

# STARS AND STRIPES®

Wednesday, April 19, 2017

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## In Japan, Pence again warns N. Korea

BY ERIK SLAVIN

*Stars and Stripes*

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — Vice President Mike Pence said during a speech Wednesday aboard the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan that “all options are on the table” as North Korea continues to develop its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs.

Pence also told gathered servicemembers from both U.S. and Japanese forces that Tokyo will “assume a larger role and responsibility” within its security alliance with Washington.

Pence arrived in Japan on Tuesday and met with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe for discussions on security and trade. Both leaders agreed that China must take on a larger role in dealing with North Korea, Japanese officials said.

The U.S. will continue to pursue diplomatic and economic solutions in concert with other nations to end North Korea’s ambitions, Pence said.

“But as all of you know, readiness is the key and you, the instruments of American policy, should know: All options are on the table,” Pence told servicemembers aboard the ship. “Those who would challenge our resolve or our readiness should know: We will defeat any attack and meet any use of conventional or nuclear weapons with an overwhelming and effective American response.”

Pence once again said the era of “strategic patience” is over, referring to a policy attributed to some Obama administration officials in dealing with the communist state.

“The United States and our allies have worked tirelessly to peacefully dismantle North Korea’s nuclear program and alleviate the suffering of its people,” Pence said Wednesday. “But at every step of the way, North Korea answered our overtures with willful deception, with broken promises and nuclear and missile tests, including a failed missile test they attempted this past Sunday.”

Citing remarks by Abe and President Donald Trump, Pence said that Japan’s alliance role would grow as both nations “expand our cooperation for our common defense.”

Pence called the U.S. commitment to Japan unwavering, adding that its agreement to defend Japanese territory will continue to include the Senkaku Islands, which China also claims as its own.

Pence added that the U.S. would continue to protect freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea, in a message aimed at Asian nations concerned by China’s militarization of islands and reefs claimed by several neighboring countries.

Pence ended his remarks by thanking the servicemembers aboard for their efforts and wishing the Reagan crew well on its “imminent deployment.”

The ship has been undergoing a restricted availability maintenance period since January. It is preparing for an upcoming deployment, but the carrier isn’t expected to depart before May.

## Vinson’s deployment is extended by month

BY KIM GAMEL

*Stars and Stripes*

SEOUL, South Korea — The USS Carl Vinson’s crew is getting an extra month at sea as the strike group sails toward the Korean Peninsula following much confusion over its initial orders.

The announcement by the group’s commander, Rear Adm. James Kilby, came after photos showed the aircraft carrier and its fleet of warships were nowhere near the divided peninsula as tensions over North Korea’s nuclear weapons program reached a peak.

“Our deployment has been extended 30 days to provide a persistent presence in the waters off the Korean peninsula,” Kilby wrote Wednesday on the group’s Facebook page.

“While all of us look forward to being connected with our friends and families, our nation requires us to be its flexible force, the away team, and as we have done time and time again through history, we won’t let her down now,” he added.

Earlier this month, President Donald Trump ordered the strike group to return to South Korea as a deterrent during a period when fears were high that the North would conduct another nuclear test to mark the birthday of its late founding father, Kim Il Sung, on Saturday.

“We’re sending an armada,” Trump told Fox News on April 11.

That plan was thrown into doubt when photos taken last weekend showed it operating

nearly 3,500 miles away, off Indonesia. The confusion was caused by miscommunications between the White House and the Defense Department, The New York Times reported Tuesday.

The carrier group was finally on its way and is expected to arrive in the region next week, the Times quoted unnamed DOD officials as saying.

South Korea’s Yonhap news agency, citing an unidentified military source, also reported that the strike group was expected to arrive next week. It said South Korea and the United States were discussing plans to conduct a joint exercise after it gets here.

U.S. Pacific Command said the Carl Vinson and its accompanying warships had complet-

ed a shortened, long-planned joint exercise with Australia after leaving Singapore on April 8 but had canceled a scheduled port visit to Perth, Australia.

“The USS Carl Vinson Strike Group is proceeding to the Western Pacific as ordered,” the command said in a statement Tuesday. “The Carl Vinson Strike Group is heading north to the Western Pacific as a prudent measure.”

Navy officials declined to discuss specific timing of future operations because of security concerns.

The announcement that the crew’s deployment was being extended means the carrier will return to South Korea just over a month after it was last here to participate in annual, bilateral war games.

# Army is testing a drone-killing laser

BY ALEX HORTON  
*Stars and Stripes*

SAN ANTONIO — As Islamic State drones complicate the offensive in Mosul, sending Iraqi troops scattering as grenades and bomblets rain down, the Army has field tested vehicle-based lasers to combat the growing threat of enemy eyes in the sky.

Infantry-carrying Stryker vehicles mounted with the Mobile High Energy Laser, a 5-kilowatt beam that scrambles the circuits of drones, took part in demonstrations at the Maneuver Fires Integration Experiment at Fort Sill, Okla., a 10-day exercise that ended last week.

The system includes radar detection and a camera to visually track aircraft on a screen, where an operator targets the drone with the laser. A “hard kill” will disable the drone mid-flight and send it crashing to the ground, the Army said. A “soft kill” occurs when the laser severs the communications link between the drone and its ground

control station.

“[Then] we can send artillery after the ground control station,” Lt. Col. Jeff Erts of the Fires Battle Lab at the Fires Center of Excellence at Fort Sill said in an Army story about the exercise.

In all, 50 drones were brought down during the exercise, the story stated.

The laser, which does not emit a sound when it pulsates, is the centerpiece of an experimental Stryker variant used during the field exercises. It is mounted atop the 16.5-ton infantry vehicle where a .50 caliber machine gun or Mk 19 automatic grenade launcher would be, outside the vehicle commander’s hatch. An M240B machine gun replaces that weapon, according to an Army video demonstrating the vehicle. The counterdrone mission has been given to reconnaissance units, a soldier in the video said.

It remains unclear how effective the weapon could be in operations against larger, more sophisticated unmanned air-

craft used by conventional militaries, whose signals could be better protected as the aircraft fly much higher than commercial drones.

While lasers maintain their energy over long distances, atmospheric and weather conditions could affect their ability to scramble more powerful, heavier military-grade unmanned aircraft, said Paul Scharre, a former unmanned system policy official at the Pentagon and director of the Future of Warfare Initiative at the Center for a New American Security, a Washington think tank.

Those aircraft might require more power to affect their systems than the 7-horsepower beam currently used by the Mobile High Energy Laser, he said.

Two variant vehicles with the laser were deployed to Europe in March for testing with an active unit, the Army said in a news release.

The Army holds ongoing exercises with NATO allies in

Europe in an effort to curb Russian aggression, including their incursion into Ukraine, where U.S. troops advise Ukrainian troops engaged in battles with Russian-backed separatists.

Both sides use drones for reconnaissance missions, with Ukrainian troops unhappy with the performance of U.S.-supplied and hand-launched Raven RQ-11B drones, which are vulnerable to hacking, Reuters reported in December.

Successful tests of the mobile lasers is a significant step after decades of questions and theories about how direct-energy weapons could be used in battle, Scharre said.

It might take as long as a century before direct technology is perfected and laser weapons are wielded in a way that alters the battlefield landscape, Scharre said, but the technology is maturing. Only two years ago, these weapons were more appropriately staged on warships and big trucks and not add-ons to existing vehicles in a combat unit, he said.

## US might up support, but no ground troops in Yemen

BY COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — The United States is looking to increase support for the Saudi-led coalition battling Houthi rebels in Yemen with intelligence-sharing and logistical support but it will not send American troops to combat the Iranian-backed fighters, U.S. officials said Wednesday.

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis during a visit to Saudi Arabia accused Iran of playing a destabilizing role throughout the Middle East, especially in Yemen where it has supplied the Houthis with weaponry including missiles that the rebels have fired into southern Saudi Arabia.

“Everywhere you look where there’s trouble in the region you find Iran,” Mattis told re-

porters in Riyadh after meeting with top Saudi leaders. “We will make progress on this. We will have to overcome Iran’s efforts to destabilize yet another country ... but the bottom line is we are on the right path for it.”

The United States aims to end the stalemated civil war between the Saudi-backed Yemeni government and the Houthis that has raged for more than two years through a U.N.-brokered peace agreement, Mattis said. The war has killed more than 10,000 people in the Middle East’s poorest nation and displaced some three million more.

“Our goal is to push this conflict into the U.N.-brokered negotiations to ensure that it ends as soon as possible,” the defense secretary told reporters after his meetings. “It’s got

to be ended.”

But a peace deal is only possible by increasing the military pressure on the Houthis, said U.S. officials who discussed internal deliberations on the condition of anonymity.

The rebel group has shown no interest in a brokered peace since talks between the two sides failed last summer.

Mattis described his meetings Wednesday with King Salman and Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the defense minister, as “highly productive,” but he declined to provide specifics of the conversations.

The talks resulted in “conclusions about our cooperation for the future,” Mattis said. “Now that we have the blessing of our leadership, it’s important we actually do something with it ... as we reinforce Saudi Arabia’s

resistance to Iran’s mischief.”

The Pentagon has been providing some intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance operations and logistical support, primarily aerial refueling operations, to Saudi and Emirati troops in Yemen. The United States will increase that support, U.S. officials said.

The United States has also provided small teams of special operations advisers to aid Emirati ground troops in Yemen, but it is not considering sending any combat troops into the fight, the officials said.

Saudi Arabia is the first stop on Mattis’ weeklong trip to meet with top leaders of allied countries across the Middle East and North Africa. Mattis will meet Thursday with senior Egyptian leaders, including President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, in Cairo.

## Navy officer is charged with hazing, maltreatment

*The (Norfolk, Va.) Virginian-Pilot*

NORFOLK, Va. — A Navy officer has been charged with hazing and maltreatment for engaging in a pattern of verbal and emotional abuse and taking reprisal against a sailor who asked to stop being called “Charlie Brown,” according to court records.

The lieutenant commander is a reservist assigned to Lakehurst, N.J.-based Navy Cargo Handling Battalion Eight and is not identified in redacted military charge sheets. The battalion reports to a command based in Williamsburg, Va., where it conducts much of its training.

The officer also is charged with willful dereliction of duty and making false official statements.

The officer waived his right to the military equivalent of a preliminary hearing and will face a general court-martial, said Lt. Cmdr. Jennifer Cragg, a spokeswoman for Virginia Beach-based Navy Expeditionary Combat Command.

The officer faces two counts of hazing stemming from a variety of occasions ranging from Aug. 30, 2015, to May 19, 2016. The charge sheets say hazing took place in Norfolk; Williamsburg; Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan; Al Udeid, Qatar; Sembach, Germany; and Baltimore.

The documents say the accused was the officer in charge of Logistics Task Force Eight and used his position to harm someone else’s career.

The officer also has been charged with nine counts of making a false official statement. The charge sheets indicate the officer told a sailor to carry a “Charlie Brown” cartoon figurine at all times, punched a chair next to a sailor at Baltimore-Washington International Airport and said, “I can’t believe that [expletive] idiot got an award.”

The court-martial, not yet scheduled, will be held at Naval Station Norfolk.

# US fighter jets intercept 2 Russian bombers near Alaska

*Alaska Dispatch News, Anchorage*

Two Anchorage-based fighter jets intercepted a pair of Russian bombers Monday night off Kodiak Island in what an Air Force commander called the first such flight seen near Alaska in nearly two years.

Lt. Gen. Kenneth Wilsbach, head of the Alaskan Command and the Alaska NORAD Region, said Tuesday that the detection and intercept of the Tu-95 Bear bombers took place over the course of about two hours from 6 to 8 p.m. Monday.

“I can’t go into all of the details on how we detected them, but we did detect them,” Wilsbach said. “We were tracking them basically paralleling the Aleutian Islands roughly 100 miles to the south.”

In response, two F-22 Raptor jets on standby were launched from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage, along with an E-3 Sentry AWACS radar plane. Wilsbach

said they were supported by an Alaska Air National Guard KC-135 tanker aircraft launched from Eielson Air Force Base in Fairbanks.

The F-22s intercepted the Bears about 100 miles southwest of Kodiak, Wilsbach said. The propeller-driven bombers didn’t have any external signs of weaponry, and the pilots had no verbal contact.

“There is a procedure where we can talk to them, but generally we don’t unless it’s some sort of dangerous situation,” Wilsbach said. “They waved at one another, but other than that there was no communication.”

Both the American and Russian aircraft were flying “in accordance with international airspace and international law,” Wilsbach said. The F-22s stayed with the Bears as they turned southwest back toward Russia, and the bombers were tracked on radar until they left U.S.-monitored airspace.

Monday’s incident, Wils-

bach said, was an indicator of the value of the controversial Northern Edge military exercise set for this summer in the Gulf of Alaska, because it includes simulated intercepts similar to the one involving the Bears.

“The response that our crews executed [Monday] night was extremely proficient,” Wilsbach said. “It’s not an easy thing to do: to detect an incursion and launch a response, and get all the pieces in the right places and get your aircraft back safely.”

Russia has periodically sent bombers toward Alaska for years despite the Soviet Union’s collapse in 1991, routinely prompting intercepts by JBER-based Air Force jets. In recent years those flights had been on an uptick, leading NORAD’s commander to tell senators in 2015 that they had reached levels not seen since the end of the Cold War.

## Del.-based airmen charged with sex abuse

*Associated Press*

DOVER, Del. — Federal prosecutors have charged two airmen stationed at Dover Air Force Base with sexually abusing a teenage runaway they harbored on base.

According to court records unsealed Thursday, Dalian Washington, 25, and Akeem Beazer, 21, waived their rights to preliminary hearings and are being detained pending trial.

Both men are charged with sex abuse of a minor. Washington also is charged with sex trafficking of a child.

Attorneys for the two men did not immediately respond to email messages.

According to court records, the investigation began after the girl told a social worker last month that she had stayed on the military base and had sex with servicemembers.

An agent with the Air Force Office of Special Investigations and a Delaware State Police detective interviewed the girl on March 16. According to court records, the detective knew the girl prior to the interview as a child with a troubled home life who often lived on the street.

The girl reportedly told investigators that she ran away from home last fall, when she was 15, and told a man she knew that she needed a place to stay. The man offered to hook her up with a friend but told her she would have to have sex with him. The girl identified Washington as the man who picked her up and who gave the other man \$20, according to a criminal complaint.

Washington allegedly went back to his barracks and had sex with the girl, who stayed in the barracks off and on for several

months and was brought food from the dining hall, according to court records. Investigators say Washington introduced the girl to Beazer, who also had sex with her on multiple occasions, both on and off the base.

According to court records, the two men were interviewed by OSI agents on March 29. Both waived their Miranda rights and agreed to talk.

Beazer allegedly recounted one instance in which Washington asked him to bring the girl some food. Beazer told investigators that when he went to Washington’s room, the girl was naked. Beazer said he got her some clothes and some food, then took her to his room. Beazer said he began playing online video games with his brothers, and that when he turned around at one point, the girl was naked on his bed.

# Ga. vote is test of US politics

Associated Press

DUNWOODY, Ga. — A Georgia congressional election in a historically conservative district is headed to a runoff that raises the stakes in an early measure for President Donald Trump and both major parties ahead of the 2018 midterm elections.

Democrat Jon Ossoff, 30, a former congressional staffer, fell a few percentage points shy of an outright victory amid an 18-candidate scramble in Georgia's 6th Congressional District. Republican Karen Handel, a former Georgia secretary of state, finished a distant second, qualifying for the June 20 runoff.

The winner will succeed Republican Tom Price, who resigned the seat to join Trump's administration as health secretary. But the matchup in greater Atlanta's northern suburbs is just as much about Ossoff and Handel acting as proxies for the nation's roiled political atmosphere.

Leaders in both major parties agree the race offers a prime test run for 2018 elections, because the affluent, well-educated Georgia district is replete with the kind of voters Democrats must attract to reclaim a House majority and win more gubernatorial and Senate races.

For Democrats, Ossoff's near-

win in such a district — a Republican has held the seat since 1979, and Price won 62 percent of the vote in November — encourages the opposition movement that has flourished since Trump's election. Yet falling short also highlights the party's lingering power deficit in Washington and around the country.

"There is no doubt this is already a victory for the ages," Ossoff told his supporters, praising them for a campaign that has collected more than \$8.3 million, most of it from well beyond Georgia.

Having already endured several attacks from national Republican outfits, Ossoff said he's ready for more. "Bring it on!" he said.

For Republicans, Ossoff's strong performance acts as another wake-up call alongside a closer-than-expected win in a House special election last week in arch-conservative Kansas. It also serves notice that GOP candidates may always struggle to handle Trump's polarizing effects; he engenders an intense loyalty among his core supporters but alienates many independents and even Republicans.

Handel has treated Trump gingerly throughout, rarely mentioning him unless she's asked and even then cautioning she isn't a "rubber stamp" for

anyone. That distinguished her from other Republican contenders she left to squabble over who is more loyal to Trump. One of Handel's closest competitors, technology executive Bob Gray, even donned hip waders for one television spot as he paid homage to the president by, literally, draining a swamp.

The campaigns, advocacy groups and even the president himself moved quickly to frame Tuesday's outcome in their favor.

Handel began to consolidate a fractured party. She trailed Ossoff by more than a 2-to-1 margin, but drew immediate endorsements from some of her fellow GOP candidates and national party leaders, including House Speaker Paul Ryan. She did not immediately get a nod from the conservative Club for Growth, a Washington organization that spent six figures attacking her as a big-spending "career politician."

Republicans believe a two-candidate scenario will embolden conservative voters and make it harder for Ossoff to campaign above the fray as he has thus far.

Ossoff has capitalized on anti-Trump energy while still trying to appeal to independents and moderate Republicans — his only path to victory.

# Police say 3 were killed in racial attacks

Associated Press

FRESNO, Calif. — Three men were having a seemingly ordinary day in downtown Fresno, Calif., before they were singled out at random and killed by a black gunman targeting white victims, police said.

The men happened to be on the same block, but had no known connection to each other or to the shooter, Kori Ali Muhammad, who told police he wanted to kill as many white people as he could before he was captured.

One victim, a 34-year-old father of two preschoolers, was on the job when he was shot Tuesday in the passenger seat of a Pacific Gas & Electric utility truck. The driver wasn't hit and sped toward the police department, but his partner couldn't be saved.

Another victim, a 37-year-old man, had just picked up a bag of groceries Tuesday at a Catholic Charities building when he was gunned down.

Stephen Hughes, 66, said he and his wife rushed home Tuesday after receiving a frantic call from a neighbor to find a body draped in a blanket on the sidewalk leading to his front door.

The third victim, a 59-year-old man, was gunned down in the parking lot of the Catholic Charities building.

"These were unprovoked attacks," Fresno police Chief Jerry Dyer said.

Two Latina women and a child crossed paths with Muhammad but were luckier. Muhammad pointed the gun at them as they sat in their car trying to flee, but didn't shoot.

Muhammad, 39, is in custody and is expected to be charged with four counts of murder — for Tuesday's three victims and Motel 6 security guard Carl Williams, 25, another white man who Muhammad is accused of shooting last week. He also faces at least two additional charges of assault with a deadly weapon. Police had been looking for Muhammad as a criminal history that includes arrests on weapons, drugs and false imprisonment charges and making terrorist threats.

# Philippine tourism chief laments violence

Special To The Washington Post

MANILA, Philippines — Experts on Philippine politics who have watched Rodrigo Duterte for decades say that he uses shock and fear strategically. By making casual references to real violence, he signals to his supporters that he is serious about his vision of change, and warns criminals and opponents they better get in line or face the consequences.

But when you're the president of the world's 12th-most populous nation, messages such as "Hitler massacred 3 million Jews. Now, there are 3 million drug addicts. ... I'd be happy to slaughter them," travel much

farther than they did when you are just the mayor of Davao, the city where Duterte got his start in the late 1980s. For better or worse, he has now achieved a degree of international fame.

Last month, Tourism Secretary Wanda Teo gave an early hint of the unintended consequences of all this attention. She asked reporters to "tone down" reports of the country's brutal drug war, according to the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

"Help us because, you know, it's really difficult for me to sell the Philippines when talk centers on extrajudicial killings," Teo told journalists in a Bangkok news conference, adding

she was now "always" being asked about the violence. It's estimated more than 7,000 people have been killed since Duterte's offensive began.

Teo's office declined interviews and did not respond to written questions about those statements and growth in the Philippine tourism industry. But data provided by the World Travel and Tourism Council indicate tourism from abroad continued to rise in 2016, although at a slower pace than in the year before Duterte took office. The Philippine government website indicates tourism revenues then actually dropped in January 2017 compared with 2016.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Report: Woman charged 'cover fee' at flophouse

**FL** SARASOTA — Authorities said a Florida woman ran a flophouse, charging a "cover fee of drugs" to enter the home.

Danielle Baggett, 37, was arrested April 11 on a charge of running a nuisance dwelling after Sarasota County sheriff's deputies responded to seven overdoses, including her own.

The Bradenton Herald reported that investigators began looking into a surge of heroin and fentanyl overdoses at the home in August 2016. An affidavit says Baggett assured deputies she was trying to "clean up" illegal activities at the house.

But the overdoses continued as deputies responded to the home 33 times before her arrest.

### Woman wearing pajama bottoms robs 6 banks

**UT** SALT LAKE CITY — A Utah woman was arrested after she was identified as the pajama-wearing robber in at least six bank robberies in the Salt Lake City area, including five in less than two hours on Saturday morning, police said Monday.

Nannette Louise Perkins, 40, was arrested Sunday afternoon at her home in suburban Taylorsville home after Salt Lake City police received a tip about her identity, police Lt. Brian Lohrke said. According to police, Perkins did little to hide her appearance during robberies Friday and Saturday morning at banks in Salt Lake City, Holladay, West Valley City, Cottonwood Heights and Sandy.

She was seen on bank surveillance camera images and described as wearing pajama bottoms, black prescription eye-

glasses, a dark shirt and a blue bandana over dark hair in a ponytail or bun. Lohrke said the robber passed notes to tellers, never showed a weapon and got cash at five of the six banks. She left one empty-handed.

### Wildlife officials find home for pet monkey

**NH** LACONIA — New Hampshire wildlife officials have found a home for a monkey that was being illegally kept as a pet.

State Fish and Game officials told WMUR-TV that the Patas monkey, named Bella, is now living at a primate sanctuary in Oklahoma. Conservation officers seized the monkey from a Laconia family in March.

Patas monkeys are native to several African countries. Wildlife experts say the primates are extremely social animals that live in groups.

New Hampshire is one of dozens of states that have outlawed monkeys as pets. Other exotic animals require permits to keep.

### Fight over flashlight leads to fatal stabbing

**MS** MOSELLE — Authorities arrested a man they say fatally stabbed another man during a fight over a flashlight.

WDAM reported that Matthew Lee Phillips, 25, of Seminary, has been charged with murder in the stabbing death of Joseph Stringer, 40, on Friday in Jones County.

Officials said Stringer was pronounced dead at the scene. Authorities said Phillips fled, leading police on an 11-hour search.

Jones County Sheriff Alex Hodge said they were fighting over a flashlight Stringer had taken from Phillips. Hodge said they've had altercations before

and there was some alcohol involved.

Phillips said the killing was self-defense and that Stringer had sent him to the hospital before.

### Poacher with 25 elk carcasses is arrested

**OR** WALLOWA — Police said a man was arrested in northeast Oregon for elk poaching after an investigation found 25 elk carcasses on and around his property.

Oregon State Police said in a news release Monday that Larry Harshfield, 69, of Wallowa, was arrested earlier this month after police served a search warrant on his property and an adjoining property.

Police said 12 elk carcasses were found on his property and 13 more were found on neighboring land. Police said it didn't appear any attempts at salvaging the meat had been made.

Harshfield was arrested on 12 counts of unlawful take of elk in a closed season and 12 counts of waste of elk.

### Alligator crawls out of drain, is wrangled

**LA** METAIRIE — An alligator was wrangled after crawling out of a storm drain in Louisiana.

WWL reported that a 7-foot alligator emerged from a drain in Jefferson Parish on Monday after heavy rains. The drain was located behind an elementary school that wasn't holding class because of spring break.

The alligator did move around, but Bucktown resident Hazel Porter described it as mainly "just chilling."

Video obtained by WWL shows a group of Bucktown residents detaining the alligator by lassoing its neck and tying the rope to a nearby pole as the creature thrashes.

Steven Nicholson, a witness, said wildlife professions arrived and taped the alligator's mouth shut. The wranglers placed the bound alligator in a pickup truck and planned to relocate it.

### Stun gun disguised as cigarette pack seized

**GA** KENNESAW — A police officer in Georgia found a stun gun disguised as a package of cigarettes during a traffic stop.

News outlets reported that the driver repeatedly requested to smoke while the officer was speaking to him, but he was not allowed to get his cigarettes during the stop.

The Kennesaw Police Department posted a video to Facebook on Monday showing the recovered stun gun and reminding the public that requests to retrieve items during a traffic stop will be denied.

### Young manatee cut by propeller is saved

**FL** KEY LARGO — Officials said a manatee calf injured by a boat's propeller has been removed from waters so it can be treated in Miami.

News outlets reported that Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission officers corralled the 7-foot manatee in the shallows of Florida Bay on April 13.

Mary Stella, director of media and marketing for the Dolphin Research Center in Grassy Key, said the propeller cuts were visible on the manatee's body and tail paddle. The mammal was spotted over a week ago, but the FWC wanted to first determine the seriousness of the injuries and see if the manatee was old enough to be away from its mother.

From wire reports

STARS AND STRIPES®

Single source convenience, reliably independent. Visit [www.stripes.com](http://www.stripes.com).

Reporting  
World, National  
and Military News

# Ex-Pat Hernandez hangs self in prison

Associated Press

BOSTON — Former NFL star Aaron Hernandez hanged himself in the prison cell where he was serving a life sentence for murder, officials said Wednesday, the same day his ex-teammates on the New England Patriots were set to visit the White House to mark their Super Bowl victory.

His death came just days after the 27-year-old athlete was acquitted in a second murder case.

Guards found Hernandez just after 3 a.m., Correction Department spokesman Christopher Fallon said. The onetime tight end was taken to a hospital and pronounced dead about an hour later.

Hernandez had been housed in a single cell in a general population unit at the maximum-security state prison in Shirley. He tried to jam the cell door to prevent guards from opening it and hanged himself with a bedsheet tied to a window, Fallon said.

Fallon said he was not aware of any suicide note. He said officials had no reason to believe Hernandez might take his life, and if they had had any such worries, he would have been transferred to a mental health

unit.

The Worcester County district attorney's office and the Correction Department are investigating.

Hernandez's lawyer, Jose Baez, said he will conduct his own investigation.

"There were no conversations or correspondence from Aaron to his family or legal team that would have indicated anything like this was possible," he said in a statement.

"Aaron was looking forward to an opportunity for a second chance to prove his innocence. Those who love and care about him are heartbroken and determined to find the truth surrounding his untimely death."

The Patriots had no immediate comment.

Hernandez helped the University of Florida win the 2008 NCAA championship, but he dropped to the fourth round of the NFL draft because of his behavior in college, where he failed a drug test, he was accused of punching a bar employee, and his name came up in an investigation into a shooting.

He was a productive tight end for the Patriots for three seasons, catching 79 passes

for 910 yards and seven touchdowns in his second year to help the team reach the Super Bowl. In 2012, he signed a five-year, \$40 million contract extension.

But the team released him in 2013 after he was arrested in the killing of Odin Lloyd, a semi-professional football player who was dating the sister of Hernandez's fiancée. He was convicted and sentenced to life without parole.

Last Friday, Hernandez was acquitted in the deadly 2012 drive-by shootings of two men in Boston. Prosecutors said he gunned them down after one of them accidentally spilled a drink on him in a nightclub.

As the jury was deliberating last week, cameras spied Hernandez blowing kisses to the young daughter he fathered with fiancée Shayanna Jenkins.

His death was "a shocking and sad end to a very tragic series of events that has negatively impacted a number of families," said Bristol County District Attorney Thomas Quinn, who prosecuted Hernandez in the Lloyd case.

Prosecutors suggested Lloyd may have been killed to keep him quiet about the 2012 Boston killings.

# Blue Jackets top Penguins to avoid sweep

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Columbus coach John Tortorella hates the kind of music his players often blare in the dressing room. Still, he really wanted them to be able to hear it again.

After the first three games of the playoff series with Pittsburgh, the Blue Jackets players shed their gear in a room that was nearly silent. That's the way it happens after a loss.

Before Tuesday's 5-4 win over the Penguins, Tortorella said he wanted the young team to experience a playoff victory, lousy music and all.

"I wanted them — some guys with limited playoff experience, some of them with none — just to try to enjoy a win," Tortorella said. "Now we'll figure out how to go about our business and try to manage the series here."

Markus Nutivaara, William Karlsson and Boone Jenner each had a goal and an assist,

and the Blue Jackets held on to beat the Penguins and avoid a sweep in the best-of-seven playoff series. Nutivaara, a rookie, was making his playoff debut.

Jack Johnson and Josh Anderson also scored for the Blue Jackets, who were able to outlast the Penguins when they pushed back hard in the second and third periods and then got a short-handed goal from Jake Guentzel with 27 seconds left in the game.

"That's a good team — they can sense the blood in the water," Tortorella said. "But we got through it."

Sergei Bobrovsky had 27 saves to help the Blue Jackets get their first playoff win in three years and their first-ever in regulation.

The Penguins now lead 3-1 in the series, which returns to Pittsburgh for Game 5 on Thursday night.

Patric Hornqvist, Ron Hainsey and Tom Kuhnhackl also scored for Pittsburgh, and

Marc-Andre Fleury had 29 saves.

Columbus got offense from its lower lines, building leads of 3-1, 4-2 and 4-3 before Jenner poked in a goal amid heavy traffic 5:37 into the third period for a 5-3 lead. Pittsburgh got the late goal but ran out of time.

"You earn your bounces, and they were better" Penguins star forward Sidney Crosby said. "They earned the win, and we didn't have the desperation that we needed to win the game."

**Rangers 2, Canadiens 1:** Rick Nash and Jesper Fast scored, Henrik Lundqvist made 23 saves and host New York leveled their first-round playoff series at two games apiece.

New York's win also ended a six-game losing streak at home in the playoffs going back to the 2015 Eastern Conference final.

Torrey Mitchell scored for Montreal and Carey Price made 30 saves.

Game 5 is Thursday night in Montreal before the series re-

turns to Madison Square Garden on Saturday night.

The Rangers, who gave up the tying goal with 18 seconds left in the third period of Game 2 before losing in overtime, stopped Montreal in the final minutes in this one.

**Sharks 7, Oilers 0:** Joe Pavelski and Logan Couture each scored two goals and host San Jose rebounded from back-to-back shutouts in emphatic fashion and tied their first-round playoff series at two games apiece.

Pavelski scored on a pair of deflections, including one just 15 seconds into the game for the fastest playoff goal in team history, the previously dormant power play scored four times and San Jose held Connor McDavid off the score sheet for the second straight game.

Patrick Marleau, Marcus Sorensen and David Schlemko also scored for San Jose, Brent Burns had three assists and Martin Jones made 23.

# Bulls puts No. 1 Celtics in 0-2 hole

Associated Press

BOSTON — The Chicago Bulls spoke often during the regular season about believing they had the personnel to play as a physically imposing team.

Their output has caught up to those desires so far during the postseason.

Jimmy Butler scored 22 points and Rajon Rondo finished one rebound shy of a triple-double as the Bulls beat the Boston Celtics 111-97 on Tuesday night to take a 2-0 lead in their series against the No. 1 seed in the Eastern Conference.

While some might be shocked by how Chicago has played as a No. 8 seed that was just 41-41, Butler made it clear he's not one of those folks.

"I'm not surprised because everybody's so locked in right now," said Butler, who added eight rebounds and eight assists.

Rondo had 11 points and 14 assists on a night when all five

Bulls starters reached double figures. Dwyane Wade had 22 points, including 16 in the second half, and Robin Lopez added 18 points and eight rebounds.

"Everybody's putting in each work, watching film, working on their game," Butler said. "That's where your confidence always comes from."

After a better start by the Celtics, a familiar theme started to take hold as the Bulls took control by again dominating on the offensive glass. Chicago held a 43-38 rebounding edge for the game.

Isaiah Thomas scored 20 points for Boston.

Boston got within 91-82 early in the fourth before Chicago went on a 14-4 run to push its lead up to 19.

The Celtics did a much better job containing reserve Bobby Portis in Game 2 after he hurt them with 19 points off the bench in Game 1. But Paul Zipser picked up the slack in Game 2, scoring 16 points in 29 minutes.

After getting thoroughly pushed around underneath in Game 1, the Celtics grabbed the first four rebounds of the night while scoring the game's first seven points.

That changed quickly, though, as the Bulls responded with a 20-4 run. Boston's early rebounding edge evaporated just as fast, with all five Bulls starters grabbing an offensive rebound in the first six minutes of action.

Boston shot 46 percent for the game, but too many times was just one-and-done in the half court.

Chicago again used its big men to push the Celtics out of the paint and was quicker to the ball in a lot of 50-50 situations. The Bulls outscored the Celtics in the paint 32-20 for the half.

"I feel like in the second half, the ball stopped moving. It wasn't moving at all," Celtics guard Avery Bradley said. "Even when we made a good play, got a steal, got an offensive rebound, we were just think-

ing quick threes. As a polished team we have to know when to take those shots and when not to."

Thomas did not speak to the media afterward and will now head to Tacoma, Wash., to be with his family to finalize funeral arrangements for his sister, Chyna Thomas. But Bradley said while the team continues to grieve for him, it can't be a distraction when they are on the court.

"We have to play hard no matter what," Bradley said. "You go through a lot throughout a season. You're going to face a lot of adversity. The best teams overcome any type of adversity."

Boston fell to just 14-4 in Game 2 at home following a loss in Game 1. Chicago's win also snapped the Celtics' six-game winning streak in such games.

The series shifts to Chicago on Friday night for Game 3.

# Lowry gets Raptors even with Milwaukee

Associated Press

TORONTO — Kyle Lowry shrugged off his Game 1 struggles in style, and got the Raptors back on level terms.

Lowry scored 22 points, including the clinching basket with less than 10 seconds to play, as Toronto beat the Milwaukee Bucks 106-100 on Tuesday night to level their first-round series at 1-1.

"I've been in the trenches with him before and he's always bounced back," Raptors coach Dwane Casey said. "That's just who he is. He's a competitor, he's a fighter. I just knew that he wasn't going to be satisfied with the way he played in the first game."

DeMar DeRozan had 23 points, Serge Ibaka added 13 of his 16 in the second half and Jonas Valanciunas had 10 points and 10 rebounds for the Raptors, who improved to 5-1 when playing Game 2 of a play-

off series on their home court.

Giannis Antetokounmpo had 24 points and 15 rebounds for the Bucks.

Lowry scored just four points in Saturday's Game 1 loss, missing all six of his three-point attempts.

He was much better in Game 2, going 6-for-12, including 2-for-5 from long range.

"We knew he was going to be more aggressive, we knew he was going to get his shot off," Antetokounmpo said. "Tonight he did a better job of shooting the ball and finding his teammates, too."

Of Lowry's six baskets, none was bigger than his step back jumper with 8.9 seconds remaining, which gave Toronto a 104-100 lead.

"The play was for DeMar to get a bucket," Lowry said. "That's our guy. He had two guys on him and he trusted us. He threw it to Serge and Serge gave it to me. For me, I

just wanted to get to my spot. I knew there were five seconds on the shot clock and I wanted to get to my spot. I got to my spot and let it go."

While they couldn't snatch a second win away from home, Antetokounmpo said the Bucks had still managed to achieve something important.

"We definitely gained a lot of things out of these two games," he said. "We got their attention."

**Clippers 99, Jazz 91:** Buoyed by a newfound sense of urgency, Los Angeles took it to Utah from the opening tip.

Blake Griffin led a smash-mouth revival of Lob City with 24 points and DeAndre Jordan had a double-double in the Clippers' victory that evened their playoff series at 1-1.

Jordan finished with 18 points and 15 rebounds, and Chris Paul added 21 points and 10 assists for the Clippers, who crushed the Jazz in the paint,

60-38.

"It was big," Griffin said. "Our spirit was great, and I think it just carried over into the first quarter, with everybody being aggressive. That's what we need. Miss or make shots, we have to be aggressive like that. Our offensive aggressiveness will carry over to defense."

Los Angeles stormed to a 12-point lead in the first quarter, reeling off the kind of dunks that earned the team's Lob City moniker years ago. Jordan's tomahawk jam put an exclamation on the end of the period.

The Big Three of Griffin, Jordan and Paul combined on 10-for-13 shooting and six rebounds in the first, when the Clippers shot 65 percent. They outscored the Jazz 18-0 in the paint.

"They played with an intensity and level from the beginning of the game," Jazz coach Quin Snyder said. "It was impressive."

# Pirates' Marte suspended 80 games

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Pittsburgh Pirates All-Star outfielder Starling Marte has been suspended 80 games by Major League Baseball after testing positive for a performance-enhancing drug.

The league said Tuesday that Marte tested positive for the steroid Nandrolone. He will be eligible to return in mid-July.

Marte was an All-Star for the first time in his career in 2016 and moved from left field to center field in the offseason after winning his second Gold Glove. The 28-year-old from the Dominican Republic is hitting .241 with two home runs and seven RBIs this season.

Marte said in a statement that “neglect and lack of knowledge led to this mistake.”

“With much embarrassment and helplessness, I ask for forgiveness for unintentionally disrespecting so many people who have trusted in my work and have supported me so much,” he said. “I promise to learn the lesson that this ordeal has left me.”

Pirates president Frank Coonelly said he was “disappointed that Starling put him-

self, his teammates and the organization in this position.”

“We will continue to fight for the division title with the men who are here,” Coonelly said, “and will look forward to getting Starling back after the All-Star break.”

Marte addressed the team during a closed-door meeting before its game Tuesday at St. Louis.

“What was said in here was strictly between us, between brothers and teammates,” infielder Josh Harrison said. “It’s something he needs to deal with on his own, but if he ever needs to reach out, just know it’s not exile. People make mistakes.”

Barring postponements, Marte would be eligible to return for the July 18 game against Milwaukee and would lose 91 days’ pay from his \$5 million salary, which comes to \$2,486,339. Under a change to baseball’s drug agreement in collective bargaining during the offseason, he doesn’t get paid on off days during the ban. Under the old agreement, he would have lost 80 days’ pay, which would have amounted to \$2,185,782.

Another change in the drug agreement means Marte will not be credited for major league service during the suspension. That

would have delayed his eligibility for free agency by a year until after the 2019 season, but he agreed in 2014 to a \$31 million, six-year contract that includes club options for 2020 and ‘21.

Under the drug agreement, Marte is ineligible for the 2017 postseason if the Pirates advance.

“It’s an unfortunate circumstance,” pitcher Gerrit Cole said. “We have a lot of season left and we have a lot of games that we have to win. Unfortunately the next 80 are going to be without Starling and we’re going to have to figure out how to get through it. That’s what this franchise is built on and what this team is built on. It’s next man up and I would expect nothing less.”

The Pirates recalled Jose Osuna from Triple-A Indianapolis.

Manager Clint Hurdle said Andrew McCutchen, who expressed displeasure about being moved from center field to right field during the offseason, will now get the bulk of the work in center.

“There’s closure now and it’s going to be a great opportunity for us as an organization, as a group of men, to step up and play,” Hurdle said.

## Marlins fall short of combined no-hitter

Associated Press

SEATTLE — Wei-Yin Chen and two relievers fell two outs shy of Miami’s first combined no-hitter and the Marlins one-hit the Seattle Mariners in a 5-0 victory Tuesday night.

The Marlins were on the verge of the sixth no-hitter in franchise history when Mitch Haniger lined a one-out double into right-center field off Kyle Barraclough. The right-hander recovered to strike out Robinson Cano and get Nelson Cruz to line out to end it.

Chen (2-0) did the heavy lifting, silencing the Mariners for seven innings. He was pulled by manager Don Mattingly after throwing 100 pitches, and the bullpen sought to finish what the left-hander from Taiwan had started. Brad Ziegler got three groundouts to get through the eighth, including close plays at first base to get Leonys Martin and Jarrod Dyson, but Haniger got the better of Barraclough, extending his hitting streak to 12 games.

### Phillies 6, Mets 2 (10):

Cameron Rupp drove in the tie-breaking run with a sacrifice fly and visiting Philadelphia scored four times in the 10th inning to beat struggling New York.

**Athletics 4, Rangers 2:** Andrew Triggs allowed three hits over six innings to outpitch Yu Darvish for host Oakland.

**Rockies 4, Dodgers 3:** Nolan Arenado homered twice, Trevor Story also connected and Colorado held off host Los Angeles.

**White Sox 4, Yankees 1:** Miguel Gonzalez pitched shut-out ball into the ninth inning to win a road start for the first time in two years, Leury Garcia and Avisail Garcia homered off Luis Severino, and Chicago stopped host New York’s eight-game winning streak.

**Cubs 9, Brewers 7:** Kyle Schwarber and Miguel Montero each hit a two-run homer, Albert Almora Jr. and Jon Jay added run-scoring hits in a four-run sixth inning and host Chicago rallied from five down

in a win over Milwaukee.

**Reds 9, Orioles 3:** Adam Duvall hit his first career grand slam, Joey Votto had a two-run shot and Bronson Arroyo got his first win in almost three years.

**Nationals 3, Braves 1:** Max Scherzer pitched two-hit ball over seven scoreless innings and Washington handed Atlanta its first loss at SunTrust Park, escaping a major jam in the ninth to win.

**Cardinals 2, Pirates 1:** Dexter Fowler tripled and scored, Mike Leake pitched into the seventh inning and host St. Louis beat Pittsburgh after Pirates outfielder Starling Marte was suspended 80 games for a banned substance earlier in the day.

**Red Sox 8, Blue Jays 7:** Brian Johnson earned his first major league win after being called up from the minors earlier in the day, Mookie Betts hit his first home run of the season and Boston hung on to beat host Toronto for its season-high fourth straight victory.

**Rays 5, Tigers 1:** Matt Andriese outpitched Michael Fulmer, Tim Beckham hit a two-run homer for host Tampa Bay.

**Giants 2, Royals 1 (11):** Joe Panik hit an RBI single with two outs in the 11th inning, and San Francisco beat host Kansas City to begin their two-game interleague set.

**Indians 11, Twins 4:** Jose Ramirez homered and drove in two runs and Josh Tomlin gave up three runs in six innings to lead visiting Cleveland.

**Diamondbacks 11, Padres 2:** Yasmany Tomas hit a three-run homer, Shelby Miller pitched 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings of four-hit ball and Arizona routed host San Diego.

**Angels 5, Astros 2:** Albert Pujols hit a tiebreaking three-run homer in the fifth inning to give visiting Los Angeles the victory, snapping a six-game skid.