

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Navy's 'Fat Leonard' scandal grows

*The Washington Post*

The worst corruption scandal in Navy history reached new heights Friday as federal prosecutors announced bribery and fraud charges against three retired sailors, including an officer who allegedly took part in a wild two-day party with prostitutes in Tokyo that cost \$75,000.

A grand jury in San Diego indicted retired Capt. David Haas, 50, of Kailua, Hawaii, on charges that he took \$145,000 in bribes from Leonard Glenn Francis, a Singapore-based defense contractor known as "Fat Leonard" in Navy circles.

Indicted separately on fraud charges were Ricarte Icmat David, 61, a retired master chief petty officer who now lives in the Philippines, and Brooks Alonzo Parks, 46, a re-

tired chief petty officer who lives in Naples, Italy, according to the Justice Department.

As of Friday, none of the defendants had made a court appearance, and it could not be determined if they had retained lawyers. It was also unclear if David or Parks would voluntarily return to the United States to face charges or if federal officials would have to seek their extradition.

Federal investigators have been scrutinizing Haas' conduct ever since the corruption scandal became public five years ago.

Shortly after Francis was arrested in a sting operation in San Diego in September 2013, Navy officials announced that Haas had been suspended from his military duties and placed under criminal investigation

by the Justice Department. But authorities provided no further updates on his case until Friday. Haas retired from the Navy in September 2016 and now works for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, according to his LinkedIn profile.

"Capt. Haas is innocent of the charges, and we will defend the case in a court of law," said his attorney, Jeremiah Sullivan III, of San Diego.

According to the indictment, Haas accepted a series of bribes from Francis in 2011 and 2012 when the captain was serving as director of maritime operations for the Navy's 7th Fleet, based in Japan. In exchange, Haas allegedly acted as a secret mole for Francis to help drum up business for his company, Glenn Defense Marine Asia, which held \$250

million in contracts to resupply Navy ships and submarines in the Western Pacific.

In June 2012, for example, Francis paid more than \$75,000 for Haas and other Navy officers to spend an extravagant two days in Tokyo, where they partied at several clubs with prostitutes, according to the indictment. On another night in Tokyo in November 2011, Francis allegedly spent more than \$20,000 for Haas and other officers to dine at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel and spend the evening with prostitutes.

David is charged with accepting \$40,000 in cash bribes from Francis, as well as prostitutes and other gifts.

Parks is charged with accepting lavish hotel suites, airlines tickets and other gifts from Francis.

## US hospital ship to treat Venezuelan refugees

*Miami Herald*

BOGOTA, Colombia — Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said Friday he would dispatch a U.S. Navy hospital ship to the Colombian coast to help treat Venezuelan refugees who have overwhelmed the Colombian medical system — the first U.S. military foray into the Venezuela crisis.

"It is absolutely a humanitarian mission. We're not sending soldiers, we're sending doctors," Mattis told reporters of his plans to send the gleaming white, former freighter with a Red Cross painted on its side to help treat refugees in Colombia and probably other Latin American nations.

He gave no timetable for when the ship, probably the ship known as the USNS Comfort,

would set sail from its home port, likely Norfolk, Va.

U.S. defense officials have yet to say how the ship would be outfitted for the Venezuelan refugee health care relief mission. In times of war, the Comfort can carry 1,215 military medical personnel, conduct 12 simultaneous surgeries, operate 1,000 hospital beds and ferry casualties by helicopter. Typically, it has carried a smaller crew with lesser capabilities aimed at providing basic humanitarian relief in hard-to-reach areas or places stricken by natural disaster.

More than 1 million Venezuelans have fled food shortages and poverty in their homeland in the past 18 months, often traveling by foot and bus to neighboring Colombia and in smaller numbers to Brazil, in what the United Nations sees as

a refugee crisis. Both countries have tried to shore up security along their land borders while taking in migrants.

The decision to deploy U.S. medical troops to the worst migration crisis in South American history is a significant departure from Trump administration policy.

Defense officials have left the response to civilian and international humanitarian relief organizations to deny Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro the possibility of casting it as a U.S. military intervention in the region. So far, the United States has provided at least \$55 million in overall assistance, something defense officials have emphasized particularly since President Donald Trump announced last summer that he was not "ruling out a military option" to

solve the Venezuelan crisis.

Mattis said he had hoped to announce the hospital ship mission in its entirety at the close of his weeklong visit, during which the Venezuelan migration crisis came up in every stop.

But Friday, Mattis met with Colombia's new president and defense minister and was offered specific suggestions "on how we might best craft the cruise through the region." That means "going back to the drawing board" before announcing the destinations and timetable, he said. It had yet to be decided, for example, whether the hospital ship would treat Venezuelans on the Atlantic side of the Panama Canal or to the south in the Pacific, a move that might allow the U.S. health care workers to also treat spillover Venezuelan refugees into Ecuador.

# Female vets embark on a new mission

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A dragon winds around a cherry tree across MJ Hegar's arm and back, the tattoo covering shrapnel wounds she had, at one point, not wanted to see with her young children around.

But nine years after being shot down in Afghanistan, then winning a lawsuit against the federal government, writing a book and now running for a Texas congressional seat, Hegar isn't hiding much anymore.

"I carry my service with me wherever I go," Hegar said in a telephone interview near her home in Round Rock, outside Austin. "We don't see my family and my childhood and my service as different chapters. It's all a package deal."

Hegar is part of a crop of female veterans running for Congress in this year's midterm elections. Almost all Democrats and many of them mothers, they are shaped by the Sept. 11 attacks and overseas wars, including the longest war in American history. Many are retiring from the military and looking for another way to serve the country.

They're part of a record number of women running for seats in Congress, but in certain ways, they are a class apart.

The female veterans claim expertise in national security and veterans issues, with a track record of thriving in institutions dominated by men. Regardless of party, they cast themselves as the antidote to bitterly partisan politics — describing themselves as "mission-driven" and trained by the military to work toward a common goal.

## 'My 90th mission'

"I flew 89 combat missions as a U.S. Marine. My 90th mission is running for Congress to take on politicians who put party over country," said Kentucky Democratic candidate Amy McGrath, the first female Marine to fly an F/A-18 in combat.

The increase in candidates with military experience is no accident, and the hopefuls are expected to be propelled by

Democratic luminaries. Former Vice President Joe Biden, for example, is expected to campaign for McGrath, among others, according to officials close to them who spoke on condition of anonymity because the schedule is not set.

Two Democrats — Massachusetts Rep. Seth Moulton, a retired Marine Corps captain and Bronze Star recipient, and Illinois Sen. Tammy Duckworth, who lost her legs and partial use of an arm when her helicopter was shot down by a rocket-propelled grenade in Iraq — have been instrumental in recruiting veterans to run for office.

Moulton said female veterans in his party carry a particular authority when talking to voters concerned about President Donald Trump's leadership.

"It's the year of the woman, but it's also the year of yearning for bringing integrity and honor back to politics," Moulton said. "We need Democrats with the credibility to tell people what's really going on."

The women are hardly the first to use their military service to their political advantage — men have been doing it for decades.

## Not 'tough enough'?

One of the traditional knocks against female candidates is "they aren't tough enough, they aren't strong enough, and they might not have the leadership skills," said Debbie Walsh, director of the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University.

Not female candidates who are veterans, particularly of combat. "They kind of automatically get that kind of respect as leaders; it's well-earned," Walsh said. "It's such a logical next step for people who are committed to this country and are committed to service."

But their campaigns highlight a set of political concerns specific to female veterans.

The candidates acknowledge that their extraordinary stories of trailblazing military careers could make it difficult for some voters to relate to them. Will

they come off as too tough or hawkish? Is it possible for any candidate, male or female, to overemphasize his or her military background in the post-9/11 era?

McGrath, who retired as a lieutenant colonel, opened her campaign with an online video in which she wears a bomber jacket, a fighter jet in the background.

McGrath sees herself as a bridge to male voters who "sort of see women as being weaker," she said in a telephone interview. "But yeah, I have to make an effort to reach out to women and make sure that they're not scared, or think that I'm too militant."

## 'I'm a feminist'

Out came a 30-second spot that mentioned the 89 combat missions — but focused on McGrath taking her three children to the pediatrician.

"I'm Amy McGrath and I approved this ad," she says, as her young son takes off down a hallway with his pants down. "Because I'd like to see the other guys running deal with this."

She upset popular Lexington Mayor Jim Gray in the Democratic primary and will take on Republican Rep. Andy Barr in November, a closely watched race considered competitive in a district Barr won by 22 points in 2016. Poised for the different calculus of the general election, Barr last week released an ad quoting McGrath saying of herself, "Hell yeah, I'm a feminist" and calling herself "a progressive."

"Seriously? Is that all you got?" McGrath retorted in a video response, sharing the screen once again with a fighter jet. But this time, she traded her bomber jacket for a denim one.

Much of Hegar's story was already public by the time she decided to challenge Republican Rep. John Carter in the Austin-area district, so she went for the full reveal — tattoos and all.

Her video, "Doors," features the door of the helicopter in which she was shot down on her third tour in Afghanistan

as a combat search-and-rescue pilot. Her medals, including a Purple Heart, play a role, as does Hegar's 2012 lawsuit against the federal government that forced it to repeal the ban on women in combat.

## A 'difficult transition'

The spot also features an intimate detail: One of Hegar's first memories was of her father throwing her mother through a glass door.

"That's been one of the most difficult transitions for me, is talking about myself more," Hegar said. "I hope that they take away that we have to start putting our faith in people who have a history of putting other people first, fighting against intimidation and bullying, and trying to do the right thing."

Air Force veteran Gina Ortiz Jones, the Democratic nominee for a House seat in West Texas, hopes her active military duty and intelligence work will "neutralize this perceived strength" of Republicans as strong on security issues.

That could be important in the race for the San Antonio-area seat, currently held by Republican Rep. Will Hurd, a former CIA operative. Ortiz Jones supports single-payer health insurance, a position that could be considered too liberal for the district.

"'Liberal' isn't a word that is normally used to describe my work in national security," she said.

If these women win, they will join an exclusive club in Congress. Just 19 percent of lawmakers are veterans — the same percentage that are women. Only four members are both: Sens. Joni Ernst, R-Iowa, and Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill.; and Reps. Martha McSally, R-Ariz., and Tulsi Gabbard, D-Hawaii.

"It kind of reminds me of a fighter squadron, with so few women," said McSally, a retired Air Force veteran who was the first woman to fly in combat and is now running for U.S. Senate.

# Poll finds partisan split over Space Force

*CQ-Roll Call*

WASHINGTON — Its cool science-fiction title alone practically oozes nostalgia for the starbound adventures of American astronauts, the spirit of Cold War competition and pride for American dominance in space. So why are most Democrats not on board with the Space Force?

Sixty-nine percent of them disapproved of the White House's effort to establish a sixth branch of the military focused on defending U.S. interests in space, according to a new poll released Wednesday. And only 12 percent supported it.

The reaction from Republicans was almost exactly flipped: 68 percent of Republicans supported the proposal, while only 14 percent opposed it.

The dramatic party-line split is remarkable for a previously obscure and largely nonpartisan idea. President Donald Trump's enthusiastic embrace of the Space Force has thrust it into public fame — and driven a deep partisan divide.

"That same partisan divide did not exist

before Trump got involved in this issue," said Brian Weeden, an expert on space policy at the Secure World Foundation. "President Trump's focus on, and support of, the Space Force has definitely raised public awareness of it but has also politicized it."

The poll, released by The Economist/YouGov, surveyed 1,500 American adults online from Aug. 12-14. It had a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Defense policy wonks have debated the idea of a space-based military service for close to two decades. Last year, a bipartisan pair of congressmen pushed hard for the Space Corps, their own version of a military space force. The provision was controversial, but not along partisan lines.

Supporters in both parties said the proposal served an urgent need to defend the country's interests in space, while other lawmakers and top Pentagon officials said space defense was better served without an expensive new bureaucracy.

Then in June, Trump plucked the idea out of obscure policy circles and launched

it into the realm of partisan politics. He has made the Space Force one of his signature grandiose campaign promises, using it to raise campaign funds and gin up supporters at rallies.

By attaching his personal brand, Trump has made the Space Force idea more well-known and, at the same time, more polarized, defense experts say. Serious debate about the issue could soon become nearly impossible, said Todd Harrison, director of the Aerospace Security Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

"It's taking something that is a legitimate security issue — where there's not an easy solution; it needs to be debated and discussed on its merits — and it turns it into another partisan issue," Harrison said.

Trump has ordered the Pentagon to get to work immediately to establish the Space Force, and Vice President Mike Pence promised it by 2020. Plenty stands in the way of its launch. Only Congress can make a new service branch, not the president on his own.

## Discharged Army specialist granted citizenship

*Associated Press*

LOS ANGELES — A South Korean-born U.S. Army specialist who sued after the military moved to discharge her has been granted citizenship, her attorneys said Friday.

Yea Ji Sea, 29, had filed a lawsuit last month demanding a response to her citizenship application. She came to the country as a child on a visitor visa and held other visas before enlisting in 2013 under a special government program for foreign citizens who want to serve in the U.S. military.

Under the program, recruits agreed in their enlistment contracts to apply to naturalize as soon as their honorable service was certified.

Her lawsuit alleged that the government improperly failed to process her citizenship application. Last week, a federal judge ruled immigration officials had three

weeks to decide whether to approve the citizenship application or explain the delay to the court.

On Friday, the Justice Department notified Yea that her application was approved, according to the American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Southern California. She's scheduled to be sworn in at a citizenship ceremony on Aug. 24.

"I love this country and was honored to serve it in the U.S. Army," Yea said in a statement. "I had felt like I was an American since I was a child, growing up here. I had hoped for a long career in the Army. But I am so happy now that I will be a citizen."

Yea's attorney, Sameer Ahmed, said he was "glad the government has made good on its promise under its enlistment program."

Ahmed said last week that he believed Yea's case was part of a greater effort by

the Trump administration to deny citizenship to soldiers.

The Associated Press reported last month immigration attorneys knew of more than 40 U.S. Army reservists and recruits who enlisted in the military with a promised path to citizenship and have been discharged or whose status has become questionable, jeopardizing their futures.

The Army has since temporarily stopped discharging immigrant recruits, pending a review of the program.

Yea applied for citizenship in 2014, but she was denied after immigration officials alleged there had been a fraudulent document in an earlier student visa application. Yea believed the paperwork she obtained through an approved language school was legitimate, according to the lawsuit, but the school's owner was convicted in a fraud case.

## Senator says Navy chaplains school returning to RI

*Associated Press*

NEWPORT, R.I. — A school for U.S. Navy chaplains is returning to Rhode Island.

Democratic U.S. Sen. Jack Reed said Friday the Navy plans to relocate the Naval Chaplaincy School and Center and about 20 jobs from Fort Jackson in Columbia, S.C.,

to Naval Station Newport in Rhode Island effective March 1, 2019.

Reed said the school was in Newport in 1951 and moved to South Carolina because of consolidations made in 2005.

The school is responsible for chaplains' education and professional development.

Currently, new chaplains begin training at the Officer Development School in Newport, then go to South Carolina. Navy chaplains will no longer have to go to the Army base to continue their training. There are more than 800 Navy chaplains. Reed says he's thrilled the school is returning.

# Trump targets more security clearances

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said Friday that he suspects he'll "very quickly" revoke the security clearance for a Justice Department official whose wife worked for the firm involved in producing a dossier on Trump's ties to Russia.

Signaling that his efforts to target clearances over his frustration with the Russia investigation were not over, Trump tweeted that it was a "disgrace" for Bruce Ohr to be in the Justice Department.

His comments came two days after he yanked the security clearance of former CIA Director John Brennan, saying he had to do "something" about the "rigged" federal probe of Russian election interference. Critics have cast it as an act of politi-

cal vengeance.

Ohr has come under Republican scrutiny for his contacts to Glenn Simpson, co-founder of Fusion GPS. The opposition research firm hired former British spy Christopher Steele during the 2016 presidential campaign to compile the dossier on Trump and his Russia ties.

Ohr's wife, Nellie, worked for Fusion GPS during the campaign — something Trump has tweeted about to highlight his assertions of political bias behind the Russia investigation.

Former U.S. security officials on Thursday issued scathing rebukes to Trump for moving against Brennan. Trump's admission that he acted out of frustration with the Russia probe underscored his willing-

ness to use his executive power to fight back against an investigation he sees as a threat to his presidency. Legal experts said the dispute may add to the evidence being reviewed by special counsel Robert Mueller.

In an opinion piece in *The New York Times*, Brennan said Trump's decision, announced Wednesday, to deny him access to classified information was a desperate attempt to end Mueller's investigation. Brennan, who served under President Barack Obama and has become a vocal Trump critic, called Trump's claims that he did not collude with Russia "hogwash."

The only question remaining is whether the collusion amounts to a "constituted criminally liable conspiracy," Brennan wrote.

## Miss America criticizes pageant leadership

Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — The reigning Miss America said she has been bullied, manipulated and silenced by the pageant's current leadership, including Gretchen Carlson.

In a letter sent Friday to former Miss Americas, Cara Mund says she decided to speak out despite the risk of punishment.

Her letter is reminiscent of the movie "Mean Girls," in which characters Gretchen and Regina bully the heroine and make her life miserable. That's what happened to her in real life, Mund wrote. Gretchen Carlson is chairwoman of the Miss America

Organization; Regina Hopper is its CEO.

Her letter exponentially increased the turmoil surrounding the pageant three weeks before the next Miss America is to be crowned in Atlantic City, N.J.

"Let me be blunt: I strongly believe that my voice is not heard nor wanted by our current leadership; nor do they have any interest in knowing who I am and how my experiences relate to positioning the organization for the future," Mund wrote. "Our chair and CEO have systematically silenced me, reduced me, marginalized me and essentially erased me in my role as Miss America in subtle and not-so-subtle ways on a daily basis. After a while, the pat-

terns have clearly emerged, and the sheer accumulation of the disrespect, passive-aggressive behavior, belittlement and outright exclusion has taken a serious toll."

The Miss America Organization said it would reach out to her directly to address her concerns.

"The Miss America Organization supports Cara," the group said in a statement. "It is disappointing that she chose to air her grievances publicly, not privately. Her letter contains mischaracterizations and many unfounded accusations."

Mund said she's been left out of interviews, not invited to meetings and called by the wrong name.

## Satanic Temple brings statue of winged-goat idol to rally

Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — The Satanic Temple temporarily placed a bronze statue of a goat-headed, winged creature called Baphomet at the Arkansas State Capitol during a rally to call for the removal of a Ten Commandments monument already mounted on Capitol grounds.

About 150 Satanists, atheists and Christians attended the First Amendment rally Thursday. The Satanic Temple says the Ten Commandments monument violates constitutional freedom of religion rights and that the installation of their 7½-foot-tall statue showing the 14th century idol seated and accompanied by smiling children would demonstrate religious tolerance.

"If you're going to have one religious

monument up then it should be open to others, and if you don't agree with that then let's just not have any at all," said Satanic Arkansas cofounder Ivy Forrester, a rally organizer.

The statue of Baphomet can't be installed under a 2017 state law that requires legislative sponsorship for consideration of any monument. The Satanist group removed the statue later Thursday.

The Ten Commandments monument at the Arkansas Capitol was sponsored by Republican Sen. Jason Rapert and installed quietly in 2017.

Less than 24 hours after its installation, a man drove his car into the monument, smashing it to pieces. The same man also destroyed a Ten Commandments monu-

ment outside Oklahoma's state Capitol.

The Satanic Temple ended its campaign to install Baphomet there, after Oklahoma's Supreme Court ruled the Ten Commandments monument was unconstitutional and it was taken down.

Rapert said in an online statement that he respects the protesters' First Amendment rights, but also called them "extremists" and said "it will be a very cold day in hell before an offensive statue will be forced upon us to be permanently erected on the grounds of the Arkansas State Capitol."

There was a significant police presence at the peaceful rally. A small group of counter-protesters holding signs with Bible verses stood quietly nearby, occasionally singing Christian songs.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Girl, 12, steals mom's car, runs over deputy

**MS** MERIDIAN — A Mississippi sheriff said a 12-year-old girl stole her mother's car and ran over a deputy trying to stop her.

Lauderdale County Sheriff Billy Sollie told news outlets Sgt. Kris Cokel was released from a hospital after being treated for a fractured wrist and other injuries. He said the girl struck the deputy Wednesday night at a trailer park near Meridian.

Sollie said deputies had placed spike strips in the road several times to flatten the tires as she drove in loops around the trailer park.

The girl was taken to a juvenile facility. The state Bureau of Investigation is handling the case.

### Serial bank robber gets nearly 5 years in prison

**MA** BOSTON — A man who robbed 10 banks in the Boston area between July 2017 and October 2017 was sentenced to nearly five years in prison.

Federal prosecutors said Paul Landrum, 38, dubbed the "Route 128 Bandit" after the highway that rings Boston, was also sentenced Thursday to three years of probation.

Investigators said Landrum robbed eight banks on his own and assisted a woman in robbing two more. In every case, the witness description of the suspect was similar.

### Island inn up for sale, lighthouse not included

**ME** ISLE AU HAUT — A picturesque Maine island inn is up for sale, but it doesn't include an attached

lighthouse that's a popular tourism magnet.

The inn property on Isle Au Haut that once served as the lighthouse keeper's residence is being sold for about \$2 million. The Bangor Daily News reported the lighthouse — which still shines at night — tends to attract tourists who will walk across private property for a look at the beacon.

The lighthouse is not open to the public and the town hopes to go out for bids this fall for renovations.

### Firefighters rescue dog from sinkhole

**PA** OLD FORGE — Firefighters in northeastern Pennsylvania rescued a dog trapped in a sinkhole.

WNEP-TV reported Tom Borthwick was getting ready to cut the grass at his Old Forge home when he saw a sinkhole on his property. Borthwick looked inside the hole and was surprised to see his son's 14-year-old husky, Damon, had fallen into the hole.

Borthwick called police and the fire department after the discovery.

A firefighter dropped into the sinkhole, put a harness around the tired dog and got it out.

### Ex-custodian gets jail for bathroom spying

**MA** NORTHAMPTON — A former custodian at a Massachusetts high school pleaded guilty to spying on people using a girls' bathroom at the school.

Prosecutors said Michael Kremensky, 22, was sentenced Thursday to serve six months of a 2½-year jail sentence, with the remainder suspended for three years of probation after pleading guilty to four counts of photographing an unsuspect-

ing person in the nude. He was also ordered to stay away from the school.

Police responded to Northampton High School in March to investigate what were described as "unusual structural modifications" in the bathroom and found holes drilled into the ceiling.

### Beheaded kitten may be work of serial killer

**WA** OLYMPIA — Police said investigators are trying to determine whether a beheaded kitten's head found this week is related to a series of cat killings in the area.

The Olympian reported Lacey police Cmdr. Jim Mack said the head was found in a wooded area near Clearbrook Drive Southeast and Yonkers Drive Southeast.

Thurston County Joint Animal Services is analyzing the remains. Mack said police also have seen coyotes in that area recently.

Cat corpses have been found in Thurston County mutilated by what authorities believe is a serial cat killer.

### Ohio makes progress on medical marijuana

**OH** COLUMBUS — The Department of Commerce said it's made additional progress in ramping up Ohio's medical marijuana program.

The state issued provisional licenses Friday to two more processors and two more testing labs.

This brings to nine the number of processors that have met state minimum standards to process plants into marijuana-infused products for use by people with physician recommendations.

The two new processors are Green Investment Partners, of

Columbus, and Standard Wellness Company, of Gibsonburg in Sandusky County.

### Doctor arrested after actions at airport

**FL** ORLANDO — Police officers pepper-sprayed a Florida doctor who acted erratically when he arrived at Orlando International Airport for a flight.

The Orlando Sentinel reported Jeffrey Epstein, 59, of Lakeland "threw his hands in the air" Thursday while yelling that "police had come to arrest him." He's charged with battery on an officer.

An arrest report said Epstein was removed from a ticket line and told he was prohibited from flying because of his behavior, frothing at the mouth while yelling obscenities.

Police said he continued yelling and refused orders to leave the airport. After he resisted being handcuffed, he was taken down and pepper-sprayed.

### Firefighters free reptile caught in hole

**CA** BAKERSFIELD — A large tortoise trapped inside a hole for several days in Southern California was rescued by firefighters.

Officials said a woman called for help to free her 25-year-old sulcata tortoise named Bentley. The reptile had been stuck underground without food and water in the Mojave area.

Video of the rescue shared by the Kern County Fire Department shows firefighters cutting through roots and digging out dirt.

Eventually the tortoise was able to walk out on its own.

Sulcata tortoises are native to Africa and can weigh up to 230 pounds and live 70 years.

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STARS AND STRIPES®

# A's within 1 game of Astros in AL West

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — With September approaching, the Oakland Athletics are showing the baseball world what they believed from the start: This group and its young sluggers are ready to make a playoff push.

Matt Olson hit a leadoff home run in the 10th inning after a video review gave Oakland the tying run in the ninth, and the A's beat the Houston Astros 4-3 on Friday night to pull within a game of the reigning World Series champs for the AL West lead.

"We've known that we're a capable team, we're a very good team all along," Olson said. "We knew it going into the year that we were going to have a chance to make a run, so glad to finally get a little recognition for it and when we go out and win games like that, people are looking at us a little bit."

Houston has been alone atop the AL West since June 14. Now

the Astros are being pushed by a team coming off three straight last-place finishes.

Olson pulled a 3-2 pitch from left-hander Tony Sipp (2-1) for his 23rd homer. It was his second career walkoff RBI and first game-ending homer.

"Definitely one of the cooler things I've done in my career," Olson said. "It's the most juiced I've gotten on a field for sure."

That came an inning after Oakland baserunner Ramon Laureano narrowly beat the tag at home from catcher Martin Maldonado for the tying run. Laureano took off from first on Nick Martini's double to the wall in right field, testing the arms of outfielder Josh Reddick and relay man Carlos Correa — who made a beautiful one-hop throw right to Maldonado's mitt. Laureano was initially called out, but immediately urged Oakland to challenge the call.

Umpires overturned the ruling after a review of more than three minutes.

Houston was stunned by the replay decision.

"From everything I saw he was out. I have no idea what they saw," Reddick said. "There was no angle that showed otherwise. I'm tired of getting screwed by replays. That's not the first time. I'm upset by a call that controls everything. I threw it gunning for home plate all the way. I wanted to get the ball to Carlos. He has the best arm in the infield and the most accurate arm."

A's manager Bob Melvin said, "When the play is that important and you're past the eighth inning, you're going to challenge it regardless."

Melvin also thought Laureano was interfered with near third base, where Alex Bregman ran through the baseline a moment before Laureano went sprinting by.

Blake Treinen (6-2) struck out the side in the 10th for the win.

Reddick singled in the go-ahead run in the sixth inning

against his former club after Bregman and Maldonado each hit solo home runs for the Astros.

Houston lost for the first time in seven games on Oakland's home field this season, having swept three-game series from May 7-9 and June 12-14. The unbeaten run was second in franchise history to a 10-game winning streak at the Coliseum from July 20, 2016, to June 22, 2017.

Astros starter Charlie Morton retired the first nine batters in order before Martini's lead-off walk in the fourth and Jed Lowrie's single one out later. New Houston reliever Roberto Osuna faced runners on first and second with no outs in the eighth and got out of the jam before Hector Rondon blew his fifth save.

The Astros won 12-1 against the Rockies on Wednesday to end a five-game skid but were unable to make it two in a row.

## Cubs turn seven double plays in shutout of Pittsburgh

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Cubs starter Cole Hamels didn't have his best stuff Friday night. Luckily, he had a few buddies on hand to help him out.

"The double play is a pitcher's best friend," he said with a smile.

A friend in need, indeed.

Chicago tied a major league record by turning seven double plays, including a game-ending effort by rookie third baseman David Bote on a grounder by David Freese to finish off a 1-0 win over the Pittsburgh Pirates.

The Cubs got six double plays on grounders — five with Hamels pitching — and one on a line drive. The Elias Sports Bureau said the Cubs became the third team in big league history to turn seven DPs in a nine-inning game, joining San Francisco in 1969 and the

Philadelphia Athletics in 1942. Both the Giants and A's lost those games.

"Crazy," Cubs second baseman Ben Zobrist said. "A lot of it is the pitcher doing a great job of getting groundballs and little of it is luck with (the hitters) rolling over on some pitches. It's also good quality defense and good focus throughout the game."

Pittsburgh had runners on first and second in the ninth before Jesse Chavez got Freese to ground to Bote. Having hit a game-ending grand slam last Sunday night to beat Washington 4-3, Bote again was in the right place to cap off a win. He stepped on third and threw to first to cap the win.

"We were in a good spot all the time," Chicago manager Joe Maddon said. "We made some really good plays and absolutely turned the ones we were supposed to turn. We

never gave them extra outs, so that was the pertinent part."

Hamels (8-9) pitched seven solid innings. Kyle Schwarber hit a home run in the second off Trevor Williams (10-9). Chavez got his second save as the Pirates lost their fifth in a row.

"(The infielders) were great with how they stayed with it and pulled them off, especially to end innings in a tight game when you can't afford one mistake," Hamels said. "It was outstanding to see. There are always going to be days where you are not sharp, but it's nine guys trying to win a game."

Freese also hit into the first double play in the first inning. Third baseman Javier Baez fielded his grounder, stepped on the bag and threw to first baseman Anthony Rizzo to end the inning.

In the second, Josh Bell hit into an around-the-horn DP, Baez to Zobrist to Rizzo.

Corey Dickerson ended the third inning by grounding to Zobrist, who threw to shortstop Addison Russell at second. Russell's relay to first was in time to get Dickerson.

Gregory Polanco hit into a 4-6-3 double play in the sixth. An inning later, Bell grounded into a 6-4-3, the last of five DPs turned behind Hamels.

Chicago had a disputed double play to end the eighth. With one out and Jorge De La Rosa pitching, pinch-hitter Adam Frazier lined to Zobrist, who threw to first to double up pinch-runner Kevin Newman. The Pirates challenged the call, but the play stood following a video review.

The Pirates put runners on first and second with one out in the ninth, but Chavez induced Freese to hit into the final double play.

# Cardinals stay hot, close in on wild card

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Jack Flaherty got an extra day of rest and a chance to pitch against Milwaukee, and took advantage of both.

Kolten Wong and Marcell Ozuna drove in two runs apiece, Flaherty pitched six shutout innings and the St. Louis Cardinals beat the Brewers 5-2 on Friday night.

“As the season goes on, whether you are facing a team for the first time or for the third time, there’s adjustments made on both sides,” Flaherty said.

“Whoever I’m out there I’m pitching against, I’m pitching against.”

The Cardinals won for the ninth time in 10 games and pulled within a half-game of the Brewers for the National League’s second wild-card spot.

Milwaukee has dropped three of four.

Flaherty (7-6) gave up three

hits, walked three and struck out seven. The Brewers had only two runners reach second base against the rookie, who has allowed two earned runs in his past 19 innings pitched.

Friday marked his third start against Milwaukee this year and fourth in his young career. In 18 innings this season, he’s allowed two earned runs in 18 innings and struck out 29.

“He pitched well,” Brewers manager Craig Counsell said. “He did a nice job.”

Bud Norris earned his 24th save in 28 opportunities.

Freddy Peralta (5-4) went six innings, giving up three earned runs. He allowed three hits, walked three, and struck out five. It was his third loss in his last four decisions.

Wong made a nifty play to start the eighth by charging a hopper that bounded over pitcher Jordan Hick’s head. Wong snagged the ball in his glove and made a hard sidearm

throw to get Keon Broxton at first. That turned out to be important because the Brewers scored twice that inning and cut the lead to 3-2.

“I always take pride in my defense and when I can make great plays like that for the pitcher, that’s always huge,” Wong said. “To come up clutch was a big day for me.”

The Brewers threatened a comeback in the eighth. They loaded the bases against Hicks, and Jesus Aguilar hit a two-run single to pull the score to 3-2 with one out. But Travis Shaw fouled out to left field and Jonathan Schoop’s flair to shallow center field was caught by shortstop Paul DeJong.

## Training room

**Brewers:** OF Eric Thames was removed from the game before the bottom of the third inning with a sore right knee. The right fielder collided with center fielder Lorenzo Cain

while making a catch in the bottom of the first. Manager Craig Counsell said after the game that Thames is day-to-day. ... C Manny Pina was held out of Friday’s game as a precaution following a collision with the Cubs’ Javier Baez on Wednesday.

**Cardinals:** RHP Carlos Martinez (right shoulder strain) continues his rehab assignment and was available to work out of the Double-A Springfield bullpen on Friday. The Cardinals announced earlier in the week that Martinez, typically a starter, would serve as a reliever when he returns to St. Louis. The Cardinals hope to have him back next week. IF Yairo Munoz (right wrist sprain) begins his rehabilitation assignment in Springfield on Saturday. ... RHP Michael Wacha (left oblique strain) is headed to Palm Beach, Fla., to begin a rehab assignment. He went on the DL on June 21.

## MLB roundup

# Machado hits two homers in Dodgers’ rout of Mariners

Associated Press

SEATTLE — For a welcome change, the Los Angeles Dodgers made the job easy for manager Dave Roberts after a stretch of close games and debatable moves.

Manny Machado hit two of Los Angeles’ five home runs, Walker Buehler allowed one run in six innings, and the Dodgers routed the Seattle Mariners 11-1 to open a key three-game series on Friday night.

The Dodgers won consecutive games for just the third time since July 28, using the long ball to knock around Seattle starter Wade LeBlanc and for a night take the pressure off their shaky bullpen. It was the Los Angeles bats leading the way, hitting at least five homers in a game for the sixth time this season.

“It was a nice change, but

those guys, the offense, they were due to break out,” Roberts said.

Machado’s first homer led off the fourth inning and was his third since being acquired in a trade with Baltimore. He added a two-run shot in the seventh inning to deep left-center field, where it caromed off the hand of a fan wearing an Orioles jersey with Machado’s name across the back.

**Rockies 11, Braves 5:** Ian Desmond tripled and drove in five runs, Kyle Freeland pitched six strong innings and visiting Colorado beat Atlanta.

**Phillies 4, Mets 2:** Aaron Nola struck out 11 in seven impressive innings to stay unbeaten at Citizens Bank Park, pitching Philadelphia past New York.

**Yankees 7, Blue Jays 5 (7):** Neil Walker hit a three-run homer, Giancarlo Stanton

added an impressive opposite-field blast and New York rallied for a rain-shortened victory over visiting Toronto.

**Nationals 8, Marlins 2:** Max Scherzer pitched six scoreless innings for his major league-leading 16th win, and Ryan Zimmerman and Matt Wieters homered as host Washington beat Miami.

**Red Sox 7, Rays 3:** Xander Bogaerts hit a two-run triple and added a pair of doubles, and Boston scored seven straight runs after allowing three in the first to beat visiting Tampa Bay.

**Reds 2, Giants 1 (11):** Philip Ervin led off the 11th inning with a home run over the center field fence, lifting host Cincinnati over San Francisco.

**Indians 2, Orioles 1:** Carlos Carrasco pitched seven scoreless innings and moved into a tie for the AL lead with his 15th

win, Jose Ramirez hit his 37th home run and Cleveland beat visiting Baltimore.

**Twins 5, Tigers 4:** Pinch-hitter Joe Mauer hit a go-ahead, three-run homer in the seventh inning, and host Minnesota beat Detroit.

**Rangers 6, Angels 4:** Rougned Odor drove in three runs with a single and a sacrifice fly, Joey Gallo ripped a two-run double and host Texas beat pitching-depleted Los Angeles.

**Diamondbacks 9, Padres 4:** Paul Goldschmidt hit a two-run home run, Steven Souza Jr. drove in three and Arizona beat host San Diego.

**White Sox 9, Royals 3:** Jose Abreu and Nicky Delmonico hit three-run homers in a seven-run, seventh-inning outburst, lifting Chicago past visiting Kansas City.

# Depth helps Vols rebuild offensive line

Associated Press

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — Tennessee offensive lineman Ryan Johnson grew up in a family of home builders and sees plenty of parallels in what he's doing now.

"When you're building an offensive line, you've got to do it just like you're building a house," said Johnson, a civil engineering major and SEC Academic Honor Roll selection. "You've got to build the foundation. ... You've got to pick the foundation before you start picking paint colors."

One year after its foundation crumbled, Tennessee's offensive line is trying to rebuild itself into a competitive and physical group again. Plenty of work remains to be done.

New Tennessee coach Jeremy Pruitt understands that as well as anyone. The former Alabama defensive coordinator saw his units practice against the Crimson Tide's championship-caliber offensive lines. Tennessee isn't close to that

point. "We're nowhere (near) where we need to be," Pruitt said.

Pruitt said that's partially because Tennessee has been testing players at multiple positions to increase the line's versatility. Tennessee needed that kind of resourcefulness last year, when injuries and defections devastated the Vols up front.

Tennessee had to burn the redshirt of Riley Locklear late last season just to have enough available bodies to make it through a game. The decimation of the line took a toll, as the Volunteers went 15 straight quarters without an offensive touchdown at one point.

By the end of the season, one of Tennessee's starting tackles was Devante Brooks, a redshirt freshman who hadn't played any football games since his sophomore year in high school because knee injuries had sidelined him as a junior and senior.

The addition of Alabama graduate transfer Brandon

Kennedy and the anticipated return of Chance Hall from injury give Tennessee more options. The Vols welcome the change.

"Competition's a really good thing," Johnson said. "We've been really pushing each other hard to improve together and individually."

Tennessee's chances of improving rest in part on whether it can get a full season from preseason all-Southeastern Conference selection Trey Smith, who missed spring practice with blood clots in his lungs. Pruitt said at the start of training camp that Smith should be cleared for contact around Aug. 19-20.

The Vols also need a successful comeback from Hall, who has 13 career starts but was limited to six games in 2016 due to injury and didn't play at all last season as he recovered from knee surgery.

Tennessee already is benefiting from the arrival of Kennedy, who didn't play much at Alabama but has emerged as

the likely starting center for the Vols. He joins a line that returns six players who made at least two starts last season: Drew Richmond, Marcus Tatum, Locklear, Smith, Brooks and Johnson.

"Pruitt, he's bringing a winning mindset here," Kennedy said. "Me, I just want to bring the leadership and experience I've had as a championship player to Tennessee."

Tennessee must figure out which combination works best before its Sept. 1 season opener with West Virginia at Charlotte, North Carolina. Smith's versatility plays a role in this because he can play anywhere on the line. Coaches may just stick Smith wherever the Vols have the greatest need.

The new staff has experimented with different linemen at different spots. It may not help in the short term as the line struggles to establish a rhythm, but it could prove handy in the long run.

## NFL preseason roundup

### Bills QB McCarron injures shoulder in win over Browns

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Buffalo quarterback AJ McCarron sustained a potentially serious shoulder injury, throwing the Bills' quarterback situation into total disarray, during a 19-17 win over the Cleveland Browns on Friday night.

McCarron, who signed with Buffalo as a free agent for a chance to start after four years as a backup in Cincinnati, completed just 3 of 6 passes for 12 yards during four series.

The 27-year-old didn't show any obvious signs of being hurt — he was hit hard from behind by Myles Garrett and sacked by Larry Ogunjobi — and the Bills didn't disclose his injury until the fourth quarter.

McCarron is competing with Nathan Peterman and rookie

Josh Allen for Buffalo's starting job.

Allen, the No. 7 overall pick, out-performed McCarron and Peterman rallied the Bills (2-0) with a late touchdown pass to tight end Nick O'Leary.

Rookie Nick Chubb and Carlos Hyde had touchdown runs for the Browns (1-1).

**Panthers 27, Dolphins 20:** Christian McCaffrey had 120 yards from scrimmage in the first half, including a 71-yard touchdown run and host Carolina defeated Miami.

McCaffrey had 92 yards rushing on five carries and caught four passes for 28 yards for Carolina (2-0).

**Chiefs 28, Falcons 14:** After a dismal showing in the first preseason game, Matt Ryan and host Atlanta found their offensive rhythm.

Ryan guided the Falcons right down the field for a touchdown on their first possession, hooking up with Austin Hooper on a 4-yard scoring pass, and led another impressive drive before calling it a night in a loss to the Kansas City Chiefs.

**Giants 30, Lions 17:** Davis Webb took advantage of his opportunity to play for Eli Manning, throwing a go-ahead touchdown in the second quarter to help visiting New York beat Detroit.

Webb was 14-for-20 for 140 yards with an 8-yard TD pass to Wayne Gallman Jr., who scored for a second time later in the game. Webb showed poise in the pocket and touchdown the field, connecting on a perfectly lofted 40-yard pass to Russell Shepard to set up Aldrick Rosas' 55-yard field goal

in the second quarter.

**Cardinals 20, Saints 15:** Free-agent acquisition Sam Bradford and 10th overall draft choice Josh Rosen combined to provide a promising outlook for visiting Arizona's quarterback situation.

After Bradford completed all six of his passes for 61 yards, Rosen went 10-for-16 for 107 yards, including a 13-yard touchdown to rookie Christian Kirk in a preseason victory over New Orleans.

Kirk finished with four receptions for 49 yards, and Chad Williams caught three passes for 44 yards for Arizona.

Saints quarterback Drew Brees sat out the entire game, as he also did when the Saints won their preseason opener in Jacksonville last week.