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North Korea puts Guam plan on hold

BY KIM GAMEL

Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea—North Korea's leader put on hold a plan to fire missiles near Guam as all sides expressed a desire to pull back from the brink in the worst crisis to face the divided peninsula in years.

Kim Jong Un's carefully worded statement came hours after Defense Secretary Jim Mattis expressed hope that peaceful measures would work but warned the U.S. will "take out" any North Korean missile considered a threat to U.S. territories, including Guam.

"If they shoot at the United States, I'm assuming they've hit the United States," Mattis told reporters at the Pentagon. "If they do that, then it's game on."

South Korean President Moon Jae-in, meanwhile, vowed to prevent a new war from breaking out on the peninsula, which was devastated during the brutal 1950-53 conflict.

The statements capped more than a week of escalating tensions as North Korea and President Donald Trump traded threats following a report that U.S. intelligence analysts believe the North has miniaturized a nuclear warhead that could fit on a missile.

In unusually bellicose rhetoric, Trump has warned he would unleash "fire and fury" if the North continues to threaten the United States.

North Korea's army subsequently promised to finalize a plan to fire four missiles into waters near Guam, a Pacific island home to a major U.S. military presence and a fleet of supersonic bombers.

The state-run Korean Central News Agency reported Tuesday that the army had finalized the blueprint and presented it to Kim as he inspected his Strategic Force command the day before.

Ukrainian rocket-maker denies leaking know-how to N. Korea

Associated Press

DNIPRO, Ukraine — The head of Ukraine's top rocket-making company on Tuesday rejected claims that its technologies might have been shipped to North Korea, helping the pariah nation achieve a quantum leap in its missile program.

Alexander Degtyarev, chief of Satellite and rocket designer KB Yuzhnoye, voiced confidence that employees haven't been leaking know-how to Pyongyang, according to remarks published Tuesday by the online site Strana.ua.

While denying any illicit technology transfers from the plant in the city of Dnipro, Degtyarev conceded the possibility that the plant's products could have been copied.

"Our engines have been highly appraised and used around the world," he said. "Maybe they have managed to build some copies somewhere."

The New York Times re-

ported Monday that North Korea's rapid progress in making ballistic missiles potentially capable of reaching the United States was made possible by black-market purchases of powerful rocket engines, probably from KB Yuzhnoye's plant. Ukrainian officials angrily rejected the claim.

Pyongyang had displayed a keen interest in the plant before. Degtyarev mentioned a 2011 incident in which two North Koreans posing as trade representatives tried to steal technologies from the plant but were arrested. In 2012, they were convicted of espionage and each was sentenced to eight years in prison.

KB Yuzhnoye and its Yuzhmash plant in Dnipro have been leading makers of intercontinental ballistic missiles since the 1950s and produced some of the most formidable weapons in the Soviet inventory.

"He examined the plan for a long time and discussed it with the commanding officers in real earnest," KCNA said, adding that Kim offered praise for the "close and careful plan."

The leader reportedly said "he would watch a little more the foolish and stupid conduct of the Yankees," as the North calls the Americans, and warned that he may "make an important decision as it already declared" if the conduct persists.

KCNA quoted Kim as say-

ing "that if the planned fire-of-power demonstration is carried out as the U.S. is going more reckless, it will be the most delightful historic moment when the Hwasong artillerymen will wring the windpipes of the Yankees and point daggers at their necks."

Kim said the U.S. "should stop at once arrogant provocations against [North Korea] and unilateral demands and not provoke it any longer," the agency said.

Analysts said Kim was trying to tamp down skyrocketing tensions that have generated the most serious crisis on the divided peninsula in years. But they also warned he left the door open to launch a missile if he feels provoked.

"By North Korean signaling it's a clear de-escalation, and it's also an ask for the de-escalation from the American side," said John Delury, an Asia expert at Yonsei University in Seoul.

"We've got to be careful," Delury added. "He didn't say 'great plan and we're not going to do it.' He said 'great plan but we're not gonna do this now and let's see what the Americans have to say and to do.'"

Delury said one action that could tip the scales would be the deployment of Guam-based B-1B bombers as part of joint U.S.-South Korean war games known as Ulchi Freedom Guardian, which are slated to begin Monday.

"At a minimum, I would say it would be unnecessarily provocative to bring a strategic bomber up from Guam at this point," he said. "You're provoking Kim Jong Un after he made a de-escalatory move."

The Lancers have flown over the peninsula several times this year in a show of force, frequently following North Korean missile tests. Pyongyang sees such drills, as well as the annual military exercises, as an indication that the U.S. is preparing for an invasion, although Washington usually stresses they're defensive in nature.

Kim Yeon Chul, a North Korean expert at Inje University in Gimhae, also said the North was sending a signal for calm.

"The key point of what North Korea is saying is that if Washington shows they have no intention or will for pre-emptive attacks on North Korea, then North Korea has no intention or will to attack," he said.

Fitzgerald will be sent to US for repairs

BY TYLER HLAVAC

Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The collision-damaged USS Fitzgerald will be sent to the United States this fall to undergo further repairs, the Navy said Tuesday.

The destroyer, which was involved in a June 17 collision with a merchant ship that killed seven U.S. sailors, will be transported stateside between mid-September and the end of October, Cmdr. Clay Doss, 7th Fleet spokesman, told Stars and Stripes.

A repair site has not been confirmed, but the Fitzgerald will remain under 7th Fleet jurisdiction while in the states, Doss said. A small portion of

the destroyer's crew will travel with the ship; however, no decision has been made regarding the remaining crew and their families.

The Navy decided to transport the Fitzgerald back to the U.S. to free up space along Yokosuka Naval Base's waterfront for other 7th Fleet ships needing maintenance, Doss said. "The main reason why the ship was not repaired here is because it would've tied up those resources and tied up the dry docks. We could do it here; it's just more cost-effective and safer to go through the heavy-lift route."

The investigation into the Fitzgerald collision is ongoing. Last June, the Navy named Rear Adm. Brian Fort as the lead investigator. Fort assumed

command of Navy Region Hawaii on Aug. 9.

Accidents involving the Fitzgerald and the guided-missile cruiser USS Antietam have put a strain on Yokosuka's dry-dock space. The naval base has six dry docks, two of which have been unexpectedly occupied by the Fitzgerald and the Antietam, which ran aground and spilled roughly 1,100 gallons of hydraulic fluid into Tokyo Bay in January. A third dry dock is occupied by the USS Blue Ridge, which is undergoing planned maintenance.

In a June interview with Stars and Stripes, Pacific Fleet Commander Adm. Scott Swift said the 7th Fleet would be hard-pressed to keep the Fitzgerald in dry dock long term at

Yokosuka.

"I'm concerned about keeping her in dry dock here because that dry dock is critical for us to sustain the ships that are here on the waterfront," he said.

Doss said work will continue on the Fitzgerald while it remains at Yokosuka. Repair crews continue to remove debris, have put a new patch on the hull and are preparing the ship for its voyage stateside.

A replacement for the Fitzgerald has not yet been named, Doss said. Swift told Stars and Stripes in June he is looking for a ship to take over for the destroyer and is considering vessels outside the 7th Fleet. He said he has two candidates in mind but declined to name them.

Mattis leaves door open to transgender service

The Washington Post

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis left the door open Monday to some transgender servicemembers continuing to serve in the U.S. military, three weeks after President Donald Trump said they would not be allowed to do so "in any capacity."

Mattis, speaking to reporters at the Pentagon, said he and his staff are still studying the issue, including how having transgender servicemembers affects other members of their units.

Asked whether transgender people currently in the military will be forced out of their service, the Pentagon chief pointed to a statement that Gen. Joseph Dunford, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, issued a day after Trump's announcement last month. Dunford said openly transgender people will be allowed to continue to serve until there is guidance from the president on how to proceed.

"The chairman ... went out

and said immediately, 'Everyone stand fast until we get the direction,'" Mattis said.

"I understand that this is probably more about your suspicion about what could be coming, but the fact is, we have received no direction that would indicate any harm to anybody right now," he said.

Mattis declined to say whether current transgender servicemembers who outed themselves will be allowed to, at a minimum, complete their military contracts.

He also questioned the numbers of a study by the Rand Corp. that was commissioned by the Pentagon and cited by the Obama administration as it lifted a ban on transgender service in July 2016. The study found that there was little impact to military operations on allowing transgender troops, and that there were, in fact, already between 2,500 and 7,000 transgender people among the 1.3 million on active duty.

Iranian drone buzzes Nimitz in Persian Gulf

BY COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — An Iranian drone harassed a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier and its jets Sunday night in the second dangerous interaction between the two nations in less than a week, a Navy spokesman said.

The Iranian QOM-1 drone made several close passes by the USS Nimitz aircraft carrier and other ships escorting it in international waters in the central Persian Gulf, said Lt. Ian McConaughy, a spokesman for U.S. Naval Forces Central. The drone did so without turning on its flight navigation lights, he said.

The unarmed drone's operators ignored repeated radio calls warning it to stay clear of the area while fighter jets operated nearby, McConaughy said.

The drone flew within about 1,000 feet of a Navy aircraft during the incident, which was deemed unsafe and unprofessional.

"The failure of the Iranian

[drone] to utilize standard, internationally mandated navigation lights during a nighttime approach of a U.S. aircraft carrier engaged in flight operations created a dangerous situation with the potential for collision and is not in keeping with international maritime customs and laws," McConaughy said.

The incident followed a similar unsafe and unprofessional interaction between a Navy F/A-18E Super Hornet and an unarmed QOM-1 drone on Aug. 8.

In that incident, the drone executed "dangerous" altitude changes and flew within about 100 feet of the jet as it prepared to land on the Nimitz, the Navy said.

The incident Sunday was at least the 14th interaction between American and Iranian military forces in and around the Persian Gulf in 2017 that the United States has deemed unsafe and unprofessional.

President retweets, then deletes critic's message

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump appears to have mistakenly retweeted a message from one of his critics saying “he’s a fascist.”

Trump deleted his retweet Tuesday after about five minutes, but not before the message sent to his 35 million followers racked up a big response.

Trump seems to have been trying to draw attention to a Fox & Friends article on a possible presidential pardon for former Phoenix-area Sheriff Joe Arpaio, who is facing sentencing for criminal contempt of court case involving immigration patrols.

A Twitter handle identified as “@MikeHolden42” tweeted to Trump “He’s a fascist, so not unusual.” The user suggested in subsequent tweets that he was calling Trump a fascist, not Arpaio.

Trump retweeted the message to his massive following, triggering an avalanche of replies. @Mike Holden42 responded: “I’m announcing my retirement from Twitter. I’ll never top this RT.” On Tuesday, Trump also retweeted and deleted a cartoon showing a train labeled “Trump” running over a man with “CNN” covering his face.

The retweets come after a national uproar over race-fueled clashes in Charlottesville, Va. It took two days of public equivocation and internal White House debate before the president condemned white supremacist groups by name on Monday.

Late Monday, Trump had retweeted Jack Posobiec, a conservative Trump supporter who used social media to draw attention to “pizzagate,” an unfounded conspiracy theory that claims Democrats harbor child sex slaves at a pizza restaurant.

Posobiec’s tweet read: “Meanwhile: 39 shootings in Chicago this weekend, 9 deaths. No national media outrage. Why is that?”

White nationalists intend to be ‘more active than ever’

Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Emboldened and proclaiming victory after a bloody weekend in Virginia, white nationalists are planning more demonstrations to promote their agenda after the violence that left a woman dead and dozens injured.

The University of Florida said white provocateur Richard Spencer, whose appearances sometimes stoke unrest, is seeking permission to speak there next month.

White nationalist Preston Wiginton had said he was planning a “White Lives Matter” rally at Texas A&M University in September, but the university later said it has been canceled.

Also, a neo-Confederate group had asked the state of Virginia for permission to rally at a monument to Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee in Richmond on Sept. 16 but later canceled its plans.

Other events are likely to be held.

“We’re going to be more active than ever before,” Matthew Heimbach, a white nationalist leader, said Monday.

James Alex Fields Jr., a young man who was said to idolize Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany in high school, was charged with killing a woman by slamming a car into a group of counterprotesters at a white nationalist rally Sunday in Charlottesville.

Fields, 20, was held without bail on murder charges.

Two state troopers also died Sunday when their helicopter crashed during an effort to contain the violence.

The U.S. Justice Department said it will review the violence, and Attorney General Jeff Sessions told ABC the death of counterprotester Heather Heyer, 32, met the definition of domestic terrorism.

White nationalists said they were undaunted.

Heimbach called the event Saturday “an absolute stunning victory” for the far right because of the large number of supporters who descended on the city to decry plans to remove a statue of Lee.

Hundreds of white nationalists, white supremacists, neo-Nazis, Ku Klux Klan members and others were involved, by some estimates, in what Heimbach, leader of the Traditionalist Workers Party, called the nation’s biggest such event in a decade or more. Even more opponents turned out, and the two sides clashed violently.

A neo-Nazi website that helped promote the gathering said there will be more events soon.

“We are going to start doing this nonstop. Across the country,” said the site, which internet domain host GoDaddy said it was shutting down after it mocked the woman killed in Charlottesville.

Rally spurs removal of Confederate statues

Associated Press

In Gainesville, Fla., workers hired by the Daughters of the Confederacy chipped away at a Confederate soldier’s statue, loaded it quietly on a truck and drove away with little fanfare.

In Baltimore, Mayor Catherine Pugh said she’s ready to tear down all of her city’s Confederate statues, and the city council voted to have them destroyed. San Antonio lawmakers are looking ahead to removing a statue that many people wrongly assumed represented a famed Texas leader who died at the Alamo.

Some people refused to wait. Protesters in Durham, N.C., toppled a nearly century-old statue of a Confederate soldier Monday at a rally against racism. Activists took a ladder up to the statue and used a rope to pull down the Confederate Soldiers Monument that was dedi-

cated in 1924. A diverse crowd of dozens cheered as the statue of a soldier holding a rifle fell to the ground in front of an old courthouse building that now houses local government offices.

The deadly white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Va., is fueling another re-evaluation of Confederate statues in cities across the nation, accelerating their removal in much the same way that a 2015 mass shooting by a white supremacist renewed pressure to take down the Confederate flag from public property.

“We should not glorify a part of our history in front of our buildings that really is a testament to America’s original sin,” Gainesville Mayor Lauren Poe said Monday after the statue known as “Old Joe” was returned to the United Daughters of the Confederacy, which

erected it in 1904.

A county spokesman said he did not know if the statue was removed because of the events that killed one person and injured dozens more Saturday in Charlottesville.

The Southern Poverty Law Center last year counted more than 1,500 things around the country named after Confederate figures or dedicated to the Confederacy, including holidays, statues, flags and the names of cities, counties, schools and parks. Nearly half are monuments, which are in 24 states. Most of the dedications are in the South, but 24 are in the North and 21 in states that did not exist at the time of the Civil War.

The violence in Charlottesville will probably speed up efforts to do away with the monuments, experts said.

Thousands of Iraqis flee Tal Afar as coalition airstrikes increase

Associated Press

BADOUSH, Iraq — Thousands of Iraqis have fled an Islamic State-held town west of Mosul as Iraqi and coalition warplanes step up strikes ahead of a ground offensive to drive out the militants.

Tal Afar and the surrounding area is one of the last pockets of ISIS-held territory in Iraq after victory was declared in July in Mosul, the country's second-largest city. The town, about 93 miles east of the Syrian border, sits along a major road that was once a key ISIS supply route.

On Monday, hundreds of exhausted civilians were brought by Iraqi army trucks from the front line to a humanitarian collection point just west of Mosul. Many described a harrowing journey of a day or more from Tal Afar, with no food or water.

Jassem Aziz Tabo, an elderly man who arrived with his 12-member family, said he had left Tal Afar months ago and gone

to a village on the outskirts to escape hunger, airstrikes and violence from the militants.

"Those who tried to escape were captured and shot in the head. They killed my son," he said. "He tried to escape, he was caught and they killed him."

He said severe shortages have caused the price of food to skyrocket in Tal Afar, which has been besieged by Iraqi forces for months.

Lt. Gen. Anwar Hama, of the Iraqi air force, told The Associated Press that airstrikes this week have targeted ISIS headquarters, tunnels and weapons stores.

Iraqi forces, closely backed by the U.S.-led coalition, are not expected to push into the town for another few weeks, according to an Iraqi officer overseeing the operation. He spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations.

Iraqi army, federal police and special forces units are expect-

ed to participate in the operation, as well as state-sanctioned mostly Shiite militias known as the Popular Mobilization Forces.

The militiamen largely stayed out of the operation to retake Mosul, a mostly Sunni city, but have vowed to play a bigger role in Tal Afar, which was mostly Shiite before it fell to ISIS, a Sunni extremist group. The militias captured Tal Afar's airport, on the outskirts of the town, earlier this year.

Their participation in the coming offensive could heighten sectarian and regional tensions. Tal Afar was once home to Shiite and Sunni Arabs, as well as a sizable ethnic Turkmen community with close ties to neighboring Turkey.

On Monday, the Iraqi army began moving an armored brigade to the front line south of Tal Afar, while an infantry division was deployed about 19 miles to the town's east.

Hundreds killed in mudslides

Associated Press

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone — The death toll from massive mudslides in Sierra Leone's capital was certain to rise Tuesday as bodies washed up on a beach and workers searched for an untold number of people buried in their homes. The Red Cross estimated that 600 people were still missing.

Authorities have said more than 300 people were killed in and around Freetown on Monday following heavy rains. Many were trapped under tons of mud as they slept.

The Connaught Hospital mortuary in central Freetown was overwhelmed on Tuesday with more than 300 bodies, many spread on the floor.

"The magnitude of the destruction as a result of the disaster is such that the number of victims in the community who may not come out alive may likely exceed the number of dead bodies already recovered," said Charles Mambu, a civil society activist and resident of one affected area, Mount Sugar Loaf.

In a sign of hope, he said, "two bodies were brought out alive from the debris last evening."

Government spokesman Cornelius Deveaux said rescue operations began early Tuesday. Deveaux said definitive death figures were unknown "as the mortuary is overwhelmed with corpses — men, women and children."

Some rescue workers and volunteers dug overnight through the mud and debris with their bare hands in a desperate search for missing relatives. Military personnel have been deployed to help with the operation in the impoverished West African nation.

"I have never seen anything like it," said Abdul Nasir, program coordinator for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. "A river of mud came out of nowhere and swallowed entire communities, just wiped them away."

Lightning strikes hit fewer in US

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Lightning — once one of nature's biggest killers — is claiming far fewer lives in the United States, mostly because we've learned to get out of the way.

In the 1940s, when there were fewer people, lightning killed more than 300 people annually. So far this year, 13 people have died after being struck, on pace for a record low of 17 deaths. Taking the growing population into account, the lightning death rate has shrunk more than forty-fold since 1940.

People seem to be capturing the phenomenon more on cameras than before, making it seem like something new and sizzling is going on in the air. Separate videos last month of a Florida lifeguard and an airport worker being hit by lightning went viral. Both survived.

Lightning strikes have not changed — they hit about as often as they used to, said Pennsylvania State University meteorology professor Paul Markowski. A big difference is fewer of us are outside during bad weather. If we're not huddled indoors, we're often in cars. Vehicles with metal roofs — not convertibles — are safe from lightning, experts say.

"As a society, we spend less time outside," said Harold Brooks, a scientist at the National Weather Service's National Severe Storms Laboratory. "Especially farmers. There aren't just as many farmers around."

Decades ago, farmers would be in fields and were the tallest object, making them most likely to get hit, said National Weather Service lightning safety specialist John Jensenius Jr. That helps explain the drop in yearly lightning deaths from about 329

in the 1940s to about 98 in the 1970s. The numbers have kept plunging ever since. From 2007 to 2016, average yearly deaths dropped to 31.

When Dr. Mary Ann Cooper started out in the emergency room in the 1970s, there was nothing in textbooks about how to treat lightning victims.

Now, instead of treating lightning patients the same way as people who touch high-voltage wires and are burned, doctors focus more on the neurological damage, said Cooper, professor emerita of emergency medicine at the University of Illinois in Chicago.

Perhaps the biggest reason deaths are down is because of efforts to teach people not to get hit in the first place.

"We've equipped the public by saying, 'When thunder roars, go indoors.' Three-year-olds can remember that," Cooper said.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Nigerian repeats win as kale-eating champ

NY HAMBURG — When it comes to chowing down on kale, Nigerian Gideon Oji is once again the top dog, beating back a challenge from hot dog-eating champ Joey Chestnut.

Oji gulped down 22½ 16-ounce bowls of the leafy green vegetable — served raw with oil and vinegar — in eight minutes during Sunday's Kale Yeah! Competition at the Erie County Fair in the town of Hamburg, just south of Buffalo.

The contest featured returning champion Oji and Chestnut, of San Jose, Calif., the reigning hot dog-eating champion at the Nathan's Famous in New York City last month. Chestnut consumed 20 kale servings.

Ice cream record set by competitive eater

IN INDIANAPOLIS — Competitive eater Miki Sudo downed a heaping helping of ice cream at the Indiana State Fair to set a new mark for gobbling up the cool treat.

The Indianapolis Star reported the Las Vegas woman ate 16½ pint-sized containers in six minutes, topping a previous record that Major League Eating lists as 15 pints in that much time.

The mark was set during Sunday's Prairie Farms World Ice Cream Eating Championship, which was sanctioned by Major League Eating. Sudo gets a \$2,000 prize for first place.

Man returns uniform to late soldier's family

MD HAMPSTEAD — A late Maryland man's 1940s Army uniform that ended

up at a thrift store across the country is back with his family, thanks to a kind stranger.

The Baltimore Sun reported that Bruce Campbell found the olive green jacket at a thrift store in Spokane, Wash. The military historian noticed the uniform still had a label for a Baltimore manufacturer and was dated September 1947. The jacket even had a name: COL. A.L. SHREVE.

Campbell concluded the uniform belonged to Col. Arthur Lee Shreve Jr., who served in both world wars. Shreve died in 1969.

Campbell said he decided the "uniform had to go home" and sent the jacket to Heather Shreve, of Hampstead, who has documented her grandfather's life.

Teen accidentally shot with gun found at park

MO FESTUS — An eastern Missouri teenager is dead after being accidentally shot with a gun he and a friend found in a city park.

Police said Zackary Depung, 17, and another 17-year-old found the gun Saturday at a park in Festus. They believed the gun was unloaded as they played with it outside Depung's house.

Depung was shot near the neck. He was flown to a St. Louis hospital, where he died early Sunday.

Authorities are trying to determine who owned the gun and how it got in the park.

People report alligator sightings near highway

MA DANVERS — No, a live alligator was not lurking by the side of a Massachusetts highway last weekend.

The Salem News reported

that police in Danvers got their first report of an alligator along Route 128 about 8:40 a.m. Sunday. One person walked into a police station to report the alligator on the southbound side of the highway a couple of hours later.

Reports of an alligator prompted a frenzy on Twitter, and the animal-control officer was requested to respond.

Officers who went to investigate found a foot-and-a-half long plastic toy discarded by the side of the road.

Heroin overdose leads to funeral escort crash

WV HUNTINGTON — Authorities say a driver overdosed on heroin behind the wheel and crashed into a police cruiser leading a funeral procession in West Virginia.

The Herald-Dispatch reported that Huntington police said a green sedan ran a red light and struck the cruiser driven by a reserve officer about 3:40 p.m. Saturday. No one was injured, and the cruiser was damaged but still drivable.

Criminal complaints from Cabell County Magistrate Court say the driver was identified as a 44-year-old Hurricane woman who told police she'd injected heroin before driving. She was found unconscious and revived with naloxone.

The woman refused medical attention and was arraigned for a misdemeanor DUI charge before being held in Western Regional Jail.

Puppy to make history as female mascot

SC HILTON HEAD ISLAND — A puppy will make U.S. Marine Corps history as the first female mascot for Recruit Depot Parris Island.

The Island Packet, of Hilton Head Island, reported an

English bulldog named Opha Mae will be Parris Island's 21st mascot.

Depot spokesman Capt. Adam Flores said Opha Mae will "begin recruit training" soon to take over for Cpl. Legend, whose health is declining.

The puppy is named for Opha Mae Johnson, the first female Marine. She was the first of several hundred women to enlist in 1918 to do clerical work so men could be sent overseas to fight in World War I.

Grill in SUV explodes when woman lights up

FL ORLANDO — A Florida woman lit a cigarette, sparking an explosion of a propane barbecue grill being transported in her SUV.

Orlando police Lt. Cindy Lane said the grill was turned on and the propane tank was open in the back of the red Kia Sorento as she left a barbecue at the Central Florida Fairgrounds on Sunday afternoon.

Lane said the woman and her husband were burned and their sports utility vehicle was severely damaged. The couple's injuries are not considered to be life-threatening.

Pet iguana is caught after biting a cyclist

NH RYE — Police in New Hampshire had their hands full after a pet iguana got loose and bit a cyclist.

Officers responded after a cyclist tried lassoing the roaming reptile with a leash Monday morning in Rye. Police safely caught the iguana and headed to the police station with him.

The 10-year-old iguana, whose name is Mr. Jingles, was reunited with his owner after Rye police posted on social media.

From wire reports

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Stanton hitting homers at rapid pace

Associated Press

MIAMI — Given Giancarlo Stanton's recent home run binge, Derek Jeter may decide baseball's biggest contract is a bargain.

Stanton signed a record \$325 million, 13-year deal in 2014 with the Miami Marlins, and they still owe him about \$300 million — an eye-popping number even to a former All-Star shortstop for the New York Yankees.

Jeter's investment group agreed last week to buy the Marlins from Jeffrey Loria, and given the franchise's history of low revenue and attendance, there's already speculation the incoming regime may deem Stanton unaffordable.

But lately, he looks like a keeper at any price. Stanton's knack for moonshots has long made him the sport's most prodigious slugger, and now he's also the most prolific.

He homered against the San Francisco Giants in the first inning Monday night to increase his season total to 43, most in the majors and a franchise record. He has homered in his past five games, another team record, and has 22 homers in

his past 34 games.

He would finish the season with 72 homers — one shy of Barry Bonds' 2001 record — if he continues his pace of the past five weeks.

"It has been amazing to watch," manager Don Mattingly said Sunday.

"You know you're watching something special," teammate Javy Guerra said. "It's very weird to see a guy come to the plate, and you think he could homer every time. It's a lot of fun to be a fan."

Stanton homered Sunday against the Colorado Rockies to tie Gary Sheffield's franchise record for homers in a season, set in 1996. The home run was the 250th for Stanton in 3,407 at-bats, and by that measure, only four players reached the milestone faster — Harmon Killebrew, Ralph Kiner, Babe Ruth and Ryan Howard.

"Crazy," said Stanton, 27. "Those are guys you glorified and put on a pedestal as gods as a kid, and you're right there on the same plane as them now. So it's something special."

This year is special for Stanton because he has remained healthy, missing only two games. It's the first time since

2011 he has avoided an injury that sidelined him for a lengthy stint.

Worst was a season-ending beaming in September 2014. Stanton led the National League in home runs and RBIs when his face was fractured by a fastball from Mike Fiers, of the Milwaukee Brewers.

The aftermath left Stanton prone to swings and misses on outside breaking pitches. But lately his timing has been excellent, and he began the week batting .281 with the lowest strikeout rate of his career.

He credits a new closed stance.

"I'm not pulling off the ball, and I've been more on time and ready to go on off-speed pitches, heaters, everything," he said. "I watched film over and over until my eyes hurt to figure it out."

"Every year I've had seven or eight different stances, and it's really because I haven't felt comfortable throughout a whole season to keep one. So it's a constant grind — how do I feel right every day? This was one I hadn't tried yet, and it has been pretty good."

Pretty good? The stance often leads to a home run trot

accompanied by a grin. On Sunday, Stanton even threw in a quick dance step rounding third base.

"I think he likes hitting homers," Mattingly said with a chuckle. "He smiles a lot when he's hitting homers."

Stanton said he's having more fun than at any time in his career, even with his team out of the playoff race as usual. This will be the 14th consecutive season the Marlins have missed the postseason, and given their injury-ravaged pitching staff, Stanton harbors no illusions of a miracle run.

"We've got arms going down like flies," he said.

Marlins fans are counting on Jeter to change the team's fortunes. Stanton? He's already tired of questions about the new ownership, and about his future.

Team management expects to close on the \$1.2 billion sale in early October, so it may be a while before Jeter can provide any answers.

"It still has months to process," Stanton said with a sigh. "So we'll just wait it out."

He knows he'll be making \$25 million next year somewhere.

Goodell fields question about national anthem sitters

Associated Press

GLENDALE, Ariz. — Asked about players who did not stand for the national anthem before preseason games, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell said Monday that while the playing of the anthem is a special moment to him, "we also have to understand the other side."

Goodell made the comments at University of Phoenix Stadium during a 45-minute question-and-answer period with Arizona Cardinals club seat holders. One season ticket-holder, Bruce Olson, asked whether players were going to continue to protest during the anthem and if anything could be done about it.

"It's one of those things where I think we have to understand that there are people that have different viewpoints," Goodell said. "The national anthem is a special moment to me. It's a point of pride. But we also have to understand the other side, that people do have rights and we want to respect those."

Seattle Seahawks defensive end Michael Bennett sat on the visiting bench during the anthem before the preseason opener against the Los Angeles Chargers on Sunday, a decision he made before weekend protests by white supremacists in Charlottesville, Va. Bennett has said that the aim of his protest is to make people uncomfortable. In the process, he hopes

to spur greater communication, understanding and involvement across racial, gender and socioeconomic lines.

Oakland Raiders running back Marshawn Lynch sat on a cooler during the anthem Saturday night on the field at University of Phoenix Stadium. Los Angeles Rams defensive end Robert Quinn raised a fist before his team's game.

The fact that former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick is still looking for a team to play for after his kneel-down protests last season is also still a hot topic.

Goodell, without mentioning any of the players, said other players are taking the platform they have into local communi-

ties to create dialogue toward positive change.

"Protest to progress is what I call it, and we all have to recognize that if we want to see change, let's go out and try to make that change happen in a peaceful and important way," Goodell said.

Olson, who described himself as a season-ticket holder "since Day 1," said the commissioner "beat around the bush" on the issue. He said he'd like Goodell to take a tougher stance.

"The thing is, all he (Lynch) has to do is stand up for two minutes and he can still have whatever beliefs he wants. Go with what looks good for the game and to the people," Olson said.

NBA excited about changes to schedule

Associated Press

MIAMI — Larry Bird made his plea years ago.

His request to the NBA was not unique: Bird wanted the league to eliminate the dreaded stretches of four games in five days. What made Bird's pitch memorable was that it didn't just cite the demand of so many games in such a short amount of time, but also pointed out how the anxiousness caused by such tests can hurt a team beforehand and how the fatigue lingers long afterward.

"What he said to me has been ringing in my head ever since," said Tom Carelli, the NBA's senior vice president for broadcasting.

Carelli and the rest of the NBA schedule-making gurus were unable to make Bird's request reality — until now. With an extra week of days to play with, along with some much deeper looks at arena availability and ways to try to help competitive balance, the NBA believes the schedule released Monday should be the most user-friendly in the league's history.

The four-games-in-five-days challenges? Eliminated for the first time in NBA history.

Back-to-backs? Only 14.4 per team on average, an all-time low for the third straight year.

Single-game road trips, average miles traveled and time zones crossed? All down a bit as well.

"I think at this point, and frankly the minute we got the extra week, we could conclude the schedule is really, undebatably, the best basketball schedule we've ever had," said Evan Wasch, the NBA's senior vice president for basketball strategy and analytics. "That's what the week affords you, the opportunity to focus on all these different metrics."

The extra week, which allows the regular season to start Oct. 17 — the league's earliest start since 1980 — was an obvious help. But schedule makers went further, taking a deeper-than-usual look at arena availability around the league and trying to minimize the nights where a weary team will face a well-rested opponent.

In other words, NBA fans,

meet FTE.

The metric — an acronym for Fresh, Tired and Even — is a major part of the NBA schedule process. It's a way the NBA has charted how tired one team will likely be when facing another.

FTE has been part of the NBA's internal charting for years, but wasn't often discussed openly or with teams.

"If a team plays the night before and its opponent didn't, then one team is tired and its opponent is fresh," Wasch said. "That fresh-tired ratio will be lower than ever. It's hard to measure and track when you build a schedule manually, but it's easy to track when building one with optimization software."

Instead of asking teams for 50 possible home dates for their respective buildings — the past standard — schedule makers like Carelli, Wasch, Chris Boghosian, Gene Li and Hao Meng instead checked every available date and tried a much broader look at how the puzzle might fit.

Their work might be particu-

larly noticed on ABC games this season.

Last season, when stars like LeBron James, Kyrie Irving, Kevin Love, Stephen Curry, Klay Thompson, Draymond Green and Andre Iguodala all were given nights off when the Cavaliers or Warriors were playing nationally televised games on ABC, there was no shortage of scorn. This season, teams playing in those marquee ABC games will have a day off both before and after those contests.

"The more information we got, the easier it was to reduce back-to-backs," Carelli said.

The changes aren't only to benefit players and teams.

The league this year will be labeling the schedule by week — Week 1, Week 2, so on, from Monday to Sunday. It's essentially an idea at presenting fans, and fantasy players, with a schedule that's broken down into smaller bites.

"It's progress. It's all part of a larger basket of progress," Carelli said.

Former Arkansas coach AD Broyles dies at 92

Associated Press

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. — Frank Broyles, who guided the University of Arkansas to its lone national football championship and later molded the overall program as its athletic director, died Monday at the age of 92.

Broyles died from complications of Alzheimer's disease, according to a statement from his family. "He passed peacefully in his home surrounded by his loved ones," the statement said.

Broyles won almost 71 percent of his games as head football coach with the Razorbacks for 19 years. He became the school's athletic director in 1974 while still the football coach, eventually retiring from the gridiron to focus on administrative duties following the 1976 season.

As athletic director, Broyles led an overhaul and upgrade of Arkansas' facilities — as well as leading the school in its move to the Southeastern Conference. Following

his coaching career, Broyles — who earned a spot in the National Football Foundation's College Hall of Fame — served as an analyst on ABC's college football telecasts.

While his coaching record of 144-48-5 defined the first part of his career, Broyles' legacy at Arkansas is every bit equaled by his work as athletic director.

Arkansas' athletic facilities underwent a near-complete overhaul following the school's move from the Southwest Conference to the SEC in 1991.

Broyles' spearheaded the fundraising efforts that led to the construction of Bud Walton Arena, the renovation of and additions to Razorback Stadium and the building of Baum Stadium. He also guided the school as it built indoor and outdoor tracks, a tennis facility and the athletic administrative complex that bears his name.

Broyles was known for his ability to identify top coaches, both head coaches and assistants.

He was responsible for the hiring of bas-

ketball coaches Eddie Sutton and Nolan Richardson as well as Lou Holtz and Ken Hatfield in football. Broyles also hired former great John McDonnell in track.

McDonnell won 40 national championships with the Razorbacks, while Richardson led Arkansas to the 1994 national championship in men's basketball.

Broyles retired as athletic director in 2007, moving into a fundraising role with the school's Razorback Foundation until his retirement from that role in 2014.

"For the past 56 years, I have had the privilege or working in the only job I ever wanted — to be the head football coach and then the athletic director of the Razorbacks," Broyles said at the time. "The Razorbacks have always been my passion."

Under Broyles as coach, the Razorbacks won or shared seven Southwest Conference football titles and went to 10 bowl games.

That included a win over Nebraska in the Cotton Bowl following the 1964 regular season, which left the Razorbacks 11-0.

Bryant stays hot, leads Cubs past Reds

Associated Press

CHICAGO — The Chicago Cubs waited all season for a hot streak from NL MVP Kris Bryant. Now that he's on one, they want it to last a while.

"My history with him is when he gets it, it stays there," manager Joe Maddon said.

Bryant and Anthony Rizzo hit back-to-back homers to cap a five-run fourth inning, and the Cubs continued their recent dominance of the Cincinnati Reds with a 15-5 victory Monday night.

Bryant went 2-for-4 with a walk and has reached safely in 16 of his last 20 plate appearances.

"It's a special stretch," said Rizzo, who was 3-for-5 with a

season-high five RBIs. "It was a matter of time before he's doing what he's doing. It's fun to watch."

Jon Jay had three hits with an RBI and finished a home run shy of the cycle as the Cubs extended their NL Central lead to 1½ games over idle St. Louis. Jose Quintana (3-2) allowed two runs, one earned, and four hits in five innings to snap a three-start winless stretch.

Chicago has 25 wins in its last 32 games against the Reds. The Cubs have swept the last two series at Wrigley Field between the teams going back to last season, and won 11 of the past 13 meetings there the last two years.

Scooter Gennett hit a two-

run homer, his 20th, in the eighth for the Reds, who have five players with at least 20 home runs to tie a club record. Gennett also mopped up on the mound after beginning the game at second base.

Cincinnati catcher Devin Mesoraco broke his left foot when he was hit by a pitch in the second.

Joey Votto went 3-for-5 to set a Cincinnati mark by reaching base at least twice in 19 consecutive games. It's the longest streak in the majors since Barry Bonds did it in 20 straight in 2004.

"We had a lot of guys on base today; both teams did," Reds manager Bryan Price said. "They were able to take advan-

tage of it a bit more."

Reds starter Asher Wojciehowski (3-2) appeared to settle down after a rough first inning, but couldn't get the final out in the fourth.

With Jason Heyward at first and two outs, Jay tripled into the right-field corner to give Chicago a 3-2 lead. Tommy La Stella followed with an RBI single to make it 4-2. Bryant then cracked a two-run homer and Rizzo followed with a solo shot for a 7-2 edge.

The Cubs scored six times in the seventh — highlighted by reliever Mike Montgomery's two-run double and Rizzo's two-run single — to make it 12-2.

Judge, Sanchez both homer in Yanks' win over Mets

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Aaron Judge and Gary Sanchez redefined the meaning of 40-40 club.

Judge hit a tying home run in the sixth inning, the 40th of his big league career, just a year and a day after his debut.

After Aaron Hicks hit a go-ahead drive in the eighth, Sanchez hit the 40th of his career, too, and the Yankees rallied from a two-run deficit to beat the Mets 4-2 on Monday night in the first of four Subway Series matchups this week.

"It's awesome to watch and be a part of," said Hicks, who also hit his 40th career home run.

Normally 40-40 is baseball parlance for reaching those figures in home runs and steals. The Baby Bombers are defined by power: Judge reached the mark in his 140th game and Sanchez in his 139th, the third-fastest behind Mark McGwire (110) and Rudy York (129).

"To be able to do that with him feels good," Sanchez said through a translator.

Hicks hit No. 40 in his 435th major league game.

Sanchez had only four homers through May, slowed by an

early-season strained biceps, but has matched his total of 20 in his rookie season last year — all in a 43-game burst from Aug. 10 to Sept. 27.

"He's going to be one of the greatest catchers in this game. We're just seeing the beginning of it," Judge said.

Curtis Granderson and Yoenis Cespedes homered in the third off Luis Cessa to give the Mets a 2-0 lead at Yankee Stadium. Cespedes' drive to right-center ticked off the glove of a leaping Judge, hit the top of the wall and bounced over.

Sanchez started the Yankees' comeback with a 273-foot sacrifice fly in the fourth against starter Rafael Montero. Hicks made a nice feet-first slide to the inside of the plate to evade catcher Rene Rivera on Cespedes' throw from left, which was up the third-base line.

Judge hit his AL-leading 36th home run — just his sixth since the All-Star break.

Hicks, who returned last week from an oblique injury, homered against Hansel Robles (7-4) leading off the eighth, his career-best 12th of the season. Sanchez connected for an opposite-field drive with two outs

against Erik Goedel. Both went 401 feet.

"They're dangerous in this park, and you're not satisfied that two runs is going to hold up in Yankee Stadium," Mets manager Terry Collins said.

Indians 7, Red Sox 3: Edwin Encarnacion homered twice to help AL Central-leading Cleveland earn its fourth straight victory by beating East-leading host Boston.

In a rematch of last year's ALDS, which Cleveland won in a three-game sweep, Trevor Bauer (11-8) struck out 11 over 6 2/3 innings for his fourth consecutive win. He allowed three runs — all on solo homers by Red Sox rookies. Rafael Devers had two and Andrew Benintendi one.

Diamondbacks 2, Astros 0: Zack Greinke struck out nine in six-plus innings to bounce back from his first home loss of the season, lifting host Arizona.

Greinke (14-5) took his first home loss last week against the Dodgers and followed with a dominant performance against the majors' top-hitting team to help the Diamondbacks win for the third time in nine games.

Blue Jays 2, Rays 1: Josh

Donaldson hit a two-run homer in the first inning for the second consecutive game, Nick Tepesch won for the first time in almost three years and host Toronto edged slumping Tampa Bay.

Rangers 6, Tigers 2: Joey Gallo hit his 33rd home run and host Texas also played some small ball in a victory over Detroit.

Orioles 11, Mariners 3: Tim Beckham hit the first pitch of the game out for his first career leadoff homer, Manny Machado launched his sixth grand slam an inning later and Baltimore routed skidding host Seattle.

Royals 6, Athletics 2: Cam Gallagher hit a grand slam for his first career home run and second big league hit, leading Kansas City past host Oakland.

Padres 7, Phillies 4: Jose Pirela's two-out, two-run single highlighted the four-run sixth inning that carried host San Diego.

Rockies 3, Braves 0: Chad Bettis drew a standing ovation when he took the mound for the first time since cancer treatment, then threw seven impressive innings as host Colorado blanked Atlanta.