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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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1 Marine dead, 5 missing after collision

BY SETH ROBSON
AND HANA KUSUMOTO

Stars and Stripes

A Marine Corps fighter jet and a tanker plane conducting a midair refueling mission collided Thursday off the coast of Japan, leaving one Marine dead and five missing, U.S. and Japanese officials said.

Another Marine who was rescued from the crash was reported to be in fair condition, officials said.

The refueling operation, which took place at about 2 a.m., was part of regularly scheduled training that involved an F/A-18 Hornet and a KC-130 Hercules aerial tanker that took off from Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, according to a statement from the Marines.

After the aircraft collided, they crashed into the Pacific Ocean about 200 miles south of Muroto Cape on Shikoku, the smallest of Japan's main islands, according to Japan's Defense Ministry. Five Marines were aboard the Hercules and two were on the Hornet.

The first rescued crewmember, who reportedly came from the Hornet, was picked up by a Japan Self-Defense Force helicopter at 5:43 a.m., the ministry said.

The Marine was being evaluated at MCAS Iwakuni, according to a Marine Corps statement issued just before 9 a.m. Thursday.

At 12:13 p.m., the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force ship JS Setoyuki found and rescued a second Marine, a spokesman

with the Defense Ministry's Joint Staff said. But the Marine, who was aboard the F/A-18 Hornet, has died, according to U.S. officials.

"The search and rescue operations continue for the remaining five U.S. Marines who were aboard the KC-130 Hercules and F/A-18 Hornet involved in a mishap," according to a statement posted on a Marines Facebook page.

A Navy P-8A Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft from U.S. 7th Fleet flew out of Kadena Air Force Base to help with the search and rescue efforts, according to the Marines.

"All available resources are being brought to bear," Lt. Gen. Jerry Martinez, commander of U.S. Forces Japan, said in a tweet by USFJ on Thursday.

"Thank you #JSDF for your rapid response during this time of need. Our thoughts & prayers are with everyone involved."

Japanese Defense Minister Takeshi Iwaya said Thursday that Japan was putting its "best effort into the search and rescue." Aircraft from the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and the Japan Air Self-Defense Force immediately responded to the emergency.

President Donald Trump tweeted about the incident Thursday afternoon: "My thoughts and prayers are with the @USMC crew members who were involved in a mid-air collision off the coast of Japan. Thank you to @USForcesJapan for their immediate response and rescue efforts. Whatever you need, we are here for you."

In Bahrain, vice chief reassures a grieving 5th Fleet

BY JOSHUA KARSTEN

Stars and Stripes

MANAMA, Bahrain — The Navy's second-in-command, dispatched here on a mission to console sailors and reassure allies after the sudden death of the service's top officer in the region, said Thursday that troops are "on watch" even as they mourn.

The arrival of Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Bill Moran, whose visit comes as the USS John C. Stennis Carrier Strike Group heads toward the Middle East, came less than a week after 5th Fleet commander Vice Adm. Scott Stearney was found dead in his home.

Moran, who met with command leadership and enlisted troops over two days, also met with Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa to deliver a

message that the mission hasn't changed.

"When you're on watch and something happens to your ship or shipmate, people step up, they step in and the mission goes on," Moran told Stars and Stripes. "I feel very confident that they're ready for anything that comes their way."

Despite CBS News and USNI News reports that Stearney's death was an apparent suicide, Moran said that he could not confirm the cause of death until an investigation is complete.

Vice Adm. Jim Malloy, who is in Bahrain as a senior liaison officer supporting U.S. Naval Forces Central Command and 5th Fleet, will soon be nominated to lead the commands, service officials said. Malloy would await confirmation from Congress.

Stearney's death shocked the military community in Bah-

rain, who gathered on base Wednesday for a private memorial service.

The death also stunned the Navy's leadership.

"I got a phone call and a text from the CNO, and he asked me to call him immediately and I did. I got word from him," Moran said. "Like you would expect, I was crushed."

While Moran wouldn't comment on the circumstances surrounding Stearney's death, he did indicate concern about the workloads of Navy leaders.

In October, Moran issued a mandate that all flag officers take more time off to care for their physical and mental health, including calling for leaders to take 10 consecutive days off per year. It's expected to be a model for lower-ranking sailors.

Senators last year during hearings zeroed in on long work

weeks — some up to 100 hours — and lack of sleep for sailors as factors in the separate collisions involving the destroyers USS John S. McCain and USS Fitzgerald, which left a combined 17 sailors dead.

During his visit, Moran spoke during a promotion ceremony and opened the floor to address sailors' concerns. Operations, less predictable scheduling of carrier group deployments and capabilities in the region were hot topics, but the biggest and most immediate concern was for Stearney's family.

"We talked about how to deal with that, and that everybody grieves in their own way (and) that they needed to pull together as a team, to watch out for each other right now at this time," Moran said. "I was heartened by just how much I saw that [is] already going on."

N. Korea reportedly expands missile base

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea has significantly expanded a key long-range missile base near the Chinese border, according to reports citing new satellite images that provide more evidence the communist state is persisting with its nuclear weapons program despite U.S.-led diplomatic efforts to stop it.

The findings come as nuclear talks between Pyongyang and Washington have stalled months after leader Kim Jong Un met with President Donald Trump in Singapore and promised to work toward the “complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.”

The commercial imagery,

which was analyzed by researchers at the California-based Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, shows construction taking place at the existing missile base called Yeongjeodong and a second site known as Hoejung-ri, about 7 miles away, CNN and NPR reported Wednesday.

The location of the base in the remote, mountainous area of Yeongjeodong has long been known to U.S. intelligence agencies, but the apparent new facility had not been previously publicly identified, according to the report, which added that it’s unclear whether the new base is separate or an extension of the existing facility.

“This missile base could be a future deployment site for mis-

siles that could strike the United States,” Catherine Dill, a senior research associate with the institute, told CNN.

The bases are believed to be shelters for mobile missile launchers, not production facilities, according to NPR.

South Korea’s military declined to comment on the report but said during a press conference Thursday that Yeongjeodong is one of the major areas that is under surveillance by Seoul and Washington.

There was no immediate response to the report from the U.S. administration, which has dismissed similar findings in the past.

North Korea also announced it had tested an unspecified “newly developed ultramodern weapon” last month.

Trump, meanwhile, has said he hopes to hold a second summit with Kim early next year.

National security adviser John Bolton said the president thinks another meeting would help move the process forward.

“They have not lived up to the commitments so far. That’s why I think the president thinks another summit is likely to be productive,” Bolton said Tuesday during a forum.

“If the North Koreans follow through on the commitments they made in Singapore, President Trump will deserve the Nobel Peace Prize,” Bolton added.

“He opened the door for them; now they have to walk through it.”

Corroded propeller caused 2017 Mississippi plane crash

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A corroded propeller blade that broke loose mid-flight and jump-started a string of events caused the horrific crash of a Marine Corps KC-130T into Mississippi farmland in July 2017, killing all 16 servicemembers aboard the doomed cargo plane, investigators determined.

The crash of the plane during a cross-country flight from Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point in North Carolina to Naval Air Facility El Centro in southern California could have been prevented had civilian Air Force technicians discovered the corrosion during the aircraft’s last major propeller inspection in 2011, the investigators wrote in a 73-page report. Their findings were made public Wednesday.

The technicians with the Air Force-run Warner Robins Air Logistics Compound on Robins Air Force Base in Geor-

gia, which is responsible for overhauling C-130 propellers for the Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps, “should have detected and removed” the corrosion, investigators wrote.

They blamed “negligent practices, poor procedural compliance, lack of adherence to publications and an ineffective” quality control program at the compound. They also cited insufficient oversight by the Navy.

Additionally, technicians failed to follow Navy guidelines for inspecting C-130 propellers, which are more stringent than guidelines for the Air Force. Air Force C-130s make up the vast majority of the military’s C-130 fleet the technicians work on.

After the corroded blade cracked and broke loose, the KC-130T broke into three pieces at 20,000 feet before crashing into a soybean field near Itta Bena, Mississippi, leaving a fiery debris field.

US conducts surveillance flight over Ukraine under Open Skies

BY JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — The U.S. military conducted an “extraordinary” surveillance flight over Ukraine on Thursday in response to Russia’s recent attack on Ukrainian ships, the Pentagon said.

The flight, which was conducted under the Open Skies Treaty, was intended to demonstrate solidarity with Ukraine, the Defense Department said in a statement. It described the operation as extraordinary but didn’t explain what made it so.

Ukraine is one of 34 countries party to the treaty, which permits its signatories to conduct surveillance missions over each other’s military and other sensitive facilities. Russia is also a signatory of the agreement.

“The timing of this flight is intended to reaffirm U.S. commitment to Ukraine and other partner nations,” the statement said.

The Pentagon did not say

where in Ukraine the flights took place.

Russia annexed Ukraine’s Crimean Peninsula in 2014 and since then has backed separatists in the country’s east in their fight against government forces. In a major escalation, Russia late last month attacked three Ukrainian ships and seized the crews during a dispute near the strategic Kerch Strait in the Black Sea.

Kiev has declared martial law in parts of the country, putting its military forces on high alert in connection with concerns that Russia could carry out further acts of aggression.

For the U.S., sending in an unarmed surveillance aircraft under the Open Skies Treaty could be a way to demonstrate solidarity with Ukraine while avoiding escalating tensions with Russia.

The Pentagon said the clash was a “dangerous escalation in a pattern of increasingly provocative and threatening activity” by Russia.

Border agent indicted for capital murder

Associated Press

DALLAS — A U.S. Border Patrol agent who confessed to killing four sex workers told investigators he wanted to “clean up the streets” of his Texas border hometown, a prosecutor said Wednesday while announcing that a grand jury had indicted the man for capital murder.

Webb County District Attorney Isidro Alaniz said he will seek the death penalty for the September slayings and that evidence presented to the grand jury showed Juan David Ortiz killed the women “in a cold, callous and calculating way.”

“The scheme in this case, from Ortiz’s own words, was to clean up the streets of Laredo by targeting this community of individuals who he perceived to be disposable, that no one

would miss and that he did not give value to,” Alaniz said at a news conference.

Alaniz said Ortiz, 35, believed law enforcement didn’t do enough to curb prostitution, so he was “doing a service” by killing the women.

A suspect can be charged with capital murder if he is suspected in more than one killing in the same scheme with an overarching motive, Alaniz said. Three of the women were shot to death, and the fourth was also shot but died of blunt force trauma.

Alaniz said the horrific nature of the killings and Ortiz’s vigilante mentality were factors in his decision to pursue the death penalty.

The Border Patrol intel supervisor and Navy veteran seemed to be living a typical suburban life with his wife and

two children when the killings occurred. He was arrested after one victim was able to escape him and asked a state trooper for help.

“By day, he was a family man. The evidence shows that he was a supervisor, that he would go about his daily activities like anybody here. He appeared normal by all accounts and circumstances,” Alaniz said. “At the nighttime, he was somebody else — hunting the streets ... for this community of people and arbitrarily deciding who he was going to kill next.”

Alaniz said Ortiz knew some of the victims but he wouldn’t elaborate on what kind of relationship they had. Melissa Ramirez, 29, was slain on Sept. 3, and Claudine Luera, 42, was killed on Sept. 13.

On Sept. 14, he picked up another woman, Erika Pena, who

told investigators that Ortiz acted oddly when she brought up Ramirez’s slaying and later pointed a gun at her while they were in his truck at a gas station, according to court documents. Pena said Ortiz grabbed her shirt as she tried to get out of the truck, but she pulled it off and ran, finding a state trooper who was refueling his vehicle.

Ortiz fled and, he later told investigators, he then picked up and killed his last two victims — Guiselda Alicia Cantu, 35, and Janelle Ortiz, 28, a transgender woman whose birth name was Humberto Ortiz.

With Pena’s help, authorities were able to track Ortiz to a hotel parking garage where he was arrested.

“I believe that if Erika Pena would not have escaped that day that there would be more victims right now in this case,” Alaniz said.

SpaceX launches supplies; booster misses its landing

Orlando (Fla.) Sentinel

ORLANDO, Fla. — As 5,800 pounds of supplies successfully headed to the International Space Station from Cape Canaveral Wednesday, SpaceX’s rocket booster zoomed back to Earth, making an unexpected splashdown in the Atlantic Ocean.

The mission, from launch complex 40 at the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, took off at 1:16 p.m. Wednesday after a last-minute rodent-related delay this week. On Tuesday,

mold was found on food bars for an experiment on the ISS involving about 40 mice that was set to analyze how space and aging relate.

Teams were able to replace the bars before the launch.

Shortly after takeoff Wednesday, the booster that powered SpaceX’s Falcon 9, which was carrying the supplies in its Dragon spacecraft, separated and started to chart a return. It was projected to land back at Landing Zone 1 in the Cape.

But one of the booster’s grid fins malfunctioned, SpaceX

founder Elon Musk tweeted Wednesday, causing the booster to spin erratically. It was able to stabilize before landing in the Atlantic Ocean about 2 miles offshore.

To prevent the problem in the future, the mogul said the company may add a backup pump to the fins to ensure they work properly.

In a post-launch briefing, SpaceX’s vice president of build and flight reliability, Hans Koenigsmann, said the booster’s safety mechanism worked as planned.

“It actually targets a landing point in the water if it loses control, so in other words, it tries to stay away from land, it tries to stay safe,” he said, adding that the booster also knows where buildings are and to avoid them.

The company has had 11 successful land landings — with Wednesday’s being the first unsuccessful one.

In space, the Dragon spacecraft performed as expected and should reach the ISS on Saturday morning before docking there for about five weeks.

Pearl Harbor reburials across US give families closure

Associated Press

HONOLULU — More than 75 years after nearly 2,400 members of the U.S. military were killed in the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor, some who died on Dec. 7, 1941, are finally being laid to rest in cemeteries across the United States.

In 2015, the Defense POW/

MIA Accounting Agency exhumed nearly 400 sets of remains from the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii after determining that advances in forensic science and genealogical help from families could make identifications possible. They were all on the USS Oklahoma, which

capsized during the attack, and had been buried as unknowns after the war.

Altogether, 429 sailors and Marines on board the Oklahoma were killed. Only 35 were identified in the years immediately after the attack. The Oklahoma’s casualties were second only to those of the USS

Arizona, which lost 1,177 men.

As of earlier this month, the agency has identified 186 sailors and Marines from the Oklahoma that were previously unidentified.

Slowly, the remains are being sent to be reburied in places like Traer, Iowa, and Ontonagon, Mich.

Bush goes home to Texas for final farewell

Associated Press

HOUSTON—America's final farewell to George H.W. Bush shifted to Texas on Thursday, with his friend and former Secretary of State James Baker addressing him as "Jefe," Spanish for "boss," and celebrating him as a president with "the courage of a warrior but the greater courage of a peacemaker."

Baker fought back tears as he concluded his eulogy.

Country music's Oak Ridge Boys, among the president's favorites, sang "Amazing Grace" and Reba McEntire offered "The Lord's Prayer" as three days of official ceremonies in Washington gave way to more personal touches for the Bush in Texas. The night before, more than 11,000 people paid their respects as his casket lay in repose all night at St. Martin's Episcopal Church, where his family worshipped.

At Thursday's funeral, Baker said, "The world became a better place because George Bush occupied the White House for four years." He said that Bush

embodied some of the nation's best values, "temperate" in thought, word and deed, "our nation's very best one-term president."

George P. Bush, the former president's grandson and the only member of the political dynasty still holding elected office, as Texas land commissioner, subsequently struck a more personal tone with the man he and the younger generations called "gampy."

The services attracted local sports stars including Houston Texans defensive end J.J. Watt and featured hymns chosen and loved by the former president.

The nation's capital bid him goodbye Wednesday in a Washington funeral that offered high praise for the last of the presidents to have fought in World War II — and a hefty dose of humor about a man whose speaking delivery was once described as a cross between Mister Rogers and John Wayne.

Bush's casket returned for the services in Houston, a ride on a special funeral train and

eventual burial at his family plot on the presidential library grounds at Texas A&M University in College Station. His final resting place is alongside Barbara Bush, his wife of 73 years, and Robin Bush, the daughter they lost to leukemia at age 3.

In the service at Washington National Cathedral, three former presidents and President Donald Trump looked on as George W. Bush eulogized his father as "the brightest of a thousand points of light."

The cathedral service was a tribute to a president, a patriarch and a faded political era that prized military service and public responsibility. It was laced with indirect comparisons to Trump but was not consumed by them, as speakers focused on Bush's public life and character — with plenty of cracks about his goofy side too.

"He was a man of such great humility," said Alan Simpson, former Republican senator from Wyoming. Those who travel "the high road of humility in Washington, D.C.," he

added pointedly, "are not bothered by heavy traffic."

Trump sat with his wife, a trio of ex-presidents and their wives, several of them sharp critics of his presidency and one of them, Hillary Clinton, his 2016 Democratic foe. Apart from courteous nods and some handshakes, there was little interaction between Trump and the others.

George W. Bush broke down briefly at the end of his eulogy while invoking the daughter his parents lost in 1953 and his mother, who died in April. He took comfort in knowing "Dad is hugging Robin and holding Mom's hand again."

It was a family that occupied the White House for a dozen years — the 41st president defeated after one term, the 43rd serving two. Jeb Bush stepped up to try to extend that run but fell short when Trump won the 2016 Republican primaries.

The elder Bush was "the last great soldier statesman," historian Jon Meacham said in his eulogy, "our shield" in dangerous times.

Dem will appeal to Walker to veto GOP power play

Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — The incoming Democratic governor of Wisconsin says he plans to make a personal appeal to his defeated rival, Republican Gov. Scott Walker, to veto sweeping GOP legislation that would strip the new administration of some powers.

If that doesn't work, Gov.-elect Tony Evers, said he might sue.

Wisconsin Republicans pushed through protests, internal disagreement and Democratic opposition to pass the bills after an all-night session. The measures would shift power to the Republican-controlled Legislature and weaken the authority of the governor and the attorney general. Republicans lost both seats in the November election.

"The will of the people has officially been ignored by the Legislature," Evers said Wednesday. "Wisconsin should be embarrassed by this."

The GOP power grab comes after North Carolina lawmakers took similar steps two years ago and as Michigan Republicans discuss taking action before a Democratic

governor takes over in that state. Wisconsin Republicans were battered in the midterm election, losing all statewide races amid strong Democratic turnout, yet retained legislative majorities thanks to what Democrats say are gerrymandered districts that tilt the map.

Evers said he would talk to Walker as soon as the bills reach the governor's desk. If he cannot persuade the governor to veto the proposals, Evers said he will consider lawsuits and any other option "to make sure that this legislation does not get into practice."

The votes early Wednesday were the height of a rare lame-duck legislative session. Walker has signaled his support for the bills; on Thursday, a spokesman said Walker was still reviewing the legislation and gave no timetable for action. Walker has 10 days to sign the package after it's delivered to his office.

The new legislation tries to protect some of the GOP's achievements in recent years, including a work requirement for some people receiving state health care and the

state's role in a lawsuit seeking to overturn the Affordable Care Act. The bills could also make it harder for Evers to renegotiate a \$3 billion subsidy for a Foxconn electronics manufacturing facility, a deal spearheaded by Walker.

In neighboring Michigan, Republicans who control the Legislature voted to advance a measure that strips campaign-finance oversight power from the next secretary of state, a Democrat. They also moved to give lawmakers authority to stand up for GOP-backed laws if they think the incoming Democratic governor and attorney general are not adequately defending the state's interests.

The Wisconsin legislation passed in a session marked by stops and starts as GOP leaders tried to muster enough votes in the Senate. That chamber ultimately approved the package 17-16, with just one Republican voting against it, around sunrise. The Assembly approved it on a 56-27 vote about two hours later, with a single Republican defecting.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

School might be renamed for couple

VA ARLINGTON — A northern Virginia high school that is removing Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee's name could be renamed for an interracial couple.

A 21-member committee appointed by the Arlington County school board is recommending that Washington-Lee High School be renamed as Washington-Loving. The proposed new name would honor Mildred and Richard Loving, a Virginia couple whose legal challenge led the U.S. Supreme Court to strike down the state's law banning interracial marriage.

A second option proposed by the committee would be to rename the school Washington-Liberty.

Once-conjoined twins now heading home

FL APOPKA — Jesi and Remi Petri are coming home in separate car seats seven months after they were born conjoined at the belly.

The babies were born to Angi and Andre Petri on Mother's Day, and have undergone seven surgeries at Gainesville's UF Shands Children's Hospital.

The Orlando Sentinel reported that Angi stayed in Gainesville while Andre and their two older children drove back and forth from their home in Apopka, near Orlando. Remi was discharged first, but stayed in Gainesville for routine checkups. Jesi was discharged Monday.

Teacher on leave over KKK-themed jingle

NH DOVER — The teacher for a class in which students were videotaped sing-

ing about the Ku Klux Klan to the tune of "Jingle Bells" has been placed on paid administrative leave.

Dover Superintendent William Harbron told Foster's Daily Democrat on Tuesday that putting John Carver on leave will allow school officials to fully investigate what happened. Cellphone footage surfaced over the weekend of the students singing, "KKK, KKK, Let's kill all the blacks" in class at Dover High School.

Man admits urinating on food conveyor belt

TN MEMPHIS — A man faces up to three years in prison for urinating on a Kellogg's cereal conveyor belt at a Memphis facility.

News outlets reported Gregory Stanton, 49, pleaded guilty last month to tampering with consumer products. He was indicted by a grand jury in September.

Stanton worked for the plant in 2014 and posted a video online in 2016 of himself urinating on the conveyor belt. The video led the company to alert law enforcement.

Woman reunited with urn with mom's ashes

AZ SIERRA VISTA — Cochise County sheriff's officials said a woman has been reunited with her mother's ashes after the father of her child threw the urn into the street.

Sheriff's spokeswoman Carol Capas said Tuesday that investigators located the urn's owner after receiving a tip.

The woman told deputies the couple had gotten into an argument and the man had kicked her out of the home and kept all of her belongings. She said he later called and said she could "find her mother in the middle

of 'Nevada.'"

The woman says she went to search for the urn but by then deputies had picked it up near Nevada and Arabian drives in Sierra Vista.

Fifth-grade class finds body outside school

OH AKRON — Officials said a fifth-grade class found a body outside an Ohio school.

The Akron Beacon Journal reported school officials said in a letter to parents the class found the body Monday morning at the Bridges Learning Center in Akron.

Principal Stephanie Davis said classes in the area were immediately moved, and students saw very little of the scene.

Police believe the man died by suicide two days earlier, and a gun was recovered at the scene. An autopsy was scheduled.

School officials said counseling is being offered to students. The school serves students in grades K-8 with emotional or behavioral needs.

Plane reported to have harassed elk

CO GRAND JUNCTION — Colorado wildlife officials said they are investigating reports that a small, single-engine aircraft harassed a herd of elk in the north-central portion of the state.

The Daily Sentinel in Grand Junction reported that witnesses told authorities they saw the aircraft make two low passes over the herd near the community of Craig, causing the animals to scatter.

The witnesses described the aircraft as either white or yellow and possibly a Cirrus SR22 or a Piper Cherokee.

It's illegal to use an aircraft to harass wildlife or as an aid in hunting.

Mom charged after car stolen with baby

NY BUFFALO — Police in Buffalo said the mother of a baby found inside a stolen car will face charges alongside the 15-year-old boy and 18-year-old accused of stealing the vehicle.

Capt. Jeff Rinaldo said the 25-year-old woman was charged with endangering the welfare of a child. Officials said she had left the car running outside a liquor store when it was stolen Saturday with her 2-month-old infant still inside.

Rinaldo said the two suspects are in custody for stealing the vehicle. Police said afterward one of the suspects took the baby to a hospital in the city of Niagara Falls, 15 miles north of Buffalo.

Police said they've connected the two suspects to an armed robbery the day before.

Co-workers, dealer replace stolen car

LA LAFAYETTE — When a restaurant dishwasher's car was stolen, his co-workers pitched in to buy a replacement.

Restaurant manager Chris Muffoletto told The Advertiser that Kea Senegal had saved for months to buy the car. News outlets reported it was stolen just before Thanksgiving from the restaurant parking lot in Lafayette.

Muffoletto said he asked the staff at Ruffino's on the River last week if they'd help. They raised \$2,500 in three days. Muffoletto said a used-car dealer, Don's Wholesale Automotive, heard about what they were doing and matched the donations.

Senegal was given a 2015 Chevrolet Malibu.

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Graduations didn't slow Army's triple-option

Philly.com

PHILADELPHIA — Army head coach Jeff Monken had some major rebuilding to do with his team's triple-option offense after the 2017 season, needing to replace four starters along the offensive line and quarterback Ahmad Bradshaw, a group that sparked a Black Knights rushing attack that led the nation.

The changeover was virtually seamless. Army might have "slipped" from No. 1 in FBS to No. 2 in rushing offense, but it has continued its run of success with four new starting linemen and a new quarterback in junior Kelvin Hopkins Jr., carrying a 9-2 record and a No. 22 ranking into Saturday's contest with Navy at Lincoln Financial Field.

The only returning starter on the line, senior center Bryce Holland, was joined by two players to his left who had combined for three career starts before this season. The two players to his right had yet to start a game, and sophomore tackle J.B. Hunter hadn't seen any game action.

"Those guys are guys that came out

every single day and expected to work hard and expected to play," Holland, one of the Army captains, said last week at the luncheon. "They knew what it took to become that player, so really everything they've done just came to fruition."

Guard Jaxson Deaton, a 6-foot-4, 310-pound junior, started three games last season: one at left guard, two at right guard. Senior tackle Austin Schuffert was on the field for one start. Those two and sophomore right guard Peyton Reeder played in a combined 31 games in 2017.

Monken gave credit to offensive line coach Brent Davis, who also is the Black Knights' offensive coordinator, for restoring an attack that averages 303 yards on the ground.

"He does a terrific job," Monken said. "He's a really good football coach. He's got a great temperament for that position. He coaches with tremendous detail, works those guys really hard, and he builds a toughness in that group that I think allows them to play the best they're capable of playing. That happens in college football.

"You can't sign them to new contracts.

Eventually they graduate, so we had a cycle where we lost a bunch of them a year ago, but these guys stepped up. When you're part of a program that's won, there's a pride there that you don't want to see the thing go in the other direction."

Bradshaw finished with 3,038 career rushing yards before being succeeded at quarterback by Hopkins. After seeing action in six games in 2017, Hopkins is the team's second-leading rusher with 783 yards, averaging 4.4 per carry, and has scored 10 touchdowns. He also averages 20.3 yards on 44 completions in the Black Knights' limited passing game.

"Frankly, we didn't know what we were going to get with Kelvin," Monken said, "but what a tremendous job he's done, and what a pleasant surprise it's been to see him run the ball as effectively as he has because he really came to us as a guy that was a thrower in high school."

Senior fullback Darnell Woolfolk leads the Black Knights with 823 rushing yards and 14 touchdowns, and has 37 career TDs.

Broncos lose Sanders just as schedule gets easier

Associated Press

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — Although the schedule gets easier for the Denver Broncos this month, the degree of difficulty in reaching the playoffs keeps going up.

The Broncos (6-6) lost leading wide receiver Emmanuel Sanders to a ruptured left Achilles tendon on Wednesday. He was hurt in a non-contact drill at the beginning of practice.

The 31-year-old receiver was placed on injured reserve and on Wednesday night he tweeted, "If you know me then you know nothing can keep me down. I've overcome too much in life to let this stop me. I'll be back next year w/ a bigger chip on my shoulder ... I PROMISE!"

The Broncos quickly claimed wide receiver Andre Holmes off waivers from Buffalo, giving them a seventh-year veteran to go with their four remaining receivers, all of whom made their NFL debuts this season.

Sanders, who led the team with 71 catches for 868 yards and four touchdowns in a

bounce-back year, was injured on a routine route. He sensed the gravity of the injury as he crumbled to the ground, tearing off his helmet and rolling it away as teammates and trainers rushed toward him.

"It didn't look good," coach Vance Joseph said, adding Sanders "was sore last week in his heel area and he felt great today."

Sanders' injury was the latest blow to a team that's lost seven starters from its opening-day lineup, including six on offense.

"It hurt, especially with an Achilles injury, that's a major injury," rookie receiver DaeSean Hamilton said. "He was our leader and he was a coach, too, so it was hard to watch."

Sanders' injury came three days after the Broncos lost star cornerback Chris Harris Jr. to a broken right lower leg, an injury that could sideline him for the rest of the regular season.

Sanders crumbled to the grass in an area of the field that has several brown patches and has led to several slips over the

last few weeks, notably by rookie receiver Courtland Sutton.

Normally, the Broncos flip their two main practice fields from a north-south configuration to east-west at midseason, but they didn't do that this year. Nor did they rotate individual drills, leaving bare patches in several areas.

Asked if he thought field conditions played any role in Sanders' injury, Joseph said, "I don't, no. The fields are fine."

Sanders' injury amplifies odds the Broncos face in their quest to reach the playoffs for the first time in the post-Peyton Manning era. After surviving the league's most arduous schedule through November, the Broncos' next three opponents — 49ers, Browns and Raiders — are a combined 9-26-1. They finish the season in Denver against the Chargers, a team they beat last month.

"We can't cry about it," Joseph said. "We have to move on and go play a football game on Sunday."

Winners of three straight, the Broncos (6-6) visit San Fran-

cisco (2-10) this weekend.

The Broncos traded top receiver Demaryius Thomas to the Texans on Oct. 30 for financial reasons and to accelerate Sutton's growth by getting him into the starting lineup opposite Sanders. After flashing in training camp, Sutton has taken his lumps as a rookie. He has 28 receptions — but it's taken 59 targets — for 558 yards and three touchdowns.

Now, he'll face No. 1 cornerbacks beginning with Richard Sherman in San Francisco.

"I love it," Sutton said. "I look forward to it. It's going to be good."

Sanders developed a rapport with his new quarterback as soon as Case Keenum arrived in March, and the speedy receiver's leadership only grew in value when Thomas was traded.

Sanders helped bring along the young receivers simply by grabbing attention away from them, Keenum said, pointing to a 30-yard TD catch by Sutton in the Broncos' 24-10 win over the Bengals last weekend.

OU's Murray star in baseball, football

Associated Press

NORMAN, Okla. — Oklahoma's Kyler Murray pulled off an impressive triple play during a brutal 30-hour stretch in April.

On a Friday night, he played center field for the Sooners' baseball team. The next day, he played quarterback in the football team's spring game. After that, he played another baseball game Saturday night.

It was a mental and physical grind for Murray, but his dedication to both sports has paid off. Two months later, the Oakland A's selected him in the first round of the Major League Baseball draft. He chose to continue playing football, and after posting one of the most impressive statistical seasons in FBS history, he was named a Heisman Trophy finalist on Monday.

Murray easily could have quit football after being drafted, but his reason for returning offers a window into his mentality. After a disappointing freshman

season at Texas A&M in 2015, he transferred to Oklahoma. He sat out a year because of transfer rules, then waited last season behind Heisman winner Baker Mayfield. Murray's sudden rise in baseball left him facing the possibility that his last significant football memories would come from the rough year at Texas A&M.

He wasn't having it.

"I've been playing this game my whole life," he said. "To leave this game with a bad taste in my mouth after my freshman year at A&M is just not who I am. I've worked my whole life for this, and we're here. So for me, leaving after getting drafted was never an option. And they (the A's) knew that. They gave me the opportunity to do what I'm doing. I'm thankful."

"For the people that say I'm crazy for doing it (coming back), it's (quitting) just not who I am. I've played this game since I was 4 years old. I love this game, and I couldn't go out like that."

Instead, he goes out with a 205.7 passer efficiency rating, which would be an FBS record. He has rushed for 892 yards to lead the fourth-ranked Sooners to a Big 12 title and a College Football Playoff meeting with Alabama.

None of Murray's success has surprised Tom Westerberg, his coach at Allen (Texas) High School who watched him go 43-0 and win three state titles. Even with the time off between his freshman year and this season, Westerberg thought Murray had the tools to pick up where he left off in high school, especially under Oklahoma coach Lincoln Riley's direction.

"I always thought he could do it," said Westerberg, who now coaches at Barbers Hill (Texas). "He's doing what he did in high school at the college level. Knowing him and his confidence, with the right situation with the right surrounding cast — and he is totally in the right place — when that gets around him, it's pretty dang good."

Oklahoma baseball coach

Skip Johnson said it took a lot of cooperation between the football and baseball staffs to help Murray in both sports.

"It's pretty rare what he's done in football and baseball, especially in our world today of select baseball — you're either going to play select baseball or football, and in football, they won't let you do baseball," Johnson said. "You have to make the choice."

Murray is a junior who would be eligible to play football next year, but he has said multiple times that he plans to focus strictly on baseball after this season. He didn't want to think about the end of his football career.

"I'm not really focused on that," he said. "If I was, I think that would take away from some of the great things that are happening, and I don't think I'd be all in it right now if I was thinking about that stuff. It's something I obviously have to think about. It's coming up pretty quick."

College basketball roundup

Hachimura's jumper lifts No. 1 Zags over Washington

Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. — Rui Hachimura's short turnaround jumper with half a second left lifted top-ranked Gonzaga to an 81-79 win over in-state rival Washington on Wednesday night.

Hachimura had 26 points for Gonzaga (9-0), which has won 12 of its past 13 games against the Huskies.

Washington missed a half-court shot as the final buzzer sounded.

Jaylen Nowell scored 26 for Washington (6-3), which was in the preseason Top 25 before losing at No. 8 Auburn. Nowell went to the free-throw line with 9.4 seconds left and tied the score at 79.

Washington's zone defense

slowed down the high-scoring Bulldogs. They were held well below their season average of 98 points per game, which ranked second in the nation.

No. 3 Duke 84, Hartford 54: Freshman forward RJ Barrett had 27 points and a season-best 15 rebounds as the host Blue Devils pulled away from the Hawks.

Zion Williamson added 18 points and 12 rebounds, and Tre Jones and Javin Delaurier finished with 10 points apiece to help the Blue Devils (8-1) win their third straight. Duke shot 62 percent in the second half to more than make up for hitting just five 3-pointers — matching a season low.

No. 13 Texas Tech 65, Arkansas-Pine Bluff 47: Jarrett

Culver scored 13 points, Matt Mooney had 11 and the host Red Raiders remained undefeated.

The Red Raiders (8-0) entered as the nation's top team in field goal defense, and that trend continued in their first home game this season as a ranked team.

No. 14 North Carolina 97, UNC Wilmington 69: Cameron Johnson scored 21 points to help the host Tar Heels to the win.

Freshman forward Nassir Little added 14 points in the Tar Heels' first game since losing at No. 5 Michigan last week. North Carolina (7-2) led 44-35 at halftime but went on a 30-3 run to blow this one open.

No. 15 Virginia Tech 89, VMI 68: Justin Robinson scored 18 points to help the host Hokies

cruise to the win.

No. 17 Buffalo 89, Le Moyne 55: CJ Massinburg had 13 points, 13 rebounds and 10 assists, and the host Bulls used a big second-half run to beat Division II Le Moyne.

No. 19 Ohio State 77, Illinois 67: Keyshawn Woods scored 12 of his 18 points in the second half, helping the Buckeyes rally for the win at Chicago's United Center.

No. 21 Villanova 69, Temple 59: Jermaine Samuels hit three three-pointers in the second half that kept the host Wildcats from the worst home losing streak in 25 years.

Minnesota 85, No. 24 Nebraska 78: Amir Coffey scored a career-high 32 points, helping the host Golden Gophers rally for the win.

NHL roundup

Ducks' win streak reaches five games

Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Daniel Sprong didn't waste time making a positive first impression on the Anaheim Ducks.

The 21-year-old right wing, acquired from Pittsburgh on Monday, scored in his Ducks debut Wednesday night as Anaheim stretched its winning streak to five with a 4-2 victory over the Chicago Blackhawks.

"It's a new opportunity. I was excited for it. I wanted to come out hot," Sprong said. "I'm a shooter and I wanted to start off early putting pucks on net and getting chances."

Sprong gave Anaheim a 2-0 lead six minutes into the first when he beat Chicago goaltender Corey Crawford top shelf with a shot at a sharp angle that just went over Crawford's shoulder.

Anaheim coach Randy Carlyle was pleased with Sprong's performance despite having only one practice with the club.

"The shot is a welcome sight because it looks he can provide some offense if he continues to shoot the puck like that," Carlyle said. "He's still got to learn our system, but he acquitted himself very well tonight."

Brandon Montour, Ondrej Kase and Jakob Silfverberg also scored for the Ducks, who have matched Toronto for the longest active winning streak in the league.

"You could tell in the first period we were playing with a lot of confidence," Silfverberg said. "That comes from building off earlier games knowing that we are playing real good right now. We have to keep it going."

Erik Gustafsson and Alex DeBrincat scored in the second period, and Crawford stopped 28 shots for the Blackhawks, who have dropped five straight and seven of eight.

Chicago is 3-9-2 under Jeremy Colliton, who replaced Joel

Quenneville on Nov. 6.

"I thought the second period was excellent," Colliton said. "I don't think they're better than us, just the puck went in the net. Frustrating."

Sharks 5, Hurricanes 1: Timo Meier had a goal and two assists in his return to his team's lineup, Martin Jones made 39 saves and host San Jose bounced back from a rough road trip by beating Carolina. Barclay Goodrow and Tomas Hertl got San Jose started with goals in the first period, captain Joe Pavelski added his team-leading 18th in the second period and Marcus Sorensen scored in the third to give the Sharks a convincing victory.

Lucas Wallmark scored on the power play for the Hurricanes, who have scored just five goals in the past five games, losing four of them. Curtis McElhinney made 18 saves.

The Sharks had been outscored 20-7 in losing the first four games on their recent road trip before salvaging it a bit with a 3-1 win in Montreal. They built on that momentum against the Hurricanes with Kevin Labanc setting up two goals in the first 10:10.

Oilers 3, Blues 2 (SO): Connor McDavid scored in the shootout after Oscar Klefbom tied it late in the third period, and visiting Edmonton beat St. Louis.

Klefbom scored with 55.2 seconds remaining to tie the game at 2, and Ryan Nugent-Hopkins and McDavid scored in the shootout. Nugent-Hopkins also scored in the second period, and Edmonton won for the fourth time in five games.

Cam Talbot made 28 saves, plus two more in the shootout to win for the first time in seven tries dating to Oct. 28.

Ivan Barbashev and Brayden Schenn scored for the Blues.

NBA roundup

George scores 47 as Thunder rally to win

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Once Paul George got going, he didn't slow down until he carried the Oklahoma City Thunder to their biggest comeback victory ever.

George scored 25 of his 47 points in a sensational fourth quarter, including a go-ahead three-pointer with 3.1 seconds left that gave the Thunder a 114-112 victory over the Brooklyn Nets on Wednesday night.

George rallied the Thunder from a 23-point deficit and finished a point shy of his career high, leading them to a fourth straight victory in a game they trailed big for much of the way.

But they got close and then got the ball to George on their last possession, and there was no surprise he nailed the shot.

"Yeah, it felt good," George said. "I had the hot hand, I knew I had the hot hand. I just felt good all game."

Russell Westbrook had his 108th career triple-double to snap a tie with former Nets star and coach Jason Kidd for third in NBA history, finishing with 21 points, 17 assists and 15 rebounds.

But it was George, whose slow start helped send the Thunder into their big hole, who made sure they climbed out of it. And Westbrook made sure George knew not to lose his confidence even when his shot wasn't falling.

"My job is to make sure that I constantly keep telling him to stay aggressive, to play his game because he's that type of guy, man," Westbrook said.

Warriors 129, Cavaliers 105: Stephen Curry made nine three-pointers and scored 42 points, Kevin Durant added 25 and visiting Golden State came back to face a very different looking Cleveland team for the first time since winning another NBA title.

Curry scored nine points

in less than a minute midway through the fourth quarter to help the Warriors pull away for their eighth straight over their former Finals rivals.

Lakers 121, Spurs 113: LeBron James scored 20 of his 42 points in the fourth quarter and Josh Hart hit two clutch three-pointers in the final minutes as Los Angeles beat San Antonio for its fourth straight victory.

Raptors 113, 76ers 102: Kawhi Leonard had 36 points, Jonas Valanciunas scored 18 of his season-high 26 in the fourth quarter and host Toronto handed Philadelphia its 13th consecutive loss in Canada.

Nuggets 124, Magic 118 (OT): Jamal Murray scored 31 points and Denver shut down host Orlando in overtime for its seventh straight victory.

Timberwolves 121, Hornets 104: Karl-Anthony Towns scored 35 points, Andrewiggins added a season-high 26 points and host Minnesota beat Charlotte for its sixth victory in seven games.

Towns tied a career high with six blocks and had 12 rebounds.

Pelicans 132, Mavericks 106: Julius Randle had 27 points and 18 rebounds to help host New Orleans beat Dallas.

Wizards 131, Hawks 117: Bradley Beal scored a season-high 36 points, Otto Porter Jr. had 20 points and 11 rebounds, and Washington beat host Atlanta for its third straight victory.

Bucks 115, Pistons 92: Eric Bledsoe matched his season high with 27 points and Giannis Antetokounmpo added 15 in host Milwaukee's victory over Detroit.

Grizzlies 96, Clippers 86: Mike Conley scored 22 points, JaMychal Green had 19 points and 11 rebounds and host Memphis held Los Angeles to a season scoring low.