

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Newest US destroyer arrives in Hawaii

BY WYATT OLSON

*Stars and Stripes*

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii — The first of the Navy's newest generation of destroyers — and its most controversial — arrived Tuesday in Hawaii for a series of tests.

The USS Zumwalt looks like no other ship in the fleet, with a sleek design made to fool enemy sonar. The sides of its "tumblehome" hull slope inward above the waterline, while below water the hull expands outward.

"Zumwalt possesses stealth, size, power and computing capacity that provides the Navy multiple-mission ships capable of meeting today's maritime missions, as well as the ability to incorporate new technologies to counter emerging threats tomorrow," Capt. Andrew Carlson, the ship's commander, told reporters dockside.

Home-ported in San Diego, the Zumwalt recently made stops in Canada and Alaska. Hawaii is a "critical training and testing area for the Navy" where the Zumwalt would "conduct important at-sea evolutions that enhance our crew's war-fighting skills," Carlson said.

For the sake of "operational unpredictability," Carlson said he was not at liberty to say how long the ship would be in Hawaii nor where it would be headed next.

"I can say that we'll be in the Hawaiian area for a little while, and then just working around the Pacific," he said.

"Part of what we need to do is just be present in the Pacific and let folks know that the Zumwalt and the capabilities she brings are available as we get through the testing and delivery phases that we need for the ship."

The Navy has had a hard time deciding how this new generation of destroyer should be equipped and used — or even how many it wants. As the price tag per ship grew since 2005, the Navy's original plan to buy 32 Zumwalt-class destroyers dwindled to just three. The USS Michael Monsoor was commissioned in January, while the third, the USS Lyndon B. Johnson, was launched in December in Maine.

The Project on Government Oversight, a nonpartisan, independent watchdog group based in Washington, published a blistering analysis in January on the history of the Zumwalt-class destroyers.

"The ships represent an object lesson in

the risk of trying to cram nearly a dozen new technologies into a warship, most of which failed to get out of port," wrote Mark Thomson, POGO's national security analyst. "The bottom line: American taxpayers have bought a fleet of three warships — at a cost of \$8 billion each! — that are still looking for a mission."

Congress, unsatisfied with the progress of new destroyers, recently ordered the Navy to strike the Zumwalt and Michael Monsoor from its roster of combat-ready vessels.

Among the weapons built into the Zumwalt-class ships is the Advanced Gun System, which fires precision-guided, 155-mm projectiles. But by early last year the cost of those projectiles was approaching \$1 million each — almost as much as one of each ship's Tomahawk missiles.

The Navy announced that the Advanced Gun System would remain on the ships but in "inactive status" until a cheaper projectile could be developed.

Officially, the Zumwalt is still in its test and evaluation phase and not operationally deployed, Carlson said.

But there are sailors on board, he added, "so we're operating."

## Revived 2nd Fleet will lead Baltic exercise

BY SCOTT WYLAND

*Stars and Stripes*

The Navy's 2nd Fleet will lead this year's Baltic Operations exercise, its first such European mission since it was resurrected last year in response to Russia's growing naval activity in the Atlantic Ocean.

The annual NATO exercise known as BALTOPS regularly draws the attention of Russia's military, which closely monitors alliance activities in the Baltic Sea.

Last year's BALTOPS brought together 5,000 servicemembers from 16 militaries, along with six more countries that observed or provided support. This year's exercise will have naval, air and land forces from 18 nations.

"What better opportunity to introduce 2nd Fleet to the theater than BALTOPS, a tried and true exercise involving our

partners and NATO allies," 2nd Fleet commander Vice Adm. Andrew "Woody" Lewis told reporters Tuesday during a phone conference.

Lewis and staff members will run BALTOPS from the USS Mount Whitney command ship, with U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa acting as the main headquarters. They will bring no additional ships from the U.S.

Leading an exercise of this scope as a deployed force is a useful drill and different from how BALTOPS has been run in previous years, Lewis said. Typically, a European command coordinates the maneuvers and simulations.

The Norfolk, Va.-based 2nd Fleet will cover a wide area, from the East Coast to the North Atlantic and the Arctic.

The operational boundaries for the 2nd and 6th fleets will remain the same — in-

cluding in the north Atlantic — with the 2nd Fleet acting as an expeditionary force that moves as needed through both theaters. That allows greater flexibility and avoids giving adversaries clear boundaries to peg the fleets' movements, Navy officials said.

The Atlantic dividing line for the two fleets is the middle of Greenland. If the 2nd Fleet operates west of that line, it falls under Fleet Forces Command; sailing east puts it under Naval Forces Europe.

The fleet expects to have about 100 personnel by the time the exercise starts in mid-June, enabling it to operate on par with any other Navy fleet, said Lt. Marycate Walsh, 2nd Fleet spokeswoman, adding that it should be fully staffed by December.

The fleet was restored last year as part of the newer national defense strategy, which focuses more on near-peer adversaries like Russia and China and less on terrorism.

## For many US men, failing to register for draft has serious consequences

USA Today

WASHINGTON — For the past 39 years, it's been a rite of passage for American men. Within 30 days of his 18th birthday, every male citizen and legal resident is required to register for Selective Service, either by filling out a postcard-size form or going online.

What's less well known is what happens on a man's 26th birthday.

Men who fail to register for the draft by then can no longer do so — forever closing the door to government benefits like student aid, a government job or even U.S. citizenship.

Men younger than 26 can get those benefits by taking advantage of what effectively has become an eight-year grace period, signing up for Selective Service on the spot.

After that, an appeal can be costly and time-consuming. Selective Service statistics suggest that more than 1 million men have been denied some government benefit because they weren't registered for the draft.

With the current, male-only draft requirement declared unconstitutional, Congress will have to decide whether to eliminate Selective Service registration or to expand it to women.

Unable to decide that question for decades, Congress created the National Commission on Military, National and Public Service in 2016. It's studying the future of the draft with a report due next year.

Among the issues it's examining: Should draft registration be mandatory? If so, what's the fairest way to enforce it? Should the same consequences that have followed men for decades also apply to women?

"We're taking a look at all of these questions," said Vice Chairwoman Debra Wada, a former assistant secretary of the Army. "And that means looking at whether the current system is both fair and equitable — but also transparent."

Since 1993, more than 1 million American men have requested formal copies of their draft status from the Selective Service System, according to data obtained by USA Today under the Freedom of Information Act. Those status information letters are the first step in trying to appeal the denial of benefits, and are the best indication of how many men have been affected by legal consequences of failing to register.

On paper, it's a crime to "knowingly fail or neglect or refuse" to register for the draft. The penalty is up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

Last year, Selective Service referred 112,051 names and addresses of suspected

violators to the Justice Department for possible prosecution.

Still, only 20 men have been charged criminally with refusing to register for the draft since President Jimmy Carter reinstated it in 1980 in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Only 14 were convicted. The last indictment, in 1986, was dismissed before it went to trial.

Now the system relies largely on voluntary compliance, a patchwork of state laws, and the risk of losing federal benefits.

Congress passed two provisions to tighten enforcement in the 1980s. The Solomon Amendment in 1982 made Selective Service registration a requirement for federal student aid. The Thurmond Amendment in 1985 did the same for federal employment.

Federal student aid is the most common problem for men who haven't registered for the draft, according to Selective Service data obtained by USA Today.

Thirty-one states have legislation mirroring federal laws on student aid and employment, applying those bans to state-funded student aid programs and state employment. As a result, registration rates vary from 100 percent in New Hampshire to 63 percent in South Dakota — and just 51 percent in the District of Columbia, according to Selective Service data.

The law has snagged federal information technology workers, Forest Service firefighters, Department of Veterans Affairs doctors and even federal contractors.

Richard Henry, a contractor for the Internal Revenue Service, lost his access to IRS facilities because he failed to register for Selective Service. They found out because Henry told them, repeatedly, beginning in 2001.

But in 2011, the IRS changed the rules to make Selective Service a requirement. He was older than 26, so he couldn't register.

He sued, and lost, in 2017.

"If they're going to enforce this law, you should know about the law and you should know about the consequences," said Henry's lawyer, Rachel L.T. Rodriguez. "The problem here is, you don't know the consequences that follow you forever like this."

But officials said that for draft registration to work, the law has to have teeth.

"If there were no penalties for failing to register, the rates would plummet, and fairness and equity would go out the window," said Matthew Tittman, a spokesman for the Selective Service System, a civilian agency that administers draft registration.

Men who are older than 26 and are denied benefits can appeal the decision if they can prove that their failure to register was not "knowing and willful."

## Poseidon's latest visit? To Malaysia.

By CHRISTIAN LOPEZ

Stars and Stripes

For at least the third time this year, the Navy has sent its latest generation of anti-submarine warfare aircraft to an international exhibition in the Indo-Pacific region.

The Washington-based Navy Patrol Squadron 47 landed a P-8A Poseidon in Malaysia last week to take part in the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition, or LIMA. The Navy and Air Force also sent several other aircraft and their crews to showcase U.S. military hardware.

The exhibition, held every two years since 1991, brings together government and military leaders from dozens of nations.

Approximately 1,400 Navy and Air Force personnel participated in the four-day multinational event aimed at strengthening ties between the U.S. and Malaysian militaries, according to an Air Force statement issued Friday.

"We are continuing to build partnerships with nations all around the Indo-Pacific area of responsibility," Lt. Shane Lewis, a tactical coordinator with Patrol Squadron 47, said in a Navy statement Saturday. "The relationships we build here have valuable geopolitical and strategic impacts for not only the U.S. but for the world."

The Poseidon was joined by two EA-18G Growlers from Electronic Attack Squadron 132 and an MH-60R Seahawk helicopter from Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron 37 for static displays, demonstrations and professional exchanges.

A B-52 Stratofortress bomber assigned to the 23rd Bomb Squadron also performed flyovers during the event, which concluded Friday.

Patrol Squadron 47 previously appeared at the Australian International Airshow and Aerospace & Defense Exposition 2019 and Aero India 2019, some of the largest air shows in the region.

The 7th Fleet's flagship, the USS Blue Ridge, and the destroyer USS Preble also visited Malaysia for the first time, to partake in the maritime portion of the exhibition. Malaysia on Saturday also became the most recent stop for this year's Pacific Partnership mission.

# Chief tells Congress NATO still vital

BY JOHN VANDIVER  
*Stars and Stripes*

The United States is stronger with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization than it would be without it, the head of the 29-nation alliance said Wednesday in Washington, marking the first time the leader of the security pact addressed a joint session of Congress.

Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg, whose speech came at the request of congressional leaders, stressed unity amid rising tensions with Russia and tried to allay concerns of strain among allies as NATO celebrates its 70th anniversary.

"The strength of a nation is not only measured by the size of its economy or the

number of its soldiers, but also by the number of its friends," Stoltenberg told members of the House of Representatives and Senate, whose repeated rounds of applause contrasted with the White House's criticism of the multilateral alliance.

While NATO was founded as a counterweight to the Soviet Union, Stoltenberg said the alliance remains vital because Europe faces new threats, including a resurgent Russia.

Russia's deployment of a "mobile, hard-to-detect, nuclear capable," missile system violates a Cold War-era treaty with the U.S., Stoltenberg said.

The weapons also "reduce the threshold for the use of nuclear weapons in an armed conflict," Stoltenberg said.

Relations within NATO have been strained during the past two years, mainly due to President Donald Trump's criticisms on lesser financial contributions from key members like Germany. The verbal attacks have raised questions about the durability of America's commitment to NATO.

While Trump's mixed messages about the alliance's values also have unsettled members of Congress, the backing of NATO has emerged as a rare point of bipartisan agreement.

In July, the House of Representatives passed legislation, by a vote of 357 to 22, that aimed to restrict Trump from unilaterally withdrawing from NATO.

Stoltenberg acknowledged the overall sense of anxiety without blaming Trump.

## Marine colonel known for honest letters laid to rest

BY CHAD GARLAND  
*Stars and Stripes*

Retired Col. Mark A. Smith, who wrote dozens of letters praised for their compassion and eloquence to the families of his Marine Reserve battalion during a deployment early in the Iraq War, was remembered this week as a "Marine's Marine."

A 32-year veteran of the Marine Corps — including his time in the Reserve — and an Indiana State Trooper for 24 years until his retirement in 2014, the 54-year-old father of two daughters died last week following a battle with lung cancer.

Many who served in the Chicago-based 2nd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment he commanded during the Iraq deployment were traveling to Indianapolis to attend funeral services on Wednesday.

Smith was a man of deep faith and convictions, said Sharon Semrow, the wife of a retired Marine who served with Smith. "That's why we loved him ... he didn't mince words," Semrow said in a telephone interview.

Semrow distributed Smith's weekly letters while serving as a volunteer liaison between 2nd Battalion's Milwaukee-based

Fox Company and the Marines' families during the unit's 2004-05 deployment.

"He was well-loved and well-respected by every family member because of that," she said of his letter-writing. "It was ... sometimes the only news that we got. It was comforting."

Made up of five companies from Illinois, Wisconsin and Iowa, the 1,200-Marine battalion operated in northern Babil province, south of Baghdad, in an area dubbed the Triangle of Death during the insurgency that arose following the U.S.-led invasion.

Smith frequently made the rounds among the Marines, said Darrick Sewell, who was a lance corporal working in the combat operations center on the deployment.

"He was a leader-warrior," said Sewell, who was also driving from Wisconsin to Indiana on Tuesday afternoon. "He rarely slept. He was just go, go, go."

Even after lengthy operations or days without sleep, Smith could be found in the headquarters at Forward Operating Base St. Michael in Mahmudiyah each Thursday "at zero-dark-thirty ... writing away" on the weekly letter, Sewell said.

## Woman allegedly got into Mar-a-Lago with malware

*Associated Press*

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — A woman carrying two Chinese passports and a device containing computer malware lied to Secret Service agents and briefly gained admission to President Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago club over the weekend during his Florida visit, federal prosecutors allege in court documents.

Yujing Zhang, 32, approached a Secret Service agent at a checkpoint outside the Palm Beach club early Saturday afternoon and said she was a member who wanted to use the pool, court documents said. She showed the passports as identification.

Agents say she wasn't on the membership list, but a club manager thought Zhang was the daughter of a member. Agents say that when they asked Zhang if the member was her father, she did not answer definitively but they thought it might be a language barrier and admitted her.

Zhang's story changed when she got inside, agents say. She told a front desk receptionist she was there to attend the United Nations Chinese American Association event sched-

uled for that evening. No such event was scheduled and agents were summoned.

Agent Samuel Ivanovich wrote in court documents that Zhang told him that she was there for the Chinese American event and had come early to familiarize herself with the club and take photos, again contradicting what she had said at the checkpoint. She showed him an invitation in Chinese that he could not read.

He said Zhang was taken off the grounds and told she could not be there. Ivanovich said she became argumentative so she was taken to the local Secret Service office for questioning.

There, he said, it became clear Zhang speaks and reads English well. He said Zhang said she had traveled from Shanghai to attend the nonexistent Mar-a-Lago event on the invitation of an acquaintance named "Charles," whom she knew only through a Chinese social media app.

Ivanovich said Zhang carried four cellphones, a laptop computer, an external hard drive and a thumb drive containing computer malware. She did not have a swimsuit.

# New mayor of Chicago sees time of change

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Chicago Mayor-elect Lori Lightfoot's resounding victory was a clear call for change at City Hall and a historic repudiation of the old-style, insider politics that have long defined the nation's third-largest city.

Lightfoot, a former federal prosecutor who'd never been elected to public office, defeated Cook County Board President and longtime City Council member Toni Preckwinkle on Tuesday with backing from voters across the city. Late results showed Lightfoot, 56, winning every one of the city's 50 wards.

Lightfoot also made history, becoming the first black woman and the first openly gay person to be elected Chicago mayor.

Chicago will become the largest U.S. city to have a black woman serve as mayor when Lightfoot is sworn in May 20. She will join seven other black women currently serving as mayors in major U.S. cities, including Atlanta and New Orleans, and will be the second woman to lead Chicago.

"Out there tonight a lot of little girls and boys are watching. They're watching us,

and they're seeing the beginning of something, well, a little bit different," Lightfoot told a jubilant crowd at a downtown hotel. "They're seeing a city reborn."

She pledged to make Chicago "a place where your ZIP code doesn't determine your destiny," to address the city's violence and to "break this city's endless cycle of corruption" that allows politicians to profit from their office.

Lightfoot emerged as the surprising leader in the first round of voting in February when 14 candidates were on the ballot to succeed Mayor Rahm Emanuel, who decided against running for a third term.

She seized on outrage over a white police officer's fatal shooting of black teenager Laquan McDonald to launch her reformer campaign. She got in the race even before Emanuel announced he wouldn't seek reelection amid criticism for initially resisting calls to release video of the shooting.

Joyce Ross, 64, a resident of the city's predominantly black West Side who is a certified nursing assistant, cast her ballot Tuesday for Lightfoot. Ross said she believes Lightfoot will be better able to clean up the police department and curb the

city's violence.

Preckwinkle said she called Lightfoot Tuesday night to congratulate her on a "hard-fought campaign."

"While I may be disappointed I'm not disheartened. For one thing, this is clearly a historic night," she told a crowd gathered in her South Side neighborhood.

"Not long ago two African American women vying for this position would have been unthinkable. And while it may be true that we took two very different paths to get here, tonight is about the path forward."

That path will have major challenges. Chicago has been losing population, particularly in predominantly black neighborhoods hit hardest by violence and a lack of jobs.

The new mayor will take over a city that faces massive financial problems. She will have just a few months to prepare a new budget, which in 2020 is expected to have a roughly \$250 million deficit.

Lightfoot also will take over the worst-funded public pensions of any major U.S. city. Chicago's annual payments to the retirement systems are slated to grow by \$1.2 billion by 2023.

## House committee OKs subpoenas for Mueller report

New York Daily News

The House Judiciary Committee authorized subpoenas Wednesday for special counsel Robert Mueller's full report and all underlying evidence from his investigation into Russia's attack on the 2016 election, paving the way for a contentious court battle with the Trump administration.

The Democratically controlled committee, chaired by New York Rep. Jerrold Nadler, predictably approved the subpoenas in a 24-17 party line vote.

The vote doesn't automatically trigger the subpoenas, but gives Nadler permission to issue them.

Before the vote, Nadler said he'll give

Attorney General William Barr one final chance to "change his mind" on releasing the full, un-redacted report.

"But if we cannot reach an accommodation, then we will have no choice but to issue subpoenas for these materials," Nadler said.

The subpoena authorization came one day after the deadline Democrats set for Barr to release Mueller's full account.

Barr refused to commit to the deadline, saying he by law has to redact some parts of Mueller's nearly 400-page-long report.

The attorney general, who was nominated by President Donald Trump last year, has said he hopes to release a redacted version by mid-April. But, instead of spending

his time on redactions, Democrats contend Barr could seek court orders to release the complete report, like prosecutors did in the Watergate and Whitewater investigations.

"Congress is entitled to all of the evidence," Nadler said in an opening statement to the committee.

Less than 48 hours after receiving Mueller's report last month, Barr released a four-page summary clearing Trump and his administration of conspiring in the Kremlin's interference in the 2016 election.

Barr also cleared Trump of obstruction, even though Mueller refused to do so in his report.

## Philippine customs officials seize 757 live tarantulas

Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine customs officials were astonished when they opened nicely gift-wrapped boxes of cookies and oatmeal flown in all the way from Poland and found a hair-raising contraband: hundreds of live tarantulas.

Bureau of Customs personnel seized the

757 tarantulas at a mail exchange center near Manila's international airport Monday and later arrested a Filipino man who tried to claim the long-legged and venomous spiders, which were declared as "collection items."

Philippine wildlife laws prohibit the trading, collection and possession of such

spiders, which are popular pets among arachnid enthusiasts, without permits.

Despite threats of hefty fines and imprisonment, a startling array of wildlife have been seized by customs inspectors by the hundreds in Manila since last year, including geckos, iguanas, chameleons and a popular reptile called bearded dragons.

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Strong rip currents keep lifeguards busy

**FL** DAYTONA BEACH — Lifeguards rescued more than 100 people from rough surf along a stretch of beaches on Florida's Atlantic coast over the weekend.

Volusia County ocean rescue Capt. Mike Berard told The Daytona Beach News-Journal that lifeguards rescued 48 people on Saturday and at least 55 on Sunday. Those rescued included a 7-year-old girl washed out into the water by strong rip currents.

Berard said the rip currents were "pretty bad" as spring break crowds flocked to the beaches.

## Man charged after freeway standoff

**GA** MARIETTA — Police charged a motorist with obstruction after a standoff on an Atlanta freeway that backed up traffic for miles, but no one was charged with the armed robbery that triggered the dramatic episode.

Marietta police said Taylor Alexander Smith-Duffy, 25, remained a "person of interest" in the robbery at a Walmart, but detectives are still trying "to make a determination if he was involved."

Police said they stopped Smith-Duffy after his car matched the description of a gray Honda Civic suspected of being involved in the robbery. At the time, police said he was armed and not cooperating with officers.

## '40s cottage could get reprieve from ex-mayor

**MS** OCEAN SPRINGS — A city on the Mississippi Gulf Coast received

state permission to tear down a cottage that dates to at least the 1940s, but a former mayor said she would like to buy it.

The Mississippi Press reported the cottage sits next to Ocean Springs City Hall. The city had been using it for its human resources department, but that department is now inside City Hall.

Former Mayor Connie Moran said her parents lived in the cottage in the late 1940s and early 1950s, when the building was in another location. She said she would like to buy it and move it.

## Runner rescued after falling into mine shaft

**AZ** CAVE CREEK — A woman who fell into a mine shaft while out for a run north of Phoenix was rescued.

Authorities said the woman appeared to have no serious injuries after being pulled from the abandoned mine in Cave Creek.

The woman said she went for a run Sunday and got lost. She then came across the mine shaft and fell 20 feet.

The woman's father became worried when he hadn't heard from her and called the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office. Deputies tracked her cellphone and heard her yelling.

She was hoisted out by a rope.

## Vandal damages 25 neighborhood vehicles

**CA** SAN DIEGO — San Diego police were investigating vandalism that left 25 vehicles with smashed windows in the Cortez Hill neighborhood.

Police officers found 17 vehicles damaged early Sunday on 10th Avenue and eight more on Date Street.

Witnesses could describe the vandal only as being a man in a hoodie.

The total value of the damage was not immediately determined.

## Pothole reporting program relaunched

**MA** HAVERHILL — Residents of a Massachusetts city who report potholes to city officials could find themselves a few dollars richer.

The Eagle Tribune reported that Haverhill Mayor James Fiorentini relaunched a pothole reporting program for the first time in several years.

Anyone who calls 311 to report a pothole to the Highway Department between Monday and Friday is eligible to enter a drawing for \$25 gift cards to city businesses.

Fiorentini said the department has received more than 300 pothole repair requests since January, and crews have patched about 250 of the potholes.

He said some potholes are actually sinkholes and others indicate underlying problems such as a water main issue.

## Mojave Max emerges, signaling spring

**NV** LAS VEGAS — The desert tortoise known as Mojave Max emerged from his burrow, signaling the arrival of spring in Las Vegas.

Max lives in Las Vegas' Springs Preserve and starts his reptilian hibernation every winter and emerges every spring.

Clark County officials say the tortoise's awakening signals the start of springlike weather in Southern Nevada.

The Las Vegas Review-Journal reported Max officially

emerged from his burrow at 1:28 p.m. Saturday.

County officials said the winner of the 20th annual Mojave Max Emergence Contest will be announced soon.

Kindergarten to fifth grade students in the county guess what day Mojave Max will emerge from his burrow after studying the Mojave Desert weather, temperatures and conditions.

## Artist wants to find sculpture thieves

**SC** SPARTANBURG — An artist in South Carolina wants to find the thieves who have taken two of his public sculptures.

Cody Roberts has put his Hoondirt art all around Spartanburg.

Roberts told the Herald-Journal that a wire bicycle sculpture was taken from the Mary Black Rail Trail and a multicolored running man sculpture was taken from Morgan Square this year.

Police say whomever took the sculptures managed to avoid surveillance cameras and they have no new leads at this time.

## Tintype portraits to show roots musicians

**LA** NEW ORLEANS — Tintype portraits of 30 American roots musicians will be shown at a New Orleans museum, with huge copies on buildings around the city.

Alabama Slim, Little Freddie King and Pat "Mother Blues" Cohen are among musicians whose portraits will be shown April 25 through July 28 at the New Orleans Museum of Art.

The museum says it's partnering with local sites to give the musicians greater visibility through the giant images.

From wire reports

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# Utility players taking on added value

Associated Press

LAKELAND, Fla. — In his rookie season with the Detroit Tigers, Niko Goodrum spent time at first base, second base, third base, shortstop and both corner outfield spots.

The next logical step was to try him in center field, and manager Ron Gardenhire did just that during spring training last month.

“We’re just looking for places to put him. We’re going to play him everywhere,” Gardenhire said. “Except catcher. We’re not going to do that yet.”

Goodrum’s bat makes him a decent asset for the Tigers, but his versatility is what really sets him apart, and there’s increasing evidence that major league teams are putting more value on his type of jack-of-all-trades skill set. More players have been moved around the diamond in recent seasons, a sign of how important the modern utility player is to the flexibility of a big league lineup.

According to the play index

at Baseball-Reference.com, 31 players appeared in at least one game last season at first base, second base, third base and shortstop. That’s the most of any season included in the data, going all the way back to 1908. The previous record was 29, set in 2017.

A record seven players last year appeared at every defensive position except pitcher and catcher. Three of them — Enrique Hernandez, Hernan Perez and Andrew Romine — actually did pitch as well.

“I think teams are recognizing that you can maximize your roster,” said Tampa Bay manager Kevin Cash, whose team includes a couple of good utility players in Daniel Robertson and Joey Wendle. “The versatility is such an important use for us. We feel that we can, No. 1, keep guys in theory healthier, rested at times, and also not take away from our production in our lineup. The job is never easy but I think it certainly helps for in-game decisions.”

With relievers facing so

many batters nowadays — and taking up roster spots — teams often don’t have the luxury of a deep bench of capable position players. It helps to have someone who is comfortable in a lot of different spots defensively.

And some modern strategies make versatility an obvious plus.

“Think about it: There’s shifts now,” Gardenhire said. “You’ve got a shortstop playing on the second base side, you’ve got a second baseman playing on the shortstop side. So now, more than ever, you need those guys that can play all over the place.”

A player on the roster for his glove can make himself more useful by playing a lot of positions. And a player who isn’t great defensively can make up for that a bit by being versatile. Goodrum wasn’t necessarily a defensive star last year, but he hit 16 home runs for the Tigers, and now Gardenhire has plenty of ways to put him in the lineup.

“That’s how I got to the big

leagues, is being able to play everything,” Goodrum said. “That’s a tough thing to do. Not everyone can play every position. You can’t take most first basemen and put them in center.”

Goodrum was drafted in the second round in 2010 by the Minnesota Twins. For his first few minor league seasons, he spent far more time at shortstop than any other position, but by the time he reached Triple-A in 2017, he was moving all around. With Rochester that year, he started 41 games in right field, 35 at second base, 19 at third base and 14 in center field. He also played a bit at first base, shortstop and left field.

At last, Goodrum made his major league debut at age 25 in September 2017. His saga sounds somewhat typical for a utility player who took a while to find his niche. The novelty can make for a nice story, such as when Romine played all nine positions in one game two seasons ago.

## Harper goes 3-for-5, belts HR in return to Washington

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The first boos, guttural and loud, greeted Bryce Harper during pregame introductions 15 minutes ahead of the rain-delayed first pitch Tuesday night, as he stood in the Nationals Park visitor’s dugout wearing his Philadelphia Phillies uniform — and hours before he marked his second-deck homer with an epic bat flip.

The jeers kept coming, filling the chilly air when Harper walked to the plate as the No. 3 hitter for Philadelphia, his initial at-bat as a Washington opponent. More hostility came while he awaited each pitch from Max Scherzer, all of that negativity interrupted only by the sheer-joy roars after each strike of his eventual whiff, which concluded with a swing-and-miss at an 85 mph

changeup.

Harper had said he expected a mixed reaction from spectators in his return to D.C. after leaving via free agency to sign a \$330 million, 13-year deal with the Phillies. Sure sounded rather one-sided from an announced attendance of 35,920.

Adding to the theatrics of it all, as is his wont, Harper delivered a no-doubt-about-it homer off Jeremy Hellickson in the eighth inning, a two-run shot that traveled about 450 feet and put the Phillies ahead 8-2, which wound up being the final score. That topped off a 3-for-5 showing with three RBIs, and Harper sent his bat twirling in the direction of his former dugout, then engaged in elaborately choreographed celebrations with his current teammates.

In the bottom half of the first, there was booing as Harper

headed out to play right field — where fans in the front row of the bleachers wore shirts that spelled out “T-R-A-I-T-O-R” — and when he caught Adam Eaton’s fly for the first out.

After Ks in his first two at-bats, Harper doubled off Scherzer in the fifth, then singled in a run off lefty reliever Matt Grace in the sixth. He reacted to both with an exaggerated wave toward the Phillies’ dugout. Fans who made the trek down I-95 from Philadelphia regaled him with chants of “M-V-P!” and “We got Harper!”

Hours earlier, wearing a black baseball hat with “Positive Vibes” stitched in white and an attitude to match, Harper described his arrival this way: “Just coming to another stadium, and try to do my job.”

Truthfully, of course, it’s not just any other stadium. That he

was speaking at the unusual-for-baseball pregame news conference packed with reporters, photographers and TV cameras was testament to that.

Until last week, the Nationals were the only big league club the 26-year-old Harper had played for, an organization that drafted him No. 1 overall in 2010 and brought him to the majors as a teen. Washington’s uniform was the one he wore when he won NL Rookie of the Year and MVP honors, when he earned six All-Star selections in seven seasons — including last year, when he stole the show by winning the Home Run Derby in D.C.

“It’s where,” he said, “I grew up.”

But the Nationals offered him less money than the Phillies did, with millions that would be deferred for decades. So he moved on.

## MLB roundup

# Bellinger's grand slam lifts Dodgers

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Cody Bellinger can't miss at the plate.

His offense has helped the Dodgers win four of six and jump out to first place in the NL West. Bellinger has hit safely in every game, with five homers and 12 RBIs.

His biggest blast yet came off Madison Bumgarner in the third inning Tuesday night, a grand slam that helped Los Angeles hang on to beat the rival San Francisco Giants 6-5.

Bellinger has struggled against left-handed pitching in the past, and credits his current success to extra work in the batting cage.

"If you're feeling good mechanically, the mental aspect allows you to see more pitches," he said. "Sticking with my approach and trying to execute my plan as best I can."

Manager Dave Roberts says, "It's as good as I've seen him."

Los Angeles has 17 homers, tied with the Seattle Mariners for most in the majors. The Dodgers matched a franchise

record with homers in six straight games to start a season, set by the 1954 Brooklyn team. The Dodgers have homered in 10 straight games dating to Sept. 18.

Hyun-Jin Ryu (2-0) allowed two runs and six hits in seven innings. He struck out five and walked none. He was the fifth left-hander in six games that the Giants have faced.

The Dodgers survived a messy ninth when closer Kenley Jansen gave up a bases-loaded walk to Yangervis Solarte to make it 6-3. The Giants began the inning with a double by Evan Longoria and a walk by Buster Posey off Yimi Garcia.

Jansen came in and promptly loaded the bases when he misplayed the ball while covering first. He struck out pinch-hitter Joe Panik before getting pinch-hitter Pablo Sandoval to ground into a game-ending double play, the Dodgers' third of the game.

**Athletics 1, Red Sox 0:** Mike Fiers gave his team another stellar start, center fielder Ramon Laureano threw

out a baserunner for a second straight game and host Oakland made Matt Chapman's homer stand in a win over Chris Sale and Boston.

**Mariners 2, Angels 1:** Marco Gonzales pitched into the ninth inning after Dan Vogelbach hit a tiebreaking homer in the eighth, lifting host Seattle to 7-1 for the first time in franchise history.

**Tigers 3, Yankees 1:** Dustin Peterson laced a tiebreaking double off Aroldis Chapman in the ninth inning for his first major league hit, and Detroit beat host New York.

**Brewers 4, Reds 3:** Orlando Arcia ended his season-opening slump with a three-run homer and Milwaukee extended its domination of host Cincinnati.

**Orioles 2, Blue Jays 1:** Andrew Cashner pitched six shutout innings, and Baltimore extended its a road winning streak to four for the first time since 2016 before another small crowd in Toronto.

**Rays 4, Rockies 0:** Blake Snell matched a career high with 13 strikeouts, pitching

seven innings of two-hit ball to lift host Tampa Bay over Colorado for its fifth straight win.

**Mets 6, Marlins 5:** Amed Rosario hit a two-run double in visiting New York's five-run first inning against Jose Urena (0-2) and started a game-ending double play.

**Rangers 6, Astros 4:** Joey Gallo grounded a hard single to right field between two diving infielders to drive in two runs and put host Texas ahead to stay.

**Twins 5, Royals 4 (10):** Nelson Cruz got a second chance and delivered a go-ahead single with two outs in the 10th inning, giving Minnesota a victory before Kansas City's smallest announced home crowd in eight years.

**Diamondbacks 8, Padres 5:** Zack Greinke hit a career-best two homers and struck out 10 in six innings to rebound from a rocky opening day, and visiting Arizona beat San Diego in a wild game that included an unusual batter's interference call on Manny Machado.

## Season ends prematurely as AAF suspends operations

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — The Alliance of American Football has ended its first season prematurely and told most employees that they will be terminated as of Wednesday.

Employees were notified of the decision in a letter from the AAF board on Tuesday afternoon. The board essentially is majority owner Tom Dundon, who also owns the NHL's Carolina Hurricanes.

The letter, obtained by The Associated Press, gave no reason for ending the inaugural season, only that the decision was made "after careful consideration." It also said a small staff would remain to seek new investment capital and "re-

structure our business. Should those efforts prove successful, we look forward to working with many of you on season two."

The abrupt end to the latest spring league after just eight weeks stunned co-founder Bill Polian, the former NFL executive who built a Super Bowl winner with Indianapolis.

"I'm extremely disappointed," Polian told The Associated Press by phone from Charlotte, N.C.

"On the one hand it was kind of our wildest fantasies come true. It all came true and now it's all come crashing down."

Asked why the league was shutting down, Polian said he's heard "only that it's about the money. That's all."

The league had teams in Orlando, Fla.; Atlanta; San Diego; Phoenix; Salt Lake City; San Antonio; Birmingham, Ala.; and Memphis, Tenn.

Several hours before the letter was sent, Memphis quarterback Johnny Manziel tweeted: "If you're an AAF player and the league does dissolve. The last check you got will be the last one that you get. No lawsuit or anything else will get you your bread. Save your money and keep your head up. It's the only choice at this point unless something drastic happens."

Manziel said in another tweet: "Just the reality of this unfortunate situation.. great concept, good football on the field and fun for fans to watch. Just not enough money to go

around which has been the main problem with "other" leagues for a long time."

The letter said employees would be paid through Wednesday.

The AAF seemed to have a better chance of surviving than other alternative leagues, such as the USFL and the World League, because of the people and philosophies involved.

Polian and co-founder Charlie Ebersol, a television and film producer, envisioned it as a development league for the NFL with several rules tweaks designed to speed up play and make it safer. There were no kickoffs or PATs. Teams had to go for a two-point conversion after touchdowns.

## NBA roundup

## Westbrook makes history

Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — With the outcome all but decided and just over a minute remaining, Oklahoma City Thunder coach Billy Donovan wanted to get Russell Westbrook out of Tuesday's game.

Westbrook wasn't having it, waving off Hamidou Diallo.

Moments later, Westbrook grabbed a rebound and nearly snagged another as the ball glanced off his fingertips after a miss.

On the next possession, Westbrook snagged a final rebound and joined some elite company in NBA history in the Thunder's 119-103 win over the Los Angeles Lakers.

Westbrook became the second player in league history to have 20 or more points, rebounds and assists in a game, finishing with 20 points, 20 rebounds and 21 assists. Wilt

Chamberlain was the only other player to accomplish the feat.

After the game, Westbrook dedicated the win to rapper Nipsey Hussle. The musician, like Westbrook a Los Angeles product, was shot and killed on Sunday.

"I'm not going to try to put it into words but like I said on the floor, that's who it's for," Westbrook said. "I'm going to leave it at that."

Chamberlain set the lofty mark with 22 points, 25 rebounds and 21 assists in a 1968 game.

Westbrook also tied Chamberlain for second all-time in 15-point, 15-rebound, 15-assists games with eight.

Thunder coach Billy Donovan said Westbrook explained the wave-off after the game.

"I knew that he had a close friend pass away," Donovan said. "For a few guys on our team relationship-wise, it's

kind of hit them pretty hard just in the last couple days.

"For Russell, that was something that really, really meant a lot to him."

**Warriors 116, Nuggets 99:**

Kevin Durant emphatically showed who is still No. 1 in the West, delivering a pair of jarring dunks late in the first half and finishing with 21 points and six assists before being ejected to lead host Golden State past Denver in a matchup of the top teams in the conference.

**Spurs 117, Hawks 111:**

DeMar DeRozan scored 29 points and San Antonio beat Atlanta for the 21st straight time at home.

**Rockets 130, Kings 105:**

James Harden had 36 points and 10 assists and Houston matched its season high with 26 three-pointers in a win over host Sacramento.

## Wizards can Grunfeld

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Ernie Grunfeld was fired as president of the Washington Wizards after 16 seasons in charge of the team, and owner Ted Leonsis said he will oversee a "reboot."

Grunfeld's dismissal was announced with four games left in a disappointing, no-playoffs season that began with Leonsis setting a goal of 50 wins, something the franchise last accomplished in the 1970s.

Instead, Washington is 32-46 and in 11th place in the 15-team Eastern Conference. So Grunfeld is gone, after sticking around through years of fans' complaints about him.

The club went 568-724 during Grunfeld's tenure, including eight postseason appearances. But Washington never made it past the second round of the playoffs, despite having All-Stars such as John Wall and Bradley Beal.

## NHL roundup

## Stars roll over Flyers, clinch playoff berth

Associated Press

DALLAS — The Dallas Stars clinched their first trip to the playoffs in three years Tuesday night, getting two goals and two assists from Alexander Radulov in a 6-2 victory over the Philadelphia Flyers on Tuesday night.

The Stars were just a point shy of the postseason and could have made it with an Arizona loss in a later game.

Instead, they left little doubt with four goals in the final 24 minutes, including a pair 10 seconds apart, for just their third Western Conference playoff berth in 11 seasons.

Dallas last made the playoffs in 2016.

**Hurricanes 4, Maple Leafs 1:** Justin Williams and Dougie Hamilton each banked in goals from behind Toronto's net as visiting Carolina picked up a big two points in the Eastern Conference playoff race.

The Hurricanes are in the first-wild card spot in the Eastern Conference with 95 points. Columbus and Montreal each

have 94 points.

**Bruins 6, Blue Jackets 2:** Jake DeBrusk and visiting Boston are looking to build some momentum heading into the playoffs.

Columbus is just trying to get into the postseason.

Boston beat Columbus, ruining the Blue Jackets' opportunity to clinch a wild card in their last game at home.

**Canadiens 4, Lightning 2:** Artturi Lehkonen and Max Domi scored in the third period to lead their team over NHL-leading Tampa Bay, keeping host Montreal within reach for a wild-card spot in the Eastern Conference.

Montreal and Columbus both have 94 points and two games left in the regular season.

**Avalanche 6, Oilers 2:** Nathan MacKinnon and Tyson Barrie scored a minute apart to ignite a four-goal second period as playoff-chasing Colorado rallied for a win over visiting Edmonton.

**Wild 5, Jets 1:** Host Minnesota raced off to a big lead against Winnipeg, and then started watching the scoreboard to see if its faint playoff hopes would survive another night. The Wild did their part, but their six-year playoff streak came to an end.

**Predators 3, Sabres 2:** Ryan Johansen scored 6:32 into the third period, and visiting Nashville stayed in the hunt for the Central Division title.

**Red Wings 4, Penguins 1:** Visiting Pittsburgh missed out on a chance to clinch a playoff spot when Tyler Bertuzzi led Detroit to the victory.

**Canucks 4, Sharks 2:** Tanner Pearson scored twice, leading host Vancouver to a comeback win over San Jose.

**Kings 3, Coyotes 1:** Jack Campbell made 49 saves, Trevor Lewis scored 3:29 into the third period, and visiting Los Angeles hurt Arizona's playoff chances.

Arizona fell four points behind Colorado for the second wild card in the Western Conference.