

STARS AND STRIPES®

Thursday, April 20, 2017

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Navy outlaws revenge porn photo sharing

BY TYLER HLAVAC

Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The Navy officially has outlawed revenge porn, according to an article added to the service's regulations this week.

"The wrongful distribution or broadcasting of an intimate image is prohibited," said a message released Tuesday by acting Secretary of the Navy Sean J. Stackley.

Revenge porn is when an intimate photo is taken and shared willingly with a partner or spouse but later is distributed online by that partner without the subject's permission, an Associated Press report said.

According to Article 1168, "wrongful distribution" is defined as broadcasting intimate images without permission and with the purpose of personal gain, humiliation or harm or with "reckless disregard as to whether the depicted person would be humiliated, harmed, intimidated, threatened, or coerced," among other scenarios, the message said.

The article defines "broadcasting" as any visual image sent electronically, and gives examples of "intimate images" as anything that violates reasonable expectations of privacy or is sexually explicit.

Sailors and Marines who violate the article could run afoul of Uniform Code of Military Justice Article 92, failure to obey an order or regulation, Chief of Information Rear Adm. Dawn Cutler told the Navy Times on Wednesday.

"The addition ... to Navy Regulations serves to underscore leadership's commitment to eliminating degrading behaviors that erode trust and weaken the Navy and Marine Corps Team," Cutler said. "It provides commanders another tool to maintain good order and discipline by holding sailors and Marines accountable for inappropriate conduct in the nonconsensual sharing of intimate imagery."

Military leaders recently have issued a slew of orders and guidance and issued strong condemnation amid the fallout over the sharing of nude photographs of female

Marines on a secret Facebook group called Marines United.

The problem engulfed the Navy last month after the revelation that female sailors at dozens of commands were targeted by individuals posting or looking to obtain nude photos of them.

Last month, Commandant Gen. Robert Neller pushed updated social media guidance across the Marine Corps and released a video addressing the scandal in which he said such behavior was "embarrassing to our Corps, to our families and to the nation."

In a message released to the Navy last month, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson said such actions "makes us weaker, and cedes advantage to the enemy," and vowed to crackdown on what he called "toxic behavior."

Currently, 35 states and Washington, D.C., have laws that in some form punish revenge porn, according to the nonprofit Cyber Civil Rights Initiative.

Trump officials defend description of carrier moves

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Trump administration officials on Wednesday denied misleading the public about the location of an aircraft carrier and whether it was redeployed as a show of strength against North Korea.

The whereabouts of the USS Carl Vinson, a Nimitz-class aircraft carrier, and its accompanying strike group were swept up last week in an intensifying standoff between the U.S. and Pyongyang, which Washington has warned is risking American military action by pushing ahead with its disputed nuclear and missile programs.

As North Korea escalated its war of words with Washington, President Donald Trump declared last week that he was "sending an armada, very

powerful" toward the Asian nation. He, like other officials, made that assertion after U.S. Pacific Command's April 9 announcement that the ship was headed from Singapore toward the western Pacific, part of a U.S. response to tensions with Pyongyang.

But news early this week that the ship at the time was actually in the Indian Ocean, thousands of miles to the southwest, triggered speculation that the Trump administration, eager to illustrate its hawkish stance on a range of national security issues, was using deceptive means to send a message to Pyongyang.

White House press secretary Sean Spicer, during his daily media briefing on Wednesday, disputed the notion that the administration had led anyone

astray.

"What part is misleading? I'm trying to figure that out," Spicer said. "We were asked a question about what signal it sent. We answered the question on what signal it sent. I'm not the one who commented on timing."

But military officials struggled to give a firm answer for why officials from the Pentagon and other agencies failed to correct at least a week of widespread media reports stating that the ship was already headed north toward the Korean Peninsula.

According to officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the issue, the misperception began after U.S. Pacific Command made its April 9 announcement, which stated that the ship would can-

cel scheduled stops in Australia and head toward the "Western Pacific" from Singapore. Although the statement did not mention North Korea explicitly, PACOM officials made reference the same day to PACOM's focus on North Korea in comments to reporters, drawing a link between the redirection of the ship and the nuclear threat.

As media outlets reported widely on the deployment, senior officials made comments in the following days that reinforced the belief that the ship already was headed in the direction of North Korea. On April 11, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, asked about the Vinson during a news conference, said the ship was "on her way up there." The next day, Trump made his comments in a television interview.

Congress urged to delay \$9B Navy plan for frigates

Bloomberg

Congress should consider delaying an upcoming Navy request for as much as \$9 billion to start work on 12 better-armed successor vessels to the troubled littoral combat ship, according to congressional auditors.

A delay beyond fiscal 2018 is warranted because too many unanswered questions remain about the new frigate's cost and capabilities, the Government Accountability Office said in a report Tuesday. The Navy plans to select in mid-2018 between competing designs by Lockheed Martin Corp. or Austal Ltd. The two contractors now make different versions of the LCS.

"The Navy's impending fiscal year 2018 budget request presents a key opportunity for Congress to affect the way forward for the frigate program by ensuring the Navy possesses sufficient knowledge on cost, design and capability before authorizing" the investment, the watchdog agency said in

the report.

Authorizing the money isn't justified yet because the program has "no current formal cost estimate — independent or otherwise" — and will not "have begun key detail design activities" and "has significant unknowns in regards to operational performance."

The LCS has been controversial, with two defense secretaries under former President Barack Obama questioning whether the light ship intended for shallow, coastal waters could survive in combat and then cutting back the numbers planned.

But the LCS and the successor frigate would be one path toward President Donald Trump's pledge to rapidly expand the Navy's fleet to 350 vessels from about 272 today.

"Today, with 28 LCS delivered, under contract, or funded, the Navy plans to wind down the LCS program — with the last contract awards expected in 2017 — and pivot to acquisition of the frigate," the GAO said.

Missing Marine's body found near Hawaii trail

BY WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii — The body of a 21-year-old Marine who went missing earlier this month in Hawaii was found Tuesday near a rugged hiking trail on Oahu.

Pfc. Tyler Wechsler, of Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 367, Marine Aircraft Group 24, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing at Marine Corps Base Hawaii, was discovered near Kaau Crater Loop Trail, a demanding hiking route that features narrow ridges, steep climbs and several waterfalls.

His Jeep Liberty was found nearby, said Sgt. Kim Buffett, a coordinator with Honolulu Crime Stoppers, which spearheaded the search.

An item belonging to Wechsler, who last had been seen on the afternoon of April 9 in Waikiki Beach, was found near his body and led to his discovery, Buffett said.

The Honolulu Medical Examiner's Office is investigating the cause of death. Foul play is not suspected at this time.

"Private First Class Wechsler was a valued member of our squadron, and his loss is deeply felt," Lt. Col. Frank Makoski, the HMLA-367 commander, said in a III Marine Expeditionary Force statement. "Our hearts are with his family and friends."

Wechsler, a native of Egg Harbor Township, N.J., joined the Marines last year and trained as an airframes mechanic, the statement said. His awards include the National Defense Service Medal.

He graduated from high school in 2013 and was part of the Cape Atlantic League championship lacrosse team in 2012, according to the Press of Atlantic City.

Wechsler's family set up a GoFundMe page in their search for him. His father had traveled to Hawaii to help search, the page said.

Guantanamo leader kills plan to rescue feral cats

Miami Herald

MIAMI — Guantanamo's commander has concluded he does not have the authority to allow teams of volunteer cat lovers to scoop up feral cats across the base to neuter and vaccinate them to spare them from extermination.

A nonprofit organization called Operation Git-Meow presented the proposal last month to the U.S. Navy base commander, Capt. Dave Culpepper — along with an appeal for his help in establishing an adopt-a-cat program to help temporary troops and contract workers take home cats they befriend on base.

But base spokeswoman Julie Ann Ripley said this week that

while Culpepper "is happy to entertain volunteers to help manage the feral cat population, including adopt-a-cat programs," he is bound by Department of Defense regulations that forbid the practice to control feral cats called trap, neuter and release.

In 2016, the base euthanized at least 186 cats, according to a Navy response to a Freedom of Information Act filing by the Miami Herald. "From what I understand, they are too sick or injured, or are dangerous," Ripley said of those cats given a "euthanasia solution" at the Veterinary Treatment Facility.

But, Ripley said, any cat that Git-Meow members bring to the base's vet clinic "for adoption are spayed and chipped"

— not killed.

Guantanamo, she said, is "committed to maintaining an animal control program as guided by Navy and Department of Defense regulations and ensuring all species are legally and humanely managed."

The proposed program for the 45-square-mile base best known for its prison for war-on-terrorism detainees put a spotlight on the residential nature of life behind a minefield in southeastern Cuba. Some 5,500 or so people live and work at the outpost, which has an airport, a seaport, suburban-style neighborhoods, a school for sailors' children and, according to activists, at least 500 feral cats.

Cats probably arrived on the first sailing ship from the

Old World, according to Erika Kelly, who spotted the problem on a visit to the base and has set up Operation Git-Meow as a corporation seeking IRS 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. Others might have made it through the Cuban minefield.

Undaunted by rejection from the skipper, her group is now preparing an appeal directly to the Department of the Navy to waive the regulation and to permit what Kelly calls "a no-cost solution" — permission for an all-volunteer force of civilian veterinarians, vet techs and cat lovers to sterilize, vaccinate and implant chips in feral cats.

Kelly added that her pitch to Navy headquarters will include a warning of the possibility of rabies on the base.

Prosecutors say illicit history between admiral, 'Fat Leonard' goes back 20 years

The Washington Post

The highest-ranking officer convicted so far in a colossal Navy corruption scandal began accepting a cornucopia of gifts and prostitutes from an Asian defense contractor 20 years ago and later suffered a mental breakdown when he learned authorities were making arrests in the case, new court documents allege.

Robert Gilbeau became the first active-duty Navy admiral ever to be convicted of a felony when he pleaded guilty last year to lying to federal investigators. He is scheduled to be sentenced next month and likely faces up to 18 months in prison.

In a plea deal last June, Gilbeau admitted to making false statements about his contacts with Leonard Glenn Francis, also known as "Fat Leonard," a crooked defense contractor from Singapore who has pleaded guilty to bribing scores of Navy officials.

At the time, Gilbeau and federal authorities revealed little about the nature and extent of his relationship with Francis.

But in documents filed last week in federal court in San Diego, prosecutors allege that Gilbeau, 56, was corrupted in 1997 when he and another Navy officer met Francis during a port visit to the Indonesian island of Bali and succumbed to the contractor's offer of free hotel rooms, lavish dinners and paid sex.

The relationship continued on a sporadic basis until 2012, according to prosecutors, who said Francis treated Gilbeau to numerous evenings at karaoke bars and luxury restaurants in Singapore, often capped off by assignations with prostitutes.

Prosecutors allege that Gilbeau also pocketed \$40,000 in cash bribes from Francis as part of a kickback scheme to overcharge the Navy for pumping wastewater from its ships.

The revelations show that the origins and scope of the scandal — already the biggest in the Navy history — stretch back seven years earlier than previ-

ously known. In cases against two dozen other defendants, prosecutors have focused on wrongdoing that began in 2004 and lasted until Francis's arrest in 2013.

Authorities said last year that more than 200 people, including 30 admirals, were under investigation for potential crimes or ethical violations.

The new evidence suggests that the roster of suspects has expanded and raises questions about how far into the past authorities will reach to hold people accountable.

Francis, who is being held in San Diego while he awaits sentencing, has admitted to gouging the Navy out of \$35 million to resupply and refuel its ships at ports across Asia.

Investigators suspect the total may have been far greater. His firm, Glenn Defense Marine Asia, did business with the Navy for a quarter century.

In court documents, Gilbeau and his attorneys said some of his actions were influenced by injuries he sustained during a mortar attack in Baghdad in 2007.

The explosion left him with shrapnel in his knee, back trauma, loss of hearing in one ear and traumatic brain injury. He was awarded the Purple Heart. In court papers, Gilbeau's doctors said he developed severe depression and post-traumatic stress that grew worse over time.

Prosecutors suggested that Gilbeau is exaggerating his condition. They said he only began exhibiting overt symptoms of mental illness in 2013 — right after news spread that Francis and several Navy officials had been arrested on corruption charges.

At the time, Gilbeau held a key command job in Afghanistan overseeing the logistical withdrawal of U.S. troops. When Francis's arrest became public, he began acting irrationally, showed signs of paranoia and became suicidal, according to his medical records filed by his attorneys.

Prosecutors said he suddenly

made "ponderous, unsolicited remarks regarding Francis, dinners and women" to colleagues in the war zone and asked for help in erasing data from his electronic devices.

Military officials seized his sidearm and evacuated him to a hospital in Germany for observation.

While Gilbeau's doctors said his behavior could be traced to the injuries he had sustained in Iraq six years earlier, prosecutors argued that it stemmed from his "regret over being caught."

Gilbeau has been receiving intensive psychiatric treatment ever since, according to medical records filed by his attorneys.

In a letter to U.S. District Court Judge Janis Sammartino, who will sentence him next month, Gilbeau called himself "a broken and ashamed man" and said he was "deeply sorry" for making false statements to investigators. He did not address the allegations that he took bribes or prostitutes.

"I always thought I was on the right side of the law and drove the best deals for our Navy and the Department of Defense," he wrote. "I apologize to the Navy, to my family and to this nation for the fact that my actions caused great damage to the Navy's reputation."

Under terms of his plea deal, Gilbeau has agreed to pay \$150,000 in fines and restitution. Prosecutors are pressing for an 18-month prison sentence.

In court papers, Gilbeau's lawyers say he should be spared any time behind bars. His lead attorney, David Benowitz, declined to comment.

The Navy allowed Gilbeau to retire in October after 33 years of service, but reduced him in rank from rear admiral to captain. It also discharged him under "less than honorable" conditions.

He is now receiving a military pension of about \$111,000 a year. But in court papers, his attorneys argued that the demotion has cost him dearly. If he had been allowed to retain the rank of a one-star admiral, he would be entitled to an extra \$692,000

in pension payments over 40 years.

Gilbeau also forfeited up to \$2.4 million in disability benefits that the Department of Veterans Affairs would have had to pay him over the next four decades, according to his attorneys. His less-than-honorable discharge from the Navy rendered him ineligible.

According to court papers filed by prosecutors, Gilbeau was a supply officer assigned to the USS Boxer, a brand-new amphibious assault ship, when he met Francis in 1997. The documents state that Francis "plied Gilbeau and another U.S. Navy Officer with hotel rooms, dinners and the services of prostitutes" during a multiday port visit to Bali.

The trio met again six years later when Gilbeau and his friend were serving on the USS Nimitz, an aircraft carrier. During a port call to Singapore in September 2003, Francis took Gilbeau and the other officer out to a nightclub with prostitutes, according to prosecutors.

During the same 2003 port visit, prosecutors allege, Francis and Gilbeau conspired to overcharge the Navy for services provided to the Nimitz. Invoices show that Francis' firm billed the Navy for pumping about 450,000 gallons of sewage and wastewater from the Nimitz over four days — about triple the usual amount.

Prosecutors contend that in exchange for approving the invoices, Gilbeau accepted about \$40,000 in cash kickbacks from Francis. (Gilbeau has previously denied receiving money from the contractor.)

Their relationship resumed in 2005 when Gilbeau returned to Singapore to help coordinate the Navy's tsunami relief efforts in the region.

Francis provided prostitutes to dozens of Navy officials over the years, and kept meticulous notes about the sailors' physical desires so he could cater to their preferences, according to court records and interviews with people familiar with his methods.

O'Reilly out at Fox but influence endures

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Despite the inglorious end to Bill O'Reilly's two-decade Fox News Channel career, observers say his deep imprint on Fox and other cable news outlets and his influence on barbed political discourse are intact for the foreseeable future.

Fired on Wednesday amid a drumbeat of sexual harassment allegations, the vacationing host's "The O'Reilly Factor" was quickly redubbed "The Factor" and Fox News announced his time slot will be filled by Tucker Carlson, another adamantly conservative Fox host who dovetails with the channel's audience.

But it was O'Reilly who created the template for how to succeed in cable TV punditry, delighting his viewers with unapologetic attacks on liberal politicians and media members that he delivered with gusto.

"In many ways, he led Fox's cable news revolution," said Frank Sesno, a journalism professor at George Washington University and former CNN Washington bureau chief. "Cable news is someone standing on a mountaintop shouting, and Bill O'Reilly was on the highest peak, so he echoed across the landscape."

And he keeps echoing in the broader media landscape. O'Reilly's success at appealing to like-minded viewers made him and Fox into cable news leaders.

"He helped shape the kind of very polarized discourse that has come to define politics over the past few years in America," said Tom Holihan, a professor at the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism at the University of Southern California.

His ratings made him Fox's most lucrative personality, with his show generating \$178 million in advertising revenue in 2015, according to Kantar Media.

Mattis: US to help Egypt fight ISIS

BY COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

CAIRO — Defense Secretary Jim Mattis vowed Thursday that the U.S. will aid Egypt in its battle against terrorism, pledging to strengthen the military bond between the two countries strained during President Barack Obama's administration.

"We agreed on the need for a renewed and strong security partnership as the new administration comes in," Mattis said of his discussions Thursday in the Egyptian capital with President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi and Defense Minister Gen. Sedki Sobhy. "... I left Cairo very confident, very confident in the avenues we have to advance our military-to-military relationship, which has been a bedrock and has stood solid all these years."

Thursday's meetings focused primarily on Egypt's efforts to counter terrorism, primarily Islamic State, which has infiltrated the country through its porous western border with Libya and has maintained a long-term insurgency in the Sinai Peninsula, said U.S. officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Mattis did not provide specifics on the kind of assistance the U.S. could provide Egypt to bolster its anti-terrorism fight. U.S. officials said no specific commitments were made Thursday.

The talks built off discussions that Mattis and el-Sissi held April 5 at the Pentagon during the Egyptian president's visit to Washington when he also met with President Donald Trump.

Trump, like Mattis, called for the two nations to rebuild their relationship, adding that el-Sissi had "done a fantastic job in a very difficult situation" in the anti-terrorism fight.

El-Sissi's visit to the White House was the first by an Egyptian president in eight years, follow-

ing tensions between the two nations over human rights issues. Obama froze some of the roughly \$1.5 billion in annual aid the U.S. provides Egypt after the 2013 military coup that overthrew democratically elected President Mohammed Morsi.

Despite political tensions, the U.S. and Egypt have remained important military partners throughout recent history, said Zack Gold, an analyst who studies Egyptian security at Washington think tank CNA.

"The military-to-military relationship is the pillar to the bilateral relationship," Gold said. "Even when there are ups and downs in the diplomatic and political front — as there have been over the past handful of years — the military-to-military ties are about as strong as they ever were."

Egypt is one of the 60-plus nations that belong to the anti-ISIS coalition. It primarily provides counterpropaganda support for the mission, but does not provide troops or play any military role to the fight.

The Trump administration potentially could ask Egypt, which has among the largest armed forces in the Middle East, to do more for the coalition fighting ISIS, Gold said. But Egypt is more focused on its own terrorism issues. The Egyptians have struggled to secure their border with Libya, allowing that country's ongoing civil war — and ISIS fighters — occasionally to spill across the border. In the Sinai, a yearslong anti-government guerrilla fight by an ISIS-affiliated militant group has continued. ISIS fighters more recently have begun waging a more traditional terrorist campaign in Egypt, including twin bombings this month that killed more than 40 people and wounded at least 100 more.

Mattis will meet Friday in Israel with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Pence lauds Indonesia's democratic values

Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia — Vice President Mike Pence praised Indonesia's democracy and moderate form of Islam after meeting Thursday with the president of the world's most populous Muslim nation.

The comments, though routine, had significance for Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo, who a day earlier suffered a serious political setback when a political ally was defeated by Islamic conservatives in the election for Jakarta governor. The divisive campaign undermined the image of Indonesia abroad as a generally tolerant Muslim nation.

Indonesia is the latest stop on

an Asian tour by Pence that is reinforcing traditional U.S. alliances at a time when Donald Trump's presidency has raised questions about the strength of the U.S. commitment to the region.

Pence said at a joint news conference with Jokowi that the U.S. wants to strengthen its strategic partnership with Indonesia. In brief comments, Jokowi said they agreed to boost cooperation.

The vice president praised Indonesia for the moderate form of Islam it practices and said the two countries would continue to cooperate on combating terrorism.

"As the second- and third-largest democracies in the

world, our two countries share many common values including freedom, the rule of law, human rights and religious diversity," Pence said. "The United States is proud to partner with Indonesia. It promotes and protects these values."

But Pence foreshadowed some reworking of commercial and economic ties, saying that the U.S. seeks a free and fair relationship that helps job creation and economic growth for both sides. He said that U.S. exporters should face a level playing field and the relationship should be "win-win."

Indonesia is on Trump's trade hit list of nations that he considers the U.S. is losing out to in trade.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Deputy found justified in shocking of man, 84

MT BILLINGS — The Montana Department of Justice has determined that a sheriff's deputy was justified in his use of force against an 84-year-old man who was shocked several times with a stun gun.

The Billings Gazette reported that the Wheatland County deputy used a Taser on Richard "Dick" Stoltz after pulling the Harlowton man over in March. Stoltz was arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence and has pleaded not guilty.

Sheriff David Jones had requested the Justice Department look into the traffic stop.

Mike McCarthy, with the department's Montana Law Enforcement Academy, concluded that Deputy Michael Barrett did not use excessive force against Stoltz. He found that Stoltz exhibited aggressive behavior during the incident, refused to follow commands and resisted arrest.

Apparent piranha carcass found at pond

NV BOULDER CITY — Nevada wildlife officials have found what appears to be a piranha carcass on the shore of a pond.

The Las Vegas Review-Journal reported Monday that the carcass had been found at Veterans Memorial Park in Boulder City.

A witness also said they saw a piranha swimming in the pond.

Officials say piranhas are not native to Nevada, which means somebody illegally possessed and released the fish into the pond. The species is found in South America.

Authorities said they won't be able to confirm the species

of the fish until a flesh test is completed, but a department of wildlife spokesman said the carcass will be investigated as a wildlife crime.

Border agents seize more than ton of pot

AZ LUKEVILLE — U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers seized more than a ton of marijuana found in a motor home at a southern Arizona border crossing.

The agency says officers at the Lukeville crossing found 2,600 pounds of marijuana when led to it by a drug-sniffing dog during a secondary inspection of the vehicle Saturday.

Agents arrested a 55-year-old Glendale man who was driving the vehicle and a 58-year-old Phoenix woman who was his passenger. Their names were not released.

City expects increase in riverboat traffic

MS VICKSBURG — An increase in riverboat traffic is expected to bring more than 40,000 visitors to Vicksburg this year.

The Vicksburg Post reported that tourists traveling by riverboat have generated a significant economic impact for the city, whose waterfront is a featured stop. Some 30,000 riverboat passengers visited Vicksburg in 2016.

The American Queen steamboat is the largest ship to regularly visit Vicksburg, with a capacity of 436 passengers. Its parent company estimated each stop in the city yields a \$23,000-to-\$27,000 impact.

Vicksburg Convention and Visitors Bureau Executive Director Bill Serrat said the overall increase in riverboat visits translates to a larger awareness of the city through word-

of-mouth advertising from passengers.

2 accused of recording new movie at theater

MD LINTHICUM — Authorities in Maryland said they arrested two men for recording the latest installment of the "Fast and Furious" movie franchise with cameras under their shirts.

Anne Arundel County police said in a statement that they arrested Troy Montgomery Cornish, 38, and Floyd Lee Buchanan, 35, and charged them with unauthorized recording at the Hoyts Movie Theater on April 14.

Police said they were alerted when an investigator with the Motion Picture Association of America called authorities. The investigator told police he saw two known piracy suspects entering an early screening of "The Fate of the Furious."

Authorities found the men in the theater, allegedly filming the movie with recording equipment harnessed under their shirts.

3rd person convicted of illegal food stamp use

CT HARTFORD — An employee of a Connecticut grocery has pleaded guilty to unlawful use of food stamps.

Tahir Shahzad, from New York, pleaded guilty in Hartford's federal court on Monday, the U.S. Attorney's office told the Hartford Courant. He was convicted alongside two other employees charged with the same crimes. Raul Carlos Monarca-Gonzalez, one of the three, has been sentenced to more than two years in prison. Shahzad and Tallat Mahmood are both awaiting sentencing.

Prosecutors said the grocery employees illegally al-

lowed customers to redeem food stamps for cash and other ineligible items like cigarettes and hookahs for a period of two years. Shahzad charged the food stamp cards double the cost of the ineligible items, making a fraudulent profit.

Diplomat chases off burglar in Manhattan

NY NEW YORK — A Danish diplomat put aside diplomacy for the night when a burglar broke into her Manhattan apartment Saturday night, chasing off the unsuccessful thief.

Marie Wandel scared off the would-be thief from her New York apartment, taking back what he stole in the process.

The burglar had attempted to take a camera and jewelry, which were worth about \$1,000 altogether. While Wandel managed to retrieve her belongings, the suspect is still at large.

Council votes to sell Robert E. Lee statue

VA CHARLOTTESVILLE — The Charlottesville City Council has decided to sell the statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee in its downtown park.

Media outlets reported the council voted 3-2 Monday to sell the statue. If it doesn't sell, the council will consider donating it.

Councilor Wes Bellamy called for the removal of the statue in March 2016, citing residents who feel it is culturally offensive and a symbol of white supremacy.

A community panel last fall suggested that the statue be moved from Lee Park to McIntire Park.

From wire reports

STARS AND STRIPES®

Single source convenience, reliably independent. Visit www.stripes.com.

Reporting
World, National
and Military News

Surprising Chicago has Boston reeling

Associated Press

CHICAGO — For a team that barely made the playoffs, the Chicago Bulls are the early surprise of this postseason.

They hold a stunning 2-0 lead over the top-seeded Celtics as the series shifts to Chicago for Game 3 on Friday night.

“The credit for this team sticking together through injuries to put ourselves in position to make the playoffs goes to everyone from the coaching staff to the leaders to the young guys, everyone did it together,” Dwyane Wade said.

The Bulls took a commanding lead in the best-of-seven series with Tuesday’s 111-97 victory, and they come home looking like a strong contender to become just the sixth No. 8 seed to knock off a No. 1. None has swept a top seed.

It was hard to see the Bulls in this position. They didn’t clinch a playoff spot until they beat Brooklyn in the final regular-season game. That put Chicago back in the postseason, after missing out a year ago for the first time since 2008.

The Bulls trip to the playoffs comes on the heels of a turbulent regular season for the transitioning team.

There was the big trade last summer when the Bulls sent hometown favorite and former MVP Derrick Rose to New York after going 42-40. Chicago also split with Joakim Noah and Pau Gasol, helping clear the way for young players such as Bobby Portis to get more time.

They brought in Rajon Rondo and then Wade in free agency, moves that seemed to go against the idea of getting younger. And even though they came with a combined four championships, neither veteran filled the team’s biggest need: better shooting.

There was a big flare-up in January when Wade and Butler teed off on the team follow-

ing a loss. Rondo fired back while defending the younger players, and all three veterans got fined by the organization. Rondo was also suspended for a game by the team earlier in the year, and he was in and out of the rotation this season.

The Bulls sat him for five straight games at one point, but had him start 13 of their final 16 games. In Game 2, he just missed a triple-double with 11 points, 14 assists and nine rebounds. Just as important, he helped contain Isaiah Thomas, the Celtics’ dynamic, high-scoring point guard.

“He’s a confident kid and that rubs off on all the other guys,” coach Fred Hoiberg said. “He’s been in a lot of these big moments, championship experience and he’s going to continue to lead us as long as we are playing.”

At the moment, everything seems to be going right for the Bulls.

Butler is averaging 26 points through the first two games. The 35-year-old Wade is coming off a 22-point performance in which he scored 16 in the second half. Not bad, considering he missed three weeks late in the year because of a fractured right elbow.

The Bulls have also gotten big contributions from their role players and have pounded the Celtics on the glass, outrebounding them by 22 through the first two games.

Chicago got 19 points and nine rebounds from Portis in the opener. In Game 2, Robin Lopez chipped in with 18 and eight, while Paul Zipser scored 16.

“I’m just trying to shoot it with confidence,” said Lopez, who hit several midrange jumpers. “I’m sure Bobby told you the same thing. Whenever we’re passing the ball we’re told shoot it if you’re open. That makes it easy to shoot the ball. It makes it easy for it to go in.”

Rockets go up 2-0 on Oklahoma City

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Russell Westbrook put up gaudy numbers on Wednesday night.

The Houston Rockets got a more modest performance from James Harden, but a collective scoring effort helped them rally for a 115-111 win over the Oklahoma City Thunder to take a 2-0 lead in the first-round Western Conference playoff series.

“It wasn’t pretty,” Harden said. “We didn’t make a lot of shots. We gave them the early lead and we had to fight our way back and we did. We didn’t give up. We continued to fight and grind and figure out a way to win.”

Harden scored 35 points and the Rockets overcame 51 points from Westbrook in the highest-scoring triple-double in playoff history. Westbrook set a fran-

chise playoff scoring record and added 13 assists and 10 rebounds. It was the sixth career playoff triple-double for Westbrook, who had an NBA-record 42 in the regular season.

But he shot just 4-for-18 in the fourth quarter and the Rockets clawed back from a double-digit deficit.

He was not in the mood to talk about his statistics after the game.

“I don’t give a [expletive] about the line,” he said before glaring at reporters. “We lost.”

The game was tied before Houston scored 10 straight points with three-pointers from Harden, Patrick Beverley and Eric Gordon to make it 114-104 with 1:22 remaining.

“Down the stretch you’ve just got to be ready,” Gordon said. “James draws a lot of attention. So I was ready for that shot.”

Beal delivers late in Wizards’ victory

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Through the first three quarters of Game 2 of the Washington Wizards’ opening playoff series, Bradley Beal made only 6 of 18 shots. And that came after shooting just 9-for-21 in Game 1.

Did all of those misses bother him? Not one bit. Instead, he relied on a silly play on words that he says his agent taught him.

“It’s something I always tell myself: I don’t know what a ‘miss’ is. A ‘miss’ is a ‘lady,’” Beal explained with a smile. “Everybody’s confident in me. Coach is more than confident in me. So I just rise up and shoot it.”

In a rough-and-tumble, foul-filled game, Beal and backcourt mate John Wall took over in the fourth quarter Wednesday night, combining to score 20 of Washington’s last 21 points in a

109-101 victory over the Atlanta Hawks that gave the Wizards a 2-0 lead in their Eastern Conference series.

Beal finished with 31 points, 16 on 6-for-9 shooting in the final period.

Warriors 110, Trail Blazers 81: Stephen Curry scored 19 points on an off night, JaVale McGee sparked host Golden State off the bench with 15 points, and the short-handed Warriors beat Portland in Game 2 of their first-round playoff series without injured leading scorer Kevin Durant.

Curry went 6-for-18 and also had six assists and six rebounds. Klay Thompson was 6 of 17 with 16 points and CJ McCollum and Damian Lillard were hardly were the dynamic scoring duo for Portland they’d been combining for 75 points only three days earlier.

Vets guide Anaheim to sweep of Calgary

Associated Press

CALGARY, Alberta — The big moments were never too big for the Anaheim Ducks in their playoff series win over Calgary.

When the Flames threatened to gain momentum, Anaheim's leadership and poise prevailed to carry the Ducks to a four-game sweep in their best-of-seven Western Conference quarterfinal. Anaheim ousted Calgary with a 3-1 win Wednesday night.

"Any time you can put a team behind you, you definitely want to take advantage of it," Ducks captain Ryan Getzlaf said.

The Ducks now have the luxury of rest and recovery ahead of their conference semifinal. They await the series winner between the Edmonton Oilers and San Jose Sharks tied at 2-2.

"We move onto the next one and we know that it's only going to get tougher," said head coach Randy Carlyle, who turned 61 on Wednesday.

Calgary was the first team eliminated from this year's playoffs.

Patrick Eaves and Nate Thompson scored on the Ducks first five shots of the game, with Getzlaf adding an empty-net goal.

Carlyle started John Gibson again after replacing him in the second period of Game 3 with Jonathan Bernier. The return on that vote of confidence was Gibson's 36 saves.

Sean Monahan scored his fourth power-play goal in as many games for Calgary.

It was a short night for starter Brian Elliott, who was pulled for Chad Johnson after giving up a soft goal at 5:38 of the first period. Anaheim scored on Johnson 68 seconds later in his NHL playoff debut. He finished the game by turning away 20 of 21 shots.

The Ducks opened the series with a pair of 3-2 wins at home before storming back from a three-goal deficit to win 5-4 in overtime Monday.

The Flames outplayed them the majority of Game 2, but a lucky deflection and a couple of undisciplined minors by Calgary late in the game allowed the Ducks to pull out the win. Trailing 4-1 late in the second period in Game 3, the Ducks score four unanswered goals en route to their biggest comeback in franchise history.

Getzlaf and Corey Perry, the holdovers from Anaheim's Stanley Cup victory in 2007 and Olympic gold medalists, steered

the Ducks through choppy waters.

Getzlaf had three goals and two assists in four games. Perry scored the overtime winner in Game 3.

"We've been in some games where we've been able to experience those moments when there's high pressure," Ducks forward Andrew Coglian said.

"When you have your leaders as guys who have played World Cups, Olympics, Stanley Cup games, it helps.

"Those guys have been there, they've experienced it and they know what to do in those situations. The team followed suit."

Anaheim's two quick goals Wednesday drained the Flames of confidence that was already dented from their Game 3 collapse.

"You realize how slim the margin is between winning and losing," Flames captain Mark Giordano said.

"Some nights it's a bounce. Some nights it's a penalty. In this series we had a little bit of everything. They found ways to win every game.

"You have to tip your hat to the other team sometimes. But we have nothing to be ashamed of. We battled right to the bitter end."

Wilson scores twice as Caps tie series

Associated Press

TORONTO — Washington coach Barry Trotz tried Tom Wilson on his third line, and it paid off in a big way.

Wilson scored twice and saved a goal from his own net, and the Capitals beat the Toronto Maple Leafs 5-4 on Wednesday night to tie their first-round playoff series at two games apiece.

"I think it's that time of year, there's been some fabulous heroes, not always the ones that you think are going to be there," Trotz said. "Obviously the big names are always there, but I just think he played the right way today.

"He's a growing young player who is physically very strong and he's grown to be a good penalty killer and his game continues to grow. Real happy for him."

T.J. Oshie also had two goals and Alex Ovechkin scored his

third goal of the playoffs as the top-seeded Capitals regained momentum with the series shifting back to Washington for Game 5 on Friday night. Braden Holtby made 30 saves.

"I think we got our heads on straight right now on how we want to play and unfortunately it's taken us a couple games to get there," Oshie said. "So we want to improve on tonight and get even better, but I think tonight was a right step breathing-wise and it could be the same next game."

Wilson also scored the overtime winner in Game 1. The Toronto native had seven goals in 82 games this season.

Wilson's play has earned the confidence of Trotz, who put the winger on Washington's third line alongside Andre Burakovsky and Lars Eller.

"I thought all our guys stepped up tonight," Wilson said. "There was good scoring from kind of every line. You

know what, it's fun to win in Toronto for sure."

Zach Hyman, James van Riemsdyk, Auston Matthews and Tyler Bozak scored for Toronto, which was coming off a 4-3 overtime win on Monday night. Frederik Andersen stopped 22 shots.

Senators 1, Bruins 0: At Boston, Bobby Ryan scored early in the third period, Craig Anderson stopped 22 shots and Ottawa grabbed a 3-1 lead in its first-round playoff series.

It was Anderson's fourth career playoff shutout.

Tuukka Rask made 26 saves for Boston, which had a goal disallowed in the second when Ottawa coach Guy Boucher challenged and the replay showed Noel Acciari was offside.

The Bruins, who were winless in four games against the Senators in the regular season, will try to force the series back to Boston with a victory

in Ottawa in Game 5 on Friday night.

Boston pulled Rask with almost 2 minutes left and managed a couple of scoring chances — both from Brad Marchand — but Anderson turned them away.

Wild 2, Blues 0: At St. Louis, Devan Dubnyk made 28 saves, Charlie Coyle scored in the first period and Minnesota avoided a sweep.

Dubnyk's second playoff shutout came almost two years to the day of his first, also against the Blues on April 20, 2015. Martin Hanzal also scored for Minnesota in the second.

Blues goalie Jake Allen made 26 saves. He entered having stopping 114 of the Wild's first 117 shots in the series.

St. Louis still leads the series 3-1 heading into Game 5 at Minnesota on Saturday.

Harper hits grand slam as Nats top Braves

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Bryce Harper assumes everybody already knows the Washington Nationals will again be a team to watch in the National League.

Just in case, Harper and the Nationals made the point by putting on an offensive show at the Atlanta Braves' new park.

Harper had two homers, including a grand slam, among four hits and the Nationals overwhelmed Julio Teheran and the Braves 14-4 on Wednesday night. Harper drove in five runs. Ryan Zimmerman also hit a grand slam and the Nationals had 20 hits.

"I think everybody knows how good we

are and what we can do," Harper said, adding the expected return of shortstop Trea Turner from the disabled list "is huge as well."

Harper's homers came in the first two innings as the Nationals led 6-2 early and kept adding runs.

His third-inning grand slam just cleared the reach of leaping Braves center fielder Ender Inciarte. Harper's seven career homers off Teheran are his most against any pitcher.

"It was just a bad day," Teheran said. "I didn't have it at all. Obviously, it was one guy that hurt me the most. He's hit me really good and he's one of the best hitters.

But it's a long season. We'll meet again."

Zimmerman's eighth-inning grand slam off Ian Krol had some Braves fans heading for the exits at new SunTrust Park.

Even the potential bad news for Washington appeared to be only a scare.

Nationals outfielder Jayson Werth left the game during a third-inning at-bat with a groin spasm. He suffered the injury on a check swing. His status is day to day, according to manager Dusty Baker.

Washington's Joe Ross (1-0) allowed three runs on six hits in seven innings in his 2017 debut.

Teheran (1-1) allowed seven runs on seven hits in four innings.

Russell's HR caps Cubs' 4-run ninth vs. Brewers

Associated Press

CHICAGO — One mighty swing by Addison Russell finished off another comeback win for the Chicago Cubs.

The Cubs say they never quit — it's inscribed on their World Series rings — and they mean it.

Russell hit a game-ending, three-run homer off Neftali Feliz in Chicago's four-run ninth, sending the Cubs to a 7-4 victory over the Milwaukee Brewers on Wednesday.

Russell's second homer of the season helped Chicago take two of three from Milwaukee after dropping the series opener Monday. The Cubs trailed 5-0 on Tuesday night before rallying for a 9-7 victory.

"That's the type of style that we play," Russell said. "We feel strongly about that. It seems like whenever your count us out, we seem to have a spark."

Mariners 10, Marlins 5: Miami's Ichiro Suzuki hit his first home run on the road in nearly four years in a loss. The 43-year-old Suzuki homered off Evan Marshall in possibly his final at-bat at Safeco Field, where he anchored right field and the top of Seattle's batting order for 11½ seasons.

Rookie Mitch Haniger extended his hitting streak to 13 games with three hits and four RBIs to help Seattle win for the fifth time in six games.

Royals 2, Giants 0: Jason Vargas (3-0) scattered four hits over seven innings with nine strikeouts and no walks, and host Kansas City finally scored off Madison Bumgarner.

Joakim Soria pitched a perfect eighth in relief of Vargas, and Kelvin Herrera worked around a leadoff walk in the ninth for his third save.

Cardinals 2, Pirates 1: Dexter Fowler hit his first two home runs for host St. Louis, which completed a three-game sweep — all by 2-1 scores. The Cardinals are 6-9, winning their opener and losing nine of 11 before the sweep.

Fowler had three of the Cardinals' eight hits, including homers in the third and fifth off Gerrit Cole (1-2). Josh Bell had tied the score with a fourth-inning homer against Michael Wacha (2-1).

Athletics 9, Rangers 1: Khris Davis hit his seventh home run of the season, Yonder Alonso and Chad Pinder also went deep for host Oakland.

Josh Phegley hit a two-run double in a four-run first that gave a quick lead to Jesse Hahn (1-1), who allowed one run and two hits over six innings, struck out four and walked four.

Yankees 9, White Sox 1: Aaron Judge hit a 448-foot homer, Masahiro Tanaka (2-1) pitched seven innings of one-run ball and New York com-

pleted its first stretch at Yankee Stadium this season 8-1, its most wins in a homestand since going 9-1 from July 17-26, 2009.

Judge followed Starlin Castro's three-run shot in the fifth for the Yankees' first back-to-back homers of the season. Chase Headley and Aaron Hicks also went deep to give New York a season high four home runs.

Blue Jays 3, Red Sox 0: Francisco Liriano (1-1) allowed four hits in 5⅓ innings and combined with three relievers combined on a six-hitter.

Kevin Pillar had three hits for the second straight game and stole two bases as the Blue Jays won for the third time this season and improved to 2-6 on their homestand.

Orioles 2, Reds 0: Ubaldo Jimenez (1-0) held the host Reds to a pair of singles in the second inning and four walks overall in 7⅔ innings to overcame a dominating performance by rookie Amir Garrett (2-1), who struck out 12 in seven innings.

Mets 5, Phillies 4: Jay Bruce homered twice and drove in five runs, including a tiebreaking shot in the eighth as host New York ended its four-game losing streak.

New York trailed 2-0 with two outs in the sixth before Bruce lined a three-run homer off frustrated starter Vince Velasquez. Philadelphia pulled even in the eighth, but Yoenis

Cespedes singled leading off the bottom half and Bruce connected again, this time against Edubray Ramos (0-2).

Astros 5, Angels 1: Dallas Keuchel threw seven solid innings, Josh Reddick finished a single shy of the cycle and host Houston beat the Angels.

Keuchel (3-0) allowed one run on eight hits with seven strikeouts. The left-hander has allowed one run or fewer in all four of his starts, going seven innings in each outing.

Rays 8, Tigers 7: A throwing error by Jose Iglesias allowed two runs to score in the ninth inning as host Tampa Bay rallied to beat Detroit.

The Tigers shortstop stumbled while trying to turn what would have been a game-ending double play, instead his error cost Detroit the victory.

Padres 1, Diamondbacks 0: Jhoulys Chacin pitched eight scoreless innings and Erick Aybar hit a homer to lift the host Padres to a win over the Diamondbacks.

Dodgers 4, Rockies 2: Clayton Kershaw struck out a season-high 10 in seven innings to lead the host Dodgers over the Rockies.

Kershaw (3-1) allowed two runs on five hits. It was the 52nd time in his career that Kershaw has struck out 10 or more, and the Dodgers are 41-11 in those games.