

STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Sawyer arrives to take helm of 7th Fleet

BY WYATT OLSON

Stars and Stripes

A career submariner arrived Friday in Yokosuka, Japan, to take the reins of the beleaguered 7th Fleet after its previous commander was relieved in the wake of a second major ship collision since June.

Vice Adm. Phillip Sawyer, who most recently served as Pacific Fleet's deputy commander, assumed command Wednesday when Vice Adm. Joseph Aucoin was relieved "due to a loss of confidence in his

ability to command," the Navy said.

Sawyer takes over at a time when the entire surface fleet is under scrutiny because of the 7th Fleet's problems.

As of Saturday in Singapore, the Navy had recovered the bodies of two of 10 sailors missing since the USS John S. McCain collided with an oil tanker Aug. 21 east of the city-state. Seven sailors died aboard the USS Fitzgerald June 17 when the guided-missile destroyer collided with a container ship near Japan. Both incidents are under

investigation.

Sawyer has extensive command experience in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. He headed up Submarine Forces Pacific in Hawaii and led Submarine Group 7/Task Force 54 and 74 in Yokosuka. His afloat commands were the USS La Jolla and Submarine Squadron 15 in Guam.

Sawyer is a Phoenix native and a 1983 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy. He holds a master's degree in engineering management.

Air Force officer tried over liaison to be dismissed

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN

Stars and Stripes

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — An Air Force officer who engaged in an unprofessional relationship with an airman 20 years his junior while commanding a small expeditionary base in Africa will be forced out of the service following a general court-martial last week.

A military judge ruled late Friday that Lt. Col. Denis Paquette should be dismissed from the service, the equivalent of a dishonorable discharge for enlisted personnel. The dismissal means that Paquette, a C-17 pilot and married father with more than 18 years in the Air Force, won't be eligible for retirement benefits.

Paquette chose to have his case decided by a military judge. He pleaded guilty to fraternization, violating a lawful general order on one occasion by drinking more than two alcoholic drinks at a deployed location in less than 24 hours, and impeding an investigation.

The judge, Col. Mark Milam, found Paquette was negligent in performing his assigned duties, a lesser offense than the dereliction of duty with which he was charged. The judge also found Paquette did not violate the same general order regarding alcohol consumption on numerous occasions. He also was found not guilty of the most egregious charge against him: abusive sexual contact.

The criminal charges against Paquette stemmed from his time last summer as commander of the 722nd Expeditionary

Air Base Squadron at Sidi Ahmed Air Base in Tunisia.

While assigned to Altus Air Force Base, Okla., Paquette was tasked with standing up the squadron at what was then a secret location in Africa for unmanned aerial vehicle operations.

In his first time commanding a squadron, Paquette oversaw the Americans' side of the camp, which was about the size of a football field and supported about 70 airmen and 20 contractors, according to court testimony.

Witnesses described Paquette as a personable commander who made it a point of getting to know all of his airmen, from their names to personal details about their families, goals and hobbies. But his gregarious leadership style backfired when his relationship with an 18-year-old Security Forces airman with less than a year in the service progressed from mentoring to a close friendship and sexual attraction, according to testimony.

"It starts out with a mentorship but it goes way, way, way over the line after that," said Maj. Rachel Lyons, senior trial counsel for the Air Force, in court. "After that, he uses personal knowledge of her family to get closer to her ... and to try to take the relationship to the next level."

When others in the camp became uncomfortable with how much time the two were spending together, the two were advised to limit their personal contact, according to testimony. To continue communicating out of the public eye, the two began writing what prosecutors called "love letters"

to each other while also still spending time together, including at a party one night in July where both were said to be drinking.

Alcohol consumption at the base was one of the major themes of the trial, with prosecutors alleging that Paquette ran the base like a "summer camp" and a "frat house." Paquette was charged with failing to follow and enforce a U.S. Africa Command general order that prohibited airmen from drinking more than two alcoholic beverages in a 24-hour period at their deployed location. Most of the government's 15 witnesses, brought to Ramstein to testify from various locations worldwide, testified about the alcohol consumption on base, with one describing it as "overwhelming." Airmen were allowed to keep alcohol in their tents and parties went late into the evening most Friday and Saturday nights, some airmen testified.

But airmen also testified that Paquette told them to be responsible and that he thought it important to keep morale high by not counting alcoholic drinks. They said the mission was accomplished.

Paquette was relieved of command on Aug. 2, 2016, about three months after he took charge of the squadron. During its investigation, the Air Force Office of Special Investigations found the letters Paquette and the airman exchanged, which led to the abusive sexual contact charge.

On his guilty pleas alone, Paquette faced up to a maximum nine years in prison. The judge declined to punish him beyond the dismissal.

Navy warship successfully tests ship-killing missile

BY TYLER HLAVAC
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The USS Coronado put its lethality on display last week, successfully launching a ship-killing missile off the coast of Guam.

The USS Coronado tested a Harpoon block 1C missile, striking a target beyond the littoral combat ship's visual range, Navy officials announced.

"The missile test was significant because it was the first time a U.S. Navy surface command deployed the combination of both unmanned and manned helicopters together to locate and pass targeting and conduct analysis of an over-the-horizon long-range anti-surface missile shot," Rear Adm. Don Gabrielson, the Task Force 73 commander, told Stars and Stripes on Friday.

The Navy describes the harpoon missile as an "all-weather, over-the-horizon weapon designed to execute anti-ship missions against a range of surface targets." It is used by a large number of cruisers and destroyers and a few littoral combat ships.

Tuesday's test was round two for the Coronado, which conducted a similar test during Rim of the Pacific drills in July 2016 in which it launched a harpoon missile that did not hit its over-the-horizon target.

This time, the ship struck its target, an important development for the LCS. An MQ-8B Fire Scout unmanned aerial system and an MH-60S Seahawk helicopter helped the Coronado strike its target, the Navy statement said.

The LCS is a relatively new ship for the Navy. The first LCS, the USS Freedom, was commissioned in 2010, according to the Navy's LCS website. The service has four "Freedom variant" and five "Independence variant" LCSs in the fleet, although more than a dozen ships are being developed. The Coronado, which is stationed in Singapore, is the only forward-deployed LCS.

The LCS trades in some armor and armament for speed and is designed to operate in shallow waters to access areas Navy cruisers and destroyers cannot. Gabrielson said that makes the LCS a good fit for Southeast Asia. He noted there are more than 50,000 islands between the Philippines and Sri Lanka, and in that chain there are fewer than two dozen places where a destroyer or a larger ship can safely navigate.

The LCS can operate in more than 1,000 locations in that arc, and the ship's speed allows it to function as a "ninja" for the Navy, Gabrielson said.

"When we really use LCS to its full potential, we use it like a ninja warrior," he said. "It sneaks in from the shadows, it attacks from the shadows and then it disappears. It's gone immediately or before anybody has a chance to locate it. It gets lost in the clutter of the islands, so that it complicates anyone's ability to attack it."

Some analysts have expressed concerns over the LCS' light armament. The LCS Forth Worth was shadowed by a more heavily armed Chinese frigate during a May 2015 patrol in the South China Sea. The Coronado's missile test aligns with a push by the Navy to give LCSs more firepower.

"We're here to show that there's a reason why LCS has combat as its middle name, and the harpoon shot is one example of that," Gabrielson said.

The Coronado also can work alongside partner nations on anti-piracy missions and can ensure freedom of navigation in the area, Gabrielson said. Last June, the Coronado conducted an anti-piracy patrol with the Philippine Navy Frigate BRP Ramon Alcaraz.

Gabrielson said he expects LCSs to become a mainstay in the Pacific.

"We look forward next year to having two LCSs here and in future years getting four," he said. "It won't be long and it'll be a regular fixture out here in large numbers."

USS Porter enters Black Sea for training

BY SCOTT WYLAND
Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — The USS Porter was training with the Romanian navy last week as part of its mission to augment security in the Black Sea region, where tensions remain high because of Russia's intervention in Ukraine.

The Rota, Spain-based destroyer entered the Black Sea last week to beef up allied defenses and to show the U.S.' commitment to protecting waters that are of great economic and military importance, the Navy said. The training is to conclude on Monday.

U.S. warships have patrolled the Black Sea sporadically for decades, but Russia has viewed their presence as aggressive posturing since 2014, when it annexed the Crimean Peninsula and began backing separatist forces fighting in eastern Ukraine. The recent U.S. and European sanctions against Moscow have raised tensions throughout much of Eastern Europe.

Navy officials declined to say whether the ongoing conflict in Ukraine played a part in

their sending the guided-missile destroyer to patrol the sea. The Porter is there to improve teamwork with allies Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine, the Navy said.

But speaking in Ukraine on Thursday, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said that countering Russian aggression against Ukraine is a priority. Mattis condemned Russia's seizure of Crimea, saying it undermines the region's stability.

"We support you in the face of threats to sovereignty and territorial integrity and international law," Mattis said at a news conference with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko at his side.

Mattis said Washington would not accept Russia's takeover of Crimea, which breached international accords dating from the 1990s. Russia has yet to comply with the Minsk cease-fire agreements, he said.

Russian leaders have expressed their displeasure at the U.S. naval presence in the Black Sea, especially for large-scale, multinational exercises such as last month's Sea Breeze.

3 missing after helo crash confirmed dead

Three of five soldiers missing after an Army UH-60 Black Hawk crashed Aug. 15 off Oahu have been confirmed dead, the Army said in a statement Saturday.

1st Lt. Kathryn Bailey, Staff Sgt. Abigail Milam and Sgt. Michael Nelson were declared deceased by the Armed Forces Medical Examiner after analysis of organic matter discovered among recovered debris matched their DNA, the statement said.

Bailey, Milam and Nelson were among five crewmembers

aboard the helicopter when it crashed during a nighttime training mission off Kaena Point. Search-and-rescue operations were suspended Aug. 21 after the soldiers could not be found despite efforts supported by aircraft and ships for more than five days.

The other two members of the crew remain listed as duty status "whereabouts unknown," the Army said.

Recovery and salvage efforts supported by the Navy, the Coast Guard and the 25th Infantry Division are ongoing, the statement said.

The circumstances of the crash are under investigation.

From staff reports

Deadly floods hit Houston after Harvey

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Rescuers answered thousands of desperate calls for help Sunday as floodwaters from the remnants of Hurricane Harvey rose high enough to begin filling second-story homes, and authorities urged stranded families to seek refuge on rooftops.

A fleet of helicopters, airboats and high-water vehicles confronted flooding so widespread that authorities had trouble pinpointing the worst areas. Rescuers got too many calls to respond to each one and had to prioritize life-and-death situations.

Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez used Twitter to field calls for assistance for those trapped inside homes, attics and vehicles. Among those seeking help was a woman who posted: “I have 2 children with me and the water is swallowing us up.”

People used inflatable beach toys, rubber rafts and even air mattresses to get through the rising waters to higher ground. Others simply waded while carrying plastic trash bags stuffed with their belongings.

Officials urged people not to crawl into attics but to get on top of them. The Coast Guard suggested they wave sheets or towels to draw attention to themselves.

Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner said authorities had received more than 2,000 calls for help and would be opening the city’s main convention center as a shelter. He urged drivers to stay off flooded roads to avoid adding to the number of stranded people.

“I don’t need to tell anyone this is a very, very serious and unprecedented storm,” Turner told a news conference. “We have several hundred structural flooding reports. We expect that number to rise pretty dramatically.”

Police evacuated two apartment com-

plexes overnight in the Greenspoint neighborhood, rescuing more than 50 children from rising water. Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo stood in waist-high water during a livestream post on Twitter.

Rainfall of more than 4 inches per hour resulted in water levels higher than in any recent floods and higher than during Tropical Storm Allison in June 2001, said Jeff Linder of flood control district in Harris County, which includes Houston.

Emergency teams came by land, water and air.

In Friendswood near Houston, authorities asked people with flat-bottomed airboats or fuel for them to help rescue people, KPRC-TV in Houston reported Sunday morning.

In Houston, dump trucks and city buses were used to ferry residents to higher ground.

The Coast Guard, which received more than 300 requests for help, deployed five helicopters and asked for additional aircraft from New Orleans.

The director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Brock Long, said the government expected to conduct a “mass care mission” and predicted that the aftermath of the storm would require FEMA’s involvement for years.

The rescues unfolded a day after the hurricane settled over the Texas coastline. It was blamed for killing at least two people and injuring up to 14.

Anxiety ran high throughout the region between Corpus Christi and Houston because some of the areas with the greatest hurricane damage were inaccessible to rescuers. And the forecast for days of steady rain threatened to inundate the region’s flat landscape with as much as 50 inches.

Some of the worst damage appeared

to be in Rockport, a coastal city of about 10,000 that was directly in the storm’s path. The mayor said his community took a blow “right on the nose” that left “widespread devastation,” including homes, businesses and schools that were heavily damaged. Some structures were destroyed.

Rockport’s roads were a mess of toppled power poles and other debris. Harvey’s relentless wind tore the metal sides off the high school gym and twisted the steel door frame of its auditorium.

“We’re still in the very infancy stage of getting this recovery started,” said Aransas County spokesman Larry Sinclair.

One person was killed in Aransas County in a fire at a home during the storm, county Judge C.H. “Burt” Mills Jr. said.

Another person — a woman who tried to get out of her vehicle in high water — died in flooding in Harris County, where Houston is located, though authorities had not confirmed a cause of death, said Gary Norman, a spokesman for the Houston emergency operations center.

Meanwhile, the storm was barely moving. Rainfall totals varied across the region, with Galveston receiving around 8 inches, Houston 11 and Aransas 10. Tiny Austwell got 15 inches.

The fiercest hurricane to hit the U.S. in more than a decade came ashore late Friday about 30 miles northeast of Corpus Christi as a mammoth Category 4 storm with 130 mph winds.

Harvey weakened Saturday to a tropical storm. By Sunday morning the system was centered about 65 miles southeast of San Antonio, with maximum sustained winds of about 45 mph, according to the National Hurricane Center, which described the flooding as “catastrophic.”

S.F. activists claim victory after rally is canceled

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Protesters opposing a right-wing gathering in liberal San Francisco claimed victory Saturday when the event was canceled after city officials walled off a city park — a move the event’s organizer said was more about silencing his group’s message than preventing violence.

Civic leaders in San Francisco repeatedly voiced concerns that the event organized by Patriot Prayer would lead to a clash with counterdemonstrators.

Joey Gibson, who is Japanese American and leads Patriot Prayer, said his group disavows racism and hatred and wanted to promote dialogue with people who may not share its views. He canceled a planned rally Saturday at a field in the shadow of the Golden Gate Bridge after he said his members feared law enforcement would fail to protect them.

He said Saturday in a phone interview that he felt like San Francisco’s Democratic leaders had shut him down. Earlier in

the week, San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee raised concerns that Patriot Prayer would attract hate speech and potential violence.

San Francisco officials closed the park where Gibson had planned a news conference after canceling the rally at Crissy Field. City officials surrounded Alamo Square park with a fence and sent scores of police officers — some in riot gear — to keep people out.

Gibson later spoke in suburban Pacifica with a handful of supporters.

More than 1,000 demonstrators against Patriot Prayer still turned out around Alamo Square park waving signs condemning white supremacists and chanting, “Whose streets? Our streets!” Hundreds of others took to the streets in the Castro neighborhood.

Gibson said his followers would attend an anti-Marxist rally Sunday in Berkeley. But a short time later, the organizer of that rally, a transgender woman named Amber Cummings, called it off.

US, S. Korean response muted over missile test

By KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea's president didn't issue the usual strongly worded condemnation after the North's latest missile test, which broke a monthlong lull in such activity. Instead he called for

ANALYSIS The White House, meanwhile, said President Donald Trump was briefed on the launches, which occurred five days after U.S.-South Korean war games began on the divided peninsula despite warnings from the North that it would retaliate against them.

North Korea fired three short-range ballistic missiles in a half-hour timespan on Saturday, with one blowing up immediately after launch and the other two flying about 155 miles in a northeastern direction, according to U.S. Pacific Command. It stressed they posed no threat to the U.S. territory of Guam, which was the focus of a recent crisis between the two sides.

South Korean officials said the projectiles were apparently fired as part of North Korea's efforts to expand the range of its 300 mm rocket artillery system. Both countries said they were still analyzing the situation and couldn't immediately provide more details.

Saturday's barrage — North Korea's first since it test-fired an intercontinental ballistic missile on July 28 — threatened to renew tensions that have begun subsiding after Trump and Pyongyang engaged in a war of words that raised fears of a new conflict on the divided peninsula.

But the relatively muted response from Washington and Seoul suggests efforts to restore calm and to leave the door open for Pyongyang to move onto a diplomatic track are continuing.

South Korea's presidential office convened a National Security Council meeting to discuss the launches, although Moon Jae-in did not attend. Participants "decided to proceed more thoroughly with the ongoing UFG drills," spokesman Yoon Youngchan said.

He was referring to joint military exercises known as Ulchi Freedom Guardian, which began on Aug. 21 and are due to end Thursday.

Moon later called for patience, saying problems between the two Koreas cannot be resolved right away.

Trump didn't tweet about the North's activities as he has in the past, although the White House said he had been briefed, adding "we are monitoring the situation."

PACOM chief, Philippine leader talk threats, siege

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

America's top Pacific commander has wrapped up a two-day visit to the Philippines, where he met with President Rodrigo Duterte and top military officials to discuss regional threats and an ongoing jihadi siege in the nation's south.

Adm. Harry Harris met Wednesday with Duterte at Malacanang Palace, the president's official residence and primary workplace, where they talked about further U.S. support to help end the conflict in the southern city of Marawi, according to a statement by the U.S. Embassy in Manila.

Harris' meetings with the Philippine defense secretary and the chief of staff of the armed forces focused on upcoming bilateral U.S.-Philippine military engagements and military aid, the statement said.

Harris also traveled to Mindanao, the southern island province where Marawi is located, to meet with that region's top military commander.

Marawi has been under a three-month siege by jihadi terrorists. Philippine forces recently recaptured the city's main mosque, where gunmen had been holding hostages.

For the past 15 years, U.S. special operations personnel have rotated through Mindanao, where they have trained Philippine troops and have provided sophisticated surveillance of terrorist groups.

Earlier in the week, the U.S. transferred a high-tech radar balloon to the Philippines intended to help the country monitor maritime and air traffic within its coastal waters.

Formally called the 28M Class Tethered Aerostat Radar System, the balloon is used for low-level radar surveillance. Federal agencies in the U.S. use the system along the U.S.-Mexico border, the Straits of Florida and the Caribbean, primarily to intercept illegal drugs.

The balloon was turned over to the Philippine Navy on Tuesday by Col. Ernest Lee, chief of the Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group in the Philippines, the statement said. It will be based at the Naval Education and Training Command in the coastal province of Zambales, northwest of Manila.

The transfer was part of the U.S. Maritime Security Initiative, which is used to

build the maritime capacity of Southeast Asian countries.

The Philippines faces challenges to maritime security on several fronts.

Maritime activities by the jihadi group Abu Sayyaf pose a threat to regional trade and commerce, Zachary Abuza, a Southeast Asia security expert, told a U.S. House subcommittee on foreign affairs in May.

Between March 2016 and April 2017, the group was responsible for 19 maritime incidents and hostage incidents, including one attempted attack, he said.

Meanwhile, Chinese vessels recently encroached on the Philippine-held island of Pagasa, which is part of the disputed Spratly Island chain. China has asserted sovereignty over the Spratlys, claims disputed by the Philippines and other countries in the region.

About 100 Filipinos live on Pagasa, the Philippines' largest occupied outpost in the Spratlys.

Philippine Congressman Gary Alejano released photographs Aug. 15 of Chinese fishing, coast guard and navy ships operating as close as 1 nautical mile of Pagasa.

"The Chinese may have a sinister plan to occupy sandbars just west of Pagasa that belong to us," Alejano told a Philippine newspaper.

The Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, run by the Washington-based think tank Center for Strategic and International Studies, confirmed with its own satellite images that nine Chinese fishing ships and two naval or law enforcement ships were in the vicinity Aug. 13, with cloud cover possibly obscuring others.

"The fact that law enforcement and naval vessels accompanied the fishermen makes it clear that this was not done without Chinese authorities being aware," the AMTI said on its website.

"At best, they permitted their operation. At worst, they escorted and guarded them. The number and rapid coordination of naval and coast guard ships suggests that this was purposely organized in advance and was not just an ad hoc response by government vessels that happened to be in the area."

Manila has plans for a \$32 million upgrade to Pagasa, including repairs to its decaying runway.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

City trying to catch bicycle-riding flasher

OH DELAWARE — Police in a city outside Columbus are searching for a man who has exposed himself to women four times in recent weeks while on a bicycle.

The Columbus Dispatch reported a police captain in the city of Delaware said the bicyclist has been exposing himself since mid-July in parking lots and along a bike path.

Capt. Adam Moore called the incidents “an assault.”

The first reported flashing occurred July 13 when the man exposed himself to a shopkeeper in the city’s downtown. Three incidents have been reported since then, including one Wednesday by a 23-year-old woman running along a bike path.

The man has been described as in his 20s or early 30s, slender, with blond or red hair, and possibly riding a mountain bike.

Man pleads no contest to giving meth to teen

WY GILLETTE — A 32-year-old Wyoming man pleaded no contest to a charge that he provided methamphetamine to a 16-year-old and then watched him smoke it.

Jeremy W. Thomas, of Gillette, entered the plea to a charge of distributing a narcotic to a person younger than 18.

The Gillette News Record reported that under a plea agreement, prosecutors will recommend a four- to six-year prison sentence. Thomas will be allowed to argue for less.

Authorities said Thomas was arrested Feb. 26 after the grandmother of the 16-year-old boy called police because he had been in the shower for 20 minutes trying to wash

“bugs” off his skin and mouth after returning from Thomas’ apartment.

Authorities kill wolf following cattle attacks

OR ENTERPRISE—Oregon wildlife officials have killed a fourth member of a wolf pack in the northeast part of the state.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife told the Capital Press that officials killed the wolf Friday in Wallowa County following attacks on cattle.

The agency said the most recent wolf killed was a non-breeding female, and that the pack now has six adult wolves remaining and at least three pups.

On Thursday, the state agency also authorized the killing of two wolves from the Meacham Pack in Umatilla County following attacks on livestock.

Man gets 4 years for throwing body into well

SC ANDERSON—A man initially charged with murder after his girlfriend’s body was found in a well has pleaded guilty to desecrating her remains by throwing her body into the hole.

Perry Pruitt was ordered to spend four years in prison. His 10-year sentence will be suspended if he successfully completes four years of probation.

Prosecutors dropped the murder charge against Pruitt after finding evidence of cocaine use in the brain and liver of Patricia Freeman, 57.

Authorities said those findings likely meant they couldn’t convince a jury Freeman died after Pruitt could have broken her neck.

Neighbors complaining of bad-tasting water led investigators to find Freeman’s body in

the Anderson County well in February 2015.

Police: Mom fired gun at mall to see if it’s real

GA ATLANTA — Police said a boy found a gun in a dressing room at an Atlanta mall and it fired when the mother pulled the trigger to see if it was real.

News outlets report the mother and son were inside a dressing room at the Adidas store in Lenox Square on Wednesday when the 10-year-old found what he thought was a toy gun under a bench. Atlanta police spokeswoman Stephanie Brown said the mother took the gun from the boy and pulled the trigger “to see if it was real.” A single shot was fired.

Brown said there were no injuries. There was minimal damage to the wall.

No charges have been filed and the case remains under investigation.

Dog gone after Tinder date back with owner

NJ LEONIA — A dog that went missing after a house sitter invited a Tinder date to the home has been reunited with its owner.

Authorities said Maggie, a 2-year-old Maltese, was presumed stolen from the Leonia home Aug. 20. She was found the following night in Garfield, a town about 20 minutes away.

It’s not clear how the dog got there. It eventually ended up at an animal shelter and its photo was posted on a Facebook page for lost and found pets.

Leonia police posted pictures of Maggie online Tuesday and were contacted by someone who thought she resembled a dog on the Facebook page.

Authorities said the house sitter invited a man to the home

and he brought another man with him. The dog, a laptop and an Amazon package disappeared after the pair’s visit.

Couple who met on bus get married on bus

NY NEW YORK — A New York City couple who met on a bus 13 years ago have now gotten married on one.

Random passengers and 50 guests joined Kara Mullins and Osvaldo “O.J.” Jimenez for their wedding on an M14 bus on Aug. 20.

Jimenez told Mullins, “I’m glad I found my way to you!” Mullins told her groom, “I love you, and I can’t wait to spend the rest of my life with you.”

A video of the ceremony aired on TV station NY1.

Jimenez first spotted his future bride 13 years ago on an M14, a Manhattan local cross-town bus. He told NY1 that when he suggested getting married on the same bus, she replied, “Heck, yeah, let’s do it.”

Man tired of renting to addicts torches home

OH CHILlicothe — A man told authorities he set a vacant trailer home on fire in southern Ohio because he’s tired of renting to drug addicts.

The Chillicothe Gazette reported Ross County sheriff’s deputies arrived at property owned by Robert Violette, 41, and found him attempting to extinguish a fire in one of his trailers with a garden hose.

An incident report said Violette told deputies he wanted to torch all the trailers on his property because of drug-addicted tenants.

A township fire department put out the blaze and issued Violette a warning.

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Mayweather Jr. improves to 50-0

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Floyd Mayweather Jr. figured out a 50th opponent, letting Conor McGregor have the early rounds before stalking him late and leaving the mixed martial artist defenseless and exhausted on the ropes.

Mayweather battered McGregor around the ring in the later rounds, finally stopping him at 1:05 of the 10th round Saturday night with a flurry of punches that forced referee Robert Byrd to stop the fight.

Before a pro-McGregor crowd that roared every time the UFC star landed a punch, Mayweather methodically broke him down after a slow start to score his first real stoppage in nearly a decade. He did it in what he said would be his final fight, against a fighter who had never been in a professional boxing match.

McGregor boxed surprisingly well early. But after landing some shots in the first three rounds, his punches seemed to lose their steam, and Mayweather went on the pursuit. McGregor backpedaled most of the way, stopping only to throw an occasional flurry as Mayweather wore him down.

"I think we gave the fans what they

wanted to see," Mayweather said. "I owed them for the (Manny) Pacquiao fight."

McGregor had vowed to knock Mayweather out within two rounds, and he won the early rounds with movement and punches to the head. But the tide of the fight turned in the fourth round as Mayweather seemed to figure out what he had to do and began aggressively stalking McGregor.

"I turned him into a Mexican tonight," McGregor said. "He fought like a Mexican."

In a fight so intriguing that it cost \$10,000 for ringside seats, McGregor turned in a respectable performance for someone in his first fight. But Mayweather's experience and his ring savvy paid off as he executed his game plan to perfection.

"Our game plan was to take our time, go to him and take him out in the end," Mayweather said. "I guaranteed everybody this fight wouldn't go the distance."

Mayweather was widely criticized for not going after Pacquiao in their megafight, and he didn't make the same mistake this time. In a fight that could make him \$200 million he seemed to stagger McGregor with a series of punches in the ninth round, then came back in the 10th eager to finish

it off.

McGregor went over and hugged Mayweather. He seemed almost happy in the ring afterward, secure that he had given a good performance even in losing.

"I was a little fatigued," he said. "He was composed in there, that's what 50 pro fights can give you."

Mayweather ran his record to 50-0, surpassing Rocky Marciano's 49-0 record and giving himself a great parting gift. He repeated afterward that he was not going to fight again.

"This is my last fight for sure. 50-0 sounds good, I'm looking forward to going into the Hall of Fame," Mayweather said. "I picked the best dance partner to do it with."

Irish fans arrived by the thousands in the days before the fight, filling the arena for the weigh-in and boisterously cheering for their man. They even went off in the middle of the night and spray painted an Irish flag and "49-1" on a billboard on Interstate 15 promoting Mayweather's businesses.

The capacity crowd at the arena cheered McGregor on, but they quieted as the fight progressed and Mayweather showed his dominance.

McGregor has multiple options after loss

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Conor McGregor was exhausted and hurt by the 10th round, his audacious venture undone by every logical problem with a mixed martial artist entering a professional boxing ring for the first time to take on the most accomplished boxer of recent years.

Yet the Irishman lasted longer and fought more competitively against Floyd Mayweather Jr. than just about anyone expected. McGregor was gracious and analytical afterward, but he was bothered by one aspect of his defeat: Referee Robert Byrd's seemingly wise decision to stop the bout while McGregor was still on his wobbly legs.

"Let the man put me down," he said.

Among his many talents, McGregor has a knack for coming up with slogans that would look good both on a T-shirt and a coat of arms.

Even though he didn't get

his wish to taste the canvas, McGregor left the Vegas ring with his honor intact — and he can go just about anywhere he wants from here.

"I'll see what's next, but I'm open," McGregor said. "I love a good fight, and tonight was a damn good fight. I can't tell you exactly what's next, but something will be next."

After hanging in there against Mayweather, McGregor is in an unprecedented position as a huge draw in two combat sports. He could command another hefty boxing paycheck, or he could return to the UFC to defend his two championship belts as the biggest star in his up-and-coming sport.

McGregor will make no decisions before his upcoming yachting holiday in Ibiza, but he certainly doesn't seem eager to limit himself to one sport.

"I believe I'll do it again," McGregor said of boxing, before immediately adding: "I'm looking forward to kicking some-

thing again. I'm also looking forward to grappling. I'm looking forward to getting back in and having a good, solid knock again."

The UFC wants its biggest star back in the octagon quickly. McGregor has won titles in two weight classes, but he has never defended either belt, and he hasn't fought at all since last November.

Yet the UFC also just made untold millions from McGregor's dalliance with boxing while he was under contract. President Dana White realizes McGregor will be impressed by boxing money, and White says he is willing to write a check that will keep McGregor in the cage.

"I would rather he did not (box again)," White said. "This is not what he does. He is a mixed martial artist."

A third meeting with Nate Diaz is an obvious choice for McGregor's next UFC fight

after their two crowd-pleasing brawls in 2016. McGregor immediately mentioned that possibility, but also said he would want that bout at the lightweight limit of 155 pounds, not the 170-pound welterweight mark at which they fought the first two times.

"I'm the 155-pound champion," said McGregor, who weighed in for Mayweather at 153 pounds. "If he wants that fight, he must come down. That's a fair trade."

No matter what he decides, McGregor established himself as a major sports icon with his valiant defeat and world-class trash-talking. He intends to cash in on that success in his limitless future.

"I'm young, I'm fit and I'm fresh," McGregor said. "I'll continue to get better, and I'll continue to make adjustments that I learned from this fight to make myself a better fighter. I always have, and I always will."

Patriots WR Edelman to miss season

Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — New England Patriots star wide receiver Julian Edelman will miss the 2017 season after tearing the ACL in his right knee in a preseason game.

The Patriots announced Saturday that Edelman, Tom Brady's favorite target, would be sidelined all season after the non-contact injury in the first quarter of Friday night's preseason game at Detroit.

The 31-year-old Edelman headed downfield after a catch and when he planted his right foot into the turf, he tore the ligament.

Edelman, whose spectacular fourth-quarter reception helped the Patriots' record comeback win in the Super Bowl in February, signed a two-year contract extension earlier this year. He has been, by far, Brady's top pass catcher with 436 receptions over the past four seasons, including the playoffs.

In other NFL news:

■ About 30 Cleveland Browns players stood arm-to-arm in a line during the national anthem before Saturday night's preseason game against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

The long line of players stood together just in front of the Browns bench, behind the rest of the players and coaches standing closer to the field.

That protest was the largest so far in a social-consciousness movement started last season by quarterback Colin Kaepernick, who became a polarizing figure for kneeling during the anthem and is currently out of the NFL.

■ Buffalo Bills defensive tackle Marcell Dareus was sent home for violating a team rule and didn't play in Saturday night's preseason game against the Ravens.

In the midst of a six-year, \$108 million contract, Dareus opened each of the past two seasons serving NFL substance abuse-related suspensions, including a four-game ban last year.

Stanford RB Love fills void

Associated Press

SYDNEY — Running back Bryce Love didn't take long to prove that he's a very competent replacement for Christian McCaffrey at Stanford.

Love scored a touchdown and finished with 180 yards rushing to lead the No.14 Cardinal to a 62-7 victory over Rice on Sunday in the Sydney College Football Cup.

Love, installed as the No. 1 player in the backfield after McCaffrey was drafted in the first round by the Carolina Panthers, had 13 carries, including a 62-yard burst through the Rice line on Stanford's opening play from scrimmage. He didn't play much after the middle of the third quarter.

"Bryce is going to be our lead dog," Stanford coach David Shaw said. "But it's nice to know we've got some guys who can back him up. I'm excited about where Bryce is heading into this season. We don't want to wear Bryce out in any one game, so those guys have got to come out and make plays like they did today."

Cameron Scarlett was one of those guys.

Scarlett, a redshirt freshman who also moved up in the Stanford pecking order, had three touchdowns, all rushing, and

finished with 68 yards on nine carries. He also had one 56-yard pass reception.

The Cardinal were 31-point favorites. They led 38-0 at half-time and scored touchdowns on their first four possessions.

Rice, trailing 55-0, finally broke its scoreless drought with 6 minutes remaining on running back Austin Walker's 23-yard touchdown run.

The takeaway

Stanford: Quarterback Keller Chryst, who tore the ACL in his right knee in December in the Sun Bowl, showed no sign of the injury. Chryst finished with 14 completions in 24 attempts for 253 yards and two TDs before Ryan Burns and later K.J. Costello took over with Stanford leading 45-0. Costello scored the final Stanford TD on a 25-yard run.

"It was great to see Keller Chryst come and be completely healthy, and be able to run the show from the quarterback position," Shaw said.

Rice: Redshirt freshman quarterback Sam Glaesmann won the starting job and had a very difficult beginning to his college career. Starting his first play from scrimmage on the Rice 10-yard line, Rice was

hit for a delay of game and false start and the Owls later punted from deep in their end zone. Glaesmann was 7-for-18 for 69 yards.

"We're a better team than we showed today," Rice coach David Bailiff said. "When you play against a team like Stanford, or any elite team, you have to be at your very best. And we made some poor decisions early."

Storm watch

Anxious Rice players and staff have been keeping a close eye on developments in Houston from Hurricane Harvey. The Houston-based players have been keeping in touch with friends and family on social media, and team staff were in contact with spouses and partners back in Houston to make sure they were aware of neighbors and friends who might have emergency equipment such as generators. The team is scheduled to leave Australia on Monday morning for Los Angeles, with a decision expected in LA whether they will attempt to fly on to Houston.

"It's hard," Bailiff said. "We're not using that as an excuse. But yes, we're worried about our friends and families and are praying for everyone."

South Florida overcomes slow start

Associated Press

SAN JOSE, Calif. — The start of the Charlie Strong era at South Florida didn't quite go as scripted. Now that it's over, the coach of the 19th-ranked Bulls is actually pretty pleased that his team had to show the ability to overcome some adversity.

Quinton Flowers threw two touchdown passes and D'Ernest Johnson had two TD runs in a dominant second quarter that helped South Florida rally from an early 16-point deficit to beat San Jose State 42-22 on Saturday.

"It's good that you have a good game like this so now guys

know there's improvement to be made," Strong said. "We can't get complacent. You want a game like this. It's not as much pressure as they think it is but you have to play well to win games."

The Bulls were held to 22 yards in the opening quarter, the defense allowed two early TD passes by Josh Love and two ineffective punts set up two scores for the Spartans.

But the game turned when Josh Black stuffed Malike Roberson for a 1-yard loss on fourth-and-1 from the South Florida 33 in the closing minute of the first quarter with San Jose State leading 16-0.

It took less than nine minutes for the Bulls to turn that big early deficit into a lead with help from a pair of interceptions off deflected passes by Josh Love. Flowers started the comeback with a 24-yard touchdown pass to Darnell Salomon, Johnson followed with a TD run on fourth-and-goal from the 2 and Flowers followed with a 49-yard scoring strike to Temi Alaka.

Johnson capped the four-touchdown, 271-yard quarter with a tight-rope act down the sideline for a 50-yard touchdown run that made it 28-16 and the rout was on in the second half.

Simmons' HR helps Angels rally past Astros

Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Andrelton Simmons stared at his eighth-inning shot headed for left field and had no idea if the drive off Houston Astros reliever Tyler Clippard would clear the fence.

"I knew it was an out or a homer," Simmons said.

The ball eventually went over a leaping Josh Reddick, giving Simmons a three-run shot that capped a late comeback and sent the Los Angeles Angels to a 7-6 victory Saturday night.

Los Angeles trailed 6-1 in the seventh before rallying to snap a three-game skid. The Angels and Seattle Mariners are a half-game behind Minnesota in a packed race for the second AL wild card.

Kole Calhoun singled home Mike Trout with two outs in the eighth to make it 6-4. Simmons then slipped and finished his swing on one knee but still drove Clippard's slider over the left-field fence, sending Angel Stadium fans into a frenzy amid fireworks over center field.

"This team never quits," Calhoun said. "We needed a big swing of the bat and we got it."

Trout worked a two-out walk and went to third on a single by Albert Pujols against Francis Martes. Clippard (2-8) gave up Calhoun's single before Simmons connected on the next pitch.

"It was just a good pitch to hit. Just a pitch up in the zone. It kind of went down a little more than I thought, but I saw it pretty decent," Simmons said. "I was fortunate to not miss it."

Blake Wood (2-4) worked a hitless inning and Blake Parker got three outs for his second save.

"Definitely a huge win," Calhoun said.

Before the eighth, the Astros appeared to be cruising.

Jake Marisnick and George Springer homered to back Brad Peacock's six strong innings as the AL West leaders raced out to a five-run lead.

Marisnick's home run, a golf shot in the fourth that made the score 5-1, came off starter Tyler Skaggs. Springer's drive came in the seventh off reliever Bud Norris and made it 6-1. Meanwhile, Peacock struck out eight.

Calhoun hit a solo homer in the second. Los Angeles scraped across two runs in the seventh to make it 6-3.

Skaggs got himself into trouble in the second when he allowed a single to Brian McCann and a double to Marisnick.

McCann scored on Skaggs' balk and then Marisnick scored on an error by third baseman Luis Valbuena. By the end of the inning, Houston led 4-0.

Josh Reddick hit a two-run single in the first for the Astros.

MLB roundup

Gausman sharp in O's victory over Red Sox

Associated Press

BOSTON — Kevin Gausman pitched four-hit ball into the eighth inning and Tim Beckham hit a three-run homer as the Baltimore Orioles routed the Boston Red Sox for the second straight day, 7-0 on Saturday.

It was the third straight win for the Orioles, who pounded Boston 16-3 a night earlier. Jonathan Schoop added a solo homer and posted his 95th RBI, a club record for second basemen, surpassing Roberto Alomar's 94 in 1996.

The AL East-leading Red Sox dropped their third straight and saw their lead sliced to 3½ games over the second-place New York Yankees.

Gausman (10-9) struck out five and walked three. He gave up four singles in 7⅔ innings.

Eduardo Rodriguez (4-4) allowed five runs and seven hits in 6⅔ innings, striking out seven.

Yankees 6, Mariners 3: Greg Bird reached base three times in his long-awaited return to the Yankees' lineup and Jacoby Ellsbury homered and drove in four runs, leading

Sonny Gray and New York over visiting Seattle.

Bird singled, walked twice and scored in his first game since May 1. He has been hobbled by ankle and foot problems.

Blue Jays 10, Twins 9: Josh Donaldson had three hits, including a two-run homer, Kendrys Morales added a solo shot and host Toronto withstood a late rally by Minnesota.

The 2015 AL MVP, Donaldson owns a .376 (50-for-133) career batting average in 35 games against Minnesota, with 15 doubles and 14 home runs.

Indians 4, Royals 0: Mike Clevinger pitched six sharp innings and rookie Bradley Zimmer made a sensational catch in center field before ending Jason Hammel's bid for a perfect game, leading host Cleveland over Kansas City.

Roberto Perez hit a two-run homer off Hammel (6-10), and Edwin Encarnacion and Carlos Santana also connected as the defending AL champions moved a season-high 16 games over .500 at 72-56.

Cubs 17, Phillies 2: Anthony Rizzo and Tommy La Stella

homered twice, Kyle Hendricks pitched seven strong innings and visiting Chicago easily overcame another home run from Philadelphia rookie Rhys Hoskins.

Kris Bryant and Ben Zobrist also went deep for the NL Central-leading Cubs, who tied their season high for homers and hits (17) while setting new marks for runs and margin of victory.

Rockies 7, Braves 6: Charlie Blackmon hit a tiebreaking, two-run homer in the ninth inning off Aroldys Vizcaino, and visiting Colorado held on to beat Atlanta.

Nationals 9, Mets 4: Adrian Sanchez drove in three runs, including an RBI single moments after he took a pitch to the chest while trying to bunt, and made a diving play to help host Washington beat New York.

Athletics 8, Rangers 3: Chad Pinder homered twice to help Oakland top visiting Texas, ending Cole Hamels' five-game win streak.

Pirates 1, Reds 0: Gerrit Cole ended his career-long futility against host Cincinnati by hitting a solo homer

and pitching seven innings for Pittsburgh.

Brewers 3, Dodgers 0: Zach Davies pitched seven dominant innings for his second scoreless start against Los Angeles this season, and Orlando Arcia hit a two-run homer for visiting Milwaukee.

Diamondbacks 2, Giants 1: A.J. Pollock and J.D. Martinez homered off San Francisco ace Madison Bumgarner, and that was enough for host Arizona.

Cardinals 6, Rays 4: Tommy Pham hit a two-run homer in the ninth inning and St. Louis rallied to beat visiting Tampa Bay.

Marlins 2, Padres 1 (11): Miguel Rojas hit a one-out sacrifice fly in the 11th inning, and host Miami won for the 12th time in 15 games by beating San Diego.

Tigers 6, White Sox 3: Justin Upton and Miguel Cabrera hit back-to-back homers in Detroit's three-run third inning, sparking the Tigers to a rainy win against host Chicago.