

STARS AND STRIPES®

Thursday, August 23, 2018

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Trump denies wrongdoing amid Cohen fallout

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump, incensed over a deal his longtime personal attorney Michael Cohen cut with prosecutors, says it might be better if “flipping” were illegal because people “just make up lies.”

Trump, in a television interview that aired Thursday, downplayed his relationship to Cohen, who claims the president directed a hush money scheme to buy the silence of two women who say they had affairs with him. The president argued Cohen only worked for him part-time and accused him of making up stories to reduce his legal exposure.

“I know all about flipping,” Trump told “Fox and Friends,” which taped the interview with him Wednesday at the White House. “For 30, 40 years I’ve been watching flippers. Everything’s wonderful and then they get 10 years in jail and they — they flip on whoever the next highest one is, or as high as you can go.”

Trump made the comments as his White House struggled to manage the fallout from Cohen’s plea deal and the conviction of Trump’s former campaign chairman, Paul Manafort, on financial charges. The president suggested that Cohen’s legal trouble stemmed from his other businesses, including involvement with the New York City taxi cab industry.

The back-to-back legal blows have raised speculation that Democrats would launch

impeachment proceedings if they win the House of Representatives this fall. Trump argued the move could have dire economic consequences.

“If I ever got impeached, I think the market would crash. I think everybody would be very poor,” Trump said. “I don’t know how you can impeach somebody who’s done a great job.”

“Without this thinking,” said Trump as he pointed to his head, “you would see, you would see numbers that you wouldn’t believe in reverse.”

Trump did not say if he would pardon Manafort, but expressed “great respect” for him and argued that some of the charges “every consultant, every lobbyist in Washington probably does.”

Cohen, who says he won’t seek a pardon from Trump, pleaded guilty Tuesday to eight charges, including campaign finance violations that he said he carried out in coordination with Trump. Behind closed doors, Trump expressed worry and frustration that a man intimately familiar with his political, personal and business dealings for more than a decade had turned on him.

Yet his White House signaled no clear strategy for managing the fallout. At a White House briefing, press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders insisted at least seven times that Trump had done nothing wrong and was not the subject of criminal charges. She referred substantive questions to the president’s personal counsel,

Rudy Giuliani, who was at a golf course in Scotland. Outside allies of the White House said they had received little guidance on how to respond to the events in their appearances on cable news. And it was not clear the West Wing was assembling any kind of coordinated response.

In the interview, Trump argued, incorrectly, that the hush money payouts weren’t “even a campaign violation” because he subsequently reimbursed Cohen for the payments personally instead of with campaign funds. Federal law restricts how much individuals can donate to a campaign, bars corporations from making direct contributions and requires the disclosure of transactions.

Cohen had said Tuesday he secretly used shell companies to make payments used to silence former Playboy model Karen McDougal and adult-film actress Stormy Daniels for the purpose of influencing the 2016 election.

Trump has insisted that he found out about the payments only after they were made, despite the release of a September 2016 taped conversation in which Trump and Cohen can be heard discussing a deal to pay McDougal for her story of a 2006 affair she says she had with Trump.

The White House denied the president had lied, with Sanders calling the assertion “ridiculous.” Yet she offered no explanation for Trump’s shifting accounts.

Hawaii braces as Hurricane Lane churns closer

Associated Press

HONOLULU — As emergency shelters opened, rain began to pour and cellphone alerts went out, the approaching hurricane started to feel real for Hawaii residents.

Hurricane Lane was forecast to continue its northwest turn into the islands Thursday, which would make it the most powerful storm to hit Hawaii since Hurricane Iniki in 1992.

“Everyone is starting to buckle down at this point,” said Christyl Nagao, of Kauai. “Our families are here. We have businesses and this and that. You just have to man your fort and hold on tight.”

Officials opened shelters on the Big Island and on the islands of Maui, Molokai and Lanai on Wednesday. They urged those needing the Molokai shelter to get there soon because of concerns the main highway on the south coast of the island could become impassable.

On the island of Oahu, which was put on a hurricane warning late Wednesday, shelters were scheduled to open Thursday. Officials were also working to help Hawaii’s sizable homeless population, many of whom live near beaches and streams that could flood.

Hawaii Emergency Management Agency Administrator Tom Travis said there’s

not enough shelter space statewide and advised those not in flood zones to stay home.

Officials warned the limited shelter space should be a “last resort” and that the shelters are not designed to withstand winds greater than about 40 mph.

“Whenever possible, the public should plan to shelter in place or stay with family or friends in homes outside of these hazard areas that were designed, built, or renovated to withstand anticipated conditions,” the city and county of Honolulu said in a statement.

Hurricane Lane is at Category 4, which means winds from 130 to 156 mph.

End of a long fight

Posthumous Medal of Honor caps huge effort to upgrade combat controller's award

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Stranded alone atop a snow-covered Afghan mountaintop, suffering from multiple gunshot wounds and surrounded by hundreds of al-Qaida militants, Tech. Sgt. John Chapman used his final moments of life to ensure other American troops had a chance to survive.

The Air Force combat controller — believed dead when his comrades fled the mountaintop amid heavy fire — stirred himself from unconsciousness to fight off enemy attackers for an hour before a helicopter carrying an assault force of Army Rangers approached. That's when Chapman, from the protection of a chest-high, World War II-style pillbox bunker, did the unthinkable — he charged forward, turning his back on an enemy machine gun, and fired on two fighters preparing to launch rocket-propelled grenades at the incoming Chinook.

For that action, his final in a series of heroic deeds atop Takur Gar mountain on the night of March 3 through the morning of March 4, 2002, President Donald Trump presented his family the Medal of Honor during a White House ceremony Wednesday afternoon.

Trump noted Chapman, who was 36 when he died, became the first airman to receive the nation's highest military honor for actions after the Vietnam War and he also was the first Air Force special tactics expert to ever receive the medal.

The president hailed Chapman as a "great warrior," as he recognized nearly a dozen individuals in attendance at the East Room ceremony whose lives were saved on the mountain by Chapman's actions.

"John gave his life for his fellow warriors," Trump said. "Through his extraordinary sacrifice, John helped save more than 20 American servicemembers."

The award is an upgrade of the Air Force Cross that Chapman was awarded posthumously in the months after the brutal fight now known as the Battle of Roberts Ridge during the early months of the war in Afghanistan.

For years, some Air Force officials believed Chapman deserved the Medal of Honor, suspecting he had lived and continued fighting after his comrades from the Navy's SEAL Team 6 had left the battlefield. But until a massive 30-month investigation into Chapman's actions was completed in recent years, that went unproven.

For his family, the Medal of Honor simply serves as confirmation of Chapman's selfless final moments, acts his widow, Valerie Nessel, said she was not surprised to learn. Her husband of 10 years always put his team before himself, she told reporters.

"It's just an amazing honor. It's been a long road coming," Nessel said Tuesday. "But it doesn't change anything as far as (our) pride. We've always been proud of him. This doesn't make us any more proud of him. It just validates what was done on that mountain that day."

On Wednesday, after posing for photographs with Trump and her late husband's medal presented in a wooden-framed box, Nessel, who had two daughters with Chapman — Madison and Brianna — smiled broadly, mouthing "thank you" to the president before kissing him on the cheek.

For years, at least officially, Chapman's story ended when Master Chief Petty Officer Britt Slabinski, the leader of the SEAL team with which Chapman had assaulted Takur Gar mountain, ordered his outmanned, outgunned and heavily bloodied team to withdraw, leaving Chapman and fallen SEAL Petty Officer Neil Roberts' bodies behind on the mountain for the Ranger team to try to recover later. Slabin-

ski, who received the Medal of Honor for his own actions earlier in that battle, has said in recent months that he still believes Chapman was already dead when his team was evacuated.

Slabinski, who attended the ceremony Wednesday, has long credited Chapman with saving the lives of his teammates at Takur Gar and endorsed him for the Medal of Honor.

A review of Chapman's Air Force Cross was ordered in 2016, and evidence compiled by a team of 17 Air Force special operators proved Chapman did live longer and he also continued to fight and likely intentionally gave his own life to give others a better chance to survive the fight. The review was part of a Pentagon effort to determine whether some 1,100 post-9/11 valor awards merited upgrades.

The review relied heavily on grainy, black-and-white video footage captured by an MQ-1 Predator drone overhead throughout much of the fight, an Air Force special tactics officer involved in the investigation told reporters last week at the Pentagon. The officer spoke on the condition of anonymity to provide a detailed explanation of his team's findings.

What the team found was "awe-inspiring" and left little doubt that Chapman's actions deserved the military's highest honor for battlefield valor, the officer said.

In addition to the drone footage, the Air Force combed through intelligence reports, reviewed autopsy results and terrain analysis, and interviewed witnesses involved in the battle from the air and the ground to determine as completely as possible what occurred on Takur Gar after the SEALs left, the officer said.

Chapman's Air Force Cross award was based entirely on witness testimony from four SEALs, including Slabinski, who were members of Chapman's team, the Air Force of-

ficer said.

Chapman and the SEALs were sent late March 3, 2002, to Takur Gar to establish a reconnaissance position at the top of the mountain to enable a forthcoming conventional Army operation against al-Qaida fighters as part of Operation Anaconda, according to the award citation. The team had no idea that it was being sent into a hornet's nest of enemy activity — a local headquarters of al-Qaida activity.

As the MH-47 Chinook helicopter ferrying Chapman and the SEALs to Takur Gar neared the mountain, it was hit by rocket-propelled grenade fire, knocking Roberts from the chopper into the enemy territory below. After landing and boarding a new helicopter, the team embarked on a mission to recover Roberts. Chapman led the charge, forging through thigh-high snow in the middle of the night to attack an enemy bunker, providing cover to his comrades as they rushed forward, Trump described Wednesday.

"John Chapman was the first to charge up the mountain toward the enemy. He killed two terrorists and cleared out the first bunker," the president said of Chapman's actions for which Trump approved the Medal of Honor some 16 years after the battle. "You couldn't even see. So many bullets. At over 10,000 feet, they fought the enemy at the highest battle in the history of the American military."

It was likely then that Chapman was first wounded and fell unconscious, said the Air Force officer who briefed reporters at the Pentagon. But his actions after awakening, fighting for another hour, ultimately suffering nine gunshot wounds, including the final two fatal wounds from a heavy machine gun, is why his award was upgraded, the officer said.

"And he really fought," Trump said Wednesday. "We have proof of that fight. He really fought."

Marine general nominated to head CENTCOM

The Washington Post

President Donald Trump on Wednesday nominated a veteran Marine officer to head U.S. Central Command and oversee the ongoing insurgent wars across the Middle East.

If confirmed by the Senate, Lt. Gen. Kenneth McKenzie will replace Gen. Joseph Votel, who is expected to step down as Centcom chief in coming months.

McKenzie has been one of the Pentagon's most visible senior military officials over the past year, regularly briefing reporters on operational issues along with the

department's civilian spokeswoman.

McKenzie was commissioned into the Marine Corps after graduating from The Citadel, a private military college, in 1979. In the years following the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, he led Marines in Iraq and Afghanistan. He later oversaw military planning at Centcom and served as the commander of all Marine forces in the Middle East from 2014 to 2015.

McKenzie prepares to take over Centcom at a time when the Pentagon, under the leadership of Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, a former Marine, seeks to pivot away from the insurgent wars of the past

17 years and sharpen the military's edge against major state powers including Russia and China.

While the campaign against Islamic State, which dominated Centcom's mission since 2014, is winding down, U.S. forces continue to conduct risky operations in Syria and, to a lesser extent, Iraq.

In Afghanistan, an American force of about 15,000 is tasked with helping Afghan troops reverse a long Taliban resurgence, an effort that the current commander acknowledged on Wednesday was at "a bit of an impasse." No end to that mission is in sight.

Navy airman charged in murder-for-hire plot

The Virginian-Pilot

NORFOLK, Va. — A Navy airman charged with attempting to kill his wife in a murder-for-hire plot appeared Wednesday in the military's equivalent of a preliminary hearing.

In addition to the attempted murder charge, Seaman Uriel Gerardo Olivas is accused of communicating a threat, solicitation, stealing his basic housing allowance and the use of marijuana. He is also charged with aggravated assault with a loaded firearm in a May 2 incident in which he is accused of pointing a loaded weapon at his neighbor "at or near" his Hampton home, according to a charge sheet. Olivas is assigned to the aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush, where he works as a fuel handler.

Wednesday's hearing will help determine whether there is probable cause to take the case to court martial.

Details were scant, and no witnesses testified during the

hearing, which lasted about a half hour. Olivas, who is being held in pre-trial confinement, was brought into a Naval Station Norfolk courtroom wearing shackles, which were removed for the hearing.

According to a heavily redacted charge sheet and Navy prosecutor Lt. Jennifer Schwartz, Olivas paid a \$500 down payment to an undercover officer in the attempted murder case on July 6. Schwartz said Olivas intended to pay off the remainder of the \$10,000 scheme using his wife's life insurance.

It was not clear Wednesday how the plan was intended to be carried out. Defense attorney Lt. Nicholas Inns said the couple dated 10 months and married before Olivas deployed. The Bush returned from a seven-month deployment in August 2017.

The charges of communicating a threat and solicitation stem from February.

It was not clear if the charges were related.

2 Navy vessels conducting missions in Black Sea

BY SCOTT WYLAND

Stars and Stripes

A destroyer and a transport vessel are conducting separate missions in the Black Sea, only the second time since 2014 that two Navy vessels have operated simultaneously in this tense region for more than just exercises.

The USNS Carson City is the first expeditionary fast-transport vessel ever to enter the Black Sea. It is conducting support operations while the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Carney patrols the waters. Both entered the Black Sea last week, officials said.

The Navy has been increasing its presence in the Black Sea in the past two years as Russia deploys more naval forces — particularly submarines — in the region.

In February, the USS Ross and USS Carney were the first two Navy ships to patrol the Black Sea in tandem since the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics,

just before Russia's seizure of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula.

Moscow views any Navy ship entering the Black Sea as an intrusion in its territory, said Jim Holmes, a professor of strategy at the Naval War College.

They would be all the more upset by two ships operating there, even if one is a transport vessel.

"They see it as a Russian lake and would prefer for outsiders to remain out," Holmes said.

Russia isn't as proprietary about the Black Sea as China is about the South China Sea, largely because Turkey controls the only access between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, Holmes said, but it still sees any NATO presence as provocative.

"Carney's arrival in the Black Sea demonstrates our continued commitment to security and stability in the region," Cmdr. Tyson Young, the Carney's commanding officer, said in a statement.

Professor critical of Naval Academy out

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — A tenured professor at the U.S. Naval Academy often critical of the school no longer works there.

School spokesman Cmdr. David McKinney confirmed

Bruce Fleming's departure to The Baltimore Sun, but declined to offer details. Fleming's lawyer, Jason Ehrenberg, said he plans to appeal to the Merit System Protection Board. Fleming's website says he's been a civilian English professor there since 1987.

In 2005, the academy's superintendent privately rebuked Fleming for a Navy trade magazine essay criticizing the admissions process. He was investigated in 2013 for complaints about his criticism of the academy's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

program.

In June, he wrote a Sun op-ed criticizing Vice President Mike Pence and other graduation speakers for portraying Annapolis graduates "as superior to those people they are supposed to defend."

From The Associated Press

Hunter still favored in Calif. race

Associated Press

ALPINE, Calif. — The indictment of U.S. Rep. Duncan Hunter, R-Calif., and his wife that alleges they illegally converted his campaign account into a household checkbook reorders his re-election contest, giving Democrats a suddenly stronger hand in a district that for decades has embraced Republican candidates.

But even with charges shadowing him, it will be an upset if Hunter loses.

Two months ago Hunter, a former Marine who saw combat in Iraq and Afghanistan, coasted through the June primary despite the ongoing FBI investigation that produced the 60-count indictment. His 30-point, first-place finish made him a strong favorite to win a sixth term in November.

The 50th Congressional District east of San Diego is the most Republican in Southern California. The party holds a nearly 15-point registration edge over Democrats, and President Donald Trump won the district by the same margin while losing statewide by more

than 4 million votes in 2016.

The Hunter name is something of a political dynasty in the area — his father, Duncan Hunter Sr., an Army Ranger who earned the Bronze Star during the Vietnam War, was elected to the seat in 1980 and held it until his son won in 2008. Hunter's Democratic opponent, Ammar Campa-Najjar, 29, has never held elective office. He won just over 17 percent of the votes in June but that was good enough for second place in the state's primary in which the top-two vote-getters advance to the general election regardless of party.

A day after Hunter and his wife were charged with looting his campaign funds to finance family vacations, boozy restaurant binges and shopping sprees, voters in Hunter's rural hometown of Alpine were sharply divided on what it all means. Some are shocked, some outraged, and some are rising to defend Hunter and his claim of being pursued by politically motivated prosecutors eager to see one of Trump's early supporters in Congress fall.

Sandy Hintz, 75, said she has

supported Hunter in the past but needs more information before making up her mind about him in November. "I was really shocked, wow. How could that happen?" she asked. "He had seemed like a good guy."

Chris Wilmot, 47, a Republican and longtime Hunter supporter, said he was rethinking the race. To Wilmot, Hunter "has talked like a politician," and the certified public accountant has been put off by "the way he dresses, and his ego."

"I wonder what else they will get on him," Wilmot said outside a coffee shop near the town's business strip, where pickup trucks rolled by feed stores, diners and gun shops.

Austin Bodger, 21, who works in a feed store, said he intends to vote for Campa-Najjar but acknowledged the candidate faces an uphill fight.

In the rural district with a large military presence "there are a lot of conservative Republicans who vote only Republican," Bodger said. "A lot of people don't think the charges are real. They think they are trumped up to take him down."

Dog pot poisonings up in Ore.

The (Bend, Ore.) Bulletin

BEND, Ore. — The legalization of recreational marijuana in Oregon brought a significant increase in pot poisoning in animals, a more serious problem than it sounds.

Dr. Adam Stone, a veterinarian at Bend Veterinary Specialty & Emergency Center, was working at a Portland animal hospital when recreational marijuana retail sales became legal.

"We saw more cases of marijuana toxicity in the first couple months of 2016 than we had in the previous year," Stone, 31, said. "There was a pretty severe increase once it was legalized recreationally."

"We see anywhere from one to three in a 12-hour shift that present with signs of toxicity that could be attributed to marijuana," Stone said of the Emergency Clinic in Bend, where he now works. "We usually see it solely in dogs. There's a very classic subset of signs that we see in dogs. Cats (are) not nearly as common, although sometimes it's suspected."

Pet Poison Helpline, a 24-hour animal poison control service, reported a 448 percent increase in marijuana cases over the past six years.

Dr. Curt Nitschelm, a vet at the Redmond Veterinary Clinic, said "it's definitely more frequent with the recent laws. It's usually dogs, and it's usually the edible products. From what I understand they have a higher concentration of marijuana, or the active ingredient."

"Most of the cases that we see, it's been the higher concentrated products like butter, and edibles, brownies, those types of things," Nitschelm said.

But it's not just baked goods and oils that can harm hounds. Dogs can get high from raw marijuana leaves and stems. While THC has to be smoked or dissolved in fat in order for human bodies to absorb it and feel its effects, dogs can simply eat part of a bud and become intoxicated.

Murder charge shocks man's employer

Associated Press

BROOKLYN, Iowa — For years, the young man from Mexico presented himself as a legal U.S. resident and reliable worker at a family dairy farm in small-town Iowa, his employer said.

But this week, the image of Cristhian Bahena Rivera transformed in a matter of hours. Now he's a man accused of illegally living and working in the U.S. on fraudulent documents, of being a predator who kidnapped and killed a beloved young woman, and to some, the monstrous face of a lax immigration system.

Rivera made his initial court appearance Wednesday in a rural Iowa courthouse on a first-degree murder charge in the death of 20-year-old college student Mollie Tibbetts. He sat stone-faced and handcuffed in a

striped jail jumpsuit as he said through an interpreter that he understood he faced life in prison if convicted. He was ordered jailed on a \$5 million cash-only bond after a prosecutor said he was a danger to the community who was accused of a "heinous crime."

The turn of events stunned the prominent farm family that employed him for the last four years. They said the 24-year-old worked under a different name and was a good employee who helped take care of their cows and got along with co-workers.

Even after Tibbetts disappeared July 18 while on an evening run in the small central Iowa town of Brooklyn, Rivera kept coming to work and "nobody saw a difference" in his demeanor, said Dane Lang, the manager of Yarrabee Farms. His colleagues were stunned Tuesday to learn that he was

not only the suspect in Tibbetts' death, but that he had a different real name than what he went by on the farm, Lang said.

"Our employee is not who he said he was," Lang said at a news conference at the farm. "This was shocking to us."

When Rivera was hired in 2014, he presented an out-of-state government-issued photo identification and a matching Social Security card, Lang said. That information was run through the Social Security Administration's employment-verification system and checked out, he said.

Rivera's defense attorney, Allan Richards, acknowledged Wednesday that his client received his paycheck under a different name and that he was uncertain of his immigration status. He said he was prepared to argue that his client was in the country legally.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Rare Unicorn Root plant discovered

ME BOWDOIN — A showy plant thought to have been long gone from Maine was found this summer.

Officials said the Unicorn Root was found on private land in Bowdoin after having last been seen in the state 130 years ago.

Unicorn Root is a tall flowering stalk with white flowers that appear in June through August. It's also known as White Colicroot or Colicroot.

The last known specimen in Maine was collected near Lewiston in 1887.

This summer, about 300 flowering stems were found in Bowdoin.

2 people, dog rescued from sinking pickup

CA LONG BEACH — By-standers and lifeguards jumped into the water to save two people and a dog from a sinking pickup after it crashed through a metal railing at a Southern California marina.

Video shared by a witness shows people scrambling to pull the dog, the woman and then the man from the pickup as it rapidly fills with water.

Jeff Jones, who took the video and ran to the lifeguard station to get help, told KCBS-TV the truck barreled through the railing at the parking lot at Alamos Bay Marina in Long Beach.

Officials seek return of tortoise to owners

CT COVENTRY — The Connecticut Environmental Conservation Police said they're hoping to return a wandering tortoise to its rightful owners after the reptile was discovered at a home in Coventry.

The Connecticut Post report-

ed that the conservation police responded after the African Spurred Tortoise was found meandering across a yard.

The African Spurred Tortoise is the largest mainland tortoise, reaching up to 30 inches in length and more than 100 pounds in weight, according to the San Diego Zoo website.

Teen is town's first female football player

NM HAGERMAN — Miracle Rey is about to make history in her southeastern New Mexico town.

She will be the first female football player to don pads at Hagerman High School when the team faces off against the Capitan Tigers on Friday to start the season, the Roswell Daily Record reported.

Rey's mother gave her permission to play football in the eighth grade, she said. Her father was initially against her playing football, but he came around after watching her play.

Her coach, Guy Rivers, said he believes that with hard work, Rey will be able to play and become a good lineman in time.

Rescued bobcat on the road to recovery

MO BLACK JACK — A baby bobcat found in eastern Missouri and being nursed back to health might be mistaken for an ornery feral cat — until you hear her roar.

The animal was found in July outside the YMCA in Potosi, scrawny and with her mother nowhere around. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported that the Missouri Department of Conservation trapped her and took her to a St. Louis County facility run by the Bi-State Wildlife Hotline of Missouri and Illinois.

Though she weighs just 7

pounds and is 3 months old, she makes noises that group founder Angel Wintrode compares to those of a "full-grown lion."

Officials place piano on downtown plaza

NC RALEIGH — Raleigh officials are offering people passing by a downtown plaza an opportunity to stop and enjoy some music.

The city recently placed a piano in a corner of City Plaza. Officials told the News & Observer it will stay there for a few months, in hopes people will stop for a moment, play or listen and have fun.

Downtown coordinator Jen Baker said the piano offers a way for people to interact and just enjoy downtown.

Fire department to adopt dog it rescued

NJ PATERSON — A New Jersey fire department plans to adopt the dog it rescued from the base of a waterfall.

The Record reported Paterson Fire Capt. Scott Parkin rappelled from a bridge with help from his crew to rescue the dog from the bottom of Great Falls on Sunday. Authorities believe the young pit bull was thrown off a ledge and had been stranded for days.

The pup, which has been named Paterson, will likely join Fire Co. 2 after it finishes treatment at Ramapo-Bergen Animal Refuge.

Boston Tea Party cartoon to be sold

MA BOSTON — A political cartoon published shortly after the Boston Tea Party is hitting the auction block.

Heritage Auctions said the rare print celebrating the Dec.

16, 1773, act of rebellion is expected to fetch \$24,000 in the auction Saturday. It's called "Liberty Triumphant or the Downfall of Oppression."

Heritage Auctions said the print was published sometime between late December 1773 and April 1774.

The print is attributed to Philadelphia and New York engraver Henry Dawkins, who was later arrested and accused of counterfeiting currency.

Lack of interest ends varsity football

VA MANASSAS — Three Virginia high schools canceled varsity football programs, citing a lack of interest.

Media outlets reported that Charles City is canceling its entire program and other schools are canceling varsity schedules.

Park View High School in Sterling canceled its varsity schedule after only 18 players reported for tryouts. Manassas Park High School Principal Pamela Kalso told parents that they'll play a junior varsity schedule after practices routinely drew only 15 players.

Police: Pony was 'sexually molested'

DE CAMDEN — Police in Delaware are searching for the person responsible for sexually assaulting a mare at a barn.

The News Journal cited a Delaware State Police news release that says an unknown person or multiple people entered a barn on a residential property and assaulted the pony.

She suffered significant trauma, which veterinarian Dr. Amy Franklin said was likely from an object, but is expected to recover.

From wire reports

On a mission to provide objective reporting to America's military, wherever they serve.
Read us online at www.stripes.com.

STARS AND STRIPES®

Ohio State suspends Meyer 3 games

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Ohio State suspended coach Urban Meyer for three games Wednesday night for mishandling repeated professional and behavioral problems of an assistant coach, with investigators finding Meyer protected his protege for years through domestic violence allegations, a drug problem and poor job performance.

The superstar coach's treatment of his now-fired assistant was also clouded by his abiding devotion to the legacy of former Ohio State coach Earle Bruce, the grandfather of former wide receivers coach Zach Smith and an early coaching mentor for Meyer.

"I gave Zach Smith the benefit of the doubt," Meyer said.

The investigation turned up "a pattern of troubling behavior by Zach Smith: promiscuous and embarrassing sexual behavior, drug abuse, truancy, dishonesty, financial irresponsibility, a possible NCAA violation, and a lengthy police investigation into allegations of criminal domestic violence

and cybercrimes," according to summary investigative findings released by the university on Wednesday night.

Meyer knew about at least some of the issues.

The report and punishment culminated a two-week investigation of how Meyer reacted to allegations that Smith abused his ex-wife, Courtney Smith. Zach Smith was fired last month after she asked a judge for a protective order.

Courtney Smith alleged her husband shoved her against a wall and put his hands around her neck in 2015. Zach Smith has never been criminally charged with domestic violence. The university put Meyer on paid leave and began investigating after Courtney Smith spoke out publicly, sharing text messages and photos she traded in 2015 with Meyer's wife, Shelley Meyer. Shelley Meyer is a registered nurse and instructor at Ohio State.

"I followed my heart and not my head," Meyer said, quickly reading a written statement during a news conference after his punishment was announced. "I should have demanded more

from him and recognized red flags."

Investigators said Meyer and athletic director Gene Smith mismanaged Zach Smith's misconduct and kept him even though he was not an appropriate role model for OSU student-athletes. The review found neither Meyer nor Gene Smith condoned or covered up alleged abuse, but raised red flags of their own:

■ Meyer, the athletic director and others throughout Ohio State thought it wasn't their place to do anything about allegations against Zach Smith unless law enforcement took more action like making an arrest or filing charges. Investigators called that a widespread misunderstanding of their reporting obligations.

■ Meyer responded to Courtney Smith coming forward to a reporter by asking one of his staffers about changing the settings on his phone to delete text messages more than a year old. Investigators didn't find older messages on Meyer's phone but couldn't determine whether he deleted them before or after the media report.

■ Meyer and his wife, Shelley, doubted the veracity of Courtney Smith's allegations of violence and abuse. Urban Meyer called the Smith situation a "he said, she said" situation last month in a text with a former player. He also insisted to investigators he met with Courtney Smith after Zach Smith's 2009 arrest and that she recanted her original story to authorities. Courtney Smith told investigators she never met with Meyer or recanted any allegations.

■ In June 2016 at Meyer's urging, Zach Smith was admitted to a drug treatment facility for addiction to an unspecified stimulant prescription drug, the report said, adding that Gene Smith was never told about it.

■ Zach Smith ran up a big strip club bill in 2014 with a high school coach in Florida and spent \$600 in personal funds. Meyer reprimanded Zach Smith but didn't report the issue to compliance officers or the athletic director. Investigators said they told the NCAA about the incident.

Oklahoma names Murray starting QB for opener

Associated Press

NORMAN, Okla. — Kyler Murray has been picked to fill Heisman winner Baker Mayfield's shoes as Oklahoma's starting quarterback.

The seventh-ranked Sooners said Wednesday that Murray — who is putting a baseball career on hold for now — will start the season opener on Sept. 1 against Florida Atlantic.

"This is a moment, since I started playing, I've been working for this," Murray said. "For me to be named the starting quarterback is obviously a huge honor. I know the standard of the position at this university, so it's my job to hold it."

The Oakland Athletics took Murray with the ninth pick in the MLB draft this summer.

Murray signed for nearly \$5 million, yet the sides agreed that he could return to school and play football this season.

Murray was Mayfield's backup last season and completed 18 of 21 passes for 359 yards and three touchdowns without an interception. He also ran 14 times for 142 yards, including a 66-yard dash on the first play against West Virginia.

Austin Kendall was the backup in 2016 before redshirting last year. Murray and Kendall battled throughout the spring for the position, and no clear-cut leader was established until fall camp.

"It was very close," Oklahoma coach Lincoln Riley said. "It stayed that way. It was one of the closest that I've been

involved with. They both did a tremendous job. At the end of the day, only one can do it."

Riley said Kendall took the news hard, but handled it in a mature way.

"He's certainly disappointed," Riley said. "He wants to play. For a guy like him, you can't sit there and say, 'What I've did here over the past several months didn't work.' What he did over the last several months did work. He's a much, much improved player. It's going to help him a lot going forward."

Riley said Kendall's improvement helped Murray.

"They made each other better," Riley said. "They fed off of each other. When one would raise their game, the other

would answer back. They've both played at a high level. It's made them better individually and it's made this team better."

Riley said Murray, best known for his blazing speed, throws the ball well, too. Because of that versatility, Riley expects similar production to last year, when the Sooners led the nation in total offense.

Murray hasn't played regularly since his freshman year at Texas A&M in 2015, so he's anxious to get on the field.

"I think I've been playing the best football of my life these past couple months, as of late, growing from freshman year at A&M until now," he said. "Being with coach Riley has obviously helped me a lot. Sitting behind Baker helped me a lot. And now it's time to go."

Bills QB Allen ready to start first game

Associated Press

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — Excited by the opportunity of securing the Buffalo Bills' starting job, rookie quarterback Josh Allen had no intention of keeping anyone waiting Wednesday.

That included members of the media seeking to hear Allen's first public reaction two days after the Bills announced he would start in Buffalo's preseason game against Cincinnati on Sunday.

Upon completing extra work after practice, the quarterback skipped through the fieldhouse doors, then jogged toward a large group of reporters gathered outside the locker room. Apologizing for being late, the 22-year-old was still trying to catch his breath while attempting to put this week's developments into perspective.

"It's crazy to think about, definitely, but I'm not going out there to try to prove why I'm the starter or whatever the case may be," Allen said. "This is an opportunity for me, and I'm not going to take it lightly. But at the same time, I'm here for whatever the team needs, and I'm just going to try to do my job."

Allen did his best to de-emphasize the significance his

first preseason start represents by calling it "just another game."

If only it were so simple for a player the Bills traded up five spots to select with the seventh pick — the highest draft position the franchise has used to choose a quarterback.

In the four months since, the Wyoming product has gone from a raw prospect requiring time to develop behind either free-agent addition AJ McCarron or returning backup Nathan Peterman, to having a realistic shot at being the team's season-opening starter.

Allen's opportunity comes after showing gradual signs of improvement through the first weeks of training camp, which carried over into Buffalo's first two preseason games.

In a preseason-opening loss to Carolina on Aug. 9, he showed off his strong arm, but was erratic by finishing 9-for-19 for 116 yards and a touchdown while overseeing the third-string offense.

On Friday, Allen went 9-for-13 for 60 yards and a touchdown in leading the second-stringers on scoring drives — including two field goals — on each of his three series during a 19-17 win at Cleveland.

Rather than not revealing the starter until an hour be-

fore kickoff, as coach Sean McDermott did the two previous weeks, the Bills announced Allen would start against the Bengals in a message posted on their Twitter account Monday evening.

McDermott said the difference in his approach was to provide Allen a chance to experience what a normal NFL week during the regular season would resemble.

"It's just him dipping his toes in the water, if you will, of what that looks like on and off the field," he said. "How he handles his teammates. How he handles the meetings. How he handles the interviews. That's all part of what comes with that starting quarterback position."

McDermott wouldn't divulge how long Allen might play Sunday, or commit to whether he has a chance of securing the starting job with a good outing.

Peterman will serve as the backup, while McCarron's status is uncertain after he hurt his right throwing shoulder against Cleveland. McCarron returned to practice on a limited basis Wednesday after missing the previous two sessions.

All eyes will be on the 6-foot-5, 240-pound Allen, who is being asked to fill a position that's remained unsettled since Hall of Famer Jim Kelly retired fol-

lowing the 1996 season. Allen's two touchdown passes showed glimpses of his potential.

Against Carolina, he zipped the ball between two defenders in hitting Ray-Ray McCloud III for a 14-yard touchdown. Against Cleveland, Allen avoided the pass rush, stepped up in the pocket and flicked his wrist to hit Rod Streater in the back of the end zone for a 2-yard score.

"You definitely can see the poise, definitely see the elusiveness," Streater said of Allen. "All those things are going to come to him. It has come to him now. But he's going to grow even more in the future. It's exciting to see him grow."

One step at a time, Allen said.

"I was happy with the performance, but I'm not content," he said, referring to the game Friday. "Just trying to learn from every little mistake on the field, and even learn from every success, too."

Question marks remain regarding a player who has had limited experience with Bills starters and has yet to face an opposing team's starting defense. Asked how much the pace of the game has slowed down, Allen provided a candid response, saying: "I guess we'll find out come Sunday."

Neurological disorder sidelines Cowboys C Frederick

Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — Dallas Cowboys center Travis Frederick said Wednesday he has been diagnosed with a rare neurological disorder that causes weakness in various parts of the body, and the four-time Pro Bowl player isn't sure on a timetable for a return.

Frederick said he has received two treatments for Guillain-Barre Syndrome over the past 48 hours and that the treatments will continue for several days.

"I am very optimistic about my condition and the immedi-

ate future, as I have been told that the illness was detected at a fairly early stage," Frederick said. "My doctors have told me that it is not possible to determine a timetable for a return to the field right now, but I am hopeful that I will be able to play as soon as possible."

The 27-year-old Frederick has started all 83 games, including three playoff games, since the Cowboys drafted him late in the first round in 2013. That streak is likely in jeopardy with the opener 2½ weeks away, Sept. 9 at Carolina.

According to the National Institute for Neurological Dis-

orders and Stroke, Guillain-Barre causes the body to attack a network of nerves around the brain and spinal cord. Most people recover from even the most severe cases of the autoimmune disease, but some will continue to have some degree of weakness, according to the institute.

Frederick saw a specialist in California while the Cowboys were still in training camp there because of feelings he said were similar to stingers in his neck and shoulders. When he returned to camp, he told reporters he checked out OK. He was on the sideline for the

preseason game against Cincinnati on Saturday.

Coach Jason Garrett said Tuesday tests for Frederick continued with doctors in the Dallas area. Garrett declined to be more specific.

Frederick was the second of three first-round picks in a span of four years, a group that anchors what is considered one of the NFL's best offensive lines. Left tackle Tyron Smith, the 2011 choice, has battled back issues in recent years. Frederick, Smith and 2014 pick Martin have all been named to the Pro Bowl each of the past four seasons.

Atlanta completes sweep of Pittsburgh

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Jonny Venters thought he had given up a tying home run with two outs in the bottom of the ninth inning.

“It sounded loud,” the Atlanta Braves reliever said. “I thought it was gone.”

Gregory Polanco’s drive to right field hit off the top of the 21-foot wall, however, and he was held to a double.

Venters then got Francisco Cervelli to hit a game-ending comebacker, preserving Atlanta’s 2-1 victory over the Pittsburgh Pirates on Wednesday night.

Ronald Acuna Jr. hit another leadoff home run and Freddie Freeman had a tiebreaking sacrifice fly in the eighth inning to lift Julio Teheran and the Braves to a three-game

sweep.

Polanco was disappointed his drive did not clear the high wall.

“It’s unbelievable, man,” he said. “I hit the ball really hard. It’s PNC (Park), man. Every other park, that’s a homer.”

Acuna hit the fifth pitch out to left-center off Trevor Williams. It was the rookie’s 20th homer and sixth leading off the first inning, including four in the last two weeks.

“He’s so exciting,” Teheran said. “You expect him to hit a long ball every time he comes up.”

The NL East leaders went ahead 2-1 in the eighth when Freeman, who leads the league in hitting, sent a fly ball to deep left field off Edgar Santana. That came after Atlanta loaded the bases against Kyle Crick (2-

2), who did not retire any of the three batters he faced.

“You’d love to score five or six runs every night, but that’s not always going to happen,” Freeman said. “These are the types of games you have to win in a pennant race. It’s a really good win for us.”

Atlanta moved three games ahead of the second-place Phillies, who lost 8-7 at Washington.

Freeman’s sac fly made a winner of Teheran (9-7), who allowed one run and two hits in seven innings while striking out five and walking one. Teheran is 2-0 with a 2.93 ERA in his last five starts.

Brad Brach struck out pinch-hitter David Freese with a runner on third to end the eighth. Venters completed the three-hitter and earned his second

save.

Atlanta also mustered only three hits but won for the 17th time in 25 games.

It was seven years to the day since Venters converted his last save for the Braves on Aug. 22, 2011, at the Chicago Cubs. The left-hander missed five major league seasons from 2013-17 while recovering from three Tommy John operations. He returned this year with the Tampa Bay Rays.

The Braves acquired Venters in a July trade and he got his first opportunity to fill in for injured closer A.J. Minter (lower back tightness) on Wednesday.

The Pirates got their run in the fifth when Colin Moran broke up Teheran’s no-hit bid with a two-out RBI single. Pittsburgh’s only other hit was a two-out single by Cervelli.

MLB roundup

Dodgers’ Jansen blows another save in loss to Cards

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Paul DeJong hit a go-ahead, two-run homer off Kenley Jansen in the ninth inning, lifting the St. Louis Cardinals to a 3-1 victory and a three-game sweep of the Los Angeles Dodgers on Wednesday night.

The Cardinals’ eighth straight road win helped them improve to 17-4 this month, the most wins in the majors. They’ve homered in 15 straight games, one off the current season mark of 16 in a row by Philadelphia.

St. Louis remained 2½ games behind the NL Central-leading Cubs.

For Jansen, it was a familiar ending.

The All-Star closer, who became a father for the third time earlier in the day, gave up consecutive homers to Jedd Gyorko and Matt Carpenter in the series opener Monday. That was Jansen’s first game back after missing time because of

an irregular heartbeat.

This time, Gyorko singled off Jansen (0-5) and DeJong followed with a drive to left-center to give the Cardinals their first lead.

Nationals 8, Phillies 7: Ryan Zimmerman hit a two-run home run with two outs in the bottom of the ninth inning to lift host Washington over Philadelphia.

Red Sox 10, Indians 4: Xander Bogaerts hit two solo homers, Andrew Benintendi had a three-run double to cap a big fourth inning and host Boston beat Cleveland to halt a three-game losing streak.

Diamondbacks 5, Angels 1: Paul Goldschmidt hit a two-run homer to set the all-time mark at Chase Field, Clay Buchholz (7-2) pitched seven scoreless innings and host Arizona beat Los Angeles.

Rockies 6, Padres 2: Ian Desmond laced a two-run triple in the sixth inning and Jon Gray (10-7) pitched effectively into the seventh in leading host

Colorado over San Diego.

Brewers 4, Reds 0: Rookie Freddy Peralta (6-4) tossed seven scoreless innings and drove in a run with his first career hit, combining with two relievers on a five-hitter to lead host Milwaukee past Cincinnati.

Cubs 8, Tigers 2: Jon Lester (14-5) pitched into the sixth inning and visiting Chicago homered three times in a win over Detroit.

Marlins 9, Yankees 3: Hours after All-Star closer Aroldis Chapman went on the disabled list with left knee tendinitis, Lance Lynn gave up five runs in the sixth inning and visiting New York lost to last-place Miami.

Astros 10, Mariners 7: Martin Maldonado and Tyler White each homered and had three hits, helping visiting Houston beat Seattle.

Rangers 4, Athletics 2: Mike Minor (10-6) pitched six scoreless innings of one-hit ball

to win his fourth straight, Joey Gallo hit his 33rd home run and visiting Texas beat Oakland.

Mets 5, Giants 3: Todd Frazier homered and hit an RBI double, Noah Syndergaard (9-3) pitched six effective innings and host New York beat San Francisco.

Rays 6, Royals 3: Brandon Lowe and Mallex Smith drove in two runs each, and host Tampa Bay beat Kansas City to move five games over .500 for the first time this season.

Blue Jays 6, Orioles 0: Kendrys Morales homered for the fourth consecutive game, Thomas Pannone (1-0) and two relievers combined on a two-hitter and host Toronto finished its home slate against Baltimore with a 10-0 record.

White Sox 7, Twins 3: Adam Engel broke a tie with a two-run homer in a five-run fifth, Carlos Rodon (5-3) continued his torrid stretch with six strong innings and host Chicago beat Minnesota.