves in Crimea.

The Ukrainian Paralympic Committee decided against boycotting the games, announcing a few hours before Friday's opening ceremony that its athletes would stay.

The decision came after discussions between Ukrainian officials and athletes over whether to pull out in light of the crisis back home and Russia's military takeover of the Crimean Peninsula.

"We are staying at the Paralympics," Valery Sushevich, president of the National Paralympic Committee of Ukraine, said at a news conference.

However, he added that the circumstances were far from ideal.

"I don't remember a situation when the organizing country during a Paralympics started an intervention on the territory of a country taking part," Sushevich said, according to the R-Sport agency. "I don't know to what extent the team can focus on the result now."

The Ukrainian official said the team would leave Sochi if there is an escalation of military conflict.

"I declare should this happen we will leave the games," Sushevich said. "We cannot possibly stay here in this case."

He said he met with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday night to discuss the situation and request peace during the games.

Sushevich said he did not receive any guarantees but that it was important that Putin agreed to listen.

Putin and IOC President Thomas Bach are expected to attend Friday's opening ceremony and a full complement of teams to compete in what we are confident will be a fantastic Paralympic Winter Games," IPC President Phillip Craven said.

"All week the IPC has been working closely with the Ukrainian Paralympic Committee in an effort to keep them here in Sochi. The talking points for Sochi 2014 needs to be great sport and great athletes, not global politics."

The IPC has appealed for Russia to recognize the U.N.'s Olympic Truce, which asks warring parties to cease hostilities during the Olympics and Paralympics.

# Ukraine oligarchs get key posts

By MARIA DANILOVA  
The Associated Press

KIEV, Ukraine — In a surprising move after Russia flexed its military might in the Crimean Peninsula, Ukraine's new leadership has reached out to oligarchs for help — appointing them as governors in eastern regions where loyalties to Moscow are strong.

With their wealth, influence and self-interest in preventing further conflict, the oligarchs could be the key to calming tensions and maintaining Ukraine's control in areas where pro-Russian activists have stoked separatist tensions.

But the decision to appoint the country's richest men as regional administrators has its risks. Some believe the oligarchs, who have a history of manipulating governments, may become too entrenched in their new jobs and could use their posts for personal gain. The unexpected move drew instant ire from Russian President Vladimir Putin, who called one of the oligarchs, Ukraine's third-richest man, Ihor Kolomoisky, a "swindler."

They name oligarchs, billionaires as governors of eastern regions," Putin said during a news conference earlier this week. "Naturally, people don't accept that."

Under Ukrainian law, governors are appointed by the country's president instead of being elected. After President Viktor Yanukovich fled for Russia last month in the

**4 The oligarchs taking on this responsibility is a demonstration of their commitment to an independent, sovereign and territorially integrated Ukraine.**

John Edward Herbst  
former U.S. ambassador

wake of mass protests against his government and deadly clashes with police, acting President Oleksandr Turchynov fired Yanukovich's appointees and replaced them with his own.

Kolomoisky, a metals, banking and media tycoon, was named governor of his native region of Dnipropetrovsk, while Serhiy Taruta, the country's 16th-richest man, according to Forbes magazine, was named governor of his home Donetsk region. Both oligarchs are seen as pro-European, and Kolomoisky's media have provided sympathetic coverage of the pro-Western protests.

Experts said the appointments demonstrated that despite its strong ties to Russia, industry leaders in eastern Ukraine who provide jobs to tens of thousands of Ukrainians are against a split-up.

"The oligarchs taking on this responsibility is a demonstration of their commitment to an independent, sovereign and territorially integrated Ukraine," former U.S. Ambassador John Edward Herbst told The

Associated Press.

Kolomoisky, worth \$2.4 billion, according to Forbes, told the AP his task would be to quell any possible unrest in his region, which he said was being fomented by agents from Russia.

"I hope that my presence in the region will help cool the few hot heads that are present here and stabilize the situation, to bring calm so that the citizens of Ukraine living in the Dnipropetrovsk region would feel safe," Kolomoisky said in a telephone interview.

In Donetsk, a coal-mining region that borders Russia, Taruta said he had never planned to serve in the government but accepted the governor's post because his country was finding itself "in dangerous times."

"My decision is a desire to protect our country," said Taruta, who is the leader of a large industrial group and the head of a soccer club. "We Ukrainians have the right to a strong and united Ukraine."

# Intent on staking claim on Crimea, Putin brushes off Obama's warnings

By JULIE PACE  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — One by one, President Barack Obama's warnings to Russia are being brushed aside by President Vladimir Putin, who appears to be speeding up efforts to formally stake his claim to Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula.

In the week since Obama first declared there would be "costs" if Putin pressed into Crimea, Russian forces have taken control of the region, and a referendum has

been scheduled to decide its future. Obama declared the March 16 vote a violation of international law, but in a region where ethnic Russians are the majority, the referendum seems likely to become another barrier to White House efforts to compel Putin to pull his forces from Crimea.

"The referendum vote is going to serve for Putin, in his mind, as the credibility and legitimacy of Russia's presence there," said Andrew Kuchins, director of the Russia program at the Center

for Strategic and International Studies.

If Crimea votes to join Russia, the referendum could also put Obama in the awkward position of opposing the outcome of a popular vote.

The White House has tried to match Russia's assertive posture by moving quickly to impose financial sanctions and travel bans on Russians and other opponents of Ukraine's new central government. U.S. officials have also urged to rally the

international community around the notion that Russia's military maneuvers in Crimea are illegal, even seeking support from China, Moscow's frequent ally against the West.

"I am confident that we are moving forward together, united in our determination to oppose actions that violate international law and to support the government and people of Ukraine," Obama said Thursday.

The European Union also announced Thursday that it was suspending talks with Putin's

government on a wide-ranging economic agreement and on granting Russian citizens visa-free travel within the 28-nation bloc — a long-standing Russian objective.

The White House says it still believes a diplomatic solution to the dispute with Russia is possible. Obama spoke with Putin for more than an hour Thursday, outlining a potential resolution that would include Russia pulling its forces back in Crimea and direct talks between the Kremlin and Ukraine.

## NATION

## Justice eyes CIA spying on Senate computers

By JONATHAN S. LANDAY, ALI WATKINS and MARISA TAYLOR  
McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — The CIA Inspector General's Office has asked the Justice Department to investigate allegations of malfeasance at the spy agency in connection with a yet-to-be released Senate Intelligence Committee report into the CIA's secret detention and interrogation program, McClatchy has learned.

The criminal referral may be related to what several knowledgeable people said was CIA monitoring of computers used by Senate aides to prepare the study. The monitoring may have violated an agreement between the

committee and the agency.

The development marks an unprecedented breakdown in relations between the CIA and its congressional overseers amid an extraordinary, closed-door battle over the 6,300-page report on the agency's use of waterboarding and harsh interrogation techniques on suspected terrorists held in secret overseas prisons. The report is said to be a searing indictment of the program. The CIA has disputed some of the report's findings.

White House officials have closely tracked the bitter struggle, a McClatchy investigation has found. But they haven't directly intervened, perhaps because they

are embroiled in their own feud with the committee, resisting surrendering top-secret documents that the CIA asserted were covered by executive privilege and sent to the White House.

McClatchy's findings are based on information found in official documents and provided by people with knowledge of the dispute being fought in the seventh-floor executive offices of the CIA's headquarters in Langley, Va., and the committee's high-security work spaces on Capitol Hill.

The people who spoke to McClatchy asked not to be identified because the feud involves highly classified matters and carries enormous consequences for con-

gressional oversight over the executive branch.

The CIA and the committee declined to comment.

Caitlin Hayden, a spokeswoman for the National Security Council, declined to discuss the matter and referred questions to the CIA and the Justice Department.

In question now is whether any part of the committee's report, which took some four years to compose and cost \$40 million, will ever see the light of day.

The report details how the CIA misled the Bush administration and Congress about the use of interrogation techniques that many experts consider torture, according to public statements

by committee members. It also shows, members have said, how the techniques didn't provide the intelligence that led the CIA to the hideout in Pakistan where Osama bin Laden was killed in a 2011 raid by Navy SEALs.

The committee determined earlier this year that the CIA monitored computers — in possible violation of an agreement against doing so — that the agency had provided to intelligence committee staff in a secure room at a CIA facility in Northern Virginia that the agency insisted they use to review millions of pages of top-secret reports, cables and other documents, according to people with knowledge.

## Survey: Half of millennials more likely to lean Democratic

By JESSE J. HOLLAND  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Young adults like to think of themselves as independent, but when it comes to politics, they're more likely than not to lean to the left.

Half of American adults ages 18 to 33 are self-described political independents, according to a survey out Friday, but at the same time, half of these so-called millennials are Democrats or lean toward the Democratic Party, the highest share for any age group during the past decade.

In addition, young adults tend to be single and churchless — turning away from their predecessors' proclivity for religion and marriage, according to the Pew Research Center survey. Almost two-thirds don't classify themselves as "a religious person." And when it comes to tying the knot, only about 1 in 4 millennials is married. Almost half of baby boomers were married at that age.

"The new survey shows how the millennial adults are 'forging a distinctive path into adulthood,'" said Paul Taylor, Pew's executive vice president and co-author of the report.

This can especially be seen when it comes to politics. Fifty percent of the millennials identify themselves as political independents, while only 27 percent said Democrat

and 17 percent said Republican. The independent identification for millennials is an increase from 38 percent back in 2004.

"It's not that they don't have strong political opinions, they do," Taylor said. "It's simply that they choose not to identify themselves with either political party."

The number of self-described independents is lower among their predecessors. Only 39 percent of those in Generation X said they were independents, along with 37 percent of the boomers and 32 percent of the Silent Generation.

Pew describes Gen Xers as those ages 34 to 49, boomers as ages 50 to 68, and the Silent Generation as ages 69 to 86.

Democratic millennials combined with the self-described independents who lean Democratic, half — 50 percent — of the millennials are Democrats or Democratic-leaning, while 34 percent are Republicans or Republican-leaning.

"They don't choose to identify, but they have strong views and their views are views that most people conventionally associate with the Democratic Party," Taylor said.

The Pew study was based on interviews with 1,821 adults by cellphone or landline from Feb. 14-23. The poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 2.6 percentage points.

## Ky. bill would let Rand Paul run for two offices at the same time

The Associated Press

FRANKFORT, Ky. — Rand Paul's biggest political decision is approaching: whether to run for president in 2016 or to focus solely on re-election to his U.S. Senate seat. A Republican lawmaker from his home state wants to free him from the potential dilemma by letting him run for both.

State Senate Majority Leader Damon Thayer said Thursday he wants to clarify that current Kentucky law, which prevents someone from running for multiple offices, does not apply to federal elections.

A bill he introduced would allow candidates' names to appear twice on the same ballot if one or both offices sought are federal offices.



Paul

session to bring it forward. The 60-day session is two-thirds complete. Thayer said he was approached by Paul's staff about the legislation and later spoke several times with Kentucky's freshman senator about it.



SUSAN WALSH/AP

Texas Gov. Rick Perry speaks Friday at the Conservative Political Action Committee annual conference in National Harbor, Md.

## Religious conservatives facing off at conference

By STEVE PEOPLES  
AND KEN THOMAS  
The Associated Press

OXON HILL, Md. — The early auditions for the Republican Party's next presidential contest are in full swing at the nation's largest annual gathering of conservative activists, where some of the GOP's most prominent religious conservatives are facing off.

Friday marked the second day of the Conservative Political Action Conference, which brings thousands of conservative activists to suburban Washington each year to put their stamp on the Republican Party.

The day's speaking program features three former presidential candidates known for promoting social conservative values — Texas Gov. Rick Perry, former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee and former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum.

Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul was scheduled to take the stage later in the day, setting up a clash of ideas between the libertarian-minded activists who generally flock to the conservative conference and the religious wing of the GOP, which continues to wield influence over party affairs. An afternoon panel discussion is titled, "Can Libertarians and Social Conservatives Ever Get Along?"

All four men have left open the possibility

of running for the Republican presidential nomination in 2016 — a contest expected to begin in earnest in about a year.

On Thursday, the initial slate of Republicans vying for the party's next presidential nomination called for the GOP to unite behind a clear agenda and draw contrasts with Democrats. The contestants ranged from Sen. Ted Cruz, a tea party champion, to New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, a favorite of the Republican establishment.

"If you want to lose elections, stand for nothing," said Cruz, who cited as examples the unsuccessful presidential bids of Bob Dole, John McCain and Mitt Romney. "When you don't stand and draw a clear distinction, when you don't stand for principle, Democrats celebrate."

The day offered an early tryout for a half-dozen Republican officials eager to win over the party's most passionate voters. At stake this year is the Senate majority, currently held by senators in President Barack Obama's Democratic Party. But for all, the November elections could serve as a springboard for the next presidential contest.

Republicans have much to mend before 2016, starting with a stark ideological divide between the party's establishment and the superconservatives who rose to power in the tea party-fueled 2010 elections that delivered a Republican House majority.

## NATION

## Senators urge action on railroad safety rules

By JOAN LOWY  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Government regulators are taking too long to write new rail safety regulations in light of recent fiery oil train accidents and a deadly commuter train derailment, senators complained Thursday.

Railroads are also taking too long to implement safety improvements Congress ordered under legislation passed seven years ago, lawmakers said at a hearing before the Senate's surface transportation panel.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., the panel's chairman, said he is "disappointed and disturbed by some of the delays and failures in rulemaking and scrutiny."

"One of the things we're going to do here is impose accountability," he said.

Cynthia Quarterman, head of the Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration, said her agency is working as fast as possible to draft new standards for tank cars used to transport crude oil. She said it takes time to address the more than 100,000 public comments the agency has received, as well as fulfill other requirements of the federal rule-making process.

The cars, known as DOT-111s, were involved in explosions and fires following derailments of oil trains near Casselton, N.D., in December and Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, just across the U.S. border, in July. Forty-seven people were killed in Lac-Mégantic and much of the town center was destroyed.

U.S. freight railroads transported about 415,000 carloads of crude in 2013, up from just 9,500 in 2008, according to government and industry figures. The increase is overwhelmingly due to the fracking boom in the Bakken region, which is mainly in North Dakota but also extends into parts of Montana and Canada.

The National Transportation Safety Board, which has urged replacement or retrofitting of the tank cars since 1991, calls the original DOT-111 cars still in use an "unacceptable accident in waiting."

In 2011, the Association of American Railroads issued updated DOT-111 standards in response to the safety criticism. Tank-car makers have been using those voluntary industry standards since then, but investigators and government regulators say those standards don't go far enough, which is why the government is drafting standards now.

Premitt Searles, testifying for the American Petroleum Institute, said the oil industry hasn't seen evidence that standards need to be toughened beyond the voluntary industry standards. On the other hand, Edward Hamberger, head of the railroad association, said railroads agree new standards are needed.



PHOTOS BY KETH SRANOCIC/AP

Above: Brian Scritchfield takes a phone order at Bobtown Pizza in Bobtown, Pa. Below: A certificate is redeemed at the shop.

## No pizza 'scandal' here

Chevron offer after explosion perfectly palatable to Pa. town's residents

By KEVIN BEGOS  
The Associated Press

BOBTOWN, Pa. — Critics are raging after an energy giant offered pizza coupons to a community near a natural gas well that exploded last month, killing a worker.

News stories, TV shows and blogs — many sarcastic or outright scornful — spread the word far and wide. "Shame on you," one person wrote about the offer by Chevron Corp. "How insulting!" said another. Comedy Central's satirical "The Colbert Report" skewered it.

But the 750 or so residents of the hamlet of Bobtown? Not one has signed an online petition demanding an apology for the pizza offer. In fact, during a recent visit, The Associated Press found the talk of the town is more the furious response by outsiders.

"We feel it was something outside groups generate," said Pete Novak, a co-director of the Polish American Club, a local gathering spot. None of the patrons has voiced outrage, he said, and residents laughed about how people who have never set foot in Bobtown claim to speak for its citizens.

Several people noted that Chevron's pizza offer was made to apologize for traffic after the fire, not to downplay the loss of life.

"I thought it was pretty decent of them," said Ray Elli, 54, who noted that the fire was about a mile outside of town on a ridge, and that people in town didn't feel threatened.

Bill Sowden, co-owner of Bobtown Pizza, the area's only restaurant, said 12 people have redeemed the coupons distributed by Chevron. The whole issue, he said, was blown out of



"I thought it was pretty decent of them."

Ray Elli  
Bobtown, Pa., resident

proportion.

"We're just a food place," he said.

The outsized reaction from people not directly affected by the accident illustrates the larger passions surrounding the fracking debate. Many critics seek stricter regulations or bans to protect air and water from pollution, while supporters speak of the economic benefits for an energy-hungry nation. Each side claims the high moral ground.

About 12,000 people have signed an online petition demanding Chevron apologize, according to petition organizer Karen Feridun.

"There are a few from nearby communities, but none right from Bobtown," Feridun wrote in emails this week to the AP. She lives about 250 miles away, at the other end of Pennsylvania. The petition isn't even on public display in Bobtown, about 2 miles from the West Virginia border.

One petition signer from New

York city mentioned "Chevron's cavalier arrogance." Other signers came from Alaska, Florida and many other states, as well as Australia, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Germany and Italy.

Chevron hasn't responded to the petition, Feridun said.

Company spokesman Kent Robertson said in an email that Chevron works to be a good partner in communities, that it has been "overwhelmed by the support" from residents and that it appreciates their understanding.

For more than a century, the region around Bobtown has been coal country, and there's still an active mine nearby. But in the past five years, natural gas locked in shale deep underground became newly accessible because of the advent of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking.

On Feb. 11, a Chevron well outside of town exploded, killing Ian McKee, 27, who lived about a half-hour away in Morgantown, W.Va., and worked for a contractor.

## NM residents frustrated at lack of nuke dump details

By SUSAN MONTVOYA BRYAN  
The Associated Press

CARLSBAD, N.M. — It's been three weeks since the radiation sensors were triggered and the exhaust dampers at the federal government's only underground nuclear waste dump slammed shut, putting the repository's massive salt caverns off-limits and the nation's cleanup efforts on hold.

The U.S. Department of Energy says low levels of radiation made it past the ventilation system's air filters and exposed 13 workers. Agency officials describe the amount as minuscule, saying the workers are not at risk of any serious effects and there's no public health threat.

But residents and officials voiced frustration at a town hall Thursday night, saying the DOE and managers at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant are leaving them in the dark about what's happening at the repository.

"Nobody knows what the plans look like. Nobody knows what the agenda looks like. We just hear a lot of surmises about what might happen and what might not happen," John Heaton, a former state representative and head of Mayor Dale Janway's nuclear task force, told a panel of officials at the town hall.

"We think that we should be the No. 1 partner and know everything that's going on from A to Z," he said, explaining that the community feels as if it's being sidestepped, with action being orchestrated in Washington instead of locally.

Energy Department officials say there is no intent to hide anything and some information is simply unknown.

Questions about what caused the leak at the repository, the extent of the contamination and the future of the federal government's cleanup efforts have been swirling for days.

Work is ongoing to get air-monitoring equipment underground that will pave the way for specially trained crews to enter. Jose Franco, manager of the DOE's Carlsbad Plant, said the timing of the cleanup and the resources and costs involved won't be known until crews can actually enter.

Carlsbad resident Karen Armentariz said her first concern after hearing about the leak was the extent of contamination and whether her children and grandchildren would be affected. Despite the assurances from the DOE, she's still anxious.

"I hear what they're saying and I want to believe it, but it's just so much uncertainty," she said. "We do feel poorly informed."

New Mexico Environment Secretary Ryan Flynn also pleaded with federal officials during the meeting to make the recovery effort transparent.

Officials promised to host public meetings each week.

## NATION



BRENNAN LINSLEY/AP

Colorado Department of Transportation employees stop traffic near Empire, Colo., last month as they attempt to trigger a controlled avalanche with an explosives launcher. Forecasters have issued warnings of considerable or high avalanche dangers for many areas outside of established ski areas.

## Deaths spike across West as storms bring snow, risks

By PHUONG LE  
The Associated Press

**S**KIERS and snowboarders rejoiced when a series of storms dumped several feet of snow in the mountains across the West, after what had been a disappointing start for those seeking fresh powder in the backcountry.

But all the new snow and strong winds have fueled dangerous conditions from the Cascades to the Rockies, prompting forecasters to issue warnings of considerable or high avalanche danger for many places outside of established ski areas.

Seventeen people have died in an avalanche this winter, 11 since early February. Many more skinned disaster and survived with broken bones or other injuries. Some were partially buried in snow, but managed to dig themselves out or were dug out by companions.

Avalanche experts are seeing a similar problem across the region: too much snow and strong winds overloading weak layers of old snow. With too much

stress and not enough time to bond or stabilize, that weak snow layer eventually gives way.

"It's like putting a brick on top of a pile of potato chips," said Bruce Tremper, director of the U.S. Forest Service's Utah Avalanche Center.

Parts of Utah received more snow over a three week period than in the prior three months, Tremper said.

The latest death, on Feb. 24, came when a 49-year-old man was buried by a slide while snowmobiling in the West Cabinet Range near the Idaho-Montana border. His friend was buried with only his face

exposed, but was dug out with no injuries, according to the Flathead Avalanche Center, which rated the slide forceful enough that it could destroy a car. The

avalanche danger the day before, the last time conditions were updated, was high.

That day in the Whitefish range in western Montana, three snowmobilers escaped injury in two incidents when slides swept them down the slope.

Avalanches have killed on average about 28 people a year over the past 10 years, according to the Colorado Avalanche Information Center in Boulder, which tracks national statistics. The deaths this year aren't unusually high, experts say, but have come during a short time period.

What has been unusual is how large and intense the slides have been.

According to the Colorado Avalanche Information Center, several recent avalanches ran larger than any in the

past 20 years.

Scott Toepfer, an avalanche forecaster, said the large and destructive slides have taken out century-old trees and ripped off its foundation an old mining structure that has stood for decades.

"It's been storm after storm after storm, and that foundation has reached a tipping point," Toepfer said.

With more people venturing into the backcountry to play, experts say it's more likely that people will be hurt or killed. They advise recreationists, at the very least, to get proper avalanche education, carry the right equipment including a beacon, shovel and probe, and check mountain and avalanche forecasts before heading out.

Boulder retiree Fred Larke, who recently went backcountry skiing near Winter Park, Colo., makes sure he heads into the backcountry with a friend, an avalanche beacon and a slope meter that helps him stay aware of steep slopes that are prone to avalanches.

"In reality, the best way to survive an avalanche is not to get caught in it in the first place," he said.

**'It's like putting a brick on top of a pile of potato chips.'**

**Bruce Tremper**  
director of the U.S. Forest Service's Utah Avalanche Center

## WORLD

# Voting in N. Korea mandatory for all

By ERIC TALMADGE  
The Associated Press

TOKYO — North Korean voters will make a choice Sunday when they elect a new national legislature, but not for a candidate. The ruling elite has already done that for them, and there's only one per district.

They get to vote "yes" or "no," virtually all pick "yes."

One thing they don't get to decide is whether to bother voting. Going to the polls is expected of all eligible voters, which effectively makes North Korean elections a powerful tool for checking up on the people.

For outsiders trying to figure out what's going on in North Korea politics, Sunday's elections for the Supreme People's Assembly may shed some light on what personalities are currently in favor and likely to dominate in the years ahead.

For North Korean authorities, the elections provide both a veneer of democracy and a means of monitoring the whereabouts and loyalties of average citizens.

U.S. analysts urge citizens to go to the polls line the streets in

Pyeongyang and other cities. Along with nearly 700 other "deputies" expected to be seated in the new assembly, supreme leader Kim Jong Un himself has announced his candidacy — in District 111 on sacred Mount Paekdu.

Official turnout rates in North Korean elections are generally reported at more than 99 percent, a practice inspired by the tradition of Joseph Stalin's Soviet Union. Sunday's will likely be the same.

Fictitious as that may sound, Michael Madden, editor of the NK Leadership Watch website and a contributor to the 38 North news bulletin, said it reflects one reason the autocratic North has elections at all: They provide "the most comprehensive assessment of the population."

Mustering the nation every so often is a chance for the authorities to hone their mobilization skills, check up on the efficiency of local leaders and get a snapshot of internal movements.

"The DPRK is very good about mobilizing the population for events," Madden said, referring to North Korea by its official name, the Democratic People's Republic



VINCENT YU/AP

**North Koreans in Pyongyang walk past an election poster that reads: "March 9 is the election of the 13th Supreme People's Assembly. Let's all vote in agreement!"**

of Korea. He said legislative elections "are celebratory events with various activities. According to various North Korean migrants and defectors, it is very difficult for a voter to get a hardship dispensation from participating."

Madden said North Korean security officials will review data on nonvoters to glean information on suspicious activity — since

absentees could be workers who have snuck off to China for higher pay, people traveling inside the country without formal permission, or military personnel who have gone AWOL. Officials use the data to conduct further investigations, make arrests and gauge the effectiveness of their social control apparatus at the local level.

# Netherlands tightens policies on pot sales

By MIKE CORDER  
The Associated Press

MAASTRICHT, Netherlands — A young man at a bus stop hisses at a passer-by: "What you looking for... marijuana?" It's a scene of street peddling that the Netherlands hoped to stamp out in the 1970s when it launched a policy of tolerating "coffee shops" where people could buy and smoke pot freely.

But Maastricht's street dealers are back, local residents complain. And the reason is a crackdown on coffee shops triggered by another problem: Pot tourists who crossed the border to visit the cafes and made a nuisance of themselves by snarling traffic, dumping litter and even urinating in the streets.

This exchange of one drug problem for another has become a headache for Maastricht — and may give reason for pause in Washington state and Colorado, where the sale of marijuana is now allowed.

The Netherlands, the world pioneer in pot liberalization, has recently taken a harder line toward marijuana, with mixed results seen particularly in border towns such as Maastricht.

The central government clampdown has involved banning people who live outside the Netherlands from coffee shops and shuttering shops that are deemed to be too close to schools. There was even a short-lived policy that said smokers had to apply for a "Weed Pass" to get into a coffee shop. The new rules were rolled out across the country between the middle of 2012 and the beginning of last year.

But while the central government made the rules, it's up to local municipalities to enforce them — and most are embracing only part of the policy.

Amsterdam — with some 200 licensed coffee shops, one-third of the nationwide total — still lets foreigners visit them, although it is closing coffee shops that are near schools.

Maastricht Mayor Onno Hoerens said he enforced the legislation to halt a daily influx of thousands of foreigners who crossed the borders to stock up on pot at its 14 coffee shops. That effort to end so-called "drug tourism" has been successful, local residents said, but the flip side has been a rise in street dealers like the man who recently tried to sell pot to an Associated Press reporter in Maastricht.

Since coffee shops were banned from selling to nonresidents, the number of foreigners has dried up. But the atmosphere in town has become more tense as street dealers now aggressively badger any potential clients and fight among themselves, resident Carol Berghmans said.

"Now the drug runners are trying to sell on the street to anyone," he said. "They are bothering everybody."

# Entrepreneurship grows in Egypt's struggling economy

By MAGGIE HYDE  
The Associated Press

CAIRO — In Egypt's newest reality television show, contestants sold fruit juice from push carts in Cairo's busiest market and later organized a desert safari for tourists, hustling to make sales in the capital's crowded streets.

The program, called "The Project" in Arabic, highlights entrepreneurship and small business among something that many say is more crucial than ever as Egypt tries to claw its way out of tough economic times.

With youth unemployment up to 30 percent and its economy only now back to levels seen before 2011 rising, Egypt's salvation may lie in the small, informal businesses run by those scraping out a living in the Arab world's most populous country.

"There is not even a word for entrepreneurship in Arabic," said Anna Elliott, executive producer of a new reality show called "Banyan Media." "But there is this hunger for it."

Egypt's economic landscape is largely controlled by its government, the country's No. 1 employer. However, the government is grappling with a large budget deficit and has had to seek billions of dollars in financial bailout cash from Gulf nations since a July 3 military overthrow of Islamist President Mohammed Morsi.

But outside of government-owned companies and foreign multinational corporations, there are



AMR NABIL/AP

**Adel Abd ElSadek, second right, owner of the pharmaceutical packaging company Trustpack, talks with an employee manning one of the machines at his factory.**

thousands of small, largely informal businesses, from street vendors to small shops. Most of those don't pay taxes, and operate in small towns and informal areas outside the capital.

Experts believe that gray economy truly powers Egypt. Ghada Fathi Waly, managing director of Egypt's Social Fund for Development, estimated that at least two-thirds of the country's economy rides on the informal businesses. Waly, who was last week also appointed a government minister, recommended allowing the businesses to run outside of government control to allow them to flourish, while registering and

taxing only potential exporters.

"I think we should definitely be very optimistic about small businesses in Egypt," Waly said. "We have seen that this sector has shown resilience and has been able to change course."

One company that received aid from the social fund is Trustpack, which makes the foil backing for sheets of pills. Owner Adel Abd ElSadek, who ran the machines himself in lean times, said he now employs 84 people from his two-room shop on the outskirts of Cairo.

"I thought it would be better than if I lived my whole life as an employee, with all of my efforts

going toward benefiting others, and not myself," ElSadek said.

Waly said it's the kind of attitude she's seen emerge since the country revolted against autocrat Hosni Mubarak in 2011. She said many Egyptians say they want to break away from the model of a centralized government economy and the so-called "crony capitalism" of the Mubarak era.

"Young people are realizing that the government is not going to be hiring," Waly said.

That push is highlighted on "The Project." Banyan, funded in part by the U.S. Agency for International Development, produced a similar show on entrepreneurship in Afghanistan.

Elliott said her hope is that the show will ultimately help job creation in Egypt, even if indirectly. All contestants voted off the show are told, "You'll realize your dream, just not with us," and they are given seed money to jumpstart their own business. A recent winner visited her show in a village in southern Egypt attracted hundreds, she said.

Contestant Thari el-Din, a Nubian from southern Egypt who plans to open a handicraft workshop for people with special needs, said the show made him believe he could succeed.

"I used to think, you know, someday I will do this," said el-Din, 23. "I used to think I needed a big space to start my business. Now, I've found that I'm able to start small, and it's much better that way."

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Man credits dog for saving life after crash

**AK ANCHORAGE** — An Alaska man said his dog saved his life after a snowmobile crash left him injured in the woods.

Oris Orth, 52, of Trapper Creek was rescued more than 24 hours after he crashed the snowmobile Sunday in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

Orth said his 2-year-old golden retriever, Amber, kept him warmer than he would have been alone. He was injured, unable to move, in temperatures below freezing.

On Monday afternoon, the dog went barking to nearby snowmobilers.

Locals responded, bringing a generator and a hair dryer to keep Orth warm in his wet clothes. Alaska State Troopers were among responders, who took Orth by helicopter to Providence Alaska Medical Center.

Orth is being treated for an injured neck, dislocated arms and frostbite.

## Police: Man urinated on people near campus

**FL GAINESVILLE** — Police are searching for a man who has been urinating on people near the University of Florida campus.

The victims told police they were standing with their backs turned to the man when they felt themselves being urinated upon.

The incidents occurred Feb. 22, Feb. 26 and March 1 in various locations near the campus.

The victims all told police that when they confronted the man, he ran away.

Police are increasing patrols in the area.

## Plane makes emergency stop due to unruly man

**OR PORTLAND** — The FBI said a Southwest Airlines flight from Seattle to Sacramento, Calif., made an emergency landing in Oregon because of a passenger who was displaying gang signs, praising Jesus and demanding alcoholic drinks.

Sheron Lamar Rogers, 27, was arrested Tuesday at the Portland International Airport on an accusation of interfering with a flight crew. He was jailed until Thursday afternoon, when a judge agreed to his pre-trial release. His court-appointed attorney, Lisa Hay, declined to comment.

FBI special agent Jake Green said in court papers that Rogers argued with passengers and the flight crew.

According to Green, Rogers told authorities he didn't believe he was threatening anyone, and any gang signs he displayed "were for Jesus." He told investigators he smoked "purple hash" before the flight but didn't feel high.

## State House votes on campus gun bill

**ID BOISE** — The House voted Thursday to back a bill that would allow students, faculty and visitors to carry guns

## THE CENSUS

# \$25

The fine for possession of less than an ounce of pot under a plan that won easy approval from the District of Columbia City Council. Backers of the measure, which makes the offense a civil infraction, said the next step would be to make pot fully legal in the nation's capital. Smoking marijuana in public would still be a criminal offense. Seventeen states have some form of marijuana decriminalization.



SARAH A. MILLER, TYLER (TEXAS) MORNING TELEGRAPH/AP

## Horsing around

From left, Brenda Jones, Justin Reeves and Kathy Hawkins play in a male-vs.-female game of cowboy mounted soccer Wednesday at the 1836 Chuckwagon Race Festival at Diamond B Ranch in Neches, Texas.

on Idaho's college campuses.

The 50-19 decision came after proponents argued the bill would uphold Second Amendment rights and give people on campuses to a way to protect themselves.

The legislation aims to let retired law enforcement officers and people with Idaho's enhanced concealed-carry permit to bring guns anywhere except dormitories, stadiums and concert halls.

Lawmakers who voted against it skewered the measure, saying it's being pushed through despite opposition from the heads of all eight public colleges and universities in the state.

Several university and college presidents testified at a public hearing that such a law would disrupt the learning environment they strive for and could put people at risk.

## Boy with cancer is made honorary police chief

**RI BURRILLVILLE** — A Rhode Island boy with cancer has received the surprise birthday party of a lifetime.

Tyler Seddon turned 7 on Thursday and has been named honorary police chief of his hometown of Burrillville. He was given a citation by the governor to recognize his service as "chief" and driven around in a police cruiser. Hundreds of firefighters,

police officers and first responders from several states threw him a birthday party.

Tyler's mother, Rachel Seddon-Dunn, put out an appeal on social media asking first responders to send birthday messages to her son. He's battling leukemia for the second time, and his family is looking for matching bone marrow donors.

Tyler received messages from all over the country, including from the Los Angeles Police Department, which sent a video featuring his chief.

## School bus driver rescues kids in bus fire

**MN BROOKLYN PARK** — Police are commending a school bus driver who evacuated four students — two of them in wheelchairs — after an electrical fire broke out on the bus in a northwestern Minneapolis suburb.

Officials said the driver also tried to douse the flames with a fire extinguisher while firefighters were on their way Thursday morning.

The driver, a nurse and all of the students aboard escaped safely.

The bus was operated by Cincinnati-based First Student and was transporting special-needs students.

An Osseo School District spokeswoman said a new bus arrived to take the children to school.

## Telescope captures shattering asteroid

**FL CAPE CANAVERAL** — The Hubble Space Telescope has captured the first pictures of a disintegrating asteroid.

Asteroid P/2013 R3 was detected in September in the asteroid belt between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter. It appeared as a fuzzy object. Further observations by ground telescopes revealed three bodies. Hubble uncovered 10 objects, each with dusty tails. The four largest fragments are up to 656 feet across.

Scientists said the asteroid began coming apart early last year. They theorize sunlight is slowly pulling the asteroid apart by increasing its rotation.

## Wake up and smell the bacon with a bacon app

**WI MADISON** — Want to wake up to the sound of bacon sizzling on the stove with its aroma drawing you out of bed?

There's an app for that.

Oscar Mayer said it has created a bacon-scented app for the iPhone, developed by the Madison,

Wis.-based company's Institute for the Advancement of Bacon.

The company said that to emit a small puff reminiscent of bacon, the user needs an external device that plugs into the headphone jack. The app itself produces the sound of bacon sizzling in a pan.

Oscar Mayer said the aroma-producing device won't be sold in stores and that quantities are limited. The company is holding a promotion to give away 4,700 devices.

## Disabled Canadian ship arrives at Pearl Harbor

**HI PEARL HARBOR** — A Canadian refueling ship disabled by an engine fire pulled into Pearl Harbor under tow Thursday morning with nearly 300 sailors aboard.

U.S. Navy tug boats guided the HMCS Protecteur to a pier after making a slow journey from Pacific Ocean waters north of Hawaii.

The ship got help from the U.S. Navy after the fire broke out last week, leaving 20 sailors with minor injuries, the Royal Canadian Navy said.

The Canadian navy said a doctor treated sailors for dehydration, exhaustion and smoke inhalation.

From wire reports

## WORLD

**'Japan's Beethoven' sorry for fake work**

**TOKYO** — The man once lauded as "Japan's Beethoven" apologized repeatedly and apologized Friday at his first media appearance since it was revealed last month that his famed musical compositions were ghostwritten and he wasn't completely deaf.

Mamoru Samuragochi, 50, appeared clean-shaven and with his trademark sunglasses and long hair, in what could be seen as a sign of remorse. He apologized for the troubles he had caused his fans, producers behind his works and others.

"I will speak the truth," he told reporters, looking contrite in a dark jacket. "I will make this my last appearance on TV."

**Malaysia bans Ultraman book over use of Allah**

**KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia** — Malaysia has banned an Ultraman comic book because it uses the word "Allah" to describe the Japanese action hero.

The Home Ministry said in a statement Friday that the Malay-edition of "Ultraman, The Ultra Power" contained elements that can undermine public security and societal morals.

It said "Ultraman is idolized by many children" and equating the lead character, Ultraman King, with Allah would especially "confuse Muslim children and damage their faith."

**Girl bitten 100 times in New Zealand dog attack**

**AUCKLAND, New Zealand** — New Zealand doctors said Friday that a 7-year-old Japanese girl was bitten about 100 times during a dog mauling that has horrified many in the South Pacific nation.

Zac Moaveni, a plastic and reconstructive surgeon at Auckland's Middlemore Hospital, told reporters that the girl, Sakurako Uehara, likely would need repeated surgeries until she was a grown woman.

Hospital officials said Friday the girl remained in a critical but stable condition.

According to police, the girl was attacked Monday by four Staffordshire bull terrier-cross dogs in the North Island town of Murupara while her family was visiting friends who owned the animals.

**International court convicts Congo rebel**

**THE HAGUE, Netherlands** — The International Criminal Court on Friday convicted a rebel leader of charges including murder and pillage over a deadly attack on a village in eastern Congo, but acquitted him of rape, sexual slavery and using child soldiers.

Germain Katanga showed no emotion as judges convicted him as an accessory in the attack on the strategic village of Bogoro on Feb. 24, 2003, in which some 200 civilians were hacked or shot to death and many women were raped and turned into sex slaves.

Katanga, nicknamed Simba, is only the second person convicted since the court was established in 2002.

From The Associated Press

# Colombia set to free paramilitaries

By **LIBRADO CARDONA**  
The Associated Press

**BOGOTA, Colombia** — One veteran of Colombia's disbanded far-right militia admitted to ordering or taking part in at least 3,000 killings, mostly targeting leftists, and incinerating many of the corpses to destroy evidence.

Another ordered a hit on a prominent intellectual who had been unjustly accused of backing insurgents and whose laptop held evidence that helped convict Colombia's then-national spy chief in the killing.

Those two men and about 400 other right-wing paramilitaries are due to walk free this year after serving eight-year sentences for crimes that normally carry more than triple the prison terms. The first is expected to be released within days.

Their lenient sentences were enshrined in a 2005 "Justice and Peace" law that provided a legal framework for the militias' supposed dismantling under a peace deal with the government of then-President Alvaro Uribe.

Human rights activists say the releases, expected to begin this month, are both premature and perilous for a country that many believe is on the cusp of making peace with leftist rebels. Activists also say prosecutors failed the nation by neglecting to completely investigate the paramilitaries' crimes and to ensure that they paid just restitution to their victims, as the law stipulates.

Victims of the paramilitaries fear they won't just go back to committing nonpolitical crimes such as drug trafficking and extortion, but also will resume killing displaced peasants who are trying to reclaim land that was stolen, most often, by far-right militias.

"They've told us they are afraid of the paramilitaries getting out," Ivan Cepeda, a leftist congressman and longtime victims' rights advocate said of the victims. "It's a feeling of great concern and anxiety."

There are also fears that, with 14-month-old peace talks with the FARC progressing, right-wing death squads could re-emerge as target guerrillas who put down their guns and take up electoral politics.

Prosecutors say the releases will be gradual and won't keep a close eye on the newly freed and to throw them back into jail if they break a single law.

Fueled by cash and drug traffickers to counter rebel kidnaping and extortion, far-right



LUIS BENAVIDES/AP

**Ramon Isaza, center, commander of the Magdalena Medio Bloc, speaks with his men before turning in their weapons during a disarmament ceremony in Puerto Triunfo, Colombia, in February 2006.**

paramilitaries killed at least 156,000 people between 1980 and 2004, prosecutors estimate. They also "violently stole land, which President Juan Manuel Santos' government is trying to restore. Many of those due to be released this year were second-tier militia commanders. Several were top honchos.

Ramon Isaza, who is due to be released in October, created the first of the right-wing militias at the end of the 1970s in the Magdalena Valley, where they received training from corrupt military officers and foreign mercenaries led by the retired Israeli military officer Yair Klein. Some of the students went on to bomb civilians on behalf of the late cocaine kingpin Pablo Escobar as he fought efforts to extradite him to the U.S.

It was from such beginnings that the United Defense Forces of Colombia, or AUC, gained purchase, committing a series of horrific massacres in the late 1990s — at the very time rebels of the leftist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, were gaining strength, consistently routing the country's regular armed forces on the battlefield.

With the close financial, logistical and intelligence support of the United States, Uribe reversed the litany of armed forces' defeats and, a provincial rancher himself, persuaded AUC leaders, many of

them major drug traffickers, to demobilize.

One second-tier leader, Edgar Ignacio Fierro, kept files in his computer detailing 550 murders and other crimes committed across Colombia's entire Caribbean coast by the AUC. The most prominent victim was Alfredo Correa de Andreis, a human rights defender shot dead by assassins in September 2004 in the coastal city of Barranquilla.

State agents months earlier had trumped up subversion charges against Correa, later discredited, claiming he was a key rebel ideologue.

Seven years after his murder, the documents from Fierro's laptop helped convict Jorge Noguera, then director of the DAS domestic intelligence agency, for the crime. Noguera was sentenced to 25 years in prison.

Fierro, by contrast, received only eight years and is slated to be freed this month.

"Those were the rules of the game," said his lawyer, Hernando Bocanegra.

Little restitution has been paid, however, and little land returned.

A leading human rights lawyer, Alirio Uribe, said only 140,000 hectares have been returned out of the more than 2.5 million hectares they stole.

The head of the unit in the chief prosecutor's office in charge of

Justice and Peace law cases, Carlos Villamil, did not provide a figure for the total amount of restitution paid despite repeated requests by The Associated Press.

His office did, however, note that Isaza handed over property worth a total of more than a half-million dollars.

In addition to 2,000 paramilitaries due eventually to be freed, another 2,000 surrendered but were never jailed. Others never put down their weapons.

Hundreds from among the estimated 31,500 paramilitaries who disbanded between 2003 and 2006 went on to join new criminal gangs.

The investigative director of the chief prosecutor's office, Luis Gonzalez, estimates that 14 percent of the 3,438 known gang members in Colombia are former paramilitaries, and police say some have been used as enforcers by regional power brokers, just as the paramilitaries were.

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## Activists: 17 rebels die in battle for Syrian town

The Associated Press

**BEIRUT** — Syrian activists say at least 17 rebels have been killed in a battle with government troops for an opposition stronghold near the border with Lebanon.

The Britain-based Syrian Ob-

servatory for Human Rights says the opposition fighters died in overnight clashes with troops loyal to President Bashar Assad near Yabroud.

The town is the last rebel stronghold in Syria's mountainous Qala-

mond region that stretches to the border with Lebanon.

The Observatory said government aircraft carried out six airstrikes on rebel positions on the outskirts of Yabroud on Friday. There were no immediate reports

of casualties in the attacks

Backed by Lebanon's Hezbollah fighters, Assad's troops have been on a punishing offensive there since November to cut off supply routes to rebels from Lebanon.

## WORLD

An Emirati couple look at designer dresses during the Fashion Forward show in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

PHOTOS BY KAMRAN JEBRELI/AP

## A NEW HOME FOR

## LUXURY

Having already cornered the market in opulence, Dubai vies to be the world's next fashion capital

By AYA BATRAWY  
The Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Dubai and luxury are nearly synonymous. The city is home to the world's tallest tower, massive man-made islands in the shape of palm trees and a fleet of police cars that includes a Ferrari, a Lamborghini and a \$2.5 million Bugatti Veyron.

Now, to boost its glamour factor and economy, the city has its eyes set on the multibillion-dollar-a-year global fashion industry, which is currently dominated by the U.S., Europe and Japan.

In the Middle East, Dubai is the powerhouse, raking in almost half of the region's market share of retail spending.

As people in other parts of the Arab world grapple with protests, violence and turmoil, Dubai's modern skyscrapers, over-the-top glitz and flair for opulence provide the well-heeled a seemingly endless supply of indulgence and distraction.

Real estate services firm CBRE ranks Dubai as the second-most important destination for international retailers, after London. A little more than half of all major international retailers have outlets in Dubai, and a third of all luxury spending in the Middle East happens here, according to consulting firm Bain and Co.

But the city's officials want more. They want Dubai to evolve into a hub of creativity that attracts the region's best designers.

Construction has already begun on a massive project called the Dubai Design District, or D3. The site is dedicated to the fashion industry and will house design studios, boutique hotels, high-end apartments and, of course, a promenade for shopping.

The first phase of construction on the 1.7 million-square-meter site will cost around \$1 billion and be ready by 2015, said Amina Al Rustamani, CEO of Tecom Investments, which is developing D3.

She said the idea is to bring creative minds together under one umbrella.

"So the idea was like, OK, why can't we create a SOHO destination for these designers to be in, one place where you have specific events and activities and promotion for tourists to come and see really what is special that Dubai could offer to them?" she said.

With foreigners making up roughly 90 percent of its population, Dubai's designers say the city is great for new brands and entrepreneurs who want the world to take notice.

"Dubai is a melting pot. There are over 200 na-

tionalities here, so there's always a different target audience to cater to without even leaving the country," said Shaimaa Gargash, one of three Emirati sisters behind the 3-year-old fashion label House of Fatam.

Local designers say there is a misconception that Arab women in the Gulf — who traditionally wear long black robes over their clothes and matching black scarves over their hair and even faces — are not daring when it comes to what they wear underneath and in front of other women.

"They are actually more adventurous than people think," said Lamia Gargash, one of the founders of House of Fatam.

Capitalizing on the growing interest in local brands, D3 will be built up over the next decade to act as a gateway for emerging designers from South Asia to North Africa.

"We believe Dubai Design District will be different than what you hear about in Milan or Paris. ... We want to create our own identity," Al Rustamani said.

'We believe Dubai Design District will be different than what you hear about in Milan or Paris. ... We want to create our own identity.'

— Amina Al Rustamani, Tecom Investments CEO



## BOOKS

# 'Delusional TV' writer thinks he's Mark Twain'

## B.J. Novak compiles tales with honesty, heart in 'One More Thing: Stories and Other Stories'

By **CONNIE OGLE**  
The Miami Herald

Writers learn their craft in any number of ways — from books they read, classes they take, the editors with whom they work. B.J. Novak says his best lesson came from comedian Steve Carell.

As a young actor and co-producer on the NBC series "The Office" — he played the self-involved Ryan Howard — Novak had done standup comedy and tended to think in terms of jokes. Carell, the former "Daily Show" correspondent who starred as exasperatingly clueless boss Michael Scott, had a different approach.

"The idea, which came from Steve Carell's background in improv and from show runner Greg Daniels, is that everything should proceed from honesty," says Novak, who worked on the mockumentary-style series for its eight-season run. "If you do that, comedy and drama can be indistinguishable. If you are true to all these characters, they will naturally reveal themselves to be funny. You didn't have to worry about chasing the joke."

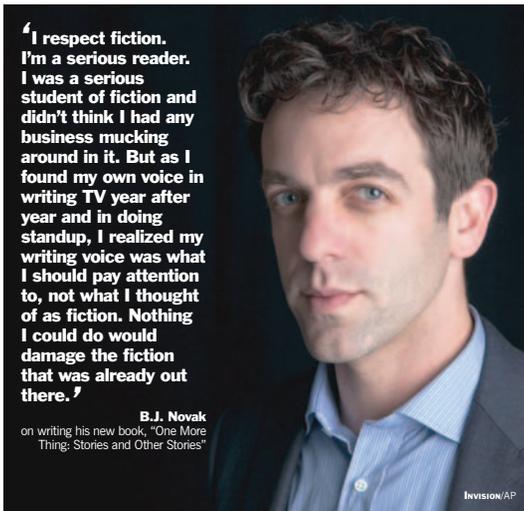
"That was very scary. ... I'd be like, 'Where are the jokes? We gotta kill!' This one time I brought jokes to Steve Carell, and he said, 'These feel like jokes to me.' I said, 'It's my job to bring you jokes for this sitcom you're the star of! Did you not get the memo?' But he was right. You have to find honesty first."

Novak, 34, puts this theory to good use in "One More Thing: Stories and Other Stories." Eschewing the usual humorous celebrity memoir or the wry tales penned by Tina Fey or Novak's BFF and "Office" cohort Mindy Kaling, Novak writes fiction — short, clever, funny fiction. He's not your usual short story writer — how many of them have actually co-starred in a Quentin Tarantino movie? — but the results display that honesty Carell was talking about, as well as quite a bit of heart.

Some of the stories are mere tidbits.

**"I respect fiction. I'm a serious reader. I was a serious student of fiction and didn't think I had any business mucking around in it. But as I found my own voice in writing TV year after year and in doing standup, I realized my writing voice was what I should pay attention to, not what I thought of as fiction. Nothing I could do would damage the fiction that was already out there."**

**B.J. Novak**  
on writing his new book, "One More Thing: Stories and Other Stories"



"The Walk to School on the Day After Labor Day" simply reads: "I was sad that summer was over. But I was happy that it was over for my enemies, too." "Kindness Among Cakes" consists of a short but pointed conversation: "CHILD: Why does carrot cake have the best icing? MOTHER: Because it needs the best icing."

Other stories run at a more traditional length, such as "Sophia," about a guy who buys a sex robot, then returns her when she confesses she's in love with him. The story, like all the others, grew from an idea Novak jotted down in a pocket notebook: "First artificial intelligence to fall in love falls for a guy who doesn't want commitment." He considered writing a short film about the

premise, but when the idea of a book arose, his "Office" training kicked in.

"These are bizarre characters, but I was really interested in this guy and this creation that could feel love," Novak says. "We've all been through heartbreak and emotional confusion about the issue of love. Before I knew it, I had put in so many of my most private fears and theories about love for both of these characters. I never would've had the courage to do that in a memoir."

Timothy O'Connell, Novak's editor at Knopf, calls him a natural storyteller.

"That shows both in his readings and on the page," O'Connell says. "He has so many ideas, and the way he spins these

ideas out — it was just a lot of fun to work with him. He's rare. The spectrum he can cover is something you just don't work with every day as an editor."

So, yes. Though he played one of Brad Pitt's Nazi killers in "Inglourious Basterds," and though his favorite "Office" character to write for was Michael Scott — "He had this huge heart and this brain that couldn't quite keep up," Novak comes by his love of literature honestly. After all, who but a lit lover writes a story, complete with footnotes, about a struggling poet who chases glory translating the classics? He graduated from Harvard University with a degree in English and Spanish literature. His father, William Novak, co-edited "The Big Book of Jewish Humor" and ghostwrote autobiographies of Magic Johnson, Oliver North, Nancy Reagan and Lee Iacocca.

Yet Novak was still nervous about venturing into literary waters.

"I was intimidated," admits Novak. "I respect fiction. I'm a serious reader. I was a serious student of fiction, and didn't think I had any business mucking around in it. But as I found my own voice in writing TV year after year and in doing standup, I realized my writing voice was what I should pay attention to, not what I thought of as fiction. Nothing I could do would damage the fiction that was already out there."

Standup comedy is not the usual path to publishing short stories, but it turns out to have been solid training for Novak, who says he has read most of his stories at least 20 times on stage over the course of the editorial process. He likens his method to Charles Dickens, too, who hones and edits his stories by performing them in front of an audience.

"There used to be much more of a tradition of this," he says. "Mark Twain was really a standup comic. He was a persona. He would go from city to city telling stories. Charles Dickens, too, performed stories on stage. Both of them have writing that reads as popular entertainment, and he had this tradition of performing live. I'm sure it did shape them. They had a real consciousness of how it sounded."

"My main point here is I am just like Mark Twain and Charles Dickens. There's your headline: 'Delusional TV' writer thinks he's Mark Twain."

# 'The Snowden Files' tells of 'biggest intelligence leak in history'

By **JEFFREY BURKE**  
Newsday

Nine months ago, Edward Snowden rocked the U.S. government and many of its allies and antagonists by leaking top-secret documents that exposed massive surveillance programs by Washington's National Security Agency. Along with his brief to spy on bad guys, it was bugging world leaders and monitoring the e-mails and internet traffic of millions of ordinary people at home and abroad.

Snowden, now 30, dropped his bombshell in early June, while in Hong Kong, and was indicted by the U.S. government for espionage on June 21. The unquiet American flew to Moscow two days later, seeking asylum with another superpower not known for respecting privacy — or extradition efforts.

"The Snowden Files," the first book on what British journalist Luke Harding calls "the biggest intelligence leak in history," is a readable and thorough account.

The narrative is rich in newsroom details, reflecting Harding's inside access as a correspondent for the London-based Guardian newspaper, which broke the story.

When Snowden first meets his two hand-picked contacts in Hong Kong, he is carrying a Rubik's cube to identify himself. They are waiting, as ordered, by a big plastic alligator in a hotel lobby. The spycraft is amusing but not overblown for someone about to

become "the world's most-wanted man." References to spies and James Bond abound, along with repeated superlatives that suggest a compulsion to oversell a story that hardly needs it.

The pair by the gator are Guardian columnist Glenn Greenwald, who will lead the paper's coverage of the leaks, and documentary filmmaker Laura Poitras, whose video will give the world its first view of this renegade.

Harding traces Snowden's rapid evolution from clever teenage geek in Maryland — who didn't finish high school but earned a diploma equivalent — to a young adult with exceptional computer skills and top-secret clearance. His résumé includes the Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency and the NSA.

During a stint with the CIA in Switzerland, the agency's dirty tricks began to sour him on spy-

ing. "I realized I was part of something that was doing far more harm than good," Snowden later said to Greenwald. (It doesn't appear that Harding himself ever interviewed Snowden.)

The disillusionment deepened between 2009 and 2012 while working in Japan, as "he found out just how all-consuming the NSA's surveillance activities are." What "pushed Snowden over the edge" was an NSA report that "involved the collection of content and metadata from millions of Americans without a warrant."

Snowden began his own collection, especially during his last NSA job, in Hawaii.

He also approached Poitras and Greenwald about working with him. In May 2013, he flew to Hong Kong to begin life as a fugitive. Two days after the alligator assassination, the Guardian's operation

in the United States — where the risk of official gagging or arrest was lower than in Britain — published the first story.

Harding explores at great length the NSA's alliance with and hefty financial support of Britain's Government Communications Headquarters. It's part of the book's heavily British flavor, along with the busy Guardian, the fencing with London officials, some grammatical ticks and the ubiquitous 007.

Harding's book offers a refresher for those who have followed the tale closely and a useful compendium for those catching up.

Its occasional rough spots and repetitions can be forgiven in light of what he has put together in a short time on a story that develops almost daily. The writer deserves unqualified praise for fueling the debate on privacy that Snowden so hoped to ignite.



## HEALTH &amp; FITNESS

For those with orthorexia, diet can never be

## PURE ENOUGH

By MARY MACVEAN  
Los Angeles Times

One awful day, D.C. Copeland recalls, her perspective on her "pure" diet had become so distorted that she found herself crying in a grocery store because she could not decide whether the kale or the chard was "better."

Jennifer Lombardi had so limited what she considered healthy that she found herself fending off others' questions about her diet. So she fabricated all sorts of food allergies — so no one would challenge her.

Both women say they were struggling with orthorexia, a condition that had them so consumed with a health food diet — or, as many people now term it, a clean diet — that the list of foods they'd eat shrank and shrank.

Their initial impulses might have been fine: perhaps cutting out processed foods or eating only organic food. But what if someone believes she absolutely cannot touch carrot juice if it's not organic? Or that she can eat only vegan raw food or not a single carb? The result, says Sandra Kronberg, a registered dietitian and nutrition therapist based on Long Island, can be malnutrition, brittle bones and other problems.

Our culture is immersed in advice and admonitions about the "right" way to eat: Juice, Paleo, low-carb, no-fat, GMO-free diets abound. So perhaps it's no wonder that the terrain gets dicey for some people.

Orthorexia "absolutely" is growing, says Kimberley Quinlan, a psychotherapist at the OCD Center of Los Angeles, an outpatient clinic that specializes in obsessive

compulsive disorder.

People who struggle with anorexia or bulimia generally have a preoccupation with their appearance and sometimes cannot rightly judge if their weight is appropriate. Those with orthorexia "are not looking to lose weight or are not fixated on a number on a scale," Lombardi says. "They say, 'I want to look at the value of food, and I want to look at an altruistic approach.'"

For Copeland, who had obsessive compulsive disorder as a child and later had problems with alcohol and drugs, getting sober in her 20s also meant that it was important to eat healthfully.

"I got into raw veganism, colonic, enemas and a whole way of life. It was so insanely pure. There was no room for error. I couldn't even work. All the energy went into making my green smoothies and doing a yoga class," she says. "I was addicted to this feeling; I had to be pure."

A hallmark of orthorexia is perfectionism, finding the "perfect" foods. "Theoretically, if we do things right or perfectly, people will be less upset with us, we will experience less adversity," Lombardi says. "There's no room for imperfection, and there's no room for enjoyment."

Orthorexia was named in 1996 but has yet to be accepted as a formal diagnosis in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, the bible of psychiatric illnesses. Some therapists see it as an eating disorder, others as a manifestation of OCD. Some doctors think a separate diagnosis is unnecessary.

Whatever it's called, therapists say, there are people whose rigid attention to what to eat, its nutritional content and how the food is grown and processed can put themselves in danger. A person might start "by getting rid of processed foods, then sugars and gluten, and little by little most things get taken out. They'll take out meat. Only raw foods, only fruit. There are no real rules, but it usually gets down to a very small number of foods," Quinlan said.

In addition, sufferers generally think there's nothing wrong with their behavior.

Copeland, a Yale graduate, says she was sure that her "pure" diet would help her reach her potential, but she now sees that it left her enervated, isolated and unwilling to leave her house without bringing her own food.

"If I can fill my whole mind with food and the purity of the food and the green smoothies, then I can stay sober," Copeland says in describing her thought process.

The day she couldn't choose which greens to buy, she called her Alcoholics Anonymous sponsor and began to get the help she needed, eventually seeing Quinlan and undergoing therapy that included learning to eat foods she had rejected.

## More kids, youths get caffeine from coffee

By DEBORAH NETBURN  
Los Angeles Times

Children might be consuming more caffeine than we realize. A new study finds that 73 percent of children and young adults in the United States have caffeine in their systems on any given day.

Over the past 10 years, the overall percentage of children and young adults ages 2 to 22 who ingest caffeine has stayed the same, but the way they get caffeine has changed, according to a study published last month in the journal *Pediatrics*.

Among kids, soda consumption is down, and coffee consumption is up. In 2000, 62 percent of young caffeine consumers got their caffeine in soda. By 2010, however, just 38 percent of the caffeine ingested by kids came from soda.

And while coffee accounted for 10 percent of caffeine intake among youngsters in 2000, by 2010, it was responsible for nearly a quarter of their caffeine intake.

Tea held steady as the No. 2 way that kids get caffeine throughout the duration of the study.

Amy Branum, a health statistician with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said she was surprised that caffeine consumption among kids had not grown more.

"You hear a lot about energy drinks in particular so we expected to see an increase," she said. "That was our original hypothesis."

The percentage of kids who got caffeine from energy drinks did grow from 0 percent to 6 percent over the course of the study, but that is mostly because energy drinks were not available when the study started.

"In 2005 we saw a very small percentage, less than 5 percent of kids, who got caffeine from energy drinks, and then it was 5 percent and then it was 6 percent, so it was not exponential increases," she said.

It is still unclear how harmful caffeine is to kids, but the American Academy of Pediatrics says caffeine-containing beverages should generally be avoided by children.

The study also looked at the demographics of caffeine-drinking kids. It found that non-Hispanic white children were more likely to consume caffeine than non-Hispanic black or Mexican-American kids, and that higher-income kids were more likely to consume caffeine than those who fell below the poverty threshold.



## VIDEO GAMES

## Eric Cartman in all his uncensored glory

Humor, offense of 'Stick of Truth' will delight any 'South Park' fan

BY MICHAEL S. DARNELL  
Stars and Stripes

As the saying goes, if you want to do something right, you're going to have to do it yourself.

After a string of failed games by now-defunct Acclaim Entertainment, "South Park" creators Matt Stone and Trey Parker retook control over future game development with the creation of their in-house entertainment label, South Park Digital Studios.

Their increased involvement with games bearing the name "South Park" has resulted in a couple of true-to-source Xbox Live Arcade titles, but even those weren't what fans wanted. Fans have been clamoring for a game that looks, feels and sounds like the animated show.

To that end, South Park Digital Studios entered a partnership with Obsidian Entertainment, the studio responsible for some of the best — albeit biggest — role-playing games ever made, including the massive "Fallout: New Vegas" and cult favorite "Alpha Protocol."

The result of that partnership is "South Park: The Stick of Truth," a role-playing game written by the very people responsible for 17 seasons worth of TV episodes, a feature-length movie and equal parts hilarity and controversy.

"South Park" fans can rest easy, knowing that there were no punches pulled on the PC version I played and that the game is just as offensively hilarious as the show. It's important to note that there are five versions of the game, with only the North and South American versions being completely uncensored on all platforms. Germany and Austria's version has removed some of the humor in the console version and Nazi symbolism from all versions. The rest of Europe and Russia will have censored console versions and the Australian version is censored across every platform.

The game's humor matches and exceeds the level of offense the show generates. It even shocked me, a lifelong fan who has seen every episode multiple times. It should go without saying, but if you're easily offended, this is most definitely not the game for you.

You have been warned.

On the other hand, if you're familiar with the adventures of Stan, Kyle, Cartman, Kenny and Butters, you'll feel right at home with the setting of "The Stick of Truth." The game is visually indistinguishable from the show,

and each character is voiced by the voice actor who brings them to life on the TV screen.

The amount of fan service packed into every aspect of the game is impressive — you'll meet up with the Underpants Gnomes, visit Tweeek's family coffee shop and hang out at Cartman's house. Every piece of loot you gather is a callback to the show. Even the familiar banjo twang that opens each episode greets players when they boot up the game. From start to finish, this is a true "South Park" experience.

The game itself revolves around the conceit that the boys are playing swords and sorcery, so the game is filtered through their eyes. Cartman is a wizard king, Butters is a noble paladin, Kenny is a beautiful princess, and they're all at war with the dastardly elves (Stan and Kyle's faction).

You play as the new kid in town who helps to turn the tide of the make-believe war, thanks to the power of your magical flatulence. Of course, in true "South Park" style, everything goes off the rails very quickly and you must eventually help save the town from a great evil that I won't spoil here.

You'll create your own version of who the new kid looks like, choosing one of the four classes (fighter, wizard, thief or Jew), then from a decent array of customization options. You're then dropped into the town of South Park. You can explore most of the town from the start, though you'll open up new areas (including the exotic, faraway land of Canada) as you gain new abilities. Like most role-playing games, you'll gain side quests, experience points and loot as you traipse about talking to folks.

Along the way, you will amass a crew of companions, though only one of them at a time can accompany you. Most of them have a special ability that will help you get past certain obstacles and each have their own abilities in combat. For instance, Butters has the ability to heal people in and out of combat, while Stan harnesses the power of his dog to ... well, shoot out certain electrical sources on the map.

You can easily swap between buddies from the menu, which is set up to resemble a social media site. Non-playable characters are added to your roster of friends, which will increase the amount of perks you unlock, giving you more reason to explore the town and complete quests. The game is largely driven by the narrative, though, so while there are side quests, these are relatively



Photos courtesy of Ubisoft

**Kyle, Cartman, Stan, Kenny, Butters. Every major "South Park" character makes an appearance in the new game, "Stick of Truth," with each being voiced by the TV show's voice actors.**

sparse.

A fair amount of time is spent in combat, which is handled with a turn-based timing system. You have regular, heavy, ranged and special attacks, each of which are tied to the timing of your button presses. A prompt will be shown in the attack animation and if you time your button press correctly, your attack will do more damage. The same mechanic applies to defense. Enemies will adjust to your tactics, forcing you to switch between melee and ranged attacks. Fans of games like "Paper Mario" will feel right at home with this system. Personally, I've always found this type of system engaging, because you're doing something in every encounter.

The loot you gather along the way is broken up into different categories and is handled surprisingly well. Weapons, armor, status-affecting patches and add-ons can be swapped out to give players a great amount of control over the look and feel of their character. A worn gas mask, for example, shows up on your character model and protects from gross-out attacks — the game's take on poison status. A num-

ber of purely cosmetic items are found along the way, and clothing and armor can be colored however you'd like. Sadly, these changes can only be applied to the new kid. Your companions will gain some special abilities as the game progresses, but you can't change their weapons or appearance.

The mix-and-match patch and add-on system can make even the tougher battles manageable (looking at you, Mr. Gore), but it can create some wild unbalances in the difficulty level. Toward the middle of the game, you'll get a combination of patches and armor that will allow you to attack again after you kill an enemy. Since each attack will generally kill an enemy, you'll just breeze through a large chunk of the combat without taking a scratch. I eventually forced myself to use a different setup, just to bring back some challenge to the battles.

It's worth noting that Obsidian is going to do wonders for their reputation with the technical execution of the game. Generally, you take the good with the bad when playing an Obsidian title, and they've gotten somewhat of a rep for putting out buggy games.

Overall grade: **A**

"The Stick of Truth" shows what they're capable of accomplishing without tight time constraints. I had zero bugs in the 13 hours of play time on my gaming rig. I can't speak to how stable it is on consoles, but there have been some streams going online showing some small amounts of slowdown in some areas, but nothing else.

The length is definitely on the shorter side for the genre, but the game is largely without filler. I'm a huge fan of lengthy games like "Skyrim," but some of the greatest entries in the genre have been short, sweet and to the point. "Stick of Truth" left me wanting more exploration possibilities, but I felt that 13 to 15 hours was plenty of time spent in a game revolving around fun jokes.

When the end-game credits rolled, I was a little sad to see it go, but even happier I never felt I had to slog through poorly-paced filler. There is some room for improvement, mostly in the difficulty balance and restriction on only one companion at a time.

If you're not a fan of "South Park," most of the game's humor will go over your head. But for long-suffering fans, who at one point had to put up with "Chef's Luv Shack," having a fantastic "South Park" game that looks, feels and plays like a season of the show is a dream come true. And even though it's easily the best game to use the South Park license, it's also a solid role-playing experience.

**Bottom line:** A If you've ever been a fan of South Park, you owe it to yourself to buy this now.

**Platforms:** Xbox 360, PlayStation 3, PC

**Online:** southpark.ubi.com/stickoftruth



Many more staff-written game reviews at [stripes.com/military-life](http://stripes.com/military-life)

## MUSIC

# THE DUALITY OF DIERKS

## New album shows Bentley's split personality

By CHRIS TALBOTT  
The Associated Press

**D**ierks Bentley bought a plane, but it was no country star vanity purchase.

The singer long ago earned his pilot's license but thought he had no use for it as he chased his music dreams. One day, though, he realized that if he could fly to some of his gigs instead of stepping on a bus, he'd get an extra day at home.

"Since the kids came around, it's just this push and pull to cut corners, being on the road, being home, trying to get home faster," Bentley said. "I can't afford to sit in the back right seat of a jet, but I realized I could afford to sit in the front left seat of a prop plane. ... I get that one extra night with my kids. That may not seem like much, but it is."

That push and pull is at the heart of Bentley's new album, "Riser," released on Feb. 25. His seventh studio LP bobs back and forth between contemplative songs examining themes of family and loss and party rockers that play best in the 38-year-old's boisterous live show.

### Dierks Bentley

Riser (Capitol Nashville)

Contemporary country singer Dierks Bentley changed producers for "Riser," his seventh album, and the results play up a long-held U2 influence. The chiming guitars and slow-boiling melodies add a simmering passion to Bentley's distinctive vocal and writing style, while the lyrics and subtle instrumental touches tie it to country music.

Working with producer Ross Copperman, Bentley's ambitious reach comes charging back in such new gems as the spiritual "Here On Earth" and the personal statements of "I Hold On" and "Damn These Dreams."

The album's arrangements — a refinement of a sound Bentley has drawn on since his 2003 debut — mix atmospheric touches with steady rhythms that percolate and at times explode into fist-pumping anthems. The sound accentuates the strengths of Bentley's voice, which nicely articulates narrative story songs like "Bourbon In Kentucky" (with harmony vocals by Kacey

It's among his most personal work. His father died near the beginning of the writing and recording process. And his first son and third child, Knox, was born toward the end, offering Bentley a wealth of reflections and emotions to sift.

"There were times in the months after he passed that I'd pick up the phone to call him about something funny or whatever," Bentley said of his father. "I still have his number in my phone. And when the kids are a little older, now is when I really need to talk to him, not when they're born. My daughter's losing her tooth, and I want to ask him, 'Did you really do the string thing where you tied it around my tooth and slammed the door?' I'm pretty sure you did."

Bentley looks at family life and grown-up themes on songs like the title track, "Damn These Dreams," "I Hold On" and "Here on Earth," which looks at the grief of losing a child and was inspired by the shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut.

At the same time, Bentley spends at least three nights a week on

the road a majority of weeks, and the album has plenty of cuts with titles like "Drunk on a Plane" and "Pretty Girls."

"I can still relate to the 17-year-old kid who jacks his truck up because my truck's out there and it's still jacked up," he said. "But I also get to be this guy who has this really full life."



Musgraves) and the tangled emotions of "Say You Do."

Bentley has often shown a sly sense of humor, and it surfaces on the entertaining "Drunk on a Plane," which manages to turn a poignant portrait of heartbreak into a party song.

"Riser" might not hit Bentley to the top-tier rank of label mates Luke Bryan and Eric Church, but the singer-songwriter continues to bring a much-needed creative heft to country music.

—Michael McCall  
The Associated Press

Courtesy of  
Universal Music Group



# GADGETS & CHARTS

## GADGET WATCH

# Motrr Galileo captures the perfect panoramic

By GREGG ELLMAN

The McClatchy-Tribune News Service

**T**he Motrr Galileo is an iPhone dock designed for taking perfect 360-degree panoramic images.

It's available for Apple iOS devices via a Bluetooth (\$149.95) model and 30-pin dock connection (\$99.95).

The Bluetooth is listed to work with the iPhone 5/5S/5C, iPhone 4/4S and iPod Touch (5th generation). The 30-pin Galileo is for the iPhone 4/4S, iPhone 3GS and iPod Touch (4th generation).

Both work with many photography apps, all listed on the Motrr site ([motrr.com/apps.html](http://motrr.com/apps.html)). It's updated as new apps become available, but there are already many to choose from including Sphere, TimeLapse, DMD Panorama and many more.

The Motrr app is free, but there is a charge for some of the others; for example, the Panorama app is \$1.99 in the Apple App Store.

The 30-pin dock doubles as a charging station since it has a built-in rechargeable lithium polymer battery. A standard tripod mount is on the bottom of both versions.

Right out of the box you would think the Galileo is an Apple product with its solid construction and white finish (also available in black).

It takes a little getting used to, but after some experiments it worked really well. You'll probably have to take your case off, as I did, for it to fit in the dock. It works in both landscape and portrait positions.

If it were late December instead of early March, the Galileo would be my gadget of the year. For now, I'll just say it has an early lead.

Online: [motrr.com](http://motrr.com)

**Jongo from Pure** (pictured below) is one of the best complete portable speaker systems yet. There are many options for the system's speakers; paired as a stereo system, a single speaker in different rooms; inside or outside use; multiple users; multiple colors; and in multiple streaming choices.

If you stream by connecting to your personal Wi-Fi network, as I did, you'll probably have to read the directions for the setup. But connecting into Wi-Fi to stream audio gives you greater range compared to Bluetooth, which gives you only about 30 feet.

The specific pieces I sampled were the Jongo T2 and the Jongo S3.

The Jongo S3 (\$229) is a desk-top/bookshelf-sized portable, rechargeable wireless speaker (5.16 by 5.47 by 5.31 inches) and comes in black, white or a mixture called Piano (white body with a black grill) but can be accessorized to coordinate with your room's color scheme.

A grille pack (\$29.99) of easy-to-fit replacements is available in white, lime green, burnt orange or mango.

The speaker produces 360-degree sound from five internal speakers (four tweeters for 360-degree sound and an upward-firing subwoofer for powerful bass) and can be paired with additional S3's to form stereo sound. More is better but even just a single S3 fills the room with sound.

As for the Jongo T2 (\$179), it won't fill the room like the S3 but it makes a great choice for background sound where you don't want the volume cranked up.

A pair of 10W 3-inch, mid-range drivers are inside and optional grill covers are available in mango, burnt orange and lime green.

Both speakers can be used with Apple or Android devices using Wi-Fi or Bluetooth,



MOTRR/MCT

**The Motrr Galileo is an iPhone dock designed for taking perfect 360-degree panoramic images.**

along with the Free Pure Connect app. The company's Pure Connect app lets users turn their smartphone into a remote control for your music and your choice of Jongo speaker output. This includes your personal playlists or access to a never-ending list of radio stations and music.

The app is free, but there are different levels of service within the app that may incur monthly fees. For example the Green level is free, up to the Violet level for \$9.99 per month.

Earlier this year, Pure announced third-party app support via Bluetooth, allowing the Jongo system to support all music apps including Pandora, Spotify and many more. This service is expected out in the spring.

Online: [pure.com](http://pure.com)

**The Soldier portable battery** is a best friend for the adventurous traveler. This handy 7800mAh battery backup is built for the roughest environments with a waterproof, rugged shock-proof body.



DIGITAL TREASURES/MCT

It's built with a standard USB and a microUSB port for charging portable electronics on the go and a flashlight with SOS functionality. LED indicators display the remaining battery life.

A friend recently spent two weeks hiking in Central America, and agree to take the backpack-friendly battery (4.52 by 3.46 by 1.14 inches) along with him.

The Soldier lived up to its name, handling all the rough and tumble of two weeks on and off the trail. An accidental dip in a stream verified the company's statement that it's waterproof up to 3 feet deep for up to 30 minutes.

No electronic device can be a perfect solution for all situations, and this had its own limitations. At one pound, it might be a little more weight than some adventurers want to carry. And to recharge the three internal Li-Ion 3.7V 2500 mAh batteries, you'll need to include your own USB-to-outlet plug to connect with the supplied cord for an 8-hour charge.

Online: [digitaltreasures.com](http://digitaltreasures.com); \$59.99 at Amazon.com



PURE/MCT

## ITUNES MUSIC

Top 10 songs on the iTunes Store for March 5:

1. "Happy" (from "Despicable Me 2"), Pharrell Williams
2. "Let It Go," Idina Menzel
3. "All of Me," John Legend
4. "Magic," Coldplay
5. "Dark Horse," Katy Perry (feat. Juicy J)
6. "Pompeii," Bastille
7. "The Man," Aloe Blacc
8. "Team," Lorde
9. "Ordinary Love," U2
10. "Best Day of My Life," American Authors

— Compiled by MCT

## SPOTIFY MUSIC

The top streamed tracks on Spotify from Feb. 24-March 2:

1. Katy Perry, "Dark Horse"
2. Jason Derulo, "Talk Dirty" — feat. 2 Chainz
3. Bastille, "Pompeii"
4. Beyonce, "Drunk in Love"
5. Lorde, "Team"
6. John Legend, "All of Me"
7. Pitbull, "Timber"
8. Pharrell Williams, "Happy (from Despicable Me 2)"
9. OneRepublic, "Counting Stars"
10. A Great Big World, "Soy Something"

— Compiled by The Associated Press

## ITUNES MOVIES

Top 10 movies downloaded from the iTunes Store for March 5:

1. "12 Years a Slave"
2. "Dallas Buyers Club"
3. "Gravity"
4. "Thor: The Dark World"
5. "Blue Jasmine"
6. "Nebraska"
7. "Captain Phillips"
8. "Short Term 12"
9. "Jackass Presents: Bad Grandpa" (Unrated)
10. "The Great Beauty"



— Compiled by MCT

## VIDEO GAMES

The editors of Game Informer Magazine rank the top 10 games for March:

1. "Dark Souls II," PS3, 360, PC
2. "Titanfall," Xbox One, PC
3. "Strider," Xbox One, PS3, 360, PC
4. "Shadowrun Returns: Dragonfall," PC
5. "The Last of Us: Left Behind," PS3
6. "Our Dark Purpose," PC
7. "South Park: The Stick of Truth," PS3, 360
8. "Thief," PS4, Xbox One, PS3, 360, PC
9. "Banished," PC
10. "Earth Defense Force 2025," PS3, 360

— Compiled by MCT

## APPS

Top 5 new free apps for March 5:

### ANDROID

1. Splashy Fish
2. LEGO City My City
3. Crazy Doctor
4. Deedman's Cross
5. Mad Skills Motorcross 2

Top 5 free apps for March 5:

### APPLE

1. Disney Movies Anywhere
2. Flappy Wings — FREE
3. Farm Heroes Saga
4. Jump Jack
5. Calculator for iPad Free

— Compiled by MCT



Frazz



Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



Candorville



Get Fuzzy



Doonesbury



Fort Knox



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
12				13				14				
15				16				17				
18				19				20				
			21	22		23	24					
25	26	27				28		29	30	31		
32								33				
34						35		36				
			37					38				
39	40	41				42	43		44	45	46	47
48						49			50			
51						52			53			
54						55			56			

ACROSS

- 1 Glazier's sheet
- 5 Appellation
- 9 Literary collection
- 12 Teeny bit
- 13 Periods of history
- 14 Once around the track
- 15 Thing
- 16 "— She Sweet?"
- 17 Rd.
- 18 As deemed fit
- 19 Snitch
- 20 Cameo gem
- 21 Plagiarize
- 23 Hosp. hookups
- 25 Settlement
- 28 Arcane
- 32 Mistreat
- 33 Chortle
- 34 California river
- 36 Chemist's bottle
- 37 Reuters rival
- 38 Sphere
- 39 Went through channels?
- 42 Beavers' creation
- 44 St. Louis squad
- 48 Playground game
- 49 Advantage
- 50 Greatly
- 51 "— had it!"
- 52 Narrow opening
- 53 PBS science show
- 54 Catcher's place?

DOWN

- 1 Settled up
- 2 Aleutian island
- 3 Yuletide refrain
- 4 "The Phantom of the Opera" actress
- 5 At hand
- 6 Operatic showstopper
- 7 Praying figure?
- 8 "Guinness Book" suffix
- 9 "Two and a Half Men" role
- 10 Almost black
- 11 Top
- 20 Pete Seeger contemporary
- 22 Barely ahead
- 24 Re the soft palate
- 25 Taxi
- 26 Japanese sash
- 27 Drag along
- 29 Massage
- 30 Freudian concept
- 31 Your
- 35 Enigma
- 36 Halley's and Hale-Bopp
- 39 Use a teaspoon
- 40 Undulating
- 41 Writer James
- 43 Not "er"
- 45 Burn soother
- 46 Relocate
- 47 Celebrity
- 49 Kreskin's claim

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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

3-8

CRYPTOQUIP

H DLHQV DB THOY SO SFFNQ BL  
FQSWZ HO DZQ WBQCQHQQWO  
K D B L Q . Z B A Q C Q L , D Z Q

K Q S L W Z A S K T L E H D N Q K K .  
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: AFTER I ACCIDENTALLY ATE LOTS OF FOOD COLORING, IT FELT AS THOUGH I DYED A LITTLE INSIDE.  
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: D equals T

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OPINION

Senate fails on military sex assaults

By PETULA DVORAK  
 The Washington Post

The examples are becoming too ridiculous to ignore, don't you think?

On Thursday, the military's sexual assault morass was on display on both shores of the Potomac River.

On the Virginia side, Pentagon officials admitted that the Army's top man in charge of prosecuting sexual assault is being investigated for allegedly groping and trying to kiss a lawyer at — of all places — a conference on sexual assault.

Crazy, right? Meanwhile, on the District of Columbia side of the river, the Senate decided that nah, the country doesn't need a dramatic overhaul in the way the military handles sex assault cases. It's all good, senators agreed.

Wonder what those senators make of Lt. Col. Joseph Morse, who also supervises a cadre of other special-victims prosecutors for the Army. These lawyers handle the really sensitive stuff, including domestic violence and child abuse.

Morse is the guy who stood up in some of the Army's darkest days recently, laying out the devastating case against a fellow soldier accused of killing 16 Afghan civilians in Kandahar province. But not long before that trial, a female lawyer said Morse groped her and tried to kiss her in an Alexandria, Va., hotel room at his conference on sexual assault. Army officials verified the existence of the criminal investigation of Morse.

This sounds depressingly similar to what happened last May, when Lt. Col.

Jeffrey Krusinski was arrested outside an Arlington, Va., bar's Cinco de Mayo party for an alleged sexual assault. At the time, Krusinski was — yes — the guy in charge of the Air Force's program to prevent sexual assaults.

The charges against Krusinski were changed to assault, and a jury acquitted him. But not before the Pentagon tried to take his case away from Arlington County prosecutors.

Which brings us back to the vote that unfolded in the Senate on Thursday. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., was pushing to remove sex-crime investigations and punishment from the chain of command — a proposal strongly opposed by the Pentagon brass. They resisted despite the fact that, according to their own research, there were an estimated 26,000 victims of sexual assault in 2012, and about 86 percent of the victims didn't report the attacks because they feared retaliation or punishment. Despite those numbers, guess who won the battle on the Senate floor?

Only 55 senators voted for Gillibrand's plan. She needed 60 for the bill to pass. And she had been working hard on it for the past year, holding hearings that featured witness after witness relating terrible stories of sexual assault and the awful way their cases were handled.

We heard from commanders who dismissed reports of assault based on snap judgments.

We heard from women terrorized by their own commanders, the people they were supposed to report assaults to.

We heard from women who survived enemy attacks, who defused bombs, but were attacked by their own.

And we heard from Brian Lewis, who was stationed outside of Guam 14 years ago when a senior petty officer invited him to dinner and then raped him at knife-point. After Lewis reported the attack, he was told to leave it alone and was sent back out to sea. A senior commander said he didn't want that kind of disciplinary problem with his ranks. Lewis told the Senate Armed Services Committee during a hearing last March.

It's almost as if we're tripping over these cases.

I even know someone who resigned over the way sexual assaults were handled at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy. Denise Rucker Krepp was an officer in the U.S. Coast Guard, continuing her family's 200-year-old family tradition. But when she requested an investigation into sexual assaults in 2011 in her role as chief counsel at the Maritime Administration, she was told by a Cabinet secretary that she shouldn't have done that and was asked to resign.

The sexual assaults and the way they were handled were "appalling," she said in congressional testimony this year. Her family's military tradition will end with her, she testified.

"My daughters will not join the military and they will not join the military because of what I saw on active duty in the Coast Guard and because of what I saw as chief counsel of the U.S. Maritime Administration," she said.

Those who volunteer to serve our country deserve better than that from military leaders. But until the system changes, they aren't likely to get it.

Petula Dvorak is a Washington Post columnist.

Cases can't stay within chain of command

By REP. MIKE COFFMAN

We must end the scourge of sexual assaults in our military. When young women decide to serve their nation in the armed services, they should never be forced to live under a cloud of intimidation or sexual harassment. This is a challenge the military must confront and overcome.

During my own military career, I have witnessed quite a number of challenges that the military had to confront. Each time it overcame the obstacles and always emerged as a more effective fighting force as a result.

For example, in 1972, when I joined the U.S. Army, I found an Army that was fractured along racial lines with its combat effectiveness further compromised by an epidemic of drug and alcohol abuse. The combination of these factors produced an Army plagued by disciplinary problems, poor morale and very low retention rates. This was not just an Army problem; it was evident in all branches of military service.

The Army responded aggressively to

resolve those problems and today, when I talk to the newest generation of young people serving in uniform, the challenges that our military faced in the 1970s are unthinkable to them today.

But today, our military is confronted with a new and very different challenge, an epidemic of sexual assaults that is again, seriously compromising the combat effectiveness of our military. Today, our soldiers, Marines, sailors and airmen are among the most accomplished of their generation. The standards of the young men and women who serve in our military have never been higher than at any time in our nation's history.

One fundamental factor that has driven up recruiting standards has been that many of the military's occupational career fields have been opened up to women. By adding women into the mix, we have increased the pool of eligible recruits raising the standards to make our military the most professional that our country has ever had. Unfortunately, with the increase in women serving in uniform there has been a reprehensible increase in the number of sexual assaults and a culture within our military that, knowingly or unknowingly, has tolerated it.

Members of the U.S. House and Senate have been debating how best to combat the epidemic of sexual assaults that have plagued our military. We seem to have fallen into two camps. The first supports the leadership of our military in wanting to resolve allegations of sexual assaults within the chain of command. The second believes that we should have independent military prosecutors deal with sexual as-

sault cases to remove the stigma of reporting the assaults and encourage women to feel comfortable in stepping forward to bring their assailants to justice.

I strongly believe that any allegations of sexual assault should be reported to authorities outside of the chain of command and thus should be procedurally treated separately from all other violations listed under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Questions of sexual assault, regarding military coworkers within the same unit, are always highly sensitive in nature. My concern is that a unit commander might feel pressure to resolve a problem that he or she might feel reflects poorly on his or her own leadership or to be an embarrassment to the reputation of his or her command, informally without having cases properly vetted and prosecuted, should the facts warrant. The net result could be fewer victims having the confidence to step forward and to testify against their attackers.

This is why I support taking the reporting of sexual assaults outside of the chain of command and will work with Rep. Jackie Speier, D-Calif., and Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., so that these allegations can be investigated by independent military authorities and, if necessary, prosecuted accordingly.

This is not a partisan issue. This is about protecting the young men and women who step forward to risk their lives in defense of our freedom. I am proud to stand with my Democratic colleagues to ensure we end the scourge of sexual assaults in our military.

Rep. Mike Coffman, a Colorado Republican, is a member of the House Armed Services Committee.

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## OPINION

## Crimea reality check: Cold War not back

By TRUDY RUBIN  
The Philadelphia Inquirer

German Chancellor Angela Merkel reportedly told President Barack Obama on Sunday that Vladimir Putin was out of touch with reality. When it comes to Ukraine, however, it's not just Putin who seems to be operating in a parallel universe. In Washington, this crisis is causing politicians from both parties to lose their grip.

I don't just mean Republican hawks, who see an opportunity to bash Obama for foreign policy weakness. Or Florida's presidential hopeful, Sen. Marco Rubio, who opposed authorizing force in Syria and now claims Russia's use of force in Crimea threatens to reverse "the hard-fought gains of the Cold War."

Democrats, too, have joined the chorus. Hillary Rodham Clinton, another 2016 contender, has compared Putin's aggression in Crimea to Adolf Hitler's World War II advance into Czechoslovakia to "save" the Germans in the Sudetenland. On the pundit side, Adm. James Stavridis, a former NATO commander, has called for the military alliance to send forces into the Black Sea area and ready them for action.

Folks, although the Ukraine situation may show some similarities, this is not Cold War redux, nor does Putin, for all his thuggery, remotely resemble Hitler (or Stalin). Unless politicians on both sides of the aisle take a more coolheaded approach to the realities in Ukraine, and in Russia, they will make the situation worse.

Putin's dreams of restoring Russia to superpower status are fantasy. Russia has become a middling power, with a declining population and a stagnant economy that has failed, under Putin, to modernize. Despite its abundant resources, its economy depends on high prices for gas and oil.

As more U.S. shale gas and oil come on line, and as more energy sources expand worldwide, Russia will be in trouble. Its economic future depends on more integration with the West, not less.

Yes, Putin still has nukes and a large military, but he isn't readying his troops to march through the Pula Gap. Moscow and Washington don't have missiles pointed at each other, or any deep ideological conflict (although it may sound like it).

Putin can only afford to threaten his weakest neighbors — like Ukraine, Georgia, or perhaps Moldova — that he believes should be part of the Russian orbit. The Baltic nations, along with Central and Eastern European countries that were once part of the Warsaw Pact, are now part of NATO, which rules out any Russian invasion, however unlikely.

So Putin's violation of Ukrainian sovereignty should be condemned, and a strong Western response is warranted, but this crisis should not be treated as a precursor of World War III.

Rather, the immediate goal should be to prevent Putin from sending troops into eastern Ukraine, an area inhabited by many ethnic Russians. Putin indicated in a news conference Tuesday that he may already have gotten that message.

Sanctions targeted at key Russian individuals and businesses involved with corrupt behavior in Ukraine would reinforce the message, while the Obama administration tries to persuade European leaders, especially Merkel, to consider tougher sanctions on the Russian economy.

Again, realism is called for: Until the Europeans become less dependent on Russian energy resources, they will be wary of taking too hard a stance against Putin. But Putin's Ukraine adventure may start changing European minds.

And despite Putin's public disdain of



sanctions, the Russian business community (and targeted billionaire businessmen) will surely take notice. Expelling Russia from the G8 group of major industrial nations would make the message even clearer.

A realistic approach would recognize that it may not be possible to evict the Russian troops that Putin just dispatched to Crimea, an autonomous part of Ukraine with a majority population of ethnic Russians. Russia has a treaty with Ukraine that will permit it to keep naval bases in Crimea for the next 28 years, and has long historic ties to the region.

Recall that during the 2008 Russian invasion of Georgia, on George W. Bush's watch, Putin sent troops to autonomous areas within that country that still remain there. It is possible the same will happen

in Ukraine. This makes it all the more important that Washington and the European Union beef up the government and economy of the rest of Ukraine, a country that has failed miserably to develop since it became independent in 1991.

Finally, realism dictates that Putin's invasion of Crimea put an end to illusions in the White House and Europe about a "partnership" with the Russian leader. Cooperation with Putin may be possible where he deems it in Moscow's interests — but that won't be often.

This doesn't mean another Cold War. Indeed, Putin may be the biggest loser if he isolates himself from prosperous Western nations. If he rejects reality, however, the West shouldn't follow his lead.

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for The Philadelphia Inquirer.

## Obama's Ukraine gamble requires Putin to relent

By DAVID IGNATIUS

Since the Ukraine crisis began, Obama administration officials have talked about pushing Russia toward the "offramp" and de-escalation. That's the best diplomatic outcome, but it will require an unlikely public reversal by Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The premise of the administration's approach is that Putin will decide that he made a mistake by seizing the Crimean region of Ukraine and, as he faces ever-greater costs, will negotiate a face-saving compromise, concluding that Russia's interests are better served by a return to the status quo.

The exit path, as envisioned by the White House, seeks to address Russian concerns without undermining the new Ukrainian government. To answer Putin's complaints about the supposed mistreatment of Russian-speakers, international monitors have arrived in Crimea. But Russia must now work with the transitional government in Kiev. Its support is essential to choose a successor to President Viktor Yanukovich, who fled last month. Finally, the Russians must return to their military bases in Crimea.

It's a lot for Putin to swallow and so far, he has refused. Russian troops remain in control in Crimea, and Moscow appears to back the upcoming Crimean referendum to break away from Ukraine and join Russia. But since Putin, with his ex-KGB man's bravado, doesn't appear eager for all-out



A woman holds a banner during a rally against the breakup of Ukraine in the Crimean city of Simferopol on Friday.

war in Ukraine.

Obama on Thursday added pressure for Putin to stand down. The White House announced visa restrictions and a structure of targeted sanctions against Russians and their allies who are threatening Ukraine's sovereignty. Since no individuals or companies are yet named, the sanctions gun is unloaded, for now. The message to Putin was that the further he moves to annex Crimea, the more he risks economic damage to himself and friends, and to Russia itself.

Obama's bet on Putin's rational willing-

ness to compromise is a long shot, it must be said. Putin is an autocratic leader with a dangerous nostalgia for Soviet empire. But Obama views him as a "transactional" leader who will make a deal at the right price. By imposing real costs, Obama is backing Putin toward a corner, but also himself: He is now publicly committed to forcing a Russian retreat.

Obama, perhaps stung by conservative criticism that his foreign policy has been weak and vacillating, has in this crisis adopted a strategy of measured escalation. The aim, an administration official explained Thursday morning, is to "calibrate sanctions based on what the Russians do." The strategy has three legs:

First, the administration seeks to impose "costs" for the Russian intervention; this was essential after Putin's humiliating rebuff of Obama's warning last Friday against such action. The harshest sanctions have been levied by the financial markets, but Thursday's announcement of Treasury and State Department measures adds some teeth. Just 24 hours earlier, the White House wasn't sure if such additional measures would backfire.

The strategy assumes that for Putin's Russia, which was so obviously hungry for validation at the Sochi Olympics, the prospect of international diplomatic and financial ostracism is a real penalty.

Second, the U.S. mobilized its NATO allies to prevent further Russian expansion in the region. Pentagon sources say that several dozen measures have already

been adopted, including new NATO exercises and U.S. visits. The message is that Putin's actions are bringing precisely the outcome he least wanted, in which Russia's neighbors are moving closer to the U.S. and NATO.

Finally, Obama has kept the exit door open, even as he tries to push Putin through. This combination of sanctions and diplomacy helped yield the breakthrough interim nuclear agreement with Iran, and Obama is attempting a similar maneuver.

U.S. officials who still think a deal with Putin is possible point to what a Washington Post headline called his "strange, rambling press conference" on Tuesday. Putin denied Russian troops had invaded ("there is no need for it"), and it's noteworthy that Russian troops in Crimea haven't worn identification badges. The ex-spy appears to be styling his Crimean campaign as a covert action, rather than an overt invasion. Perhaps if it never officially happened, it's easier to back down.

Putin returned again and again during his news conference to the theme of legitimacy. He even said he sympathized with the protesters in Kiev who are "used to seeing one set of things being replaced by another." Putin, in his weird way, wants to appear on the right side of history. But finding a way out of this crisis and maintaining the legitimacy he prizes will require Putin to change course. That's the uncertain bet Obama is making.

David Ignatius is a member of Washington Post Writers Group.



## SPORTS BRIEFS/GOLF



JACK DEMPESE/AP

In a cost-cutting move Thursday, the Denver Broncos released cornerback Champ Bailey, the team's defensive leader who's been a fan favorite since he was acquired in a trade with Washington in 2004.

## Briefly

## Broncos bid adieu to Bailey

By PAT GRAHAM  
The Associated Press

DENVER — Champ Bailey spent a decade with the Denver Broncos, making eight Pro Bowls and picking off 34 passes even with quarterbacks only reluctantly glancing his way.

This number was hard to overlook: \$10 million.

In a salary-cap move Thursday, the Broncos released Bailey, the team's defensive leader who's been a fan favorite since he was acquired in a trade with Washington in 2004.

In his prime, Bailey wasn't always very busy because opponents simply picked on his counterpart. And yet he still has 52 career interceptions, the most among active cornerbacks.

In other NFL news:

■ Devin Hester is done returning kicks in Chicago.

The Bears confirmed Thursday that they are parting ways with the three-time Pro Bowl pick after eight seasons, confirming what he told the NFL Network the previous day.

Hester matched Hall of Famer Deion Sanders' NFL record with his 19th return touchdown last season, tying his friend and mentor with an 81-yard punt return at Washington in October. It was

Hester's 13th punt return for a TD, extending his own record in that category.

## NCAA approves change to targeting penalty

INDIANAPOLIS — An NCAA panel has approved a change to the targeting foul that would wipe out the 15-yard penalty when video review overturns the ejection of a player.

The football rules committee last month passed a proposal to no longer enforce the 15-yard penalty when the ejection is overturned, as long as another foul has not been committed. The playing rules oversight panel approved it Thursday.

## Guard: Pistorius told me 'everything is fine'

PRETORIA, South Africa — A security guard working in Oscar Pistorius' gated community says the athlete told him everything was "fine" when he called to investigate neighbors' reports of gunshots on the night Reeva Steenkamp was killed.

Pieter Baba, who drove with another guard and made a phone call to Pistorius from outside the Olympian's villa in the pre-dawn

hours of Feb. 14 last year, testified Friday: "that's when Mr. Pistorius said to me everything is fine."

Baba said he told a fellow security guard: "not everything was in order as Mr. Pistorius was telling me."

Pistorius is charged with murder. He says he shot Steenkamp by mistake, thinking she was an intruder.

## BYU's Mahoney tosses no-hitter vs. Nicholls St.

THIBODAUX, La. — BYU sophomore right-hander Kolton Mahoney threw the seventh no-hitter in school history, striking out 11 in a 5-0 victory over Nicholls State on Thursday.

Mahoney, from West Point, Utah, walked two in a 102-pitch performance for BYU's first no-hitter since John DeSilva tossed one in 1989 against Colorado State.

"Everything was working," said Mahoney, who also got a few nice defensive plays from his teammates to preserve the no-no. "I started to feel it in the sixth or seventh inning. I knew it was definitely there going into the ninth inning and I wasn't going to go for anything less."

## Golf roundup

## Reed ends first round with lead

The Associated Press

DORAL, Fla. — Patrick Reed ended a long opening round at the Cadillac Championship on Friday with a 4-under 68 to take a one-shot lead as the new Blue Monster showed some bite.

Just ask Tiger Woods. A four-time champion at Doral, the world's No. 1 player finished off a 76 for his highest score in 40 complete rounds on the course. He wasn't alone. Steve Stricker, the runner-up to Woods last year, had a 77. Masters champion Adam Scott took a big step back in his bid to reach No. 1 in the world with a 75. Four players, including former U.S. Open champion Webb Simpson, failed to break 80.

Only six players finished the first round Thursday because of a storm delay lasting more than two hours.

The rest of the field who had to return Friday morning did not find typical peaceful conditions. Donald Trump, who bought the resort and brought in Gil Hanse for a complete makeover, described it as "bold." In this wind, it was brutal.

Woods played with Scott and Henrik Stenson in the traditional grouping of Nos. 1-2-3 in the world. They all made double bogey on the 14th hole — Woods from the middle of the fairway with what appeared to be a perfect shot into the green. It trickled into a back bunker, and he needed two to get out.

Stenson went left into the water that typically is not in play. Scott went into the water, and then clanked one off a palm tree.

Stenson stopped walking off the 15th green and said, "Are you having fun watching?" And then he smiled as he looked back over

his shoulder and said, "Because it's sure as hell not any fun to be playing."

Stenson, who had a shank on the second hole Thursday, birdied the 18th for a 73.

Harris English finished Thursday with a 69 (on a 45-foot birdie putt). He was joined by Francesco Molinari, Jason Dufner, Dustin Johnson, Matt Kuchar and Hunter Mahan. Rory McIlroy and Luke Donald were in the group at 70, along with Miguel Angel Jimenez, who had the most remarkable round. He didn't make a bogey.

Another Spaniard wasn't so fortunate.

Sergio Garcia was playing nicely until a 5-wood plugged in a bunker on the 16th hole, and he had no chance of getting out. His third shot flew over the green, over the corporate suite and into a water hazard next to the second green. He made triple bogey and went from a chance to break par to a 74.

"So much for being benign conditions in the morning," Zach Johnson said after a 70.

PGA Tour: Brian Stuard birdied seven his first 12 holes in windy conditions to take the first-round lead in the Puerto Rico Open at Rio Grande.

Stuard finished with a 6-under 66, dropping a stroke on the par-4 seventh hole — his 16th of the day — in wind gusting to 20 mph at Trump International. He finished second in November in the OHL Classic in Mexico.

Jason Gore and Danny Lee shot 67, and Y.E. Yang was another stroke back along with Ricky Barnes, William McGirt, Tim Petrovic, Chesson Hadley, Eric Axley and Ben Martin.

Defending champion Scott Brown opened with a 70.



LYNNE SLADKY/AP

Patrick Reed hits from a bunker onto the eighth green during a continuation of the first round of the Cadillac Championship on Friday in Doral, Fla. Play was suspended before the end of play Thursday due to severe weather.

NHL

Roundup

# Stamkos' return reined by Sabres

The Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Jonas Enroth stole the spotlight from Tampa Bay star Steven Stamkos.

Enroth made 43 saves to spoil the return of Stamkos and the Buffalo Sabres beat the Lightning 3-1 on Thursday night.

Stamkos has been sidelined since breaking his right shin Nov. 11 at Boston, causing him to miss 45 games. The center received a partial standing ovation during pregame introductions, when it was announced that he is the new team captain.

"For the most part I felt good," said Stamkos, who played 21:03. "It's a step in the right direction. You can feel it a little out there as the play progresses, but I felt like I played a lot tonight and felt pretty good. As the game went on, my timing felt great with the puck."

Right wing Ryan Callahan, acquired Wednesday from the New York Rangers for former Tampa Bay captain Martin St. Louis, made his Lightning debut.

"As the game went on, I got more and more comfortable with who I was playing with," Callahan said. "More comfortable on the ice."

Tyler Myers, Marcus Foligno and Cody Hodgson scored for the Sabres. Enroth stopped a combined nine shots by Stamkos (five) and Callahan (four).

"When we get good goaltending, we have a chance to win," Buffalo interim coach Ted Nolan said. "We were very opportunistic on our chances. Thomas was the backbone, for sure."

Tyler Johnson ended Enroth's shutout bid with a short-handed goal at 17:31 of the third.

"I'm pretty (upset) that I didn't get the shutout, but that's hockey, I guess," Enroth said.

The Lightning have dropped four of five since the end of the Olympic break.

Myers put Buffalo up 1-0 when he beat Anders Lindback from the right circle 15:56 into the game. Lindback had been out since hurting his ankle on Jan. 30.

Foligno made it 2-0 with his first NHL goal in 11 games at 9:25 of the second.

**Kings 3, Jets 1:** Mike Richards scored the go-ahead goal on a giveaway by Winnipeg to lift visiting Los Angeles to its sixth straight victory.

Dustin Brown scored the tiebreaking goal with 5:30 left in regulation to help host San Jose overcome a two-goal deficit to beat Pittsburgh.

Justin Braun started the comeback with a goal late in the second and Patrick Marleau and Brent Burns scored tying goals earlier in the third for the Sharks, who have 10 wins and one tie in their last 11 home games against Pittsburgh.

on Montreal early after the Canadiens won a six-round shootout against the NHL-leading Anaheim Ducks the night before and did just that, scoring three goals in the first period.

**Bruins 3, Capitals 0:** Tuukka Rask got the first win of his career against Washington, Gregory Campbell and Loui Eriksson scored second-period goals for host Boston.

Rask's sixth shutout of the season and 22nd of his career came just five days after the Capitals beat him 4-2, also in Boston. But since then Washington is 0-3 and Boston is 3-0.

**Avalanche 3, Red Wings 2 (OT):** Andre Benoit scored off an assist from rookie Nathan MacKinnon with 3:14 seconds left in overtime, lifting visiting Colorado to over Detroit.

MacKinnon was a point in 13 straight games, breaking Wayne Gretzky's record for an 18-year-old NHL player.

**Blackhawks 6, Blue Jackets 1:** Andrew Shaw and Jonathan Toews had two goals apiece, and host Chicago beat Columbus.

Brendan Bollig and Bryan Bickell also scored as Chicago bounced back from a 4-2 home loss to Colorado on Tuesday night. Corey Crawford made 22 saves for his 10th consecutive victory against Columbus.

**Blues 2, Predators 1:** Ian Cole had a goal and an assist to lead visiting St. Louis to its third straight win.

Magnus Paajarvi had the other goal for the Blues, who have won all four of their games against Nashville this season.

**Stars 6, Canucks 1:** Tyler Seguin had three goals and two assists to lead Dallas to a 6-1 rout of Vancouver.

Jamie Benn, Alex Goligoski and Ryan Garbutt also scored for Dallas, which built a 5-0 lead. Kari Lehtonen made 31 saves, and Benn and Rich Peverley each had two assists.

**Oilers 3, Islanders 2 (OT):** Tyler Hall scored the overtime winner and host Edmonton rebounded from a listless start to earn a come-from-behind victory over New York.

The Oilers got the win after trailing 2-0 after the second period.

**Sharks 5, Penguins 3:** Joe Thornton scored the tiebreaking goal with 5:30 left in regulation to help host San Jose overcome a two-goal deficit to beat Pittsburgh.

Justin Braun started the comeback with a goal late in the second and Patrick Marleau and Brent Burns scored tying goals earlier in the third for the Sharks, who have 10 wins and one tie in their last 11 home games against Pittsburgh.

## Scoreboard

Eastern Conference						
Atlantic Division						
Team	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF/GA
Boston	62	40	17	5	85	195/133
Montreal	65	25	23	7	77	166/162
Ottawa	62	27	22	13	73	162/162
Tampa Bay	63	24	24	5	73	180/163
Detroit	63	26	21	11	69	164/172
Ottawa	63	27	21	15	65	177/206
Florida	62	23	32	7	53	152/201
Carolina	62	18	35	8	44	127/184

Metropolitan Division						
Team	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF/GA
Pittsburgh	63	33	24	6	72	180/184
Philadelphia	63	24	24	15	66	174/180
N.Y. Rangers	63	23	26	4	70	160/160
Columbus	63	22	26	9	69	185/176
Washington	64	29	25	0	68	188/196
New Jersey	62	27	23	13	66	162/162
Carolina	62	26	26	9	63	154/175
N.Y. Islanders	65	24	32	9	57	178/220

Western Conference						
Central Division						
Team	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF/GA
St. Louis	62	42	14	6	90	206/142
Chicago	64	37	13	14	86	221/171
Minnesota	63	41	17	5	87	195/168
Minnesota	62	34	21	7	75	153/150
Colorado	63	30	27	10	70	187/187
Winnipeg	64	30	27	7	67	177/184
Nashville	62	27	18	17	62	152/190

Pacific Division						
Team	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF/GA
Anaheim	63	43	11	7	92	205/154
San Jose	64	37	17	7	87	195/157
Los Angeles	64	36	22	6	78	155/135
Phoenix	63	32	26	9	69	185/175
Vancouver	65	28	27	10	66	151/173
Calgary	62	31	27	4	66	160/160
Edmonton	64	22	34	8	52	160/208

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss.

**Wednesday's games**  
 Montreal, Anaheim, 5:30  
 Toronto 3, N.Y. Rangers 2, OT  
 Philadelphia at Washington 4  
 Calgary 4, Ottawa 1

**Thursday's games**  
 Boston 3, Washington 1  
 Los Angeles 3, Winnipeg 1  
 Dallas 2, Buffalo 1  
 Colorado 3, Detroit 2, OT  
 Dallas 2, Nashville 1  
 Dallas 6, Vancouver 1  
 St. Louis 6, N.Y. Islanders 2, OT

**Friday's games**  
 N.Y. Rangers at Carolina  
 New Jersey at Detroit  
 Buffalo at Florida  
 Dallas 2 at Calgary  
 Pittsburgh at Anaheim

**Saturday's games**  
 Ottawa at Winnipeg  
 St. Louis at Colorado  
 Dallas 2 at New Jersey  
 Phoenix at Tampa Bay  
 Columbus at Nashville  
 Phoenix at Washington  
 Columbus at Nashville  
 Minnesota at Dallas  
 Calgary at Vancouver  
 Montreal at San Jose

**Thursday**  
**Stars 6, Canucks 1**

**First Period—1, Dallas, 8:24 (17 shots-14 saves), Markstrom (6-0 third), 5-0 (18 shots-14 saves), Boston, Rask 27-14 (4-16).**  
**A—14,634 (18,532). T—2:33.**

**Second Period—4, Dallas, Goligoski 5 (Wells, Garbutt, 1-0), Dallas, 12:06.**  
**Garbutt 12 (Goligoski, Rask), 12:06.**

**Third Period—4, Dallas, Seguin 18 (15-12), 12:53.**

**Shots on Goal—Vancouver 9-16-33. Dallas 15-12-25.**

**Power-play opportunities—Vancouver 1 of 5; Dallas 2 of 5.**

**Penalty shots—Lack 9-11 (4). (17 shots-12 saves), Markstrom (6-0 third), 5-0 (18 shots-14 saves), Boston, Rask 27-14 (4-16).**

**Bruins 3, Capitals 0**

**Washington 0 0 0 0-0  
 Boston 0 0 1 1-1**

**First Period—1, Boston, Campbell 7 (Bergeron, Barkowski), 3:05. 2, Boston, Erikson 7 (Soderberg, Miller), 8:20.**

**Second Period—1, Washington, 18:26 (penalty).**

**Third Period—4, Washington 4-4-16. Boston 10-17-16-43.**

**Shots on Goal—Washington 4-4-16. Boston 10-17-16-43.**

**Power-play opportunities—Washington 0 of 4; Winnipeg 0 of 4.**

**Goalies—Los Angeles, Quick 20-13 (2 shots-10 saves), Los Angeles, Pavlic 20-23 (5-41-38).**

**A—15,004 (15,004). T—2:21.**

**Kings 3, Jets 1**

**Los Angeles 0 2 1 3-3  
 Winnipeg 0 0 1 1-1**

**Second Period—1, Winnipeg, Jokinen 12 (Brown, Stoll, Vovryn), 12:45. 3, Los Angeles, Richards 9, 16:15.**



Tampa Bay center Steven Stamkos is introduced as the new captain of the Lightning before Thursday's home game against the Buffalo Sabres.

Chris O'Meara/AP

**Sabres 3, Lightning 1**

**Buffalo 1 1 1 3-3  
 Tampa Bay 0 0 1 1-1**

**First Period—1, Buffalo, Myers 9, 15:56.**

**Second Period—2, Buffalo, Foligno 7 (Hodgson, Myers), 9:25.**

**Third Period—3, Buffalo, Hodgson 16 (Foligno), 13:44. 4, Tampa Bay, Johnson 19 (Hedman), 17:31 (sh).**

**Shots on Goal—Buffalo 10-6-5-21. Tampa Bay 15-16-13-44.**

**Power-play opportunities—Buffalo 0 of 2; Tampa Bay 0 of 2.**

**Goalies—Buffalo, Enroth 4-13 (5 (44 shots-18 saves), Tampa Bay, Lindback 5-12 (21-18).**

**A—19,204 (19,204). T—2:28.**

**Avalanche 3, Red Wings 2 (OT)**

**Colorado 0 1 1 1-3  
 Detroit 1 1 0 0-2**

**First Period—1, Detroit, Kronwall 7 (Andersson, Ericsson), 12:33.**

**Second Period—2, Colorado, Duchene 20 (Johnson, O'Reilly), 10:11. 3, Detroit, Jurco 5 (Gheban, DeKeyser), 12:10 (pp).**

**Third Period—4, Colorado, Parenteau 13 (Gheban, O'Reilly), 5:49.**

**Overtime—5, Colorado, Benoit 4 (Mackinnon, Johnson), 4:28.**

**Shots on Goal—Colorado 8-7-7-25 (20).**

**Power-play opportunities—Colorado 0 of 2; Detroit 1 of 2.**

**Goies—Colorado, Giguere 10-5-0 (17 shots-33 saves), Detroit, Hwang 13-14-10 (25-22).**

**A—20,066 (20,066). T—2:28.**

**Blackhawks 6, Blue Jackets 1**

**Columbus 2 3 1 6-6  
 Chicago 6 1 0 7-7**

**First Period—1, Chicago, Bollig 7 (Ruger), 4:12. 2, Columbus, Johansen 25 (Atkinson, Prout), 7:56. 3, Chicago, Shaw 15 (Brookhanks, Leddy), 15:59.**

**Second Period—4, Chicago, Toews 23 (Said, Seabrook), 8:00. 5, Chicago, Bickell 10 (Versteeg, Kruger), 12:29. 6, Chicago, Shaw 16 (Seabrook, Keith), 17:44.**

**Third Period—1, Chicago, Toews 24 (Kane, Sharp), 3:04 (pp).**

**Overtime—5, Chicago, 8:7-23. Chicago 17-11-33.**

**Shots on Goal—Pittsburgh 10-4-21 (31).**

**Goalies—Columbus, Brovsky 23-16 (18 shots-14 saves), McElhinney (12-29 second-15-13). Chicago, Crawford 24-11-10 (21-17-33).**

**A—21,179 (19,717). T—2:24.**

**Blues 2, Predators 1**

**St. Louis 1 1 0 2-2  
 Nashville 1 0 0 1-1**

**First Period—1, St. Louis, Cole 3 (Ote), 4:03. 2, Nashville, Spaling 11 (Hornqvist, Fisher), 10:28.**

**Second Period—3, St. Louis, Paajarvi 6 (Polak, Cole), 8:18.**

**Third Period—1, St. Louis, 15:27 (penalty).**

**Shots on Goal—St. Louis 4-10-8-22. Nashville 8-9-5-21.**

**Power-play opportunities—St. Louis 0 of 2; Nashville 0 of 2.**

**Goalies—St. Louis, Miller 18-22 (21 shots-14 saves), Nashville, Rinne 4-5-1 (22-20).**

**A—16,180 (17,113). T—2:29.**

**Oilers 3, Islanders 2 (OT)**

**Edmonton 2 0 0 2-2  
 Phoenix 3 0 2 5-5**

**First Period—1, Phoenix, Vrblata 16 (Schlemko, Chichirco), 2:08. 2, Montreal, Markov 6 (Subban, Gallagher), 7:13. 3, Phoenix, Korzhakov 8 (Stone, Hisecki), 15:04 (pp). 4, Phoenix, Ekman-Larsson 10 (Doan, Ribeiro), 19:51.**

**Second Period—5, Montreal, Galchenyuk 12 (Subban, Markov), 14:53 (pp).**

**Third Period—6, Phoenix, Vrblata 17 (Chichirco), 11:43. 7, Phoenix, Doan 18 (Vande, Ekman-Larsson), 13:28 (pp).**

**Shots on Goal—Montreal 7-12-7-26. Phoenix 15-17-23.**

**Power-play opportunities—Montreal 1 of 5; Phoenix 2 of 3.**

**Goalies—Montreal, Budaj 8-6-2 (23 shots-18 saves), Phoenix, Smith 22-18-10 (26-24).**

**A—15,282 (17,125). T—2:23.**

**Oilers 3, Islanders 2 (OT)**

**Edmonton 2 0 0 2-2  
 Phoenix 3 0 2 5-5**

**First Period—1, N.Y. Islanders, Nielsen 19 (Clutterback, Hickey), 9:58 (sh). 2, N.Y. Islanders, Lee 4 (Strand, McDonald), 18:22.**

**Second Period—3, Edmonton, Smyth 9 (Bergeron, Gagner), 8:28 (pp). 4, Edmonton, Larson 2 (Smyth, Perron), 16:53.**

**Overtime—5, Edmonton, Hall 21 (Gagner), 1:29.**

**Shots on Goal—N.Y. Islanders 13-10-9-2-34. Edmonton 4-0-11-4-29.**

**Power-play opportunities—N.Y. Islanders 0 of 4; Edmonton 1 of 4.**

**Goalies—N.Y. Islanders, Nabokov 11-13-9 (29 shots-26 saves), Edmonton, Schriener 12-9-4 (24-24).**

**A—16,839 (16,839). T—2:31.**

**Sharks 5, Penguins 3**

**Pittsburgh 2 0 1 3-3  
 San Jose 5 1 4 10-5**

**First Period—1, Pittsburgh, Kunitz 2 (Glass, Goo, 15:09. 2, Pittsburgh, Marleau 29 (Malkin), 16:21 (pp).**

**Second Period—4, San Jose, Braun 4 (Wingels, Deslauriers), 17:43.**

**Third Period—4, San Jose, Marleau 26 (Demers), 5:18 (sh). 5, Pittsburgh, Matla 9 (Suter, Jokinen), 5:29 (pp). 6, San Jose, Burns 17 (Pavelski, Thornton), 18:41. 7, San Jose, Thornton 9 (Pavelski), 14-21.**

**Shots on Goal—Pittsburgh 10-4-22. San Jose 13-18-16-47.**

**Power-play opportunities—Pittsburgh 2 of 4; San Jose 0 of 2.**

**Goalies—Pittsburgh, Zatkoff 9-3-1 (46 shots-42 saves), San Jose, Niemi 30-16-23 (22-19).**

**A—17,562 (17,562). T—2:27.**

**Scoring leaders**

**Through March 6**

Player	GP	G	A	Pts
Sidney Crosby, Pit	62	29	54	83
Phil Kessel, Tor	63	33	71	77
Ryan Getzlaf, Ana	59	29	39	68
Alex Ovechkin, Was	59	24	63	61
Clayton Kershaw, NYJ	59	24	63	61
Patrick Kane, Chi	63	27		

# AUTO RACING

## Around the track

### SPRINT CUP

**This week:** Kobalt 400 at Las Vegas.

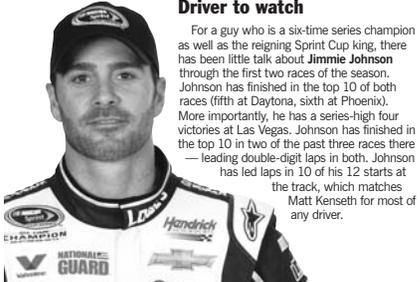
**TV:** AFN-Xtra, 8 p.m. CET Sunday.  
**Track:** Las Vegas Motor Speedway (oval, 1.5 miles).

**Race distance:** 400.5 miles, 267 laps.

**Last year:** Matt Kenseth won in his third start for Joe Gibbs Racing.

**Last week:** Kevin Harvick raced to his second straight victory at Phoenix International Raceway, leading 224 of 312 laps. He's in his first season with Stewart-Haas Racing.

**Fast facts:** Dale Earnhardt Jr. won the season-opening Daytona 500 and finished second in Phoenix. ... Kyle Busch won the 2009 race at his home track. ... Two-time Indy 500 winner Dan Wheldon was killed in an accident at the track during the 2011 IndyCar finale.



### NATIONWIDE SERIES

**This week:** Boyd Gaming 300 at Las Vegas.

**TV:** AFN-Xtra, 10:15 p.m. CET Saturday.

**Track:** Las Vegas Motor Speedway (oval, 1.5 miles).

**Race distance:** 300 miles, 200 laps.

**Last year:** Sam Hornish Jr. held off Kyle Busch on two late restarts.

**Last week:** Busch won the rain-shortened Phoenix race to become the first driver to win three consecutive Nationwide events at the track. Busch has a series-record 64 victories.

**Fast facts:** Daytona 500 winner Dale Earnhardt Jr. is driving the No. 88 Chevrolet. ... Busch is winless in Nationwide competition at his home track. Regan Smith won the season-opening race at Daytona.

**Next race:** Drive to Stop Diabetes 300, March 15, Bristol Motor Speedway, Bristol, Tenn.

**Online:** nascar.com  
— The Associated Press

### Driver standings

1. Regan Smith..... 83
2. Trevor Bayne..... 78
3. Elliott Sadler..... 77
4. Ty Dillon..... 71
5. Dylan Kwasniewski..... 67
6. Brendan Gaughan..... 66
7. Chase Elliott..... 64
8. Brian Scott..... 60
9. James Buescher..... 60
10. Mike Wallace..... 55
11. Mike Bliss..... 51
12. Ryan Reed..... 48
13. Landon Cassill..... 48
14. Dakota Armstrong..... 47
15. Jeremy Clements..... 38

**Next race:** Food City 500, March 16, Bristol Motor Speedway, Bristol, Tenn.

**Online:** nascar.com  
— The Associated Press

### Driver standings

1. Dale Earnhardt Jr..... 90
2. Brad Keselowski..... 84
3. Jeff Gordon..... 80
4. Kevin Harvick..... 79
5. Jimmie Johnson..... 78
6. Joe Logano..... 75
7. Matt Kenseth..... 70
8. Denny Hamlin..... 68
9. Carl Edwards..... 65
10. Greg Biffle..... 64
11. Jamie McMurray..... 64
12. Casey Mears..... 64
13. Ricky Stenhouse Jr..... 63
14. Kyle Busch..... 61
15. Ryan Newman..... 60
16. Austin Dillon..... 56
17. Marcos Ambrose..... 49
18. Kasey Kahne..... 47

### Driver to watch

For a guy who is a six-time series champion as well as the reigning Sprint Cup king, there has been little talk about **Jimmie Johnson** through the first two races of the season. Johnson has finished in the top 10 of both races (fifth at Daytona, sixth at Phoenix). More importantly, he has a series-high four victories at Las Vegas. Johnson has finished in the top 10 two of the past three races there — leading double-digit laps in both. Johnson has led laps in 10 of his 12 starts at the track, which matches Matt Kenseth for most of any driver.

### CAMPING WORLD TRUCKS SERIES

**Next race:** Kroger 250, March 29, Martinsville Speedway, Martinsville, Va.

**Last race:** Kyle Busch won at Daytona on Feb. 21 to become the first driver to win Truck, ARCA, Nationwide and Sprint Cup races at the track.

**Online:** nascar.com  
— The Associated Press

### Driver standings

1. Timothy Peters..... 43
2. Johnny Sauter..... 41
3. Ron Hornaday Jr..... 39
4. Ryan Blaney..... 38
5. Jeb Burton..... 37
6. Jimmy Weller III..... 35
7. Germán Quiroga..... 34
8. Ryan Sieg..... 33
9. Tyler Reddick..... 32
10. Matt Crafton..... 31
11. Ben Kennedy..... 31
12. John Wes Townley..... 31
13. Justin Jennings..... 28
14. Bryan Silas..... 27
15. Chris Fontaine..... 25

### NHRA MELLO YELLO DRAG RACING

**Next event:** NHRA Gatornationals, March 13-16, Auto Plus Raceway at Gainesville, Fla.

**Last event:** Alexis DeJoria raced to her first career Funny Car victory on Feb. 23, beating Robert Hight in the final at Wild Horse Pass in Chandler, Ariz. Antron Brown won in Top Fuel and Allen Johnson topped the Pro Stock field.

**Online:** nhra.com  
— The Associated Press

# Victory and validation

## Phoenix win backs up Childers' move to Harvick's team

BY JENNA FRYER  
The Associated Press

**R**odney Childers wrestled for months with the decision to join Kevin Harvick at Stewart-Haas Racing. Just when he thought he'd made up his mind to leave Michael Waltrip Racing, he and Brian Vickers won a race together at New Hampshire. Weeks went by after that victory last July when Childers thought his heart was truly in remaining with MWR. He woke up one day and his mind was finally made up. "My alarm went off and it hit me, it was like, 'I need to go to Stewart-Haas and crew chief Kevin Harvick,'" Childers told The Associated Press this week.

So much for peace of mind: MWR reacted to his decision by essentially benching Childers for the rest of the season. He couldn't work for almost six weeks. He pressure washed his house, tweeted with fans during races and had weekends off for the first time in his adult life.

In late October, MWR gave Childers his release and he was free to join to SHR and get a head-start on the 2014 season.

"When I started, it was a bit overwhelming, the way it's run is different because the crew chiefs have a lot more control," Childers said. "I got there and really wasn't happy

with the way the cars were built, the equipment needed to be a lot nicer. I started to think after six or seven days, 'Man, this is going to take a long time to fix.'"

Childers grew so discouraged he thought it would be June or July before Harvick would win his first race with his new team.

Six weeks into the process, something suddenly changed.

"I left work one night and looked around and thought 'Crap, we can win one of the first four races and we can contend just like anyone else can,'" Childers said. "It had all come together so quickly, and from that moment on, our whole demeanor has been a lot different — it's been about winning."

That was evident all last weekend at Phoenix, where Harvick showed early on that his No. 4 Chevrolet was going to be a race-day contender. The car was ultimately so good, Harvick led 224 of the 312 laps Sunday en route to a victory in just his second race with SHR.

It was the lone bright spot in a second straight crummy weekend for SHR. After a disastrous Speedweeks plagued with engine issues and four wrecked cars, Phoenix wasn't much better. Kurt Busch had another engine failure, Danica Patrick was wrecked out for the second straight week and Tony Stewart finished 16th.

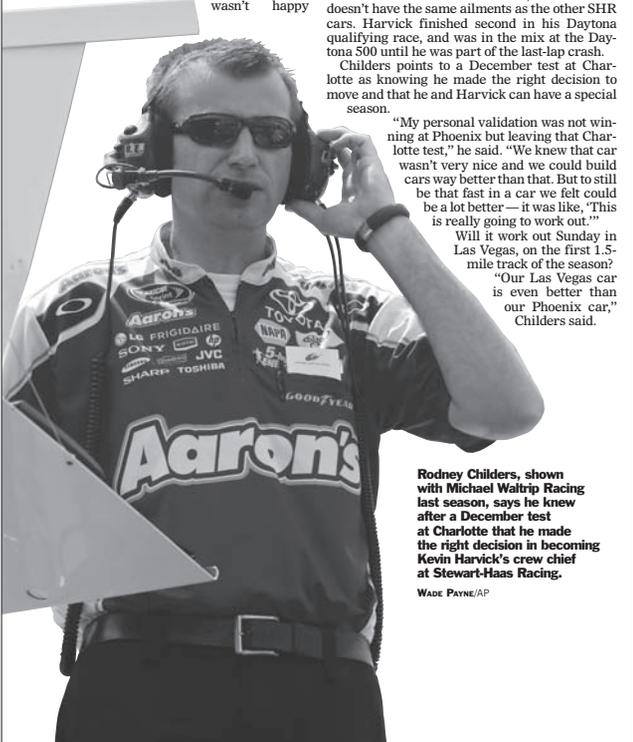
Perhaps because of the head-start Childers had on 2014 and Harvick's arrival, the No. 4 team doesn't have the same ailments as the other SHR cars. Harvick finished second in his Daytona qualifying race, and was in the mix at the Daytona 500 until he was part of the last-lap crash.

Childers points to a December test at Charlotte as knowing he made the right decision to move and that he and Harvick can have a special season.

"My personal validation was not winning at Phoenix but leaving that Charlotte test," he said. "We knew that car wasn't very nice and we could build cars way better than that. But to still be that fast in a car we felt could be a lot better — it was like, 'This is really going to work out.'"

Will it work out Sunday in Las Vegas, on the first 1.5-mile track of the season?

"Our Las Vegas car is even better than our Phoenix car," Childers said.



**Rodney Childers, shown with Michael Waltrip Racing last season, says he knew after a December test at Charlotte that he made the right decision in becoming Kevin Harvick's crew chief at Stewart-Haas Racing.**

WAKE PAINE/AP



# COLLEGE BASKETBALL

## AP Top 25 roundup

# Villanova clinches rare outright Big East title

## 11th win in last 12 games for red-hot Wildcats

The Associated Press

CINCINNATI — Darrun Hilliard scored 19 points and No. 6 Villanova clinched the outright Big East championship for the first time in 32 years by holding off Xavier 77-70 on Thursday night.

JayVaughn Pinkston added 15 points — eight in the last 3-20 — James Bell finished with 12 and Ryan Arcidiacono chipped in with 11 as the Wildcats (27-3, 15-2 Big East) extended their school record for regular-season wins with their fifth straight and 11th in their last 12 games.

The Wildcats went into the night with a 1½ game lead over No. 13 Creighton in the Big East and two games remaining. The Bluejays have one game to play.

Villanova, which last won the title alone in 1981-82, wraps up its regular season Saturday at home against Georgetown.

Justin Martin had 20 points for Xavier (20-11, 10-8) while Semaj Christian added 18 and Isaiah Philmore finished with 15. The Musketeers ended the regular season with consecutive losses.

The game was Xavier's first without 6-foot-10 junior center Matt Stainbrook, who started each of the Musketeers' previous 30 before straining the medial collateral ligament in his left knee in their loss at Seton Hall on Monday.

No. 15 Cincinnati 97, No. 20 Memphis 84; Sean Kilpatrick scored a season-high 34 points in his final home game, and

a trio of senior starters steadied the host Bearcats in a win that left the American Athletic Conference race tied with a game to go.

Cincinnati (25-5, 14-3 AAC) remained tied to the first-year league with No. 11 Louisville. The Cardinals won 84-71 at No. 18 Southern Methodist on Wednesday night and finish at home against No. 19 Connecticut. The Bearcats close the regular season at Rutgers.

With a chance to break the race open, the Tigers (22-8, 11-6) fell apart in the opening minutes and never fully recovered. Cincinnati's seniors kept the Bearcats ahead the whole game.

Kilpatrick led the way in his final home game at the school where he will end up as the No. 2 all-time scorer behind Oscar Robertson.

**No. 22 Michigan St. 86, No. 24 Iowa 76;** Keith Appling scored in double figures for the first time in more than five weeks for the host Spartans.

Appling showed his old aggressiveness before hip and wrist injuries and scored 12 points for Michigan State (23-7, 12-5 Big Ten). Travis Trice, Appling's backup, was 3-for-4 from three-point range and had 16 points, while Adreian Payne added 14 points in his final home game.

Roy Devyn Marble had 24 points for Iowa (20-10, 9-8) which has continued to struggle on defense and is 1-4 over the past two weeks.



TOM UHLMAN/AP

Villanova's Darrun Hilliard pumps his fist near the close of Thursday's 77-70 win over Xavier in Cincinnati. Hilliard finished with 19 points.

## Conference tournaments

**America East Conference**  
**At SEFCU Arena**  
**Albany, N.Y.**  
**First Round**  
**Saturday, March 8**  
 Vermont vs. New Hampshire  
 South Carolina vs. UMBG  
 Stony Brook vs. Maine  
 Hartford vs. Binghamton  
**Semifinals**  
**Sunday, March 9**  
 Vermont-New Hampshire winner vs. Albany  
 Stony Brook-Maine winner vs. Hartford-Binghamton winner  
**Championship**  
**At Campus Sites**  
**Saturday, March 15**  
**Atlantic Sun Conference**  
**At Campus Sites**  
**First Round**  
**Thursday, March 4**  
 Mercer 85, Jacksonville 64  
 Florida Gulf Coast 77, Stetson 55  
 South Carolina Upstate 89, N. Florida 74  
 ETSU 89, Lipscomb 88, 2OT  
**Semifinals**  
**Thursday, March 6**  
 Florida Gulf Coast 69, ETSU 64  
 Mercer 79, South Carolina Upstate 75, 2OT  
**Championship**  
**Sunday, March 9**  
 Florida Gulf Coast vs. Mercer  
**Big South Conference**  
**At The H.C. Center**  
**Conway, S.C.**  
**First Round**  
**Wednesday, March 5**  
 Winthrop 77, Liberty 65  
 Presbyterian 73, Southern  
 Charleston Southern 81, Campbell 71  
 Gardner-Webb 81, Longwood 69  
**Quarterfinals**  
**Friday, March 7**  
 High Point vs. Winthrop  
 UNC Asheville vs. Radford  
 Coastal Carolina vs. Charleston Southern  
 VMI vs. Gardner-Webb  
**Semifinals**  
**Saturday, March 8**  
 High Point-Winthrop winner vs. UNC Asheville-Radford winner  
 Coastal Carolina-Charleston Southern winner vs. VMI-Gardner-Webb winner

**Championship**  
**Sunday, March 9**  
**Colonial Athletic Association**  
**At Baltimore Arena**  
**First Round**  
**Friday, March 7**  
 Hofstra vs. UNC Wilmington  
**Quarterfinals**  
**Saturday, March 8**  
 Delaware vs. Hofstra-UNC Wilmington winner  
 Drexel vs. Northeastern  
 Towson vs. James Madison  
 William & Mary vs. College of Charleston  
**Semifinals**  
**Sunday, March 9**  
 Delaware-Hofstra-UNC Wilmington winner vs. Drexel-Northeastern winner  
 Towson-James Madison winner vs. William & Mary-College of Charleston winner  
**Championship**  
**Monday, March 10**  
**Horizon League**  
**First Round**  
**Tuesday, March 4**  
 Oakland 96, Youngstown State 82, OT  
 Valparaiso 73, Illinois-Chicago 63  
 Milwaukee 83, Detroit 73  
**At The Reach Center**  
**Green Bay, Wis.**  
**Second Round**  
**Friday, March 7**  
 Wright State vs. Valparaiso  
 Valparaiso vs. Milwaukee  
**Semifinals**  
**Saturday, March 8**  
 Cleveland State vs. Wright State-Oakland winner  
 Green Bay vs. Valparaiso-Milwaukee winner  
**Championship**  
**At Higher-Seeded Team**  
**Tuesday, March 11**  
 Semifinal winners  
**Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference**  
**At MassMutual Center**  
**Springfield, Mass.**  
**First Round**  
**Thursday, March 6**  
 Rider 71, Monmouth 60  
 Saint Peter's 65, Fairfield 62, OT  
 Marist 66, Niagara 62

**Ohio Valley Conference**  
**At Municipal Auditorium**  
**Nashville, Tenn.**  
**First Round**  
**Wednesday, March 5**  
 Tennessee Tech 74, SIU Edwardsville 67  
 Southeast Missouri 79, Eastern Illinois 61  
**Second Round**  
**Thursday, March 6**  
 Morehead State 76, Tennessee Tech 61  
 Eastern Kentucky 84, Southeast Missouri 76  
**Semifinals**  
**Friday, March 7**  
 Belmont vs. Morehead State  
 Murray State vs. Eastern Kentucky  
**Championship**  
**Saturday, March 8**  
 Belmont vs. Murray State  
**Missouri Valley Conference**  
**At Scottrade Center**  
**St. Louis**  
**First Round**  
**Thursday, March 6**  
 Evansville 69, Drake 63  
 Loyola of Chicago 74, Bradley 72  
**Quarterfinals**  
**Friday, March 7**  
 Wichita State vs. Evansville  
 Missouri State vs. Illinois State  
 Indiana State vs. Loyola of Chicago  
 Northern Iowa vs. Southern Illinois  
**Semifinals**  
**Saturday, March 8**  
 Wichita State-Evansville winner vs. Missouri State-Illinois State winner  
 Indiana State-Loyola of Chicago winner vs. Northern Iowa-Southern Illinois winner  
**Championship**  
**Sunday, March 9**  
 Semifinal winners  
**Northeast Conference**  
**At Higher-Seeded Team**  
**First Round**  
**Wednesday, March 5**  
 Robert Morris 60, Fairleigh Dickinson 53  
 Wagner 83, CCSU 69  
 Mount St. Mary's (Pa.) 58, Bryant 54  
 Mount St. Mary's (Tn.) 52, Francis (N.Y.) 71  
**Semifinals**  
**Saturday, March 8**  
 Mount St. Mary's at Wagner  
 St. Francis (Pa.) at Robert Morris  
**Championship**  
**Thursday, March 11**  
 Semifinal winners

**Semifinals**  
**Sunday, March 9**  
 Davidson-Samford/Appalachian State winner vs. Elon-Western Carolina winner  
 Chattanooga-Georgia Southern-Furman winner vs. Wofford-UNC Greensboro-The Citadel winner  
**Championship**  
**Monday, March 10**  
**Summit League**  
**At Sioux Falls Arena**  
**Sioux Falls, S.D.**  
**First Round**  
**Saturday, March 8**  
 IPFW vs. IUPUI  
**Sunday, March 9**  
 Denver vs. South Dakota  
 South Dakota State vs. Western Illinois  
**Semifinals**  
**Monday, March 10**  
 North Dakota State vs. Denver-South Dakota winner  
 IPFW-IUPUI winner vs. South Dakota State-Western Illinois winner  
**Championship**  
**Tuesday, March 11**  
 Semifinal winners  
**West Coast Conference**  
**At Orleans Arena**  
**Las Vegas**  
**First Round**  
**Thursday, March 6**  
 Loyola Marymount 67, Portland 64  
 Santa Clara 81, Pacific 64  
**Quarterfinals**  
**Saturday, March 8**  
 San Francisco vs. San Diego  
 BYU vs. Loyola Marymount  
 Gonzaga vs. Santa Clara  
 Saint Mary's vs. Pepperdine  
**Semifinals**  
**Monday, March 10**  
 San Francisco-San Diego winner vs. BYU-Loyola Marymount winner  
 Gonzaga-Santa Clara winner vs. Saint Mary's-Pepperdine winner  
**Championship**  
**Tuesday, March 11**  
 Semifinal winners

# COLLEGE BASKETBALL

# Pick 6: Women's tourney players to watch

By **AARON BEARD**  
The Associated Press

It's conference tournament week in women's basketball with the NCAA tournament about two weeks away.

Here's a look at six players to watch among the top leagues in tournament action, which began with the Atlantic Coast Conference's first-round games Wednesday afternoon. Strong performances by these players could help determine whether their teams can hoist the championship trophy.



LM OTTERO/AP

**West Virginia senior Asya Bussie averaged 13.2 points per game for the No. 7 Mountaineers.**

**1** Asya Bussie, West Virginia. The 6-foot-4 senior missed last year with a knee injury, but has averaged 13.2 points and 7.7 rebounds for the No. 7 Mountaineers. She has seven double-doubles this year and nearly half her team's

blocked shots while leading active players nationally with 133 career assists. West Virginia tied No. 9 Baylor for first in the Big 12 and split the regular-season meetings, with Bussie averaging 19 points in those two games for the second-seeded Mountaineers.



TIMOTHY D. EASLEY/AP

**Louisville's Shoni Schimmel guided her team to the NCAA championship game last season.**

**4** Shoni Schimmel, Louisville. Schimmel guided the No. 3 Cardinals to their surprising run to the NCAA tournament's championship game last year. They're the No. 2 seed in the American Athletic Conference tournament behind top-ranked and unbeaten Connecticut. The senior guard ranked among the league's leaders in numerous categories, including scoring (16.9 points), assists (3.7), free-throw percentage (77.9), three-point percentage (37.8) and made threes per game (3.2). Schimmel's ability to hit from outside could spark the Cardinals in this week's tournament.



GEORGE NIKITIN/AP

**California's Reshanda Gray had eight 20-point performances.**

**5** Reshanda Gray, California. The 6-3 junior averaged 17.3 points and 9.1 rebounds while shooting 60 percent from the floor, good for second in the Pac-12 for the No. 20 Bears. Gray had eight 20-point performances, cracked 30 points twice and scored a career-high 43 points on 17-for-20 shooting against Washington State last week. The only hiccups game against tournament top seed Stanford, when she managed a combined seven points on 3-for-9 shooting while battling foul trouble in the two regular-season meetings. Cali is the No. 2 seed in the Pac-12 tournament.



MARY ANN CHASTAIN/AP

**South Carolina sophomore Tiffany Mitchell was named the Southeastern Conference Player of the year this season.**

**2** Tiffany Mitchell, South Carolina. Mitchell was the Southeastern Conference player of the year in the fifth-ranked Gamecocks' historically successful season. Mitchell averaged 15.5 points and 5.6 rebounds while shooting 52 percent both from the floor and behind the three-point arc. The 5-9 sophomore guard sparked South Carolina to its first SEC regular-season title and has the Gamecocks as the No. 1 seed aiming for a first tournament title to go with it.



PAT SULLIVAN/AP

**Nebraska's Jordan Hooper was the Big Ten player of the year, shooting 36 percent from three-point range during the season.**

**3** Jordan Hooper, Nebraska. The 6-2 senior was the Big Ten's player of the year by proving to be an inside-out threat for the No. 16 Cornhuskers. Hooper ranked third in the league in scoring (20.1) and rebounding (9.3) while shooting 36 percent from three-point percentage during the regular season, helping Nebraska finish a game behind Penn State and Michigan State atop

the league. Hooper was part of the team's 2012 run to the tournament final, a double-overtime loss to Purdue. "I think anybody who watches Jordan on a daily basis in our practices knows that Jordan works really hard," coach Connie Yori said after Hooper's final home game against Illinois. "That's how you get better — by working hard on a regular basis and being consistent. And that's what she's been."



PATRICK SEMANSKY/AP

**Maryland forward Alyssa Thomas, three-time ACC player of the year is averaging 18.7 points, 10.8 rebounds and 4.3 assists per game for the No. 8 Terrapins.**

**6** Alyssa Thomas, Maryland. The 6-2 senior is a three-time ACC player of the year for the No. 8 Maryland, the third seed in the ACC tournament. If the Terrapins have any chance of stopping Notre Dame's unbeaten run in its league debut, Thomas will have to come up big. She's averaging 18.7 points, 10.8 rebounds and 4.3

assists while shooting nearly 53 percent from the field. She also had 29 points and 12 rebounds in an 87-83 loss to the Fighting Irish on Jan. 27, which was Notre Dame's closest call all year. "A kid that can be powerful inside and pass like that is just a special, special player," Florida State coach Sue Semrau said this season.

## MLB



JULIAN H. GONZALEZ, DETROIT FREE PRESS/MCT

Detroit's Austin Jackson, top right, gets a welcome hug from Anibal Sanchez during spring training.

## Fun: Ausmus brings sense of camaraderie to clubhouse

### FROM BACK PAGE

Leyland, whose old-school sense of humor was always a hit. But Ausmus seems to be going out of his way to foster a sense of clubhouse camaraderie.

"At the end of the day, we're playing a game," Cy Young winner Max Scherzer said. "We're playing a game for a living, and you've got to have fun in this game, because there's so much failure, inherently, within baseball."

The Tigers have been a loose but professional bunch throughout their run of success, and Hunter was acting very much in character when he tweeted a link Tuesday to the blurry picture of him and the alligator. He said later he puckered but didn't actually kiss the animal.

The gator's arrival was apparently the result of a visit by some players to a nearby theme park.

"We had the rookies go and do a report," Hunter said. "They had like a camera and microphone, and walked around and different animals — tarantulas, pythons, everything. ... We did a film and then at the end of it, they had a delivery."

"A knock on the door, and somebody opened the door — it was a delivery for Miguel Cabrera. Miguel was about to get it, and the box started moving — like something was moving in it — and Miguel took off running."

The alligator turned out to be relatively harmless, its mouth bashed shut.

"We just had fun with it, took pictures with it," Hunter said.

Leyland, Detroit's manager for the last eight seasons, was known

for his ability to relate to players much younger than he. "He was having fun in his own way," Scherzer said. "He can moonwalk, he can dance. The jokes he tells are so X-rated I can't even tell you. It's stuff like that."

The 44-year-old Ausmus took over in November, with his Dartmouth pedigree and refined manner — but he clearly understands the importance of team bonding.

The alligator stunt was part of the Tigers' morning meeting, which is a new element of the team's daily routine. Lest anyone think the players are turning their spring training complex into "Animal House" — literally and figuratively — Ausmus says these gatherings involve more than just goofing off.

"The point of the meetings are to kind of get the team together and have some fun and build camaraderie. If it's working, then great," Ausmus said. "We tend to business in those meetings as well, but we have some laughs while we're in there."

The photo of Hunter surfaced a couple days after another Tigers-related picture began making the Internet rounds.

Reliever Joba Chamberlain's Twitter followers were treated to

a shot of Detroit catcher Bryan Holaday posing in a women's swimsuit at a get-together with teammates.

Next to Holaday in the picture was a more conventionally dressed Upton. Tigers star Justin Verlander has been spotted with Upton on occasion, but he's never said much publicly about the nature of his relationship with the swimsuit model.

Holaday has played in 22 major league games. Now, he's a bit of a social media sensation.

"He did an unbelievable job," Chamberlain said. "He probably should have used a spray tan before, but we'll have to work on that."

Scherzer is in the foreground of that picture wearing a sombrero. "We had a theme — taco night — for a cookout," Chamberlain said. "We've done cookouts and stuff before, so we tried to mix it up and had a taco night."

So the Tigers are enjoying themselves, breaking up the monotony of baseball's preseason in whatever creative ways they can think of. Players have also been participating in a basketball shooting competition, which is tracked on a big bracket posted in the clubhouse.

There's already been plenty of trash talk about that. It's all healthy fun to an experienced team that has probably earned the benefit of the doubt as far as balancing preparation with laughter.

"It's baseball," Scherzer said. "If you're not smiling and having fun while you're getting better, you're not playing this game right."

## Sports medicine pioneer Jobe dies

By BETH HARRIS  
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Dr. Frank Jobe, a pioneering orthopedic surgeon who was the first to perform an elbow procedure that became known as Tommy John surgery and saved the careers of countless major league pitchers, died Thursday. He was 88.

Jobe died in Santa Monica after being hospitalized recently with an undisclosed illness, according to a spokesman for the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Jobe performed groundbreaking elbow surgery on John, a Dodgers pitcher who had a ruptured medial collateral ligament in his left elbow. The injury previously had no solution until Jobe removed a tendon from John's forearm and repaired his elbow. John went on to pitch 14 years after the operation on Sept. 25, 1974, compiling 164 more victories without ever missing a start because of an elbow problem.

"Today I lost a GREAT friend," John tweeted.

Last year, the initial surgery and the relationship between John and Jobe was the subject of an ESPN documentary.

"When he did come back, I thought maybe we could do it on somebody else," Jobe told The Associated Press in 2010. "I waited two years to try it on somebody else, but we had no idea we could do it again."

Jobe initially estimated John's chances of returning to the majors at less than 5 percent. He later said 92 to 95 percent of patients return as good, if not better,

than before the surgery.

The surgery has since become common practice for pitchers and players at every level of baseball, including New York Mets pitcher Matt Harvey, Washington star Stephen Strasburg, Milwaukee's Tim Hudson and Minnesota's Francisco Liriano.

Some pitchers have signed multi-year contracts just months after they have the surgery in expectation of a high-level return.

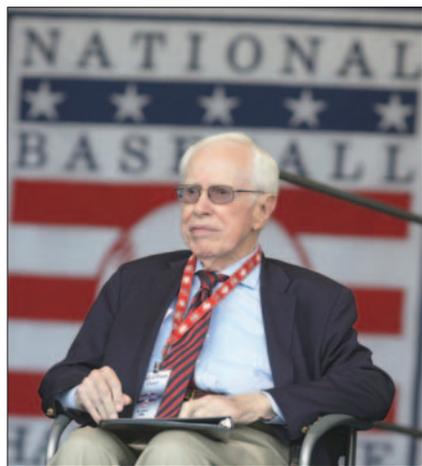
Typically, full rehabilitation takes about a year for pitchers and about six months for position players. The procedure initially required four hours; now it takes about an hour.

Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig saluted Jobe for revolutionizing sports medicine.

"His wisdom elevated not only the Dodgers, the franchise he served proudly for a half-century, but all of our clubs," Selig said in a statement. "Dr. Jobe's expertise, as well as his enthusiasm to mentor his peers, made the national pastime stronger."

Since 1974, Jobe had performed hundreds of Tommy John surgeries on pitchers. Jobe co-founded the Kerlan-Jobe Orthopedic Clinic along with the late Dr. Robert Kerlan in 1965. They supervised the medical treatment for the Dodgers and Angels, Los Angeles Lakers, Los Angeles Rams, the Los Angeles Kings, and Anaheim Ducks, as well as other pro and amateur athletes around the country.

Jobe had also been the orthopedic consultant for the PGA Tour for more than 25 years.



MIKE GROUL/AP

Dr. Frank Jobe, known for the development of the historic elbow procedure known as "Tommy John surgery," is honored during a ceremony in Cooperstown, N.Y., on July 27. Jobe, a pioneer in the field of sports medicine, died Thursday. He was 88.

# SPORTS

Right: Detroit outfielder Rajai Davis hams it up for a photo shoot during spring training in Lakeland, Fla. Below: In this screen shot from Instagram, the Tigers' Torii Hunter, left, has a close encounter with an alligator while teammate Justin Verlander watches.

GENE J. PUSKAR, RIGHT/AP



# Good times

## Tigers are having fun

By NOAH TRISTER  
*The Associated Press*

LAKELAND, Fla. — Torii Hunter puckered up next to the mouth of a wide-eyed alligator — and it was hard to tell if the fun-loving Detroit outfielder was more amused or terrified.

“He was calm,” Hunter said of the unexpected visitor to spring training. “I guess he’s used to being around people.”

Hunter and the Tigers are laughing their way toward opening day, approach-

ing spring camp with a mix of relaxed lightheartedness and serious focus under new manager Brad Ausmus.

Whether it’s a player posing with a reptile or a backup catcher donning a women’s swimsuit next to Kate Upton, the three-time AL Central champions certainly look like they’re the class of the majors when it comes to viral photos.

The Tigers also had fun under Jim

**SEE FUN ON PAGE 31**



## Clippers hand Lakers their most lopsided loss in history | NBA, Page 28