

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## Trump border plan now in governors' hands

BY CLAUDIA GRISALES  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Following a hastily issued presidential memorandum Wednesday night, it's now up to state governors along the U.S.-Mexico border to make the call on using National Guard deployments to bolster security against illegal immigration.

Several governors pledged support for the plan Wednesday, yet details remained light: No troop numbers, costs or timing on the deployments were available from federal or state officials by Thursday.

"This was done on a whim," said Rep. Ruben Gallego, D-Ariz., a Marine veteran irked by Wednesday's announcement. "What budget is this coming from? What are they actually going to be doing?"

President Donald Trump, frustrated with inaction over his demands for a border wall, which was a central campaign promise, issued the proclamation Wednesday evening to request state governors dispatch National Guard troops to the border with Mexico to help curb illegal immigration.

With state cooperation, the document directs the defense secretary to support the Department of Homeland Security in securing the southern border to stop the flow

of drugs and people.

"The threat is real ... It's time to act," Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen told reporters at the White House. "The president has been frustrated. I think what you are seeing is the president taking his job very, very seriously in terms of securing our border."

The effort comes after Trump has issued escalating concerns in recent days over illegal immigration.

Last week, Trump received a briefing on illegal immigration from senior administration officials and directed a vigorous administrative strategy to confront this threat and to protect America's national security, the White House said in a statement.

"Build WALL through M!" Trump tweeted last week, followed by several media reports confirming through White House sources that the "M" stood for military.

On Tuesday, in a briefing with Nielsen and Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and others, the mobilization of the National Guard was among the options discussed with Trump, the White House said. During public comments, Trump later suggested troops would be dispatched to the southern border.

On Wednesday, Nielsen also said officials are weighing whether funding directed for

the military could be used to build a wall or to replace existing wall or fence structures on military bases along the border.

The effort could face opposition on Capitol Hill, however.

On Monday, Senate Minority Whip Dick Durbin, D-Ill., and Sen. Jack Reed, of Rhode Island, ranking Democrat for the Senate Armed Services Committee, wrote a joint letter to Mattis seeking his views on the legal authority of using military funding to build the wall especially in light of recent congressional testimony from Pentagon officials on the urgent needs facing the Defense Department.

The senators questioned the legality of such a move, suggesting congressional appropriations for the Defense Department are limited to intended purposes and have not made any provisions to paying for the wall.

"Such a controversial move could only be funded by cutting other vital priorities for our servicemembers, mere weeks after the department communicated its needs to the Senate Defense Appropriations subcommittee during omnibus appropriation negotiations," Durbin and Reed wrote.

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## Crash in Nevada kills Air Force Thunderbirds pilot

BY COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — A U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds pilot was killed Wednesday when his F-16 fighter jet crashed during a routine aerial demonstration training flight over a large Nevada military range, Air Force officials said.

The Air Force immediately launched an investigation into the cause of the crash, which happened about 10:30 a.m. on the Nevada Test and Training Range near Nellis Air Force Base outside Las Vegas, according to a statement provided by Nellis officials. The pilot's name has yet to be released. The Pentagon withholds publicly identifying fallen servicemembers until 24 hours after family notification.

The crash occurred during training to

prepare for the Thunderbirds' flight demonstration show this weekend at March Air Reserve Base, Calif., an Air Force official said. The Thunderbirds — officially designated the U.S. Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron — canceled their scheduled appearance at the March Field Air & Space Expo on Saturday and Sunday following the pilot's death.

"It is unknown how this accident will impact the remainder of the 2018 Thunderbirds season," the unit said in a statement.

This weekend's air show was to be the third appearance of the season for the Thunderbirds. The unit has more than 30 additional appearances scheduled at events across North America through November.

The crash Wednesday marked the third major crash by a Thunderbirds pilot since 2016.

In June 2017, the Thunderbirds pulled out of a scheduled air show after one of their jets crashed during training leading up to the two-day Dayton Air Show in Ohio. The crash upon landing left the pilot with minor injuries but completely destroyed the \$29 million aircraft.

An Air Force probe determined the pilot was at fault in the incident.

In June 2016, a Thunderbirds F-16 crashed following a flyover of the U.S. Air Force Academy's commencement ceremony. The plane was destroyed in that incident as well, but the pilot escaped major injuries.

In November, the Air Force removed Thunderbirds commander Lt. Col. Jason Heard, citing unnecessary risk-taking. But a spokesman for the unit denied his removal was linked to either crash.

# Navy chaplain seen on video having sex at La. bar is fired

USA Today

WASHINGTON — A Navy chaplain was fired last month from his post at a Marine Corps command after he was caught on video having sex with a woman at a pub in New Orleans, USA Today has learned.

The Marines fired Navy Capt. Lofton Thornton on March 20 for “loss of trust and confidence,” said Marine Lt. Col. Ted Wong, a spokesman for Marine Reserve. Thornton had been chaplain for Marine Forces Reserve based in New Orleans.

Wong declined to discuss what prompted the Marines to fire Thornton, a Navy chaplain since 1992. But two Defense Department officials confirmed that authorities were examining video that shows Thornton having sex with a woman at the Crown & Anchor Pub. They were not authorized to speak on the record because the case is under investigation. The owner of the pub, Neil Timms, said the incident took place in front of the pub by the road near some picnic tables. Timms is cooperating with authorities, he said. The bar is a five-minute drive from the Marine Reserve facility.

## Correction

An article in the April 5 edition on Air Force Reserve loss-management procedures should have said they apply to all Reserve airmen.

The story also should have said the policy in effect since Sunday revokes commanders’ authority to waive the standard six-month wait time for Reserve airmen wanting to separate.

Thornton did not respond to a request for comment, and a Navy official said he was not available.

The “Marine Corps takes all allegations against any of our Marines or sailors seriously, and they are thoroughly investigated,” Wong said.

The Navy provides chaplains for the Marine Corps. Clergy members “are embedded within commands operating at sea and ashore to ensure 24/7 availability,” according to the Navy’s strategic plan for religious ministry. “They provide a source of comfort and refuge that enables service members and their families to practice and grow in their faith and to face personal and professional challenges.”

The Marines have struggled during the past year with sexual misconduct and allegations of toxic work environments. Last year, news broke of the Marines United scandal in which a private Facebook group of current and former Marines shared often-explicit photos of women without their consent. Several Marines have been court-martialed while others have received lesser punishment, and it prompted a new policy on social media use.

More recently, Gen. Robert Neller, Marine Corps commandant, has ordered a new investigation of sexual harassment allegations at its base in Quantico, Va. USA Today reported in February that two civilian employees made complaints against a Marine officer. In March, Neller ordered the review to focus on the complaints of Sherry Yetter and Traci Sharpe. They allege that their concerns about the officer, dating to 2013, were not taken seriously by the Marine Corps. They say he called them to his office and showed them that he was sexually aroused on several occasions. He denies the allegations.

# Calif. Navy sailor arrested after wife is hospitalized

The San Diego Union-Tribune

A Navy man was arrested Thursday on suspicion of poisoning his wife in an attempt to kill her, sheriff’s officials said.

Race Remington Uto, 27, of Dulzura, Calif., was booked into jail on three counts of attempted murder and two counts of poisoning food or a drink, according to jail records. He is being held in lieu of \$2 million bail.

He’s listed as a third class electrician’s mate and is assigned to Naval Base Point Loma, Calif.

Uto’s wife, who is expected to recover, was hospitalized two weeks ago, on March 15, with a then-unknown illness. Hospital staff later determined there was an “extreme level” of thallium in her body, sheriff’s Lt. Greg Rylaarsdam said.

Thallium is a toxic metal that was once widely used in rat poisons and insecticides.

The high levels of thallium in the woman’s system led medical staff and sheriff’s investigators to suspect she had been poisoned intentionally, Rylaarsdam said.

In the course of a joint investigation with the FBI, Naval Criminal Investigative Service and a San Diego County hazardous-materials team, sheriff’s detectives “developed probable cause to believe the victim’s husband was responsible for her poisoning,” Rylaarsdam said.

On Thursday, Uto was taken into custody at the Naval Medical Center San Diego, the lieutenant said. He did not disclose details about the circumstances surrounding his hospital visit.

A Navy spokesman said Uto was slated to be discharged from the Navy this week but was placed on a “legal hold” that will keep him indefinitely on active duty while his civilian criminal case continues.

## Navy adds \$57M to pay for repair of destroyer

PASCAGOULA, Miss. — The U.S. Navy is adding another \$57 million to what it’s paying a Mississippi shipyard to repair a destroyer damaged in a June collision that killed seven sailors.

The additional contract for repairing the USS Fitzgerald was awarded Tuesday to Ingalls Shipbuilding of Pascagoula, Miss. The destroyer arrived at Ingalls in January. A June 17 collision with a Philippine-flagged container ship caved in parts of the Fitzgerald above and below the waterline.

Ingalls, part of Virginia-based Huntington Ingalls Industries, already received a \$63 million contract to rip out damaged areas. Repairs and modernization are expected to take until mid-2019.

Secretary of the Navy Richard Spencer has said it could cost \$600 million combined to repair the Fitzgerald and the USS John S. McCain, another

destroyer that was damaged in August.

## Ceremony set for ship named for Sen. Inouye

HONOLULU — Irene Hirano Inouye, the widow of U.S. Sen. Daniel Inouye, will head to Maine in May for the keel-joining ceremony of the \$1.5 billion destroyer named for her late husband, who was a Medal of Honor recipient.

The Star-Advertiser reports that Inouye will be the ship’s sponsor at the ceremony scheduled for May 14.

Delivery of the USS Daniel Inouye has slipped more than a year due to a schedule change with the contractor, which means the 510-foot warship won’t arrive in Hawaii until 2020.

During World War II, Daniel Inouye lost his right arm attacking multiple German machine gun positions in Italy in 1945. He died in 2012.

From wire reports

## SIGAR: \$60M Afghanistan power project bungled

BY CHAD GARLAND  
*Stars and Stripes*

A \$60 million power project overseen by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Afghanistan couldn't be powered up over fears that it would put Afghan lives at risk and that shoddy work could leave the system structurally unstable, a government watchdog found.

The third phase in the Corps' North East Power System project strung high-voltage power lines through 32 miles of Parwan and Kapisa provinces as part of an international effort to build up Afghanistan's power grid to bring electricity to communities and military installations throughout the beleaguered country.

But when the system was turned over to the Afghan government, residents in some areas were still living and farming on land used for the project, perhaps dangerously close to the transmission towers and high-voltage power lines — in some cases, directly under them — according to a review by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, published Wednesday.

Inspectors also found what they said were signs of poor workmanship at some of the 18 transmission towers inspected last fall, which the report said could lead to their collapse from crumbling concrete foundations or from erosion.

A Corps official at Bagram Air Field said officials reviewed the structural concerns raised in the report and found they do not pose a risk to the system's long-term operation. Spokeswoman Britney Walker said other issues noted in the report had been resolved and the power would be turned on in seven days.

In an official response included in the SIGAR report, the Corps rejected most of the report's findings and recommendations — including its title, which accused the Corps of "mismanagement."

Officials said SIGAR ignored the fact that some features of the power system, such as connecting the third phase of the project to its power source, were supposed to be done by other organizations involved in building out the grid, such as the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Asian Development Bank or the governments of Afghanistan, France or India.

"The SIGAR report appears to suggest that if (the Corps) finished a project before another critical piece of the grid was available, (it) should build the incomplete segment or terminate the contract," the response said.

Acknowledging the difficulty of completing power projects in the embattled country, where insurgents control, influence or contest more than half of the districts, Walker said officials "are confident the Afghan government can operate these systems safely."

## US military grounds flights in Djibouti after crashes

BY JOHN VANDIVER  
*Stars and Stripes*

STUTTGART, Germany — All U.S. military flights in Djibouti have been grounded and a major military exercise suspended after two recent accidents in the East African country, the U.S. military said Thursday.

On Tuesday, a Marine Corps AV-8B Harrier jet crashed at Djibouti's international airport, forcing the pilot to eject from the aircraft. Later that day, a CH-53 helicopter suffered structural damage during a landing in Arta Beach.

"Both incidents are currently under a joint investigation, and we will provide more information when able. A safety stand-down has been initiated for all exercise participants," said Lt. Christina M. Gibson, a spokeswoman for U.S. Naval Forces Central Command.

The pilot of the Harrier suffered minor injuries. The aircrew of the CH-53 were not injured during the landing, and the helicopter has remained at the landing site pending additional assessment, the Navy said.

It was the third incident involving Marine Corps aircraft this week. On Tuesday, four Marines were killed when a CH-53E Super Stallion helicopter crashed in Southern California.

The accidents in Djibouti occurred during a major naval exercise being conducted off the coast of the strategic Horn of Africa nation.

Alligator Dagger is the largest regional amphibious combat rehearsal exercise in the region and involves troops with the Naval Amphibious Force, Task Force 51-5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade.

The drill is led by Naval Forces Central Command.

For the military, Djibouti is a hub for counterterrorism efforts in the region, including operations in neighboring Somalia and across the Gulf of Aden in Yemen.

There are roughly 4,000 U.S. military personnel in Djibouti, a tiny nation where there are large numbers of international troops. Last year, China opened its first overseas base in the country.

## Activists raid Ga. nuclear sub base

*The Washington Post*

Seven Catholic peace activists were detained early Thursday at the Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base in Georgia after entering the installation to protest nuclear weapons.

The protesters were "carrying hammers and baby bottles of their own blood" when they entered the base, according to a statement from fellow activists.

"They also brought an indictment charging the U.S. government for crimes against peace," the statement read.

A base spokesperson said the seven demonstrators were detained early Thursday and were turned over to local authorities. They now face charges of trespassing and defacing federal government property, the spokesperson, Scott Bassett, told *The Washington Post*.

Bassett said the anti-nuke group entered without authorization and smeared red paint on buildings and signs around the base.

"At no time was anybody threatened," he said, adding that there were no re-

ported injuries and that no military personnel or "assets" were in danger.

The base, in southeastern Georgia, is known as "the east coast home to the Ohio-class submarines," which, the Navy says, are "ballistic missile submarines, often referred to as 'boomers,' [that] serve as an undetectable launch platform for intercontinental missiles. They are designed specifically for stealth and the precise delivery of nuclear warheads."

The demonstrators who entered the base on Wednesday night called themselves the "Kings Bay Plowshares" and are part of the broader "Plowshares movement," a strain of peace activism in which people break into nuclear weapons sites.

Other members of the movement sent out a news release about the incident Thursday, saying that the activists "went to three sites on the base: The administration building, the D5 Missile monument installation and the nuclear weapons storage bunkers."

# YouTube shooter's videos key to understanding motive

Associated Press

MENIFEE, Calif. — The woman who shot three people at YouTube's headquarters was prolific at producing and posting videos; many of them are bizarre, such as a clip in which she removes a revealing purple dress to expose fake breasts with the message, "Don't Trust Your Eyes."

In others, Nasim Aghdam exercises, promotes animal rights and explains the vegan diet, often in costumes or carrying a rabbit.

The videos have become central to the motive authorities have settled on for the shooting: Aghdam's anger with YouTube's policies.

Aghdam, who was in her late 30s, posted the videos under Nasime Sabz, and a website in that name decried YouTube's policies, saying the company was trying to "suppress" content

creators.

People who post on YouTube can receive money from advertisements that accompany their videos, but the company "demonetizes" some channels for reasons including inappropriate material or having fewer than 1,000 subscribers.

Aghdam also ran a Farsi-language public channel on the messaging app Telegram, which had 6,000 followers. Telegram reportedly has some 40 million users in Iran. In one post she says, "Internet crackdown and filtering is increasing in the West."

Police who found Aghdam sleeping in her car early Tuesday in Mountain View, about 25 miles from YouTube headquarters, said she was calm and said nothing about being angry with YouTube or having any plans to harm others or herself.

Later that day, Aghdam went to a gun range before walking

through a parking garage into a courtyard at YouTube's campus south of San Francisco, where she opened fire with a handgun and wounded three people, police said. She then killed herself.

Two women wounded in the shooting were released Wednesday from a San Francisco hospital. The third victim, a 36-year-old man, was upgraded from critical to serious condition.

Aghdam's father, Ismail Aghdam, told the Bay Area News Group he warned police the day before the attack that his daughter was upset with how YouTube handled her videos and might be planning to go to its offices.

Police in Mountain View said they spoke to Ismail Aghdam twice after contacting the family to report finding his daughter and that he never told them she could pose a threat to YouTube employees.

## At least 4 Mich. deaths blamed on spring snow

Associated Press

GAYLORD, Mich. — At least four traffic deaths in Michigan have been blamed on an early spring storm that dumped more than a foot of snow across parts of the state's northern Lower Peninsula.

Snow began falling Tuesday but picked up in intensity early Wednesday, leaving roads slick and hazardous. National Weather Service meteorologist Mike Boguth said 2 to 3 inches of snow was falling an hour in some areas before the storm started to wind down Wednesday afternoon.

"It was a really big event," Boguth said, noting that water on wet roads froze as temperatures decreased before the snow moved in.

A 17-year-old Ionia girl was killed in a two-car crash Wednesday morning on a snowy, slushy highway in Bengal Township, north of Lansing, according to the Clinton County Sheriff's Office. The girl was a passenger in a vehicle that lost control, crossed the centerline and was struck broadside by another vehicle.

The 16-year-old driver and the 59-year-old driver of the second vehicle suffered injuries that weren't considered life-threatening. Both were taken to a Lansing hospital.

A mother and her adult son also died following a crash Tuesday in Buckeye Township, according to Gladwin County sheriff's officials. Weather conditions and speed were believed to be factors in the crash, which occurred in an area that got at least 4 inches of snow, according to the National Weather Service.

Up to 14 inches of snow were reported farther north.

Separately, a 56-year-old woman from Coleman died in a two-vehicle crash Tuesday night in mid-Michigan's Warren Township. Local authorities said she likely lost control of her vehicle on icy roads.

## 3 former soldiers to go on trial in contract killing case

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A former U.S. Army sniper and two other former U.S. soldiers agreed to become contract killers for an international crime boss who wanted to settle a score with a real estate agent in the Philippines he thought had cheated him on a land deal, a prosecutor said Tuesday in opening statements at the trial of the three men.

Joseph Hunter, who is a onetime sergeant with a Special Forces background, Adam Samia and Carl David Stillwell have denied they planned the 2012 hit — a case that's provided an inside glimpse into the secret fraternity of private mercenaries willing to kill in cold blood for cash.

Prosecutors said Hunter, 52, was working as a security chief for weapons and drug trafficker Paul Le Roux when he recruited Samia and Stillwell to travel from their homes in Roxboro, N.C., to the Philippines for what was called "ninja work." Hunter provided firearms and silencers and told them Le Roux would pay them \$35,000 apiece to get the job done, Assistant U.S. Attorney Patrick

Egan said in federal court in Manhattan.

The broker, Catherine Lee, was on a "kill list" that self-styled assassins with military backgrounds saw as a golden opportunity, Egan said.

"If Paul Le Roux wanted somebody killed, these guys got the call," he said. "For these men, more murders meant more money."

Samia, 43, and Stillwell, 50, did surveillance on Lee before contacting her, pretending to be potential clients, the prosecutor said. While returning from a trip to the countryside outside of Manila, Samia pulled out a .22-caliber gun and killed Lee by shooting her twice in the face as she sat in the backseat of a van, he said.

Lee's body was found on a pile of garbage on the side of the road, Egan said. After being paid, her killers were ordered back to the U.S., where they were arrested in 2015.

An investigation turned up a picture on Stillwell's phone of a bloody head wrapped in a towel that was taken about the time of Lee's death, authorities said. He also admitted being behind the wheel of the van when she was shot, they added.

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Reports of 'zombie' raccoons investigated

**OH** YOUNGSTOWN — Police are investigating reports of “zombie-like” raccoons in northeast Ohio.

WKBN-TV reported Youngstown police have received more than a dozen calls in the past three weeks about raccoons acting strangely in the daytime. Photographer Robert Coggeshall says he was playing with his dogs outside his home last week when one such raccoon approached them. Coggeshall said the animal would stand on its hind legs, show its teeth and fall over backward.

The raccoon Coggeshall saw and 14 others police responded to were euthanized. The state Department of Natural Resources said the animals were likely suffering from distemper, not rabies.

## Community votes to ban all balloons

**RI** NEW SHOREHAM — Town officials have voted to ban all balloons from Block Island.

The New Shoreham Town Council voted unanimously Tuesday to eliminate the sale, distribution and use of all balloons. WPRI-TV reported the ban goes into effect Monday.

Violators face a fine of up to \$200. The ban is designed to help protect the environment.

The ban came after discarded balloons — none of which is biodegradable — became an issue to the community and the surrounding ecosystem.

## Out-of-control trash truck smashes vehicles

**PA** PHILADELPHIA — An out-of-control trash truck smashed into a row of parked cars along a residen-

tial street in Philadelphia, but no injuries were reported.

Neighbors said they heard a series of loud booms around 3:30 a.m. Wednesday that caused them to bolt out of bed.

Outside, they found a number of vehicles destroyed on the street in south Philadelphia.

KYW-TV said the private trash truck's driver told police there was some kind of mechanical malfunction.

Police are still investigating.

## Lawsuit claims mouse remains found in soup

**OR** PORTLAND — A 72-year-old woman has filed a lawsuit against the organic foods company Pacific Foods after she said she found rodent intestines and a foot in her soup box.

The Oregonian/OregonLive reported that Maesel Dorn had fallen violently ill two days before discovering the partial remains of what appeared to be a mouse in the soup box.

Dorn filed a lawsuit seeking \$400,000 Monday, saying the company tried to brush off her complaints. Joe McCarthy, vice president of operations at Pacific Foods, said the company can't comment on pending litigation but is dedicated to ensuring safety and integrity.

## Inmate's escape attempt from courtroom foiled

**NJ** FREEHOLD — Authorities said an inmate seeking freedom tried to bypass the judicial process by making a break from a New Jersey courtroom but was apprehended.

Undersheriff Ted Freeman of the Monmouth County sheriff's office told the Asbury Park Press that Matthew Greenblatt, 22, of Middletown tried “without warning” to flee a second-floor Monmouth Coun-

ty courtroom. Freeman said sheriff's officers apprehended him and took him to prison.

Freeman said charges of assault on a law enforcement officer and attempting to disarm a law enforcement officer will be added to Greenblatt's charges.

## Eatery's pipes ripped out during standoff

**GA** LAWRENCEVILLE — Police say a man ripped out a urinal and pipes during a more than four-hour standoff at an Atlanta-area McDonald's.

News outlets reported the Tuesday morning standoff ended when SWAT units deployed tear gas inside the restaurant, allowing police to arrest Derrick Hall, 36. Police said Hall had barricaded himself inside the bathroom when employees who saw him possibly doing drugs asked him to leave. Gwinnett County police spokeswoman Michele Pihera said Hall had a knife and threatened to kill officers.

## Zoo offering visitors buckets of 'Zoo Poo'

**MI** ROYAL OAK — Some visitors to the Detroit Zoo will soon be able to add animal droppings to their souvenir list.

Free buckets of 5 pounds of animal manure, dubbed Detroit Zoo Poo, will be handed out on April 14 as part of the zoo's GreenFest celebration. The event precedes Earth Day and will showcase how the zoo recycles waste.

Buckets will be available to the first 1,000 visitors to the zoo's anaerobic digester educational display. The digester converts 500 tons of animal manure and other organic waste each year into methane-rich gas to help power the zoo's animal hospital.

## Couple drive 14 hours to adopt dog's sibling

**MS** BROOKHAVEN — He ain't nothing but a hound dog, but he was worth the long drive.

A couple drove 14 hours from their home in Sheboygan, Wis., to Brookhaven, Miss., to adopt a red hound mix because they already have, and love, his littermate.

The Daily Leader reported the dog and his sister were left at the Brookhaven Animal Rescue League in December, and were treated for hair loss. The female went to Wisconsin through a program that moves dogs from crowded shelters to parts of the country where there's more demand. After Cheri and James Newman adopted the female dog, they learned she had a brother and set out to get him.

## Police: Mother used stun gun to wake son

**AZ** PHOENIX — Authorities said a Phoenix woman shocked her teenage son with a stun gun to wake him for church services on Easter.

Phoenix police arrested Sharon Dobbins, 40, on suspicion of child abuse after her 17-year-old son alerted authorities.

According to police documents, the teen did not complain of any pain but told police he had two small bumps on his leg where he was shocked.

Dobbins said she did not shock her son. She said she only used the noise from the stun gun to wake her two sons who were refusing to get up for church.

“I don't think I did anything wrong because you're supposed to put God first and that's all I was trying to do is tell my kids to put God first,” Dobbins told KNXV-TV.

From wire reports

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STARS AND STRIPES®

# Johnson excited to be back at Masters

Associated Press

AUGUSTA, Ga. — The recovery from the back injury took a lot longer than he imagined, longer than the sting of having to miss the Masters.

Dustin Johnson, with a history of misfortune in the majors, has a remarkable knack of moving forward.

If only everyone would quit reminding him.

“I get asked about it every day out here on the range or walking down the fairway,” Johnson said. “So I’m reminded all the time.”

The back injury getting most of the attention at this year’s Masters belongs to Tiger Woods, and for good reason. It was far more severe, requiring four surgeries over four years, the last one fusion in the lumbar area. More than keeping Woods from playing Augusta National three of the last four years, he hardly played at all.

Johnson’s injury was a freak accident at the worst time.

He had won his last three tournaments against three of the strongest fields of the year, which not only elevated him to No. 1 in the world, it made him the biggest favorite at the Masters since Woods was at his peak.

Then 24 hours before he was to tee off, calamity struck.

Johnson was still wearing socks after returning home from the gym. It was raining. His son was headed back from day care, so he ran downstairs in his rental home to move the car. The stairs were wooden, a bad combination with socks. Johnson slipped and crashed down the stairs, wrenching his back. His brother, Austin, was the first to reach him and still recalls the wild eyes of his older brother looking up at him.

Johnson tried to loosen up on the range. He went to the putting green. And then he had no choice but to withdraw.

“It was just a freak thing, and it happened. There’s nothing I can do about it except I’m here this year,” Johnson said Tuesday.

One year later, so much has changed. Johnson remains No. 1 in the world for the 59th consecutive week — only Woods (three times), Greg Norman (twice) and Nick Faldo have held the No. 1 ranking longer.

But he hasn’t won since the first tournament of the year, an eight-shot victory at Kapalua. He came close at Pebble Beach until Ted Potter Jr. beat him in the final round. He was not particularly close in his last start, losing all three matches in his group at the Dell Technologies Match Play.

He’s not worried about that, either, because Johnson doesn’t worry about much.

“Last year I was about as confident as I’ve ever been, so it was probably a 10,” he said when asked to compare his confidence level on a scale of 1 to 10. “This year it’s probably a 9½. Starting to swing it a lot better. Feeling a lot better on the golf course, for sure.”

Just don’t get the idea there is any additional motivation. Johnson doesn’t look back.

“Why?” he asked. “There’s nothing you can do about it. Hopefully, I can get myself in a position where I have a chance to win. Last year has nothing to do with anything happening right now.”

What’s happening at this Masters is a wide-open race for the green jacket. Rarely have so many top players been on top of their games coming into the first major of the year, including past champions Phil Mickelson, Bubba Watson and Jordan

Spieth.

Not to be overlooked is Woods, who hasn’t won this year but has shown he is plenty capable.

“I think that this year it feels like you probably have eight or 10 guys that are in good form, with a really good, solid chance of winning,” defending champion Sergio Garcia said. “So it’s kind of interesting to see how the week goes on, because every week is a different story. But at the moment, it’s quite exciting.”

Along with a green jacket, the No. 1 ranking is up for grabs.

Justin Thomas (No. 2), Jon Rahm (No. 3) and Spieth (No. 4) all have a reasonable chance to replace Johnson at No. 1 if they were to win. Thomas and Rahm already have had chances this year. Rahm needed to win at Torrey Pines and was one shot behind going into the weekend until he closed with rounds of 75-77. Thomas only had to win his semifinal match Sunday morning at the Match Play against Bubba Watson. He says he thought too much about No. 1 and it cost him.

Johnson, already home in Florida at that point, didn’t even bother watching. He was on his boat. There was nothing he could do about it.

He is proud of the No. 1 ranking, mainly for reaching the top.

“But most importantly, I want to stay here,” he said. “To do that, I’ve got to keep pushing myself and keep working hard.”

That starts with getting to the first tee on Thursday. Johnson was on the range trying to sharpen his wedges on Tuesday afternoon. He already knew his plan for Wednesday.

“I’m going to take it really easy,” he said.

## UFC strips McGregor of 155-pound crown

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Conor McGregor’s run as UFC lightweight champion is set to end.

The long-expected move that McGregor would lose his 155-pound belt was officially announced by UFC President Dana White at a news conference for Saturday’s pay-per-view card at Barclays Center. McGregor has not fought for UFC since he won the 155-pound title at UFC 205 in November 2016. McGregor last

fought at all in a boxing match he lost to Floyd Mayweather Jr. on Aug. 26, 2017.

The UFC 223 main event of Khabib Nurmagomedov vs. Max Holloway will be for the lightweight championship. White said he did not expect McGregor to attend the fight.

Nurmagomedov was originally scheduled to fight Tony Ferguson. Holloway already holds the 145-pound featherweight belt, and moved up to 155 pounds on less than one week’s notice.

Ferguson had been the 155-pound interim champion in McGregor’s absence and remained the No. 1 contender in the division.

“We’re not stripping Tony Ferguson,” White said. “Tony Ferguson isn’t being stripped. The only one that’s losing a belt here is Conor. Conor is losing the belt. These two are fighting for the belt.”

Once the fight starts, McGregor will no longer be champion and there won’t be a need for the interim belt, leaving the

winner as the true 155-pound champ.

Ferguson and Nurmagomedov had been booked to fight each other four times, yet all four fights have been called off.

White was hesitant to book a fifth fight between the two but could be forced to should Nurmagomedov become the champ.

“It’s the last fight on earth that I want to make again,” White said. “However this thing plays out on Saturday, we’ll go from there.”

# Yankees' power trio each hits HR in win

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Giancarlo Stanton turned on a high slider from Blake Snell, and the cracking sound in Yankee Stadium was exceptional.

The newest slugger in New York's lineup watched the drive head about 10 rows into the left-field second deck at 117.9 mph, the hardest-hit ball in the major leagues so far this young season.

Even before the ball landed 458 feet from home plate, Stanton flipped his bat with gusto toward New York's dugout and headed on a trot around the bases with his first Yankees home run in pinstripes.

Fans cheered, those career-

high five strikeouts from the home opener a distant memory, along with the boos.

"It was loud," Aaron Judge marveled. "It was impressive."

Stanton hit an emphatic go-ahead drive in the first inning, and Judge and Gary Sanchez also hit two-run homers. The Bronx Bombers lived up to their nickname with a 7-2 win over the already reeling Tampa Bay Rays on Wednesday that completed a two-game sweep.

"Hopefully we'll put some back-to-back-to-backs in there," Stanton said, "but it's good that we all got one today."

Luis Severino (2-0) allowed two runs and five hits with seven strikeouts in 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings, the longest outing by a

New York starter this year. The Yankees improved to 4-2 under new manager Aaron Boone and won their 11th straight home series against the Rays.

Tampa Bay has lost five straight games since beating Boston in its opener and is off to its worst start since 2011.

Stanton led the majors with 59 home runs last season for Miami, then was traded to New York to join Judge (52) and Sanchez (33) as part of a trio that combined for 144 home runs last season.

C.J. Cron put the Rays ahead in the first when he lined an RBI double to left that got past Stanton, who didn't cover much ground. Second baseman Ronald Torreyes, in his first game

this season, saved a run with an inning-ending over-the-shoulder grab of Wilson Ramos' pop into short right.

Brett Gardner reached on a single leading off the bottom half, and Stanton put New York ahead with his first home run since he hit a pair in Thursday's opening win at Toronto.

Stanton's home run energized New York's dugout.

"I think his teammates got fired up," Boone said.

Stanton also struck out three times, giving him eight in his past nine at-bats and 12 this season. The trio has whiffed 25 times in six games, including eight by Judge. At the same time, 21 of New York's 35 runs have scored on homers.

## MLB roundup

# Ohtani, Cozart lift Angels over Tribe in 13th

Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Shohei Ohtani really didn't think his long drive to center field at Angel Stadium would get out of the park, so he sprinted around first base while it soared over the fence for his second homer in two days.

Ohtani made the same sprint with the same thoughts one day earlier, when his first big league homer also surprised him by flying over the wall.

The Los Angeles Angels' two-way sensation is doing things even he can't believe during his dynamite first week in the majors.

Ohtani homered again at home in the fifth inning and Zack Cozart hit a game-ending shot in the 13th to give the Angels a 3-2 victory over the Cleveland Indians on Wednesday.

One day after Ohtani hit an electrifying three-run homer in his first home plate appearance, the Japanese rookie connected for a tying two-run homer off AL Cy Young Award winner Corey Kluber in his second game at the Big A.

"There was a runner on second base, so I was just trying to get a base hit and keep my swing compact, and it ended up clearing the fence," Ohtani said through a translator. "I think everything is going really well right now. I'm off to a good start."

Neither team scored again after Ohtani's drive until Cozart, the Angels' new infielder, connected for his first career walk-off homer against Zach McAllister (0-1).

Ohtani also singled leading off the 10th to go 2-for-5, giving him six hits this season and five in his only two home games. He will make his first home pitching start Sunday against Oakland, one week after beating the Athletics on the road in his big league pitching debut.

"At the plate, he's starting to get comfortable," Angels manager Mike Scioscia said. "You can see the big power he has. Corey Kluber is a guy that does not give up a lot of home runs. He's as tough as there is. (Ohtani) made him get a ball over the plate, and Shohei got a hold of it. That's obviously a big

hit in the game."

**Diamondbacks 3, Dodgers 0:** Patrick Corbin shut out Los Angeles on one hit over 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings, striking out a career-high 12 for host Arizona.

**Mets 4, Phillies 2:** Yoenis Cespedes homered, Amed Rosario hit a two-run triple and host New York's bullpen faced the minimum batters over five scoreless innings.

New York swept the weather-shortened two-game series.

**Astros 3, Orioles 2:** Josh Reddick had three hits, and Alex Bregman's tiebreaking RBI single in the seventh inning lifted host Houston past Baltimore for a three-game sweep.

**Twins 7, Pirates 3:** Brian Dozier homered for the third straight game, Miguel Sano drove in a pair of runs in frigid, snowy conditions and Minnesota handed host Pittsburgh its first loss of the season.

**White Sox 4, Blue Jays 3:** Matt Davidson hit his fourth home run of the season, Jose Abreu added a tiebreaking solo shot in the eighth inning and visiting Chicago snapped

Toronto's four-game winning streak.

**Giants 10, Mariners 1:** Pablo Sandoval splashed a three-run homer into McCovey Cove while making a rare start, Johnny Cueto earned his first win of the season and host San Francisco jumped all over Seattle ace Felix Hernandez.

**Braves 7, Nationals 1:** Mike Foltynewicz outpitched Max Scherzer, Preston Tucker hit a three-run homer and host Atlanta beat Washington.

**Cardinals 6, Brewers 0:** Carlos Martinez pitched into the ninth inning and struck out 10, Yadier Molina homered and St. Louis beat error-prone host Milwaukee.

**Rockies 5, Padres 2:** Jon Gray pitched seven scoreless innings, Trevor Story and Ian Desmond each drove in two runs and Colorado beat host San Diego.

**Athletics 6, Rangers 2:** Sean Manaea pitched three-hit ball over eight innings and host Oakland defeated Texas.

Jed Lowrie had a two-run single in a four-run fourth.

## NBA roundup

# Raptors close in on East's top seed

Associated Press

TORONTO — DeMar DeRozan scored 16 points, Fred VanVleet and Serge Ibaka each had 15 and the Toronto Raptors moved closer to clinching the top seed in the Eastern Conference by beating the Boston Celtics 96-78 on Wednesday night.

Toronto increased its lead over second-place Boston to three games. Both teams have four games left.

Kyle Lowry scored 13 points for the Raptors, who earned a split in the season series with the Celtics and clinched the tiebreaker over Boston, based on each team's record in conference play. Toronto is 37-11 against the East, while Boston is 31-17.

With its 56th win of the season, Toronto matched the franchise record set in 2015-16.

**76ers 115, Pistons 108:** JJ Redick scored 25 points,

and visiting Philadelphia won its 12th straight game, eliminating Detroit from playoff contention.

The Pistons had their five-game winning streak snapped, and their defeat clinched a postseason spot for the Milwaukee Bucks.

Anthony Tolliver scored 25 points for the Pistons and went 7-for-8 from three-point range. Detroit was without star forward Blake Griffin and the 76ers were missing center Joel Embiid.

**Lakers 122, Spurs 112 (OT):** Kyle Kuzma scored six of his 30 points in overtime and host Los Angeles swept the three-game season series against San Antonio.

Kuzma is the first rookie in NBA history with 1,200 points, 450 rebounds and 150 three-pointers in a season. He made a three-pointer and a sky hook to start overtime and give the

Lakers a lead they didn't relinquish. Los Angeles outscored the Spurs 14-4 in the period.

**Heat 115, Hawks 86:** Kelly Olynyk scored 19 points, including 15 on five three-pointers when his team took the lead for good in the second period, and visiting Miami beat Atlanta, capping a sweep of back-to-back games between Southeast Division rivals.

Miami rested Dwyane Wade, Goran Dragic and James Johnson one day after clinching a playoff berth by beating the Hawks in Miami. Josh Richardson also had 19 points, and Justise Winslow had 18 for Miami.

**Pelicans 123, Grizzlies 95:** E'Twaun Moore scored 30 points, and Anthony Davis had 28 points and 12 rebounds in a return to form to help host New Orleans rout Memphis.

Davis struggled in the previous two games after twisting

an ankle in a loss to Portland on March 27. He made 8 of 13 field goals, 11 of 13 free throws and had three blocks and two steals.

The eighth-place Pelicans ended a season-worst four-game losing streak and increased their lead over idle Denver to a full game for the final playoff spot in the Western Conference.

**Magic 105, Mavericks 100:** Rookie Jamel Artis had 18 points for his second straight career high for host Orlando.

Artis was coming off a 16-point game Tuesday night in a victory at New York. Aaron Gordon led the Magic with 20 points.

Jalen Jones led Dallas with 15 points. The Mavericks listed seven players out with injuries, including Dirk Nowitzki, the 19-year veteran who missed only his second game of the season.

## NHL roundup

# Keith, Blackhawks try to throw wrench in Blues' plans

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Duncan Keith and the Chicago Blackhawks did their part to spoil the St. Louis Blues' playoff chances.

The star defenseman scored a power-play goal with 8.5 seconds left and the Blackhawks beat St. Louis 4-3 on Wednesday night.

Alex DeBrincat had a goal and an assist, Andreas Martinsen and Blake Hillman also scored, and Jean-Francois Berube made 30 saves. The Blackhawks beat the Blues for the first time in three meetings this season.

"We're trying to win the game," Keith said. "At the end of the day, it's a bigger game for them but I thought we did a good job of matching their intensity and for us it's fun to play

in a game like that. ... There was something on the line so it was a little easier to get the fire going a little bit."

Vladimir Tarasenko and Brayden Schenn each had a goal and an assist for the Blues. They have lost four straight to fall a point behind idle Colorado for the second wild-card spot in the Western Conference.

Robert Bortuzzo also scored for the Blues, and Jake Allen made 22 saves in his 14th straight start.

"We played terrible in the third from myself out," Allen said. "It's unacceptable, especially at home against a team that really has nothing to play for except beat us."

**Ducks 3, Wild 1:** Ondrej Kase scored the tiebreaking goal on a rebound with 3:56 to play, and

host Anaheim clinched its sixth consecutive playoff berth with a victory over Minnesota.

Kase secured his first 20-goal season by jumping on a long rebound of Josh Manson's shot, and Andrew Coglianò added an empty-net goal with 2:13 left. Ryan Miller made 26 saves in his first start since March 9 for the Ducks, who have won eight of 10 in their usual late-season surge to the playoffs.

Nick Ritchie also scored, and Manson had two assists as the Ducks officially extended the NHL's second-longest streak of consecutive postseason berths. Anaheim also leapfrogged archrival Los Angeles into third place in the Pacific Division, leading by one point with two games to play for both clubs.

Matt Dumba scored a power-

play goal and Devan Dubnyk stopped 28 shots for the Wild, who took their fifth loss in seven games during what turned out to be a meaningless contest for the playoff-bound club.

**Senators 4, Sabres 2:** Matt Duchene scored his team-leading 27th goal for visiting Ottawa, helping assure Buffalo of finishing last in the NHL standings.

Max McCormick, Ryan Dzingel and Alexander Burrows, with an empty-netter, also scored for the Senators, and Craig Anderson stopped 32 shots.

Ryan O'Reilly and Kyle Okposo scored for the Sabres. Buffalo had already extended its franchise-worst playoff drought to a seventh season and will finish last for the third time in five years.