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Harvey hits La.; death toll rises in Texas

The Washington Post

HOUSTON — Tropical Storm Harvey, already the biggest rainstorm in the history of the continental United States, made landfall again Wednesday morning, delivering another punishing wave of rain to Texas and Louisiana.

Five days after roaring ashore in Texas — leaving behind disastrous flooding across Houston and a mounting death toll that had reached at least 22 people — Harvey made landfall before dawn near tiny Cameron, La., and began grinding its way northeast.

Expected to weaken over land, Harvey's immediate impact was not expected to pack the same destructive power as when it slammed into Texas as a Category 4 hurricane last week and dropped foot after foot of rain.

But forecasters said the danger was far from over, and alarming amounts of rainfall in Texas have been battering cities such as Beaumont and Port Arthur.

The National Weather Service warned Wednesday that “catastrophic and life-threatening flooding will continue in and around Houston eastward into southwest Louisiana for the rest of the week.” The service also warned that “expected heavy rains spreading northeastward from Louisiana into western Kentucky may also lead to flash flooding” across those areas, imperiling a new swath of the population.

The Beaumont and Port Arthur area saw more than 26 inches of rain fall on Tuesday alone, pushing rain totals to more than 47 inches since Friday.

Beaumont, about 80 miles east

of Houston, had seen more than 32 inches of rain by Wednesday morning, according to reports from the National Weather Service. Parts of Interstate 10 near Beaumont were left swallowed by floodwaters — with road signs poking above the wind-driven chop.

As Harvey approached, Louisiana — hit by Hurricane Katrina 12 years ago this week — hunkered down, evacuating hundreds of people and deploying the Louisiana National Guard. Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards, in a news conference Tuesday, urged people to “prepare and pray.”

Lake Charles, La., had seen more than a foot of rain, and forecasts said the downpours were expected to continue. A storm surge warning was posted across the coast of southern

Louisiana from Holly Beach to Morgan City.

The storm's path at least appeared to offer a break to New Orleans, which this week postponed Katrina remembrance events due to Harvey.

Harvey's movement up the coast also gave Houston a respite from the heavy rains that have pelted the city since the weekend, even as officials noted it could be years before the storm's true toll is known. More than 50 inches of rain over four days had turned the country's fourth-largest city into a sea of muddy brown water as boats skimmed along what had been neighborhood streets in search of survivors.

At least 22 deaths were blamed on the storm, a number expected to rise as authorities are able to enter flooded homes and cars.

Trump on North Korea: ‘Talking is not the answer’

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said Wednesday that “talking is not the answer” when it comes to North Korea after it upped the stakes in its standoff with Washington by calling for more weapons launches in the Pacific.

Trump's morning tweet followed a highly provocative North Korean missile test Tuesday that flew over Japan, a close American ally.

But his comment contradicted statements from his Cabinet officials and was likely to deepen confusion over his administration's policy on the nuclear threat from Pyongyang.

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis on Wednesday told reporters, “We're never out of diplomatic solutions,” and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson had hinted at possible direct talks with

North Korea.

Trump's tweet returned to a familiar theme: the failings of past U.S. administrations to halt North Korea's weapons development over the past quarter-century.

The North last month tested for the first time a long-range missile, putting it closer to its goal of posing a direct nuclear threat to the U.S. mainland.

“The U.S. has been talking to North Korea, and paying them extortion money, for 25 years. Talking is not the answer!” Trump said.

Trump's tweet did not spell out what he meant by “extortion.” The White House did not immediately respond to questions.

North Korea has in the past temporarily halted nuclear development when the U.S. and others provided food aid or other types of compensation.

According to the Congressional Research Service, between 1995 and 2008, the United States provided North Korea with more than \$1.3 billion in assistance — slightly more than 50 percent for food aid and about 40 percent for energy assistance. But since early 2009, the U.S. has provided virtually no aid to North Korea. The last formal talks between the two sides on the North's nuclear program were in 2012.

The North hasn't made demands for aid, at least publicly, since Trump came into office. Instead, it has focused on finishing its decadeslong effort to master the technology for fitting a nuclear warhead on a missile that can strike the U.S., which it views as essential for its national defense.

Trump's assessment about the need for dialogue also appears at odds with his top dip-

lomat, Tillerson, who had in recent weeks been softening the conditions for a possible, formal dialogue with Pyongyang. The U.S. also has been maintaining a diplomatic back channel with North Korea.

At the Pentagon, during a photo opportunity with his South Korean counterpart, Mattis said the U.S. remains focused on diplomacy as well as military readiness. Amid the heightened tensions on the divided Korean Peninsula, the U.S. and South Korea have been conducting annual military drills.

On Wednesday, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un called for more weapons launches targeting the Pacific Ocean to advance his country's ability to contain his country's ability to contain Guam, state media said. The U.S. territory is home to key U.S. military bases that North Korea finds threatening.

Major recognized for saving 3 people from rough Hawaiian surf

BY WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — Maj. Andrew Downey at first saw only a woman's hand jutting out of the surging white-water tide on a stormy day last April off the north shore of Kauai. As she bobbed up, he saw the backpack that was dragging her under.

Within a few minutes he had pulled the woman, her husband and their 11-month-old child out of the swirling maelstrom called the Queen's Bath.

On Tuesday, Downey was presented the Soldier's Medal, the service's highest honor for an act of valor in a noncombat situation.

"What a great day when you can recognize a soldier for doing a heroic act," said Gen. Robert Brown, commander of U.S. Army Pacific, as he presented the medal at a ceremony at Fort Shafter. "It's a pretty darn good day."

Addressing the soldiers who had gathered, Downey said, "I have to say that I think a lot of people would do the same thing, and first responders do it every day without any thought of their own personal safety. I'm happy everyone came away unscathed."

Such rescue attempts are indeed perilous. In July 2015, two soldiers with Hawaii's 25th Infantry Division were standing on rocks along the shore of Halona Beach Cove on Oahu. A sudden wave pulled one of them in, and as the other soldier attempted to pull him back up, another wave dragged him out. Both drowned.

Downey, who works in Space Operations, had been vacationing on Kauai with his wife, Rifka, and four children. They were standing near Queen's Bath, a tide pool on the Hawaiian island's north shore. During the winter months, the surf is often dangerously high in the area, even more so during

stormy weather.

The more confident swimmers leap off a cliff into Queen's Bath during calm days. But April 22 was not one of those days.

"That day everything was shut down," Downey said. "There was a heavy rainstorm and bigger waves were coming in. A few waves — heavy waves — rolled in and crashed over the rocks. There was a lot of whitewash coming in."

It was Rifka who first realized someone standing near that cliff's edge had been dragged in by a rogue wave.

"I saw the baby in the water first, just being caught up in the whitewash," Rifka said, standing beside her husband after the medal ceremony. "I started yelling for him to go get them. He saw the woman. I started praying."

"There's not much time to think," Downey said of the seconds in which the catastrophe unfolded. "It's more of a reaction to the situation. You have to make a quick assessment of what's going on. A quick decision makes a difference when somebody's going under."

"Without regard to his own safety, Downey immediately jumped 20 feet into the ocean, navigated through the white-water to the woman, hooked his arm around her, and took her safely to shore," the award citation reads.

He returned to the father, who was holding onto the baby.

"He did a great job holding onto that child," Downey said. "He did a phenomenal job staying afloat." But when the father told Downey he "really couldn't swim," the soldier took the baby ashore himself. He then returned for the father, who was by then clinging to a jutting rock.

The names of the rescued family members, who were vacationing from Wisconsin, were not made public.

Navy secretary vows to fix crash problems

The San Diego Union-Tribune

SAN DIEGO — In office for only 26 days, Richard V. Spencer, the 76th secretary of the Navy, visited San Diego on Tuesday, vowing to rush emergency teams to Hurricane Harvey-ravaged Texas and solve the problem of warship collisions in the Western Pacific.

Spencer, a former Marine helicopter pilot, said crews in Norfolk, Va., were loading supplies onto two amphibious assault ships before sailing 2,500 sailors and Marines to Texas. He also directed MH-60 Seahawk and MH-53 Sea Dragon helicopters to Texas.

Spencer also vowed a comprehensive review of the root causes of accidents involving Navy warships in the Western Pacific over the past year. In

January, the guided-missile cruiser *Antietam* ran aground in Tokyo Bay, gushing hydraulic oil into the sea. Five months later, a South Korean fishing boat slammed into the cruiser *Lake Champlain*, then in June the guided-missile destroyer *Fitzgerald* was struck by a Philippine-flagged container vessel, killing seven American sailors. On Aug. 21, the destroyer *John S. McCain* collided with a Liberian-flagged oil tanker, leaving 10 American sailors dead and triggering the firing of Japan-based 7th Fleet commander Vice Adm. Joseph Aucoin.

Spencer said that not only would he gather the best minds in the active-duty Navy, retired commanders and private sector experts, but he'd stand up a "red team" to review and challenge "and enhance" their findings.

DOD panel to study operational impact of transgender troops

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A committee of senior Pentagon civilians will examine the operational impact that transgender servicemembers have on the military as the Defense Department attempts to implement President Donald Trump's ban on them, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said Tuesday.

The White House on Friday provided the Pentagon its official policy that indefinitely bans transgender men and women. However, the policy gives Mattis leeway to determine whether he should discharge servicemembers who have identified themselves as transgender since the ban was lifted more than a year ago.

In a statement released late Tuesday, Mattis said transgender servicemembers would not be dismissed until the new

panel thoroughly analyzes the issue. The White House order gave Mattis until Feb. 1 to present Trump a plan for implementing the ban.

"Once the panel reports its recommendations and following my consultation with the secretary of Homeland Security, I will provide my advice to the president concerning implementation of his policy direction," Mattis said in the statement.

The panel, which will include soon-arriving political appointees, will look at the impact of transgender troops and whether the military should consider opening recruiting to more transgender individuals. The Pentagon had already been studying the issue before Trump's tweeted July 26 that transgender people would no longer be allowed to serve "in any capacity."

Marines help Afghan forces clear insurgents

BY PHILLIP WALTER
WELLMAN

Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — The U.S. military says it is achieving its primary goal in Afghanistan's embattled Helmand province by enabling Afghan forces to expand security zones around the provincial capital of Lashkar Gah.

For the past two weeks, U.S. Marine advisers have been helping the government troops conduct a clearing operation in the key district of Nawa, just south of the city. They have described the operation as "very successful" so far.

"We're making gains, we're expanding security around the provincial capital, and building momentum," said U.S. Marine Brig. Gen. Roger Turner, commanding general of Task Force Southwest, part

of NATO's training and assisting mission in Helmand.

"Our primary goal is to enable the Afghans so they can expand security around Lashkar Gah and other key population centers and bring peace back to the people of Helmand," Turner said.

The Taliban have made significant advances in Helmand, Afghanistan's most violent province, since international forces ended combat operations in Afghanistan in 2014. The insurgents have been blamed for a number of attacks that have caused casualties among security forces and civilians. They are now said to control about half of the province, one of the largest in the country and long a stronghold of the insurgency.

More than 20,000 U.S. Marines were based in the region during the surge in 2010,

which brought about 100,000 U.S. troops and 40,000 NATO allies into the country.

Since the drawdown of foreign troops, fears have been growing that the Taliban would seize Lashkar Gah, which would give them control of the opium-rich region and mark one of the biggest failures of the U.S.-led coalition since 2001.

Officials say securing Nawa, which the Taliban held for about nine months until July, is critical for preventing the insurgents from seizing Lashkar Gah. Nawa is located on a major north-south thoroughfare into the capital, and while the Taliban held the district they routinely staged attacks on the provincial capital.

Afghan forces retook Nawa with U.S. air support in July. But an ensuing Taliban counterattack forced them to launch

the current operation, code-named Maiwand Five.

"Our partners had to conduct another operation to counter the attacks from the Taliban," Turner said. But two weeks after Maiwand Five began, he said, the situation already looked more positive.

"We believe they've been able to push out these (insurgents) that had been taking a pretty hard fight to the district," Turner said of the Afghan forces. "Now we're seeing a normal pattern of life again in Nawa."

Omar Zwak, spokesman for Helmand's governor, said that while Maiwand Five was still ongoing, local officials were pleased with the early results.

"If we secure Nawa, it means we secured Lashkar Gah and the airport, which is very close to the district," he said.

Defense needs may not rank when Congress returns

BY CLAUDIA GRISALES

Stars and Stripes

Despite urgent concerns facing the military, defense priorities could get pushed to the back burner thanks to an onslaught of pressing matters awaiting Congress when members return next month.

With looming deadlines, debt ceiling concerns and demands from President Donald Trump, members will be hard-pressed to pass a larger defense budget, boost troop levels in Afghanistan and address military readiness in light of recent Navy warship collisions.

Adding to the uncertainty: emergency spending in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey that could affect the overall budget.

The overdue 2017 \$1.1 trillion budget was just approved in May, and new funding is needed for the 2018 fiscal year that begins Oct. 1.

"It's a big, giant cluster you-know-what," Daniel Mitchell, senior fellow at the Cato Insti-

tute, a Libertarian think tank in Washington, said of the issues facing Congress when it returns Tuesday.

A default on the debt limit could spark a global financial panic, for example, he said. A government shutdown could trigger a repeat of the 16 days in 2013 when the military had to put training and maintenance on hold, and commissaries were among the family services that were affected.

While it's too early to predict emergency spending for Harvey-related damage, it could help members address debt ceiling concerns and avert a government shutdown at the end of September.

Providing emergency aid for Harvey-related damage could undermine Trump's threat to hold government funding hostage over his plan to build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Congress could say, "At this point, it's not worth shutting down the government and depriving federal aid to Harvey victims" to get the wall, said

Molly Reynolds, a governance studies fellow at the liberal-leaning Brookings Institution in Washington.

The budget debate comes as Congress is looking to tackle tax reform and possibly revisit the health care debate.

"Republicans desperately want to get something done; they feel a huge amount of self-imposed pressure to come up with a tax cut," Mitchell said. "I see a lot of political drama, and it will mostly be for show."

Some experts contend that military issues will get addressed but at a slower pace than many would prefer.

The House Armed Services Committee has set a Sept. 7 hearing to address naval readiness after separate collisions of the USS John S. McCain and USS Fitzgerald. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., has said Congress will also play a role in the increase in troops to Afghanistan, starting with a hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee, which he leads. Congress has

to approve new funding for the troop surge.

In July, the House passed a broad spending package, the 2018 Make America Secure Appropriations Act, that included new funding for defense efforts, military construction and veterans' affairs.

While the plan faces an uphill battle in the Senate, it signals that members are willing to place a priority on defense issues despite the bigger distractions that abound, said Reynolds, an expert on congressional issues.

"Issues that are important to the military are tied up in a number of these big fights that are coming for Congress," she said. For example, raising the Budget Control Act caps for defense "is a key part of the broader budget fight, especially since doing so would require Democratic votes, and Democrats have, in the past, insisted that increases in defense spending are matched by increases in nondefense spending."

President to push 'vision' for tax reform

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump kicked off his lobbying effort for a tax overhaul at an event with a Midwestern manufacturing backdrop and some economic tough talk.

The one thing missing? A detailed proposal.

Instead, in Springfield, Mo., Wednesday, Trump planned to give remarks that the White House said would focus on his "vision" for spurring job creation and economic growth by cutting rates and revising the tax code. Details will come later, officials said, when lawmakers work them out.

After a year with no major legislative wins, the stakes are

high for the White House and GOP leaders, who face mounting pressure to get points on the board before next year's midterm elections. Complicating matters, the tax push comes amid an intense September workload that requires Congress to act by month's end to fund the government and raise the debt limit, as well as pass emergency spending for the Harvey disaster.

After failing to deliver on seven years of promises to repeal and replace Obamacare, many Republicans believe they must produce on taxes or face a reckoning in next year's congressional midterm elections. If they don't have something to show for full control of Congress

and the White House, voters could try to take it all away, beginning with the GOP's House majority.

On Twitter on Sunday, Trump previewed his trip, stressing the politics. Calling Missouri a "wonderful state," he said the state's Democratic Sen. Claire McCaskill — up for re-election next year — is "opposed to big tax cuts" and said a "Republican will win" the state.

Trump is kicking the effort off in Springfield, considered the birthplace of the historic Route 66 highway, known as "America's Main Street." Emphasizing domestic jobs, he's appearing at the Loren Cook Co., which manufactures fans, gravity vents, laboratory exhaust systems and

energy recovery ventilators.

A key challenge is to frame a tax plan that could include cuts for corporations and top earners as a boon for the middle class. Officials suggested Trump would argue that cutting business taxes will benefit American companies and workers.

Trump will be joined by Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, Gary Cohn, director of the National Economic Council, and Small Business Administrator Linda McMahon, said the White House. Also expected are Missouri elected officials, including Sen. Roy Blunt and Gov. Eric Greitens, as well as local business owners.

19 indicted in DC in attack at Turkish ambassador's home

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A total of 19 people, including 15 identified as Turkish security officials, were indicted Tuesday by a grand jury in the U.S. capital for attacking protesters in May during a U.S. visit by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The indictments charge the defendants with attacking peaceful demonstrators who had gathered on May 16 outside the home of the Turkish ambassador, awaiting Erdogan's arrival after he had met with President Donald Trump at the White House.

The case threatens to further complicate already tense relations between the two NATO allies. Ankara strongly opposes the U.S. decision to arm Syrian Kurdish rebels fighting Islamic State in Syria. Turkey views the Syrian Kurds as an extension of its own outlawed Turkish Kurdish movement and opposes any moves that could lead to the formation of an in-

dependent Kurdish state.

All 19 defendants are charged with conspiracy to commit a crime of violence, a felony punishable by a statutory maximum of 15 years in prison. Several face additional charges of assault with a deadly weapon.

Sixteen of the defendants had been charged on June 13. Tuesday's indictment adds three new defendants, all Turkish security officials. Two of the defendants were arrested in June and face an initial court hearing on Sept. 7. The rest remain at large.

Several are members of Erdogan's security detail who returned with him to Turkey, so it is unclear if any will face legal repercussions in the United States. However, they could end up being threatened with arrest if they return to the U.S. If any are still in the country, they could be expelled if Turkey refuses to waive diplomatic immunity.

NATO: Russian war games need additional monitors

Associated Press

BRUSSELS — NATO said Wednesday that it will send three experts to observe military exercises between Russian and Belarus next month but alliance Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg wants the two countries to allow broader monitoring.

Russia and Belarus say the Zapad 2017 exercise, which runs Sept. 14-20 not far from the borders of NATO allies Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, will involve fewer than 13,000 troops. Under international rules, the two should allow wider access to monitors if troop numbers exceed that figure.

NATO spokeswoman Oana Lungescu said the three experts will attend "Visitors' Days" in Belarus and Russia after they were invited to attend.

But she said international rules permit monitors to have much wider access, like "briefings on the exercise scenario and progress; opportunities to talk to individual soldiers about the exercise; and overflights of the exercise."

The rules governing military exercises are enshrined in the

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's so-called Vienna Document.

Stoltenberg is calling for the Vienna Document to be revamped, and believes he can muster enough support to ensure that unannounced war games, or snap exercises, can be watched with "snap monitoring," or that small, multiple maneuvers under different commands be recognized as one big exercise, loopholes he said Moscow is exploiting.

"It's especially important now, because tensions are higher than they used to be," he said Friday, in Orzysz, Poland.

Stoltenberg was in Orzysz to thank some of the 1,200 U.S.-led battlegroup, based near Russia's Kaliningrad region and Belarus, for their service. NATO has around 4,500 troops based in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland.

NATO allies are concerned that Moscow might leave military equipment behind in Belarus when the exercises are over, perhaps to use later should President Vladimir Putin want to send troops quickly across the border, as he did in Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man, 52, faces 8th drunken driving charge

WI BLACK RIVER FALLS — A Black River Falls man is facing his eighth drunken driving offense — this one while operating a motorized bike.

The Jackson County Sheriff's Office said the 52-year-old man was spotted weaving between lanes of traffic without a light on his bike last Saturday night in the Town of Brockway.

He was out on bond from his seventh drunken driving arrest in May.

He was booked into the Jackson County Jail.

Class ring lost 47 years ago returned to owner

MA DENNIS — A college class ring lost in the surf at a Massachusetts beach nearly half a century ago is back on the finger of its owner.

The Cape Cod Times reported that Patrick O'Hagan lost the Class of 1969 Manhattan College ring while on his honeymoon in Dennis in 1970.

James Wirth was in ankle-deep water at low tide on a Dennis beach last month scanning with his metal detector when he found the corroded ring.

Tracking down the owner was easy, because O'Hagan's full name was inscribed on the ring, along with an "E" indicating he had studied engineering.

Meth on lunch money leads to woman's arrest

AL HELENA — Authorities said traces of meth were found on a child's lunch money and now an Alabama woman faces charges.

Local news outlets reported the Shelby County Drug Enforcement Task Force said

Heather Brooke Isaacs, 44, was arrested and charged with chemical endangerment of a child.

Lt. Clay Hammac said a student at a Helena school paid for lunch in cash, and the cafeteria cashier noticed a white, powdery residue on the bills. The cashier shared her find with the school resource officer, who Hammac said recognized it as possibly meth.

The officer contacted the task force and an investigation was launched. Hammac says investigators found "horrific" conditions at Isaacs' home.

Couple caught having sex on golf course

SC TEGA CAY — A South Carolina couple was arrested after playing around on a golf course instead of playing a round.

The Herald of Rock Hill reported Tega Cay police received a call from a resident shortly before 7:30 p.m. Sunday saying two people were lying on the eighth fairway. A police report said the resident told officers he thought there may have been a medical situation, but after looking through his binoculars, he saw two people engaged in a sex act.

Police said Dakota Len Payne, 19, and Kiernan Dunne Hennessey, 24, were arrested and charged with indecent exposure.

City's price for pack of cigarettes highest in US

NY NEW YORK — Mayor Bill de Blasio has signed legislation raising the minimum price for a pack of cigarettes to \$13 in New York City.

Health Department officials say the increase from \$10.50 will make the city the most expensive place to buy cigarettes

in the country. The \$13-a-pack cost includes taxes. The law goes into effect on June 1.

The price increase is part of a package of anti-smoking bills signed Monday.

Firefighters rescue dog stranded on park cliff

CT WOODBRIDGE — Firefighters in Connecticut said a rescuer lowered about 60 feet down a cliff was able to grab a dog that was stranded on a ledge and bring it to safety.

Hamden and Woodbridge firefighters were called to West Rock Ridge State Park last weekend to rescue the dog.

Rescuers said the dog could not be reached safely from below, so a Hamden firefighter was lowered over the edge. They said it took some time for him to gain the dog's trust and take hold of it.

Officials said the dog suffered minor injuries. It's not clear how it became stranded.

Anglers catch 20,000 farmed Atlantic salmon

WA BELLINGHAM — A Native American tribe said its anglers have caught about 20,000 fish following the collapse of a commercial net pen rearing farmed Atlantic salmon in Puget Sound.

The Lummi Nation said its fishermen have brought in about 200,000 pounds of the non-native species since the tribe declared a state of emergency Aug. 24.

Cooke Aquaculture's marine salmon farm in the San Juan Islands failed more than a week ago, releasing thousands of farmed Atlantic salmon into waters. The facility held about 305,000 fish.

Tribal and state officials have urged people to catch as many as possible.

The tribe and others are worried the invasive fish will out-compete native fish.

Video shows police making fun of victim

DC WASHINGTON — Two police officers are seen dancing and questioning a homeowner's sexuality in a Washington burglary victim's security footage.

WRC-TV reported the home surveillance video showed someone breaking into the victim's townhouse Aug. 8 before responding police are later seen inside the home where one officer can be heard laughing and saying "Armani, Dolce and Gabbana — he's probably gay."

Clarence Williams said he was out of the country at the time and that it was the second time someone broke into his home in less than a month.

Metropolitan police said the two officers have been placed on noncontact status for misconduct and that an internal investigation is ongoing.

Penguin population at zoo increases by 5

FL JACKSONVILLE — Florida zoo has announced the additions of two chicks and three adults to its Magellanic penguin group.

The Florida Times-Union reported the first chick, whose gender is still unknown, hatched on July 30 at Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens. Another chick hatched Aug. 7.

Officials are monitoring two more eggs.

Three adult penguins arrived at the zoo from the San Francisco Zoo and are currently on exhibit. The penguins are part of a breeding program.

Magellanic penguins are native to the southern coasts of Argentina and Chile.

From wire reports

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Air Raid terrorizes defenses in Big 12

Associated Press

NORMAN, Okla. — While Mike Leach's Air Raid offense was posting astonishing numbers at Texas Tech, he didn't realize he also was helping mold a group of young coaches who would use the system to frustrate Big 12 defenses for years to come.

Leach's former Tech quarterbacks are gaining prominence as coaches at Big 12 programs. Lincoln Riley recently was promoted from offensive coordinator to head coach at Oklahoma. Kliff Kingsbury has been the head coach at Texas Tech since 2013, and his offenses have been nearly unstoppable. Sonny Cumbie is entering his fourth season as TCU's co-offensive coordinator, and his units with quarterback Trevone Boykin were among the best in college football.

All three were on the Red Raiders team that won the 2002 Tangerine Bowl. Kingsbury, the oldest, just turned 38.

Leach said he doesn't think about it much — he's still coaching at Washington State, where his system is now challenging Pac-12 defenses. Asked to reflect, his pride shows.

"I get asked once in a while about them," he said in a phone

interview with The Associated Press. "I got to work with some really quality guys. I'm thrilled they have gone on to have success."

Riley, who will turn 34 in September, is the youngest coach in the Bowl Subdivision. His Oklahoma offense set an FBS record for passing efficiency last season, and the Sooners ranked second nationally in total offense and third in scoring. Quarterback Baker Mayfield and receiver Dede Westbrook were Heisman Trophy finalists.

Kingsbury's Texas Tech squad led the nation in total offense and passing offense last season, and quarterback Patrick Mahomes was the 10th overall pick in the NFL Draft.

TCU's offense fell off a bit last season, but Cumbie, who just turned 36, is a proven commodity. In 2014, the Horned Frogs ranked second nationally in scoring offense and fifth in total offense, and in 2015, they ranked third nationally in total offense and seventh in scoring.

It all started with Leach's incredible run at Tech. From 2000-09, his offenses led the nation in passing six times and total yards three times. Kingsbury led the nation in yards passing in '02 and Cumbie led

the nation in '04 while Riley was a student assistant.

Leach has watched his pupils from afar, and at times the 56-year-old mastermind has become the student.

"We will occasionally pick up the phone and call one another and draw stuff from one another and pick each other's brain a little bit, so there is some cross-over," he said. "It all comes from the same basic offense we ran at Tech."

Riley didn't get on the field at Tech, and Leach offered Riley a student assistant position after cutting him in 2003. Riley made the most of his time with successful quarterbacks Cumbie, B.J. Symons, Cody Hodges and Graham Harrell.

"We had a lot of interesting characters in there," Riley said. "The head coach, for first. That was interesting right off the top. A lot of dynamic personalities in there. It was good. There was a lot of learning. It was a unique environment to learn, but one that benefited all of us."

Cumbie closely followed Kingsbury's path and was ready to play when the opportunity finally came his senior year.

"Everywhere Kliff went, everything Kliff did, Cumb-

ie did," Leach said. "I think Cumbie's focus, persistence and diligence doing that helped him get on the field and be the guy for a year."

Though they all use the same basic system, there are differences. Last season, Washington State and Texas Tech passed nearly twice as often as they ran, staying true to the Air Raid roots. Oklahoma ran 14 more times per game than it passed last season and TCU had a nearly even split.

"He's (Leach) had incredible success, but he's always had his system and recruits guys to that," Riley said. "He's not going to tinker the system much — they are going to run what they run. Only the names and faces change. Our belief has been a little bit different here in that you do have to adapt to what you have. There's two ways to do it well, and both groups have had a lot of success offensively."

Leach used the system as offensive coordinator at Oklahoma in 1999, and he helped Riley get onto former Sooner coach Bob Stoops' staff in 2015. Leach is pleased that the system he helped develop under Hal Mumme has continued to grow through the players he coached and beyond.

Alabama, SEC trying to climb back to the summit

Associated Press

Alabama and the Southeastern Conference are trying to climb back atop the college football mountain.

The SEC was toppled — at least temporarily — from that summit by the Atlantic Coast Conference last season. A powerhouse Crimson Tide team has a much shorter climb back after a down-to-the-last-breath loss to the ACC's Clemson in the national championship game.

'Bama has won 17 consecutive SEC games by an average of 21 points but coach Nick Saban insists "there's a lot of parity in our league."

Despite Saban's perspective, there's no debating that the battle for No. 2 has been more heated than the competition for the top spot the past few seasons. Exhibit A: Alabama's 54-16 win over Florida in the last SEC championship game.

Alabama remains the decisive favorite to win a fourth consecutive SEC title despite losing four first-round NFL Draft picks. No team has won the league four times in a row — or three for that matter before the Tide's run — since Steve Spurrier and Florida dominated from 1993-96.

The first test might just be

Alabama's biggest of the regular season. The Tide open with another ACC power, Florida State, in Atlanta's new Mercedes-Benz Stadium.

"All the guys that did play in that (Clemson) game are really hungry to get back out there and play and show the world that we are one of the top teams in the nation," 'Bama receiver Calvin Ridley said.

Quarterback Jalen Hurts, the SEC offensive player of the year, gives Saban a returning starter at quarterback for the first time since 2013. He heads a group of promising young passers including Georgia's

Jacob Eason, Mississippi's Shea Patterson and South Carolina's Jake Bentley.

Not to mention transfers Jarrett Stidham at Auburn and Malik Zaire at Florida.

In the SEC West, teams like LSU, Texas A&M and Auburn are trying to play catch-up to the Tide. Georgia, Florida and Tennessee are among the East Division teams hoping to close the gap with their West counterparts, who have held an eight-year monopoly on SEC titles.

The Gators have won the East crown in each of coach Jim McElwain's first two seasons but are aiming higher.

Defending champ Kerber falls in opener

By HOWARD FENDRICH
Associated Press

NEW YORK — The question was rather simple after Angelique Kerber became only the second defending U.S. Open champion in the professional era to lose in the first round.

The surprisingly lopsided 6-3, 6-1 loss to 45th-ranked Naomi Osaka of Japan under the closed roof in Arthur Ashe Stadium at a rainy Flushing Meadows on Tuesday was former No. 1 Kerber's latest in a long list of disappointing performances in 2017, so she was asked what she thinks went wrong this season.

She sighed, shrugged her shoulders and began to answer: "I don't know."

Moments later, her eyes darting around the room, she added, "This year is a completely different year."

Talk about an understatement. In 2016, Kerber broke through to the top of tennis in a spectacular way. A player with only one previous Grand Slam semifinal appearance reached the first three major title matches of her career, winning two of them. She stunned Serena Williams in the Australian Open final, lost to Williams in the Wimbledon final and then beat Karolina Pliskova in the U.S. Open final to rise to the

top of the WTA rankings for the first time.

Her follow-up has been quite a flop. Kerber, a 29-year-old German, hasn't won any title of any sort this season. She is only 25-18 overall, 0-9 against opponents ranked in the top 20, and Tuesday's loss assured her of falling out of the top 10 for the first time since October 2015. At Grand Slam tournaments she is 6-4, including another first-round loss in May at the French Open, where she became that tournament's first No. 1 seed to lose so early.

"I know that I'm strong and I know that I will come back stronger, for sure. I know that I will not (be) giving up," said Kerber, the first defending champion to lose in the U.S. Open's first round since Svetlana Kuznetsova in 2005.

Showers showed up before noon Tuesday and led to the postponements of dozens of matches. The only court used in the afternoon and evening was Ashe, thanks to the retractable cover constructed ahead of last year's tournament.

The only men's matches completed were there, and Roger Federer overcame a slow start and then a late lapse to edge 19-year-old American Frances Tiafoe 4-6, 6-2, 6-1, 1-6, 6-4 in a compelling first-rounder at night.

Federer's footwork and strokes were off in the first set, and he repeatedly gave Tiafoe points via miscues. Federer then appeared to take control by grabbing eight of nine games en route to taking a 2-1 lead in sets. But Tiafoe rediscovered his own powerful shots to force a fifth set. Federer went up 3-1, then got broken while serving for the match at 5-3. But he broke right back, finally converting his third match point.

Federer earned his 79th career victory at the U.S. Open, equaling Andre Agassi for second-most behind Jimmy Connors' 98.

Federer's possible semifinal foe and chief rival for the title, No. 1 Rafael Nadal, overcame a first-set hiccup of his own before overpowering Dusan Lajovic of Serbia 7-6 (6), 6-2, 6-2.

The women's No. 1 seed, Pliskova, easily advanced by beating Magda Linette 6-2, 6-1, French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko got past Lara Arruabarrena 6-2, 1-6, 6-1 in a match that started on Court 17 then was moved indoors at Ashe, and No. 23 Barbora Strýcova defeated Misaki Doi 6-1, 6-3. Yet another seeded woman was eliminated when No. 28 Lesia Tsurenko lost to Yanina Wickmayer 6-3, 6-1.

At night, No. 15 Madison Keys of the U.S. compiled a 32-9 edge

in winners and moved into the second round by beating Elise Mertens of Belgium 6-3, 7-6 (6). Keys got broken while serving for the match at 6-5, and then faced a set point at 6-5 in the tiebreaker. But Keys delivered a big forehand to force a backhand error by Mertens, starting a three-point run for the American to close out the victory.

"I would say I was probably one of the luckier people all day," Keys said, "to just kind of know I was going to get a match in today."

While Kerber's quick departure was stunning in and of itself, that Osaka would be the one to do it might not be quite so remarkable, even if she is just 19 and never won before against a top-10 woman.

Osaka is comfortable around the grounds at Flushing Meadows, where she has been spending time, and even occasionally practicing, since she was a kid: She was born in Osaka, Japan, so represents that country, but moved to the U.S. when she was 3, has dual citizenship, and used to live on Long Island.

She nearly upended Keys in the U.S. Open's third round last year, leading 5-1 in the third set before losing in a tiebreaker, a collapse on her mind in the latter stages Tuesday.

Mariners trade for Leake to bolster staff

Associated Press

SEATTLE — The Mariners acquired right-hander Mike Leake from the St. Louis Cardinals on Wednesday for minor league infielder Rayder Ascanio as Seattle tries to bolster its beleaguered starting rotation during the AL wild-card race.

Seattle is without James Paxton, Felix Hernandez and Hisahi Iwakuma due to injuries and have struggled to get five innings out of their starters for most of the past month. Seattle has had just 16 starts of at least six innings in 43 games since

the All-Star break.

St. Louis will send Seattle \$17.5 million to cover a portion of the \$55.6 million Leake is guaranteed during the remainder of an \$80 million, five-year contract through 2020. The Mariners also acquired \$750,000 in international signing bonus allotment as part of the deal.

Seattle started the day on a four-game losing streak and has fallen three games behind Minnesota in the chase for the second wild card spot.

"This is as much about the next three, potentially four

years as it's about this next four or five weeks," Seattle general manager Jerry Dipoto said. "Obviously, we feel like Mike helps us walking in the door for 2017. But the chance to acquire a guy that is going to be pitching his 30-year-old season next year and get some controllable pitching in the door with a history of durability like Mike has for us was a huge concern going into the offseason and something we were able to address in August."

Leake has been one of the most durable starters in the National League but has not been

at his best since the All-Star break. Leake is 7-12 with a 4.21 ERA for the season, but since the break is 1-5 with a 6.90 ERA in nine starts since July 14.

Dipoto said the plan is for Leake to make his first start for Seattle sometime this weekend when the club returns home to play Oakland.

Leake is not a short-term rental. He has a \$15 million salary this year and is owed \$17 million next season, \$16 million in 2019 and \$15 million in 2020. The Mariners acquire an \$18 million option for 2021 with a \$5 million buyout.

Astros routed while minds on Houston

Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — It wasn't just another night at the ballpark for the Houston Astros and Texas Rangers, who can't stop thinking about everyone back home affected by Hurricane Harvey.

The stands at Tropicana Field were mostly empty, the "home" team dressed in the visitors clubhouse, and the "road" team wore white uniforms they usually wear at home.

The three-game series that concludes Thursday was moved from Minute Maid Park because of flooding in the Houston area, with the Astros serving as the home team after the Rangers declined a proposal to play the games in Arlington, Texas.

"I thought both teams kind of handled the situation, getting on a plane and flying over here and really getting set up to play a baseball game," manager Jeff Banister said after the Rangers opened a series moved 1,000 miles to St. Petersburg, Fla.,

with a 12-2 victory in front of an announced crowd of 3,485.

Shin-Soo Choo homered and drove in four runs, backing the strong pitching of Martin Perez, helping Texas move ahead of Tampa Bay in the AL wild-card standings while playing in the Rays' ballpark.

Adrian Beltre, of the Rangers, drove in three runs to pass Hall of Famer Ernie Banks for 28th on the career RBI list with 1,637 while Joey Gallo hit a two-run homer off Mike Fiers (8-9).

"We were really motivated to do well for Houston, but looking on the TV with Houston half under water is kind of hard," Astros third baseman J.D. Davis, who also pitched an inning, said.

"We played hard. We just came up short. Good for the Rangers," Davis added. "They had three big innings. There's nothing much you can do. It's just baseball."

It's only the fourth time in major league history that games

have been relocated to neutral sites because of weather.

The Astros were involved as well in 2008, when two scheduled home games against the Chicago Cubs were moved to Milwaukee because of Hurricane Ike.

Three games between the Angels and Indians were played in Milwaukee instead of Cleveland because of snow in 2007, and two games between the Montreal Expos and Florida Marlins were moved from Miami to U.S. Cellular Field in Chicago due to Hurricane Ivan in 2004.

Choo had an RBI single off Fiers, who allowed eight runs in four innings. He added a three-run homer off reliever Francis Martes in the fifth.

Perez (10-10) pitched seven strong innings for the Rangers, yielding two runs and eight hits. Jose Altuve and Alex Bregman drove in runs for the Astros with third-inning singles.

The small but lively crowd included Carolina Padilla, who

made the 90-minute trip to the domed stadium with two 9-year-olds — one of them her son, David, who wore an Altuve jersey.

"It's awesome. It's wonderful," she said. "When we found out this morning they were playing here, they were like, 'Oh, we have to go!'"

Seating was limited to the lower level, with tickets going for \$10 each. Some Astros fans wore orange T-shirts, one Rangers fan showed up wearing a Dak Prescott football jersey and a handful of people showed up in Tampa Bay Rays gear.

Banister said before the game that the prospect of the series attracting small crowds should not affect either team's commitment to playing for people affected by the storm.

"If at this moment they need people in the stands to have them charged up to play the game," Banister said, "they aren't playing for the right reasons."

MLB roundup

Stanton hits 51st home run in loss to Nationals

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Giancarlo Stanton tied a major league record with his 18th home run in August, but Anthony Rendon had four RBIs and the Washington Nationals beat the Miami Marlins 8-3 on Tuesday night.

Stanton hit a long homer in the first inning off Edwin Jackson (5-3), his 51st this season, to open the scoring following a 26-minute rain delay. His August output matched the mark set by Rudy York with the Detroit Tigers in 1937. Sammy Sosa set the record for homers in a month when he hit 20 in June 1998, and Stanton has two games left this month to catch the former Cubs slugger.

Stanton added an RBI with a deep sacrifice fly in the fifth inning.

Rendon's three-run double in

the seventh came after Washington's bullpen thwarted a rally earlier in the inning. Daniel Murphy also had a two-run single.

The Nationals, 16-7 since Aug. 6, had five runs and nine hits in 4¹/₃ innings against Vance Worley (2-4).

Junichi Tazawa allowed Rendon's double and three runs in the seventh. Rendon also added a run-scoring single.

Red Sox 3, Blue Jays 0: Chris Sale (15-6) and two relievers combined on a four-hitter, Hanley Ramirez hit a solo home run and visiting Boston beat Toronto.

Orioles 4, Mariners 0: Dylan Bundy (13-8) threw a one-hitter for his first career shutout, Manny Machado hit two of his team's four solo homers, and host Baltimore extended its winning streak to six games.

Royals 6, Rays 2: Whit Merrifield, Jorge Bonifacio and Eric Hosmer homered as host Kansas City snapped a 45-inning scoreless streak on the way to a victory over Tampa Bay.

Cubs 4, Pirates 1: Jake Arrieta (14-8) continued his dominant second half with six innings of two-hit ball, Ben Zobrist homered and host Chicago beat Pittsburgh.

Cardinals 10, Brewers 2: Matt Carpenter hit a two-run homer and Luke Voit drove in four runs, backing Luke Weaver's 10-strikeout night and leading visiting St. Louis past Milwaukee.

Twins 6, White Sox 4: Jorge Polanco homered twice and Ervin Santana (14-7) struck out seven while pitching into the seventh inning, leading host Minnesota past Chicago.

Diamondbacks 7, Dodgers 6: A.J. Pollock hit a two-run homer and host Arizona roughed up Rich Hill (9-6) in his follow-up to a near no-hitter.

Rockies 7, Tigers 3: Nolan Arenado capped a four-run seventh inning with his 30th homer, and host Colorado beat Detroit.

Angels 8, Athletics 2: C.J. Cron hit two homers, including a three-run drive in the first inning, and host Los Angeles beat Oakland.

Reds 14, Mets 4: Scott Schebler hit his first career grand slam, and host Cincinnati ended its 14-game losing streak against New York.

Padres 6, Giants 3: Manuel Margot and Jabari Blash homered to back Luis Perdomo's (7-8) six innings of solid pitching as host San Diego beat San Francisco.