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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Trump: Missiles coming against Syria

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Defying Russian warnings against U.S. military strikes in Syria, President Donald Trump said Wednesday that missiles “will be coming” in response to Syria’s suspected chemical attack that killed at least 40 people.

“Russia vows to shoot down any and all missiles fired at Syria,” Trump tweeted. “Get ready Russia, because they will be coming, nice and new and ‘smart!’ You shouldn’t be partners with a Gas Killing Animal who kills his people and enjoys it!”

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, however, indicated that evidence of what happened in

Saturday’s suspected attack near Damascus is still being studied. Mattis was asked by a reporter whether he had seen enough evidence to blame the Syrian government.

“We’re still assessing the intelligence, ourselves and our allies,” Mattis said. “We’re still working on this.”

Asked whether the U.S. military was ready to conduct an attack in Syria if ordered, Mattis replied, “We stand ready to provide military options if they’re appropriate, as the president determines.”

Trump did not detail what a strike would look like, or whether these would be U.S. missiles. The U.S. has been consulting with allies on a possible joint

military response to Syria’s alleged poison gas attack. Trump canceled a foreign trip in order to manage a crisis that is testing his vow to stand up to Syrian President Bashar Assad.

Syria’s Foreign Ministry said Wednesday that his threats are “reckless” and endanger international peace and security.

Trump’s tweet also drew a quick response from Russia’s Foreign Ministry. Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on Facebook that “smart” missiles would destroy any evidence of a chemical weapons attack.

The term “smart” missile dates to the introduction decades ago of weapons with advanced guidance systems — for example, using GPS — for

greater precision in targeting.

Russian lawmakers have warned the U.S. that Moscow would view an airstrike on Syria as a war crime and that it could trigger a direct military clash between the two former Cold War adversaries.

Shortly after warning that missiles were coming, Trump tweeted that the U.S. “relationship with Russia is worse now than it has ever been, and that includes the Cold War.” Then, striking a more conciliatory tone, he said: “There is no reason for this. Russia needs us to help with their economy, something that would be very easy to do, and we need all nations to work together. Stop the arms race?”

USS Theodore Roosevelt sails in disputed sea in show of force

Associated Press

ABOARD THE USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT, South China Sea — As fighter jets streaked overhead, a U.S. aircraft carrier sailed through the South China Sea on Tuesday in the latest display of America’s military might after China built a string of islands with military facilities to assert its claims in the strategic waters, sparking regional alarm.

The U.S. Navy flew a small group of Philippine generals, officials and journalists to the USS Theodore Roosevelt, where fighter jets landed and took off by catapult with thunderous blasts. The nuclear-powered carrier and its 65 supersonic F18 jets, spy planes and helicopters were en route to Manila.

Recent U.S. deployments of aircraft carriers, backed by destroyers, to perform freedom-of-navigation exercises to Beijing’s territorial claims are reassuring allies but also prompting con-

cerns with China’s own show of force in the busy waterway.

“It’s a showcase of the capability of the U.S. armed forces not only by sea but also by air,” Philippine army Lt. Gen. Rolando Bautista said after joining a tour of the 97,000-ton carrier.

“The Americans are our friends. In one way or another, they can help us to deter any threat,” Bautista said, adding that the American military presence helps secure vulnerable Philippine waters.

At least twice this year, the U.S. Navy has deployed destroyers in freedom-of-navigation sail-bys near Chinese-occupied Scarborough Shoal, which Beijing wrestled from the Philippines in 2012, and Manila-claimed Mischief Reef, which Chinese forces occupied in 1995.

Another U.S. carrier, the USS Carl Vinson, patrolled the contested waters last month, taking part in anti-submarine drills in the South China Sea with Japa-

nese forces and visiting Vietnam with its 5,000-strong crew, the largest such U.S. military presence there since the Vietnam War ended in 1975.

China has protested those moves, calling it U.S. meddling in an Asian conflict, and renewed warnings to Washington to stay away. Beijing has also reportedly been holding large-scale naval exercises in the area featuring its only operating aircraft carrier, while its air force says it recently sent some of its most advanced fighters and bombers for “joint combat patrols” over the sea.

Those included H-6K long-range strategic bombers that carry DH-20 long-range land-attack cruise missiles, giving them the ability to hit targets as far away as Australia, along with Russian-made Su-35 fighters.

“What we see now is a show of force and a counter show of force in the South China Sea,” said Roilo Golez, a former Philippine national security adviser

and congressman. While the moves could increase the risks of miscalculation and accidental clashes, Washington’s superior naval power could serve as deterrence to Chinese aggression, Golez said.

Despite occasional exchanges of rhetoric, U.S. Rear Adm. Steve Koehler told reporters on board the Roosevelt that it has been smooth sailing so far, with U.S., Chinese and other forces engaging each other professionally.

“I haven’t seen any dangerous interaction,” Koehler said, adding that problems could be avoided “if all the navies are operating in accordance with the international norm and law.”

Washington stakes no claims in the territorial disputes but has declared that their peaceful resolution and the maintenance of freedom of navigation are in its national interest.

American officials have said U.S. Navy ships will continue sailing close to Chinese-occupied areas without prior notice.

PACOM taps Fleet Forces leader

BY WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — Adm. Philip Davidson, head of U.S. Fleet Forces Command, has been nominated to lead U.S. Pacific Command, the Department of Defense said Tuesday.

He will replace Adm. Harry Harris, who is expected to retire in May and has been nominated for the ambassadorship to Australia.

Davidson took over U.S. Fleet Forces in December 2014. He previously commanded the 6th Fleet and was deputy commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe and U.S. Naval Forces Africa. He also commanded Carrier Strike Group 8/Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group.

Historically, the sitting commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet is tapped to lead PACOM. But Pacific Fleet commander Adm. Scott Swift announced last fall

he would be retiring after being told he would not be nominated for the job. He has not yet announced when he will retire.

The reason he was passed over was not made public; however, Swift is in charge of the 3rd and 7th fleets, the latter of which experienced separate high-profile collisions involving the USS Fitzgerald and the USS John S. McCain that killed 17 sailors last year. The incidents brought increased scrutiny upon the Navy, resulting in a wave of punishments that forced several leaders into early retirement and caused several others to be relieved of their duties.

In the wake of the collisions, Davidson, a seasoned surface warfare officer, was tasked with completing a comprehensive review of surface fleet operations and incidents at sea over the past decade, with special attention to the 7th Fleet.

A graduate of the U.S. Naval

War College, Davidson has earned decorations including the Distinguished Service Medal and the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with Combat "V."

"He served earlier in his career in policy, strategy and operations billets on multiple tours with the U.S. Pacific Fleet staff, the Navy staff and the Joint Staff, and as the Navy's military aide to the vice president of the United States," his Navy biography states.

Air Force Gen. Terrence O'Shaughnessy, commander of Pacific Air Forces, had been under consideration to head PACOM, according to recent news reports. He will instead take over U.S. Northern Command, as well as command of North American Aerospace Defense Command at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo., the Pentagon said.

Military technology showcased

BY MICHAEL S. DARNELL
Stars and Stripes

OXON HILL, Md. — The convention hall housing the Navy League's 2018 Sea-Air-Space Exposition at the National Harbor in Maryland was packed with military technological wonders large and small.

Companies as large as Boeing and Bell presented their latest defense projects, while smaller, niche groups such as Creatrex Education sought to expand their reach with low-key demonstrations.

Bell, the aeronautical tech giant, was on hand primarily to showcase its next-generation Navy helicopter trainer, the 407GX. That upgrade to the helicopter trainers used by Navy aviators offers a more direct, more modern pipeline from training to the fleet.

Bell also talked about two tilt-rotor aircraft in development for the Army and Marine Corps. The first, the V-280 Valor, is the Army's answer to the Marine Corps' MV-22 Osprey. Bell designed the Valor's predecessors, and the company is applying the hard lessons learned from the Osprey's development to the new generation of tilt-rotor aircraft.

Farther off is the V-247 Vigilant, Bell's unmanned aerial vehicle designed with tilt-rotor technology. The drone was built for the Marine Corps to have an unmanned platform capable of taking off from ships.

Not all of the tech at the Sea-Air-Space Expo was in development. Some — such as the 3-D printing display by Marine Corps Systems Command — were showcasing current tech in ingenious new ways.

Creatrex Education's mission is to get kids excited by science, technology, engineering and math, or STEM. Its plan is to get kids to build flying drones at school. Creatrex representatives will go to interested schools and guide teachers in building drones to fly in their gyms.

Marine sentenced to hard labor

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

NAHA CITY, Okinawa — The Okinawa-based Marine who pleaded guilty last month in the drunken-driving death of a 61-year-old Japanese man has been sentenced to four years in prison with hard labor.

Lance Cpl. Nicholas James-McLean, 22, had been charged with negligent driving causing death and driving under the influence of alcohol in the Nov. 19 head-on collision that took the life of Hidemasa Taira. He appeared before a three-judge panel for sentencing Wednesday morning in Naha District Court.

The Camp Kinser-based Marine also faced substantial fines, though none was assessed at sentencing.

"His behavior was extremely dangerous, therefore his fault is great," chief judge Toshihiro Shibata said while reading the verdict. "As a result the victim

lost his precious life ... it is inevitable that the defendant would receive the prison sentence."

Shibata credited James-McLean with admitting guilt and showing remorse, two things that are weighed heavily in the Japanese legal system. He also pointed out that James-McLean had no prior criminal record.

James-McLean — wearing a gray sweatshirt and dark blue sweatpants and sporting a short beard — listened intently while the verdict was read but sat expressionless. He was not given an opportunity to speak. Several American supporters were seated in the gallery.

At his one-day trial on March 19, James-McLean said he did not know why he got behind the wheel the day of the crash.

"Stupidity," he said. "It shouldn't have happened. I know his family will never forgive me, and I will never forgive myself but all I can say is I'm sorry."

Taira's family had called for

a "severe" punishment in the case. They did not speak or release a statement immediately after the verdict was read.

James-McLean's attorney, Tetsu Amakata, was unsure whether or not his client would appeal the court's decision. They have two weeks to do so.

James-McLean was "slightly injured" in the crash, which occurred about 5:30 a.m. at an intersection in the Tomari section of Naha, just south of Camp Kinser. His U.S. government-owned Isuzu Elf collided head-on with Taira's minitruck. Taira later died at a hospital from chest wounds and bleeding.

The Marine, who was off duty, had a blood-alcohol content level three times Japan's legal limit of 0.03 percent when he was tested four hours after the crash, prosecutors said at trial. They believe James-McLean's BAC may have been as much as five times over Japan's limit.

Freelance reporter Chiyomi Sumida

Navy is deploying Tritons to Guam

BY WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

The Navy's first two operational MQ-4C Triton spy planes are slated to deploy to Guam later this year, a Navy official said Monday.

The service will send two more Tritons to Guam by 2021 for surveilling Pacific Ocean hot spots, Triton program manager Capt. Dan Mackin told reporters Monday at the Navy League's Sea Air Space exposition in Maryland.

The high-altitude drones will be able to provide combat information to expeditionary and carrier strike groups and can communicate directly with the Navy's manned P-8A Poseidon aircraft.

The addition of the land-based drones, which weigh about 16 tons and have a 131-foot wingspan, comes at a crucial time in the Pacific.

At a Senate committee hearing in March, U.S. Pacific Command chief Adm. Harry Harris told lawmakers that he did not have enough spy aircraft "because there isn't enough to go around."

He said he lacked the needed intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, or ISR, aircraft to verify any future denuclearization agreement that might come out of the upcoming proposed meeting between President Donald Trump and Kim

Jong Un, the leader of North Korea.

China's increased activities in the South China Sea, where it has militarized disputed islands, have also intensified the need for U.S. surveillance. Beijing has installed electronic jamming equipment on two of the artificial islands it has built in the sea, *The Wall Street Journal* reported Monday.

Mackin said that four Tritons operating out of Guam will allow continuous 24-hour, seven-day orbit.

The first pair of Tritons will be able to track targets on water surfaces from as high as 60,000 feet. The data will be transmitted to Naval Station Mayport, Fla., or Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Wash.

The information could also be sent to the Navy's submarine-hunting P-8A Poseidon aircraft.

The capability for the two types of aircraft to "chat" means "situational awareness of the fleet will be enhanced," he said.

Made by Northrop Grumman, the MQ-4C Triton is based on the Air Force's RQ-4B Global Hawk surveillance drone. The Air Force operates a small fleet of Global Hawks out of Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, although five of them were moved to Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo for several months last year because of favorable weather conditions.

Troops en route to Mexico border

Associated Press

ROMA, Texas — The deployment of National Guard members to the U.S.-Mexico border at President Donald Trump's request was underway Tuesday with a gradual ramp-up of troops under orders to help curb illegal immigration.

The Trump administration also announced that Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen will visit this week a stretch of new border wall breaking ground in New Mexico, putting additional focus on what Trump has called a crisis of migrant crossings and crime.

The construction and commitment of at least 1,600 Guard members from Arizona, New Mexico and Texas provoked fresh condemnation from immigrant activists and praise from border-state Republican governors, who will retain command-and-control of their state's Guard during a mission that for now has no firm end date.

The only holdout border state was California, led by Democratic Gov. Jerry Brown, who has not announced whether troops from his state's National Guard will participate and has repeatedly clashed with Trump over immigration policy. The

state was still reviewing Tuesday whether it will join the effort, said Lt. Tom Keegan, a spokesman for the California National Guard.

In Texas, where Republican Gov. Greg Abbott has pledged to put more than 1,000 Guard members into action, military officials said Tuesday that 300 troops would report to armories this week for preparation and training. Texas has previously kept about 100 Guard members stationed on the border for years as part of its own border security efforts.

"What is different now it is happening in a different context and a different narrative," said Fernando Garcia, director of the Border Network for Human Rights, an immigrant advocacy group.

Speaking from the Rio Grande Valley where immigrant crossings are the highest along the 2,000-mile U.S.-Mexico border, Garcia said, "When you hear the narrative of the president, it seems to him the enemy is the immigrant family."

Trump said last week he wants to send 2,000 to 4,000 National Guard members to the border, issuing a proclamation citing "the lawlessness that continues at our southern border."

Special Forces vet to lead effort to create memorial for terrorism war

BY NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The nonprofit behind the effort to establish a national memorial dedicated to the global war on terrorism got a new director Monday after the group's founder left in mid-March.

Michael "Rod" Rodriguez, an Army Special Forces veteran, will now lead the Global War on Terror Memorial Foundation through the yearslong, multistep process to raise funds

for the memorial, select a site, design and construct it.

Andrew Brennan, who founded the nonprofit, conceived the idea for the memorial in 2014 and shepherded legislation through Congress to allow for its construction. President Donald Trump signed the bill in August.

Brennan is no longer part of the foundation. He declined to comment on the situation, instead referring questions to the foundation's new leadership.

Rodriguez said the transition

marks the start of a "new chapter" for the foundation but that its purpose remains the same.

In a written statement, David Burke, president of the foundation's board of trustees, said the foundation "faces an exciting new future." He added Rodriguez was "ideally positioned to lead the foundation through the vital next steps ahead."

The intent of the memorial is to honor servicemembers who have fought and died in Iraq and Afghanistan since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, as well as troops

still fighting. With the fighting still going on, the nonprofit had to secure a special exemption to a law requiring Congress to wait 10 years after the official end of a military conflict before considering a memorial in the nation's capital.

Now that the group has approval to build the memorial on federal land, it's starting a detailed, 24-step process to establish it. The process begins with site selection.

Speaker Ryan to retire in '19

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Claiming he's accomplished a "heckuva lot," House Speaker Paul Ryan announced Wednesday he will not run for re-election and will retire next year, injecting another layer of uncertainty as Republicans face worries over losing their majority in the fall.

The Wisconsin Republican cast the decision as a personal one, saying he did not want his children growing up with a "weekend dad." He told reporters he believes he's leaving with strong accomplishments his party can sell to voters ahead of November elections.

"I have given this job everything I have," he said. "We're going to have a great record to run on."

Ryan's plans have been the source of much speculation and will set off a scramble among his lieutenants to take the helm. A self-styled budget guru, Ryan had made tax cuts a centerpiece of his legislative agenda, and a personal cause, and Congress delivered on that late last year.

Ryan, 48, first announced his plans at a closed-door meeting of House Republicans on Wednesday morning. His tone was somber, and he read directly from prepared remarks. Rep. Mark Walker, R-N.C., said an emotional Ryan "choked up a few times trying to get through" his remarks to colleagues

and received three standing ovations.

Moments later, Ryan told reporters that if he were to stay for one more term, his children — now all teens — would only know him as a weekend dad.

"I can't let that happen," he said.

The speaker called extended family and a few close friends Tuesday night and alerted a few staff. On Wednesday morning, he called the president and the vice president and informed the rest of his staff before going to the conference meeting, officials said.

Ryan, who has had a difficult relationship with President Donald Trump, thanked the president for giving him the chance to move the GOP ahead.

Ryan, a Republican from Janesville, Wis., was first elected to Congress in 1998. Along with Reps. Eric Cantor and Kevin McCarthy, he branded himself a rising "Young Gun" in an aging party.

He became the GOP presidential nominee Mitt Romney's running mate in 2012.

Ryan was pulled into the leadership job by the abrupt retirement of House Speaker John Boehner in 2015. Boehner had struggled to wrangle the chamber's restless conservative wing and failed to seal big-picture deals on fiscal policy he sought. Ryan had more

trust with the hardliners in the House, but had no more success in brokering fundamental reform of entitlement he sought.

He ultimately had to wrestle with another unexpected challenge: Trump, a president with little of Ryan's interest in policy detail or ideological purity.

House Majority Leader McCarthy, a Republican from California known to be tighter with Trump, is expected to seek the speaker post. He will likely compete with House Majority Whip Steve Scalise, of Louisiana, for the job. Both men spoke at the closed-door meeting Wednesday, delivering tributes to Ryan.

In Wisconsin, the most likely Republican candidate is state Assembly Speaker Robin Vos, multiple Republicans in the state said. Vos did not immediately return telephone or text messages.

Another Republican mentioned as a potential candidate is longtime Ryan family friend and Ryan backer Bryan Steil, an attorney and member of the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents. Steil did not immediately return an email seeking comment.

Democrat Randy Bryce, a colorful ironworker who has cultivated an "IronStache" moniker, had been Ryan's best-known challenger, drawing liberal support from around the country.

Arizona teachers protest, seek raise

Associated Press

PHOENIX — Teachers will be wearing red shirts and walking arm-in-arm at around 1,000 schools across Arizona to show solidarity in their demand for higher salaries.

Wednesday's "walk-ins" are part of a grassroots movement pushing for a 20 percent raise and more than \$1 billion in new education funding. Arizona's demonstration is part of a wave of educators demanding higher pay that started in West Virginia, where teachers successfully won a 5 percent raise after a statewide strike.

Oklahoma teachers have walked out in protest over educating funding, and Kentucky educators called in sick to protest pension reform.

In addition to a 20 percent pay bump, Arizona teachers are seeking increased pay for support professionals, a permanent raise structure, and a freeze on corporate tax cuts until per-pupil spending reaches the national average.

So far, Gov. Doug Ducey and the Republican-controlled legislature haven't budged on the group's demands.

Algerian military plane crashes after takeoff

Associated Press

ALGIERS, Algeria — An Algerian military plane carrying soldiers and their families crashed soon after takeoff Wednesday into a field in northern Algeria, killing 257 people in what appeared to be the North African nation's worst plane crash.

Algeria's Defense Ministry said those killed included 247 passengers and 10 crew. The cause of the crash was unclear and an investigation has been opened.

Algerian authorities did not mention whether there were any survivors but one witness reported seeing some people jump out of the aircraft before it crashed at 7:50 a.m. Wednesday.

The flight had just taken off from the Boufarik military base, 20 miles southwest of the capital Algiers, for a military base in Bechar in southwest Algeria, according to Farouk Achour, the chief spokesman for the civil protection services. It was scheduled to make a layover in Tindouf in southern Algeria, home to many refugees from the neighboring Western Sahara, a disputed territory annexed by Morocco.

The Soviet-designed Il-76 military transport plane crashed in a farm field with no people nearby, Achour said.

Algerian TV Dzair said five people were in critical condition but it's unclear whether they were inside the plane when it crashed.

Footage from the scene showed thick black

smoke coming off the field, ambulances and Red Crescent vehicles arriving at the crash site and body bags lined up in the field.

Several witnesses told Algerian TV network Ennahar they saw flames coming out of one of the planes' engines just before it took off. One farmer said some passengers jumped out of the aircraft before the accident.

The prime minister's office said lawmakers and officials observed a minute of silence as a tribute to the victims.

The Il-76 model has been in production since 1970s and has an overall good safety record. It is widely used for both commercial freight and military transport. The Algerian military operates several of the planes.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Woman blows air horn at speeding cars

AK ANCHORAGE — An Anchorage woman who is tired of cars speeding through her subdivision has decided to see if blowing an air horn at speeding vehicles will help solve the problem.

KTUU-TV reported Sunday that Denise Buck, while sitting in a lawn chair in her driveway, has been blowing the horn to let people know when they are driving too fast.

Buck said her busy southside neighborhood gets a lot of cars cutting through — many with drivers speeding, texting and not paying attention.

Couple busts dog out of quarantine, flees

CT PLAINFIELD — Police in Connecticut are looking for a couple they say busted their German shepherd out of doggy jail and then fled the state.

Plainfield police said the dog had been held since January for multiple biting incidents, including one in which two children were injured.

Sometime Saturday night or Sunday morning, police think Sean Simmons and Cierra Pensis broke into the animal control officer's office, liberated their dog, and then left the state with the pet and their two children.

Police think they are headed for North Carolina or South Carolina.

Would-be thief foiled by angry cat in home

MD SALISBURY — The creeping of a would-be thief outside a Salisbury home apparently was too much for one cat.

Angry over something outside the window, the cat woke

its owner about 1 a.m. Monday. The owner looked outside and saw a man was stealing items from his car.

The Daily Times of Salisbury cited a Wicomico County Sheriff's Office news release that said deputies arrived and found Jamie Ruark, 32, inside another car.

Ruark was charged with four counts each of theft and tampering with a motor vehicle.

Official: Bird knocked out power to over 11K

FL CALLAWAY — A Gulf Power official said a nesting bird led to a brief power outage in multiple Florida cities.

Spokesman Jeff Rogers told The News Herald of Panama City that more than 11,000 customers lost power shortly before 11 a.m. Monday in eastern Bay County after the bird entered Gulf Power's Parker substation. Rogers described the bird as small and said Gulf Power's substations are gated but open on top.

Power was restored to most customers within 45 minutes.

Man charged in carjacking of nun

DC WASHINGTON — Police said a man who carjacked a nun in Washington has been charged.

Metropolitan police told news outlets that Brandon Brown, 20, approached the nun, brandished a handgun and demanded that she hand over the keys to her car on Monday. Police said she complied, and he fled in the vehicle.

Police spotted the woman's car. Brown exited the vehicle and ran away from the scene but was apprehended after a brief chase. A gun was recovered.

A police news release said

Brown was charged with armed carjacking and carrying a pistol without a license.

Students, parents in fight at school

LA FERRIDAY — Two parents and five students were arrested for fighting at a Louisiana high school.

The Natchez Democrat reported several parents were called to Ferriday High School for a disciplinary hearing Friday after police responded to a report of students fighting, which is said to have begun over spring break.

Investigator Richard Madison said some parents began arguing, and administrators asked them to leave campus. The school and two students tried to break up the brawl, and police were called.

James E. Johnson Jr., 18, and the juveniles were charged. Teyka Gullage, 40, and Calbrial L. Smith, 41, were arrested on charges of disturbing the peace.

Postal worker charged after feds seize mail

NY BELLMORE — A postal worker was arrested following the seizure of dozens of bags of undelivered mail at his Long Island home.

Newsday reported that Richard Schaaf Jr., 44, pleaded not guilty in federal court in Central Islip Monday to destruction of mail.

Postal agents raided Schaaf's home in Bellmore a week ago after receiving complaints from residents in Levittown and Bethpage.

Authorities said numerous black plastic bags containing almost 1,000 pieces of undelivered mail were found in his backyard, some of it dating to March 2017.

Man arrested in theft of ivory, carvings

AK ANCHORAGE — Anchorage police arrested a suspect in the theft of walrus ivory and carved artifacts from a store on the city's east side.

Timothy Hayes, 60, was arrested Saturday night at Point Woronzof on suspicion of burglary, theft and criminal mischief.

Employees of Duane's Auction Market on Saturday morning called to report their front door glass window smashed. They determined that someone broke in at 5:30 a.m., stole collectables and fled in a car.

Airport police Saturday night checked on a man witnesses said was asking for gas money at Point Woronzof. Police spotted an ivory tusk sticking out from beneath a blanket in the car's back seat. A search revealed other artifacts.

Church camp director accused of voyeurism

AR SEARCY — Officials at a church camp in north-central Arkansas fired the camp's director after he was arrested on suspicion of video voyeurism.

Authorities said Robert Powell, 45, was arrested Friday night. He had worked as a director at Camp Wyldewood.

Camp Wyldewood is a year-round Christian camp in White County near Searcy. In a statement posted on Facebook, camp officials said they believed it was a "one-time, isolated incident" that did not involve any campers.

From wire reports

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STARS AND STRIPES®

Net-front guys vital in NHL playoffs

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — There's a bit of masochist in Patric Hornqvist. Has to be.

How else to explain the thrill the Pittsburgh Penguins forward gets by planting himself in front of an opposing net and daring someone — be it a goaltender or defender typically within a stick's reach of him — to move him out of the way by any means necessary?

Over the course of three periods on a given night, Hornqvist will be punched, pushed, slashed (both legally and illegally) and generally treated as a piñata on skates. And here's the thing. He likes it. A lot. The smile on his face even as he's being chopped to the ice is a dead giveaway.

"I think he finds comfort in being a pain in the neck," Penguins coach Mike Sullivan said.

Sure, it's not quite the career path the 31-year-old envisioned while growing up in Sweden, where the larger international

ice sheets provided Hornqvist plenty of room to do as he pleased. That space has disappeared in the NHL, where the ice surface is smaller, the players bigger and faster, and the goals far harder to come by.

So Hornqvist has carved out a niche by volunteering to get to the places on the ice that aren't for the meek — a 5-foot-11, 189-pound stockpile of kinetic energy. In the process, he's become arguably the best of the net-front masters that will play a pivotal role in the Stanley Cup playoffs. Hornqvist scored 29 times this season for the two-time defending Stanley Cup champions, most of them coming from in tight. Some on deflections. Others on rebounds. Others still when he managed to thrust his stick in the middle of chaos and find the order in it. Oh, and the puck, too.

They call the corners and the front of the net the "dirty area." Maybe, but beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Especially in the postseason.

"Usually it's not the pretty

goal that wins the game," said Predators forward Scott Hartnell, no stranger to the mosh pit that doubles as the area just outside the goal crease. "It's the one-two-three-four whacks on it and it goes in."

The goal that propelled the Penguins to a second title last June came not from Sidney Crosby or Evgeni Malkin or Kris Letang but by Hornqvist doing what he does as well as anyone in the NHL — collecting Justin Schultz's shot off the end boards then banking it off Nashville's Pekka Rinne and into the net late in Game 6 of the 2017 Stanley Cup Final.

"I love to be where it's hot, especially in those areas in front of the net," Hornqvist said. "It's probably the best place to be."

And, in a weird way, it's a pretty effective path to career longevity. Hornqvist just signed a five-year contract extension over the winter. Hartnell will turn 36 later this month. Tampa Bay's Chris Kunitz — who filled a role similar to

Hornqvist's while helping the Penguins to three Cups before joining the Lightning — played in all 82 games this year for the Eastern Conference's top seed at age 38.

Pain, it turns out, has its perks. Washington's Tom Wilson, just 24, points to players like Hornqvist and Philadelphia's Wayne Simmonds as role models of sorts.

"(Simmonds) will tip the puck, he'll turn and he'll find it," Wilson said. "He's strong enough to be able to get two or three chances. And you've got to be strong enough in order to be able to do something with it after you find it."

Hornqvist brushes off the notion that he's special, saying only "I take pride in what I do out there." He points out he scored 15 power-play goals this season — third most in the league — not so much because of any particular talent he may have but because he happens to play on the same unit as Crosby and Malkin.

Terrible season, drought just a memory for Devils

Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. — The worst season in nearly three decades is just a recent memory, and so is the five-year drought.

The New Jersey Devils are back in the playoffs, and again in the hunt for the Stanley Cup. It's like old times.

The Devils completed a remarkable comeback season by beating the Toronto Maple Leafs 2-1 on April 5 to clinch their first postseason berth since making it to the Stanley Cup Final in 2012.

It capped an offseason and regular season that saw general manager Ray Shero reshape half his 25-man roster through free agency, the draft and trades and have John Hynes make all the right moves to keep his team in a playoff position every day of the season.

Not bad for a club that won 28

games and finished last in the Eastern Conference in 2016-17.

"This is the best, the best," said veteran defenseman Ben Lovejoy, who won a Stanley Cup with Pittsburgh in 2016. "My first stint in Pittsburgh and Anaheim and then again in Pittsburgh, I never appreciated what baseball players did. I thought it was stupid when they would come in and have champagne when they made the playoffs. I get it now. Making the playoffs is hard."

The Devils can point to so many players in bouncing back from their worst season since 1988-89. Taylor Hall (39 goals, 54 assists) had a career year that teammates feel merits the Hart Trophy as the league MVP. Top draft pick Nico Hischier overcame a slow start to have 20 goals and 52 points. Free agent Will Butcher set a

team record for rookie defensemen with 44 points.

The unsung hero was goaltender Keith Kinkaid, who stepped for an injured Cory Schneider and carried the team over the final 10 weeks, going 10-1-1 in the last 12 games and helping the New York-metropolitan area avoid being shut out of the postseason for the first time since the Devils took up residence in New Jersey in 1982. The Rangers and Islanders will miss the postseason.

"It's fun, but playoffs are a new breed," said Kinkaid, who re-signed with the team in the offseason despite being an unrestricted free agent.

There are only two players left from the Devils' 2011-12 team: defenseman and captain Andy Greene, and Travis Zajac, who centers the line Hynes' uses against the opponent's top

line.

While there have been lean years, Zajac said the Devils rediscovered themselves this season. They practiced and played hard, and made sure opponents knew they were in for a battle every game.

The results have been a 44-28-9 record that includes a 25-8-9 mark in one-goal games. It was a record that reminded many of the old Devils, a franchise that made the playoffs 20 of 22 times and won three Cups between 1989-90 and 2011-12.

This group, however, skates faster and is relentless.

Last year, the Devils were disappointing underachievers. Their biggest sin was failing to compete every night. And they paid the price, especially down the stretch when they went 3-17-4.

Betts' slam helps Red Sox rout Yanks

Associated Press

BOSTON — A monster night by Mookie Betts kept the Red Sox rolling.

Betts hit a grand slam and scored five times, leading Chris Sale and Boston over the New York Yankees 14-1 Tuesday for its ninth straight victory. The Red Sox improved to 9-1 for the first time in franchise history.

Betts went 4-for-4 and drove in four runs. His third career slam cleared the Green Monster in left field and capped a nine-run burst in the sixth inning that turned the first matchup of the season between longtime rivals into a rout.

"I just got some good pitches to hit and put some good swings on it today," Betts said. "I think just all of us putting together good at-bats kind wears guys down."

Manager Alex Cora has been

pushing his new team to be aggressive in the strike zone. He sat down with Betts this spring and showed the All-Star outfielder how effective he can be when he does.

"A slugger leading off," Cora said. "He's going to make contact. But now he understands that he can do damage in the strike zone."

Betts joined Ken Griffey Jr. (1996) as the only players to have four hits, five runs and four RBIs in a game against the Yankees.

Sale (1-0) allowed one run in six innings, scattering eight hits. He struck out eight without a walk.

He said the run support helped him settle in.

"The biggest key is it just allows you to go out there and throw strikes," Sale said. "You're not too worried about

making mistakes."

Boston's starting pitchers improved to 6-0 on the season on a night in which the temperature dipped into the 30s.

Hanley Ramirez went 2-for-2 with three RBIs. Andrew Benintendi added a two-run triple, along with a double.

Luis Severino (2-1) allowed five runs and eight hits in five innings.

Aaron Judge had three hits for the Yankees, including a drive off Sale over the center field wall in the fifth for his third home run of the season.

The highest profile acquisitions both showed a little something at the plate after early-season slumps

Boston's J.D. Martinez went 1-for-5, but had a two-run double in the sixth.

Yankees slugger Giancarlo Stanton went 2-for-4. He struck out his first two times

up against Sale, and has now fanned 22 times in 46 at-bats.

"It's good progress," Stanton said. "We've got two more here, so pick up where I left off here today and get it going."

He said his introduction to the rivalry was "cool."

"Not a cool outcome, but it was cool to see the passion and what goes on," he said.

Of Boston's nine runs in the sixth, six were unearned.

The Yankees brought in Chasen Shreve with two outs in the inning and runners at first and second. He hit Jackie Bradley Jr. with the first pitch to load the bases, and Christian Vazquez followed with a grounder that Miguel Andujar botched at third, allowing Martinez to score on the error.

Brock Holt walked and Betts cleared the bases to put the Red Sox up 14-1.

MLB roundup

Carpenter fails at bunt, lifts Cardinals with home run

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Matt Carpenter doesn't mind some small ball now and then, and takes pride in his bunting.

That said, he wasn't too upset about failing to get one down in the 11th inning Tuesday night.

Two pitches after botching a bunt attempt, Carpenter hit a two-run homer with no outs to lift the St. Louis Cardinals over the Milwaukee Brewers 5-3.

"I was trying to beat out a bunt," Carpenter said. "I'm glad it didn't work."

Carpenter ripped a pitch from J.J. Hoover (0-1) down the right field line for the third game-ending homer of his career. It capped a night in which St. Louis rallied from one-run deficits in the ninth and 10th innings.

"There's always a win every year that kind of jumpstarts you," Carpenter said. "We haven't been playing bad, but we haven't been clicking like

we know we're capable of. This might be the game that gets us on a roll."

Domingo Santana singled in Eric Thames to put Milwaukee ahead 2-1 in the ninth inning, but Tommy Pham scored from second on a pair of wild pitches by Jacob Barnes to tie it in the bottom of the inning.

Giants 5, Diamondbacks 4: Andrew McCutchen hit a bases-loaded single for his second walk-off of San Francisco's homestand.

Blue Jays 2, Orioles 1: Aaron Sanchez lost his no-hit bid when Baltimore's Tim Beckham led off the eighth inning with a sharp grounder through the legs of third baseman Josh Donaldson, and Curtis Granderson hit a tiebreaking homer in the ninth to carry visiting Toronto.

Mets 8, Marlins 6: Yoenis Cespedes snapped a slump with a two-run double to break a tie in the ninth inning, giving visit-

ing New York the best 10-game start in franchise history.

Pirates 8, Cubs 5: Ivan Nova pitched seven solid innings, Francisco Cervelli hit a three-run homer and Pittsburgh ruined Chicago's home opener.

Dodgers 4, Athletics 0: Hyun-Jin Ryu cruised through six innings of one-hit ball and Corey Seager hit one of three home runs for the host Dodgers.

Nationals 4, Braves 1: Stephen Strasburg threw eight scoreless innings and Ryan Zimmerman had a two-run triple for host Washington.

Indians 2, Tigers 1: Roberto Perez hit a leadoff home run in the eighth inning against reliever Alex Wilson, lifting host Cleveland over Detroit.

Angels 11, Rangers 1: Mike Trout and Andrelton Simmons each homered, and Albert Pujols had two more hits in his push to 3,000 for host Los Angeles, which is 9-3 for the first

time since 1982.

Padres 5, Rockies 2: Joey Lucchesi got his first major league win thanks to a go-ahead three-run homer from Hunter Renfroe in the seventh inning for visiting San Diego.

Phillies 6, Reds 1: Aaron Nola pitched eight stellar innings and Scott Kingery hit a grand slam.

Twins 4, Astros 1: Jake Odorizzi grinded through six innings for his first win with host Minnesota, and leadoff man Brian Dozier walked a career-high four times.

Mariners 8, Royals 3: Felix Hernandez pitched into the sixth inning, Guillermo Heredia homered and Seattle bounced back from a blowout loss to rout host Kansas City.

Rays 6, White Sox 5: Blake Snell pitched one-hit ball and struck out 10 through six innings and Tampa Bay kept host Chicago winless at home this season.

NBA roundup

Surging Sixers close in on No. 3 seed

Associated Press

ATLANTA — The Philadelphia 76ers have a long, proud history.

They've been around since the NBA's very first season, starting out as the Syracuse Nationals. Their résumé includes three championships. The list of franchise greats runs from Dolph Schayes to Wilt Chamberlain, from Julius Erving to Allen Iverson.

They've never done anything like this.

As if to put an emphatic stamp on their staggering turnaround from a 10-72 debacle just two seasons ago, the Sixers set a team record with their 15th consecutive victory, holding off the Atlanta Hawks 121-113 on Tuesday night in the penultimate game of the regular season.

Coach Brett Brown marveled at the accomplishment.

"It's not like we're a young club," he said. "We are an old club, with a tremendous amount of culture and a tremendous amount of history. Taking that type of momentum into the playoffs, it's important. It doesn't

guarantee anything, but it certainly lets you feel like you've been doing the right things. The team has been fantastic."

The Sixers can wrap up the third seed in the Eastern Conference with a home victory over the Milwaukee Bucks on Wednesday night, which could pay big dividends in the postseason.

Finishing No. 3 could possibly lead to a second-round meeting with the Boston Celtics, who have lost four of five and are limping into the playoffs without Kyrie Irving, who is out for the season.

"We have a real opportunity that we don't want to let slip," Brown said. "We can control our own destiny. We're not a prisoner to other people's events. That, in and of itself, is rare and not to be taken for granted."

Of course, the way the Sixers are playing, they have no reason to fear anyone.

What makes it even more amazing: Philadelphia kept right on winning after losing young All-Star Joel Embiid, who is expected to miss at least the first couple of weeks of the

playoffs after undergoing surgery to repair a fractured orbital bone around his left eye.

He leads the team in scoring (22.9 points per game) and rebounding (11.0).

"The strength of this team is so deep," Robert Covington said. "We're doing it without Joel, so imagine once we get the head honcho back. He's definitely going to be ecstatic. There wasn't really much of a drop-off. We just played a little bit differently. We'll be glad once he gets back. We just have to hold it down until he gets back."

Jazz 119, Warriors 79: Donovan Mitchell scored 22 points and set an NBA rookie record for three-pointers, Derrick Favors added 16 points and nine rebounds, and host Utah cruised to a victory.

The Jazz (48-33) won their sixth straight game and went 3-1 in the season series with Golden State.

Wizards 113, Celtics 101: John Wall surpassed 5,000 career assists and host Washington beat Boston despite Jaylen Brown's 21 first-quarter points

to remain in play for the No. 6, No. 7 or No. 8 seed in the Eastern Conference.

Rockets 105, Lakers 99: At Los Angeles, Chris Paul scored 22 points, James Harden had 21 points and 10 assists, and Houston kept steamrolling toward the playoffs with its 31st victory in 34 games.

The Rockets lost backup forward Luc Mbah a Moute to a dislocated right shoulder in a meaningless game.

Hornets 119, Pacers 93: Dwight Howard finished with 14 points and 17 rebounds, and Frank Kaminsky tied his career high with 24 points to lead visiting Charlotte past Indiana.

The Pacers, who are locked into the No. 5 seed in the Eastern Conference, lost for the second time in three games with three starters sitting out. Darren Collison, T.J. Leaf and Glenn Robinson III all scored 13 points for Indiana.

Suns 124, Mavericks 97: Rookie Alec Peters scored a career-high 36 points and visiting Phoenix beat Dallas in a reserve-filled finale for two teams headed to the lottery.

Kansas, NC State hoops added to indictment

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Kansas and North Carolina State are the latest schools to be swept up in a bribery scandal involving college basketball.

A rewritten indictment released Tuesday in New York alleges that an Adidas representative, who no longer works for the company, arranged for payments to parents of athletes willing to commit to the schools.

The refreshed indictment came several months after 10 men were charged in an alleged scheme to bribe assistant coaches in exchange for steering top-flight NBA prospects to a particular agent or financial adviser. Four assistant coaches have been prosecuted, and the scandal has led to the end of coach Rick Pitino's career at the University of Louisville.

The new indictment expands the scope of the charges, alleging a wire-fraud con-

spiracy that included alleged payments to families of six student-athletes being recruited by four schools, prosecutors said.

The court papers portrayed the shoe executive and some coaches as bad actors, saying the conspiracy included hiding payments and signing forms falsely asserting that no payments had been made. The indictment paints a picture of transactions that were concealed to allow athletes to make it through eligibility reviews.

Prosecutors said the Adidas representative, James Gatto, and others agreed to pay \$90,000 to the mother of a Kansas recruit and to funnel \$40,000 to the father of a recruit at North Carolina State who was widely regarded as the top high school recruit in the state of North Carolina and who had played for an Adidas-sponsored Amateur Athletic Union team. No players are directly named, but specific details make

clear the indictment is describing former North Carolina State star Dennis Smith Jr. and Kansas player Silvio De Sousa.

Prosecutors say money helped secure the players' commitments to play college basketball at the schools and encouraged them to sign an Adidas sponsorship deal when they entered the NBA.

Smith, a point guard, was drafted by the Mavericks and declined comment to The Associated Press on Tuesday night.

A date listed in court papers for the announcement — Aug. 30 — is when De Sousa made a surprise announcement he would play for Kansas. He became a crucial player off the bench this season as the Jayhawks reached the Final Four before losing to eventual champion Villanova.

Prosecutors said they beefed up charges related to the Louisville conspiracy, adding a wire fraud charge. Louisville declined to comment.