

STARS AND STRIPES®

Friday, February 10, 2017

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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US Army general demoted after scandal

USA Today

WASHINGTON — One of the Army's most promising generals will be demoted to one star and retired following a scandal that involved sex clubs in Seoul and Rome, high-priced booze and indiscretions with young, female troops, the Army announced Thursday.

Ron Lewis, who had been a three-star general and a top aide to then-Defense Secretary Ash Carter, also will lose about \$10,000 per year in pension payments due to the demotion.

The Pentagon Inspector General "substantiated allegations that Maj. Gen. Lewis misused his government travel charge card for personal expenses, made false official statements regarding his (credit card) misuse, and engaged in conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman on multiple occasions," Cynthia Smith, an Army spokeswoman, said in a statement.

Lewis was a high-flying,

decorated, attack-helicopter pilot whose ascent to the highest ranks of the Army seemed unlimited. But allegations of an improper relationship with a female subordinate prompted Carter to fire him in 2015. The devastating report from the Pentagon Inspector General detailed a bill of particulars that showed Lewis lying about a bar tab of more than \$1,000 to have it expunged from his government-issued credit card.

Lewis disputed many of the report's findings. In his rebuttal, Lewis acknowledged mistakes and "errors in judgment" but denied visits to sex clubs and maintained that his relationship with a woman on an official trip to Hawaii with Carter had been mischaracterized.

Lewis lost one star immediately after being fired as Carter's top aide. The discipline meted out Thursday drops him from a major general to a brigadier general, which is the last

rank in which he served satisfactorily. His annual pension will drop from about \$90,000 to \$80,000.

Army investigators found that, among other things, Lewis spent more than \$1,100 in April 2015 during a visit to the "Candy Bar" in Seoul. The bar, in the city's red-light district known as "Hooker Hill," had been deemed off limits to troops. When questioned about the charge, Lewis denied it was his and the Pentagon challenged the expense and got him a new card.

In October 2015, Lewis ran up a bill of \$1,755 at the Cica Cica Boom club in Rome. Unable to pay the bill with his debit card, Lewis returned to his hotel with a "female foreign national employee" of the club to get his government credit card. Lewis woke a female subordinate whose room was in the same hallway as Carter's. The subordinate told investigators

"she thought it was 'very odd' that MG Lewis asked for his [government credit card] and that she 'felt like something wrong was about to happen, but I wasn't in a place to tell him, 'No.'"

A month later, on a trip to Hawaii with Carter, Lewis downed 11 alcoholic beverages with a female enlisted servicemember, who was also drinking heavily, the inspector general found. Witnesses said they saw Lewis, who is married, with the woman on the beach near their hotel with Lewis' arms around her. Afterward, another female official on the trip told Lewis he was "being really stupid" and tried to get the enlisted woman away from his hotel room, the report said.

The military has struggled in the past year with a series of high-profile career flameouts of general officers caught up in illicit sex scandals.

Court refuses to revive travel ban; Trump strikes back

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — The legal fight over President Donald Trump's ban on travelers from seven predominantly Muslim nations is on hold after the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals refused to reinstate the order, unanimously rejecting the administration's claim of presidential authority, questioning its motives and concluding that the order was unlikely to survive legal challenges.

In a rebuke to the Trump administration Thursday, the three federal appellate judges sided with the states of Washington and Minnesota on nearly every matter, opening the possibility that the case could shift

to the U.S. Supreme Court.

In a tweet Friday, Trump called the decision disgraceful. Trump quoted an article by Benjamin Wittes, editor-in-chief of the Lawfare blog. It reads, "Remarkably, in the entire opinion, the panel did not bother even to cite this (the) statute." Trump tweeted, "A disgraceful decision!"

Wittes later said Trump had taken his statement out of context.

Moments after the ruling Thursday, Trump tweeted, "SEE YOU IN COURT," adding that "THE SECURITY OF OUR NATION IS AT STAKE!"

But it is unclear what Trump's next move will be. The Justice

Department said it is reviewing the decision and considering its options. It was the first day on the job for Attorney General Jeff Sessions.

The lower court action is temporary and hasn't resolved broader questions about the legality of Trump's order. While the ban is on hold, refugees and people from seven majority-Muslim nations identified in the president's Jan. 27 executive order can continue traveling to the U.S.

The appellate judges noted compelling public interests on both sides.

"On the one hand, the public has a powerful interest in national security and in the ability

of an elected president to enact policies. And on the other, the public also has an interest in free flow of travel, in avoiding separation of families, and in freedom from discrimination."

The administration could appeal the ruling to a larger 9th Circuit panel or bypass that step and go straight to the U.S. Supreme Court. That could put the decision over whether to keep the temporary restraining order suspending the ban in the hands of a divided court that has a vacancy. Trump's nominee, Neil Gorsuch, cannot be confirmed in time to take part in any consideration of the ban, which would expire in 90 days unless it is changed.

3 \$80M Navy planes damaged by wrong oil

The (Norfolk, Va.) Virginian-Pilot

NORFOLK, Va. — Days before the aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush set out from Norfolk last month, the Navy had to scramble to fix a major problem with the ship's squadron of early-warning, command-and-control aircraft.

The engines on three of the squadron's four E-2C Hawkeyes had been damaged and needed to be replaced.

The culprit?

The wrong oil was used in each \$80 million, twin-turboprop aircraft.

"The damage occurred over a period of time and it involved the use of a lubricant not approved or specified for these engines," Naval Air Force Atlantic spokesman Mike Maus said in response to questions from *The Virginian-Pilot*. "A thorough investigation is being conducted to determine how and why this procedure

was allowed."

The cost to repair the damage initially was estimated to be at least \$2 million, according to the Naval Safety Center, putting it into its most serious classification for damage.

But that figure is automatically based on 15 percent of the cost of all six engines and was made before a full inspection could occur, according to Cmdr. Dave Hecht, a Naval Air Force Atlantic spokesman.

"When the engines are inspected for the damage, we are optimistic that the repair costs will be less than \$2 million," Hecht said late Thursday.

It wasn't immediately clear when the need to replace the engines became apparent, but the Naval Safety Center listed the mishap date as Jan. 19 — two days before the Bush deployed.

The replacements come at a time when

the Navy says that half its aircraft can't fly because they're awaiting maintenance or lack needed spare parts.

"While our first team on deployment is ready, our bench — the depth of our forces at home — is thin. It has become clear to me that the Navy's overall readiness has reached its lowest level in many years," Adm. Bill Moran, vice chief of naval operations, said in prepared testimony before the House Armed Services Committee on Tuesday in a plea for increased funding.

"Time is running out. Years of sustained deployments and constrained and uncertain funding have resulted in a readiness debt that will take years to pay down."

The affected Hawkeye squadron consists of four planes and is based at Norfolk Naval Station's Chambers Field.

It's unclear how long the investigation will take.

Official in Utah charged with theft of military gear

TOOELE, Utah — An official who oversaw supplies and logistics at a military facility in Utah is accused of stealing equipment.

The Deseret News reported that the 49-year-old Dugway Proving Ground official was charged in federal court Wednesday with theft of government property. If convicted, he could face up to 10 years in prison and a fine of as much as \$250,000.

Dugway Proving Ground spokesman Robert Saxon said the man is being investigated on suspicion of stealing military-grade rifle scopes and other optic devices.

Ex-Navy chaplain gets 30 years for child porn

DOVER, Del. — A former Navy chaplain and Catholic priest who was convicted of sexually assaulting a Naval Academy midshipman years ago has been sentenced to 30 years in prison on federal child pornography charges.

John Thomas Matthew Lee, 51, of Millsboro, Del., was sentenced Wednesday.

From The Associated Press

Trump thanks Japan for hosting bases

From staff and wire reports

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump thanked Japan's prime minister Friday for hosting U.S. military bases and called the U.S.-Japanese alliance the "cornerstone" of stability in the Pacific at a time of growing concern over North Korea's nuclear threat.

"The U.S.-Japan alliance is the cornerstone of peace and stability in the Pacific region," Trump told reporters at a joint news conference with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Trump, who spoke during the election campaign of making Japan and South Korea pay more for their own defense, thanked the Japanese for "hosting our Armed Forces" and described the missile and nuclear threat from North Korea a "high priority" for the U.S.

The warm public atmosphere between the two leaders amounted to a political coup for Abe, a nationalist adept at forging relationships with strongmen leaders. Abe was the only world leader to meet the Republican before his inauguration and is the second to do so since the new president took office.

Trump and Abe held talks

in the Oval Office, followed by a joint news conference and a working lunch. The two leaders were to depart on Air Force One on Friday afternoon for a trip to Trump's Mar-a-Lago Club in Florida and to play golf Saturday.

Other leaders of America's closest neighbors and allies, such as Mexico, Britain and Australia, have been singled by their encounters or conversations with Trump. But Japanese officials are optimistic the invitation to visit Trump's "Winter White House" signals a more positive outcome.

The meeting comes as Trump appears to be shifting toward a more mainstream stance on U.S. policy toward Asia — consolidating alliances and cooperating with rising power China.

Late Thursday, Trump reaffirmed Washington's longstanding "one China" policy in a call with Chinese President Xi Jinping. The move likely will ease anger in China over his earlier suggestions that he might use Taiwan as leverage in negotiations over trade, security and other sensitive issues.

Trump's "America First" rhetoric and campaign trail de-

mands that allies pay more for their own defense had sowed doubts in Tokyo, too. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis allayed many of those concerns during a trip to Japan and South Korea last week. Both countries host tens of thousands of U.S. forces — seen as a deterrent against the nuclear threat from North Korea and China's growing assertiveness.

Abe has championed a more active role for Japan's military, easing constraints imposed by the nation's pacifist post-World War II constitution and allowing forces to defend allies, even if Japan, itself, is not under attack. That's a trend likely to be welcomed by Trump.

The economic side of the U.S.-Japan relationship is more uncertain.

One of Trump's first actions as president was to withdraw the U.S. from a 12-nation, trans-Pacific trade agreement that was negotiated by the Obama administration and was strongly supported by Tokyo.

Trump also has criticized Toyota Motor Corp. for planning to build an assembly plant in Mexico.

Work on ND pipeline underway; suit filed

Associated Press

CANNONBALL, N.D. — Construction crews have resumed work on the final segment of the Dakota Access pipeline, and the developer of the long-delayed project said Thursday that the full system could be operational within three months.

Meanwhile, an American Indian tribe filed a legal challenge to block the work and protect its water supply.

The Army granted Energy Transfer Partners formal permission Wednesday to lay pipe under a North Dakota reservoir, clearing the way for completion of the 1,200-mile pipeline. Company spokeswoman Vicki Granado confirmed early Thursday that construction began “immediately after receiving the easement.”

Workers had already drilled entry and exit holes for the segment, and oil had been put in the pipeline leading up to Lake Oahe in anticipation of finishing the project.

“The estimate is 60 days to complete the drill and another 23 days to fill the line to Patoka,” Granado said, referring to the shipping point in Illinois that is the pipeline’s destination.

Work was stalled for months due to opposition by the Standing Rock Sioux and Cheyenne

River Sioux tribes. Both tribes argue that the pipeline threatens their water supply and cultural sites.

The Cheyenne River reservation in South Dakota borders the Standing Rock reservation, which straddles the North Dakota-South Dakota border. The last piece of the pipeline is to pass under the lake on the Missouri River, which marks the eastern border of both reservations.

A separate court battle unfolded between the developer and the Army Corps of Engineers, which oversees the federal land where the last segment is now being laid. President Donald Trump last month instructed the Corps to advance pipeline construction.

The Cheyenne River Sioux on Thursday asked a federal judge to stop the work while a lawsuit — which was filed last summer by the tribes but put on hold — proceeds. Attorney Nicole Ducheneaux said in court documents that the pipeline “will desecrate the waters” that the Cheyenne River Sioux rely on. Energy Transfer Partners maintains that the pipeline is safe.

U.S. District Judge James Boasberg said he would hear arguments from attorneys on Monday.

Crime, drugs focus of executive orders

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — With Jeff Sessions sworn in as attorney general, the Trump administration signaled some of its priorities for a revamped Justice Department in a series of executive orders aimed at reducing crime and drug trafficking and protecting police officers.

One executive order announced Thursday directs the Justice Department to define new federal crimes, and increase penalties for existing ones, to further protect local and federal officers from acts of violence.

Another order calls for the creation of a task force to reduce violent crime — even though the murder rate has declined sharply in recent decades — and a third is aimed at dismantling international drug cartels.

Taken together, the directives, announced amid a national dialogue about racial bias in policing and police use of force, suggest the White House wants to prioritize law and order, and align itself closely with local law enforcement.

“We must better protect those who protect us. Our men and women in blue need to know that we’re with them 100 per-

cent as they patrol our streets. Unfortunately, this has not always been the case,” White House spokesman Sean Spicer said at a press briefing.

That was perhaps a reference to criticism directed at one of Sessions’ predecessors, former Attorney General Eric Holder, by some local law enforcement officials who saw him as insensitive to the challenges of their jobs and as overly sympathetic to the concerns of black protesters.

On Thursday, Holder posted on Twitter a Justice Department press release from 2011 announcing an initiative aimed at preventing police officer deaths.

“It worked and continues to protect,” Holder wrote.

Sessions, who represented Alabama in the Senate for the last 20 years, was sworn in Thursday after being confirmed the night before. The executive orders are in keeping with his commitment to represent law-and-order interests.

He said at his confirmation hearing last month that he was concerned that a recent uptick in homicides in American cities could become a trend.

Clinical trial eyes pot as remedy for vets with PTSD

BY NIKKI WENTLING

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Researchers started this week the first clinical trial of marijuana for treating the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder in veterans.

The trial will test four potencies of smoked marijuana and their effects to manage PTSD symptoms in 76 veterans, according to the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies. Approved by the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Food and Drug Admin-

istration, the study is intended to develop marijuana into a legal prescription drug.

The \$2.2 million trial is funded by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. The first participant received marijuana Monday.

Researchers are looking for other volunteers who experienced trauma during their military service. The study is being conducted at the Scottsdale Research Institute in Arizona and Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. Veterans will visit clinics 17 times over 12-week

period, and then will be scheduled for a six-month follow-up. To apply, email arizona@marijuanasites.org or call Johns Hopkins at (410) 550-0050.

The association has worked since 2010 to gain approval for the study. The DEA gave its approval in April.

Dr. Sue Sisley, the medical researcher leading the portion of the study in Arizona — and a former Department of Veterans Affairs psychiatrist — said at the American Legion national convention last year that veterans were “getting desperate”

for PTSD treatment.

“I could never reach that level of relief with traditional medications, so I knew I had to keep going,” she said of her research.

At the convention, the American Legion issued a resolution urging Congress to remove marijuana from the list of Schedule I drugs, which are designated as having no medical use.

Congress blocked a provision last year that would allow VA doctors to recommend medical marijuana to patients in states where it’s legal.

California storms turn south

Associated Press

SONOMA, Calif. — The atmospheric river that drenched Northern and Central California, causing at least two deaths, crumbling part of a major dam spillway, was expected to turn south Friday.

The National Weather Service forecast rain spreading across Southern California, with up to 2 inches of rain in Ventura County northward and less than an inch in Los Angeles County.

Thanks to a wet winter, downtown Los Angeles has exceeded its annual rainfall total, with the season far from over.

In the north, which has reeled this week from downpours and gusty winds, the rain began tapering off Thursday. Dry weather could develop by Saturday and continue along with a warming trend through the middle of next week, the National Weather Service forecast.

The series of storms has left its mark, however. In hard-hit coastal mountains near Santa Cruz, a dump truck accidentally ran over two highway workers — killing one — as the men

worked Thursday to clear one of several slides of mud and rock pouring onto Highway 17, the California Highway Patrol said.

In Central California, a car plunged into a flooded creek near Bakersfield. Kern County authorities rescued a woman who was clinging to tree branches in the swollen creek, but a man in his 20s died when the car submerged upside down.

Thursday's storm whipped the Golden Gate Bridge with wind gusts near 60 mph and brought nearly an inch of rain to parts of the San Francisco Bay Area.

Northern California already has received more than a year's worth of rain and snow from an unending series of storms, with two months left to go in the winter rainy season.

"The ground is already supersaturated," National Weather Service forecaster Steve Anderson said. "The water is still flowing out of the hills from the storm on Tuesday."

Several homes were inundated with mud earlier in the week.

In the Marin County community of Fairfax, Maggie Bridges scooped up her 4-year-old son and climbed barefoot out of the bathroom window as a rain-soaked hillside gave way on Wednesday, her husband said.

"The mudslide came down and broke our front door in half," Zach Laurie told KPIX-TV.

Residents along Sonoma County's Russian River stacked up sandbags and retreated to the second floor of buildings.

Lynn Crescione, owner of Creekside Inn & Resort in Guerneville, said many long since had raised their buildings on stilts for days like Thursday.

"We've been here 35 years, and we've risen most of our buildings over time. When it rains we just go upstairs," Crescione said.

The weather service said the storms were part of a "classic pineapple express," an atmospheric river phenomenon that carries moisture across the Pacific Ocean from Hawaii and dumps it on Northern California.

Hole in dam's spillway growing

Associated Press

OROVILLE, Calif. — A gaping hole in the spillway for the tallest dam in the United States has grown, and California authorities said they expect it will continue eroding as water washes over it. However, the Oroville Dam and the public are safe, they said.

Earlier this week, chunks of concrete flew off the nearly milelong spillway, creating a 200-foot-long, 30-foot-deep hole. Engineers don't know what caused the cave-in, which is expected to keep growing until it reaches bedrock.

But faced with little choice, the state Department of Water Resources resumed ramping up the outflow from Lake Oroville over the damaged spillway to keep up with all the runoff from torrential rainfall in the Sierra Nevada foothills.

Officials said the critical flood-control structure is at 90 percent of its capacity. But the dam is still safe and so are Oroville's 16,000 residents.

"The integrity of the dam is not jeopardized in any way because the problem is with the spillway and not the dam," department spokesman Eric See said.

Located about 150 miles northeast of San Francisco, Oroville Lake is one of the largest man-made lakes in California; 770-foot-tall Oroville Dam is the nation's tallest.

The lake is a central piece of California's water delivery network, supplying water for agriculture in the Central Valley and to residents and businesses in Southern California.

After years of drought, Northern California has endured several months of exceptionally wet weather. Oroville and other lakes are brimming and have begun releasing water to make room for more runoff.

Northeast starts digging out after storm

Associated Press

BOSTON — The Northeast is digging out from a winter storm that dumped a foot or more of snow along the New York-to-Boston corridor, forced the cancellation of schools in cities big and small and grounded thousands of flights.

The storm Thursday came a day after temperatures soared into the 50s and 60s, giving millions a taste of spring. But then it was back to reality.

"We were waiting for a good one all year," said Morgan Crum, a manager at Katz Ace Hardware in Glastonbury, Conn., where more than 50 people stopped in to buy shovels, ice melt, gas cans and other storm provisions. "We live in New England. This is what we expect."

Numerous accidents were reported as drivers dealt with blowing and drifting snow and slippery streets. Stretches of Interstate 95 in Rhode Island were closed in the afternoon after tractor-trailers got stuck.

Dozens of motorists got stranded on New York's Long Island after they couldn't make it up icy ramps. Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone said snowplow drivers were going to have a "long night" working on icy roads.

Schools in New York City, Philadelphia, Boston and elsewhere called off classes for the day,

and government offices told nonessential workers to stay home. The mayor of Boston said schools would be closed Friday as well.

Thousands of flights were canceled across the region, and planes bound for New York's Kennedy Airport were ordered held on the ground for hours while crews cleared the runways.

In Rhode Island, they got "thundersnow," with whiteout conditions accompanied by the rumble of thunder.

"It's pretty nuts here," Felecia White said as she and friends hunkered down in a restaurant in Newport, R.I., waiting for the weather to improve. "Even with four-wheel drive, you can't do anything. You can't see across the street."

Some neighborhoods in New York City saw a foot or more of the white stuff. Boston and Providence, R.I., recorded more than 10 inches of snow, and East Hartford, Conn., saw more than 19 inches.

Farther north, Berwick, Maine, recorded more than 16 inches of snow, and Lee, N.H., got 14 inches.

The Philadelphia area was largely spared after being told to expect up to 8 inches. Some suburbs received 5 inches, but by the afternoon, the sun was out.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Police recover stolen ring from 1892

CA COSTA MESA — Authorities in Orange County recovered several pieces of jewelry, including a family heirloom ring from 1892.

Police in Irvine arrested a man on suspicion of grand theft after investigators said he never returned rings people entrusted to him for repairs and maintenance.

The Orange County Register said Daniel Cervantes, 27, worked under the business names Diamonds Are Forever and Cervantes Jewelers.

Police said detectives found pieces including the heirloom ring at a pawn shop in Costa Mesa. The ring's owner said she cried when she got it back.

Domino's launches wedding registry

MI ANN ARBOR — Forget the fine china. Domino's Pizza has launched a wedding registry site that allows couples to order the pie of their dreams.

Domino's spokeswoman Jenny Fouracre said the company launched the site just in time for Valentine's Day so couples "passionate about pizza" can "register for something they both truly love as much as their partner."

Visitors to the site have the option of signing up for Domino's to be served at a bachelorette party or as a late night snack at the end of the wedding reception.

Couples who receive gifts from the site get a gift card in order to pay for the pizza.

Harambe Cheeto gets \$100,000 bid

CA BURBANK — Someone bid nearly

\$100,000 on eBay for a Cheeto that bears a resemblance to slain gorilla Harambe.

The seller said he found the snack in a bag of Flamin' Hot Cheetos. Bidding began at \$11.99 on Jan. 28. It ended early Tuesday morning with a winning bid of \$99,900. The listing showed a picture of the Cheeto side-by-side with a gorilla climbing a tree.

Harambe has become fodder for internet jokes since his death in May. He was shot by handlers at the Cincinnati Zoo after dragging a small boy who had gotten into his enclosure.

Wayward deer runs amok in supermarket

PA MANCHESTER — Pandemonium broke out at a supermarket just outside of Harrisburg, Pa., when a rogue deer smashed through its glass entrance and ran amok inside.

The York Daily Record reported the wayward doe busted its way into a Giant grocery store in the York County borough of Manchester shortly after 9 p.m. Monday.

Robert Beck III, 45, of Conewago Township, was in the store at the time with his wife. He said he heard a loud bang that he first thought was a gunshot before hearing screams of "Deer!"

Catching a glimpse of the doe as it scampered toward the bakery section, Beck sprang into action. The avid hunter wrangled the deer with help from two other men and forced it outside.

Man connects with sender of message

NJ LONG BEACH ISLAND — A New Jersey man has found the person who wrote a message in a bottle.

The Asbury Park Press reported Vincent Stango has exchanged text messages with Stuart Brown, of Yorkshire, England, since Stango found the bottled note on a beach near his Long Beach Island home about two weeks ago.

The note included U.K. phone numbers and read: "Found the bottle? Read this note? I'm Stuart, if you wish, call or mail me. Speak or mail soon. England Stuart."

Brown told the newspaper Thursday he recently returned from a world tour aboard the Queen Elizabeth and tossed several bottled messages along the way. He said Stango must have found one he tossed about 150 miles out from New York.

Man in trash bin saved from garbage truck

FL TAMPA — Authorities in Florida said a man who had been sleeping in a commercial trash bin is recovering after nearly being crushed in the back of a garbage truck.

The Tampa Bay Times reported that the 32-year-old man suffered a leg injury early Wednesday, but Tampa fire officials said it wasn't life-threatening.

Police said the operator of a Waste Management truck had just dumped one load into the back of his truck outside a Dollar General store and was about to dump a second when he heard someone yelling for help. Tampa Fire Rescue spent more than an hour loading the man into a basket and hoisting it out with a winch attached to a ladder truck.

Students perform with renowned musicians

DC WASHINGTON — It was no ordinary jam at a northeast D.C. elementary

school when some students got to perform with violinist Joshua Bell and cellist Yo-Yo Ma.

The world-famous musicians spent Tuesday afternoon performing for and with students at Bunker Hill Elementary School, who play string instruments in the school's orchestra.

Ma and Bell visited the school through the program Turnaround Arts, which aims to give underperforming schools more resources for arts and music.

As part of the program, actors, artists and musicians, like Ma and Bell, "adopt" schools where they volunteer and visit with students and teachers.

Ma is also "Turnaround artist" for Noyes Elementary in Northeast, and Bell works with Savoy Elementary School in Southeast.

Orange gator in pond puzzles neighborhood

SC HANAHAN — No one seems to know why there's an orange alligator in a pond near Charleston.

Residents joke the gator used too much self-tanning lotion. Or maybe it's a fan of the Clemson Tigers, who are known for their orange colors.

Residents living near the pond in Hanahan said they've seen the orange or rust-colored alligator a number of times.

Photos show the 4- to 5-foot-long alligator on the banks of a retention pond at the Tanner Plantation neighborhood.

Jay Butfiloski with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources said the color may come from where the animal spent the winter, perhaps in a rusty steel culvert pipe.

Experts said the alligator will shed its skin and probably return to a normal shade soon.

From wire reports

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Top-ranked Zags still undefeated

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Nigel Williams-Goss had 19 points and 11 rebounds and No. 1 Gonzaga continued its roll Thursday night with a 90-60 victory over Loyola Marymount.

Gonzaga — the last remaining unbeaten team in Division I — pushed its record to 25-0 overall and 13-0 in the West Coast Conference.

No. 7 Wisconsin 70, Nebraska 69 (OT): Nigel Hayes hit the go-ahead three-pointer with 18.4 seconds left in overtime and Ethan Happ blocked Tai Webster's shot the host Cornhuskers's last try.

Hayes scored 18 of his 20 points after halftime for the Badgers (21-3, 10-1 Big Ten), who won their eighth straight and 17th of their last 18.

No. 16 Purdue 69, Indiana 64: At Bloomington, Ind., Vince Edwards matched his career-high with 26 points and Caleb Swanigan added 16 points and 14 rebounds for the Boilermakers.

Purdue (20-5, 9-3 Big Ten) has won three straight and six of seven to move into second place in the conference.

No. 20 Saint Mary's 51, Portland 41: At Moraga, Calif., Jock Landale had 13 points and 10 rebounds and the Gaels overcame their worst shooting game of the season.

Saint Mary's (22-2, 12-1 West Coast Conference) used an 11-2 run midway through the second half to erase a 29-28 deficit and set up Saturday's duel with unbeaten and top-ranked Gonzaga at McKeon Pavilion.

No. 25 SMU 66, Temple 50: Semi Ojeleye scored a career-high 30 points and added 10 rebounds to lead the visiting Mustangs past to their seventh straight win.

Sterling Brown added 10 points and nine rebounds for SMU (21-4, 11-1 American Athletic Conference), who earlier in the week vaulted into the national rankings for the first time this season.

Blue Devils upset Tar Heels

Associated Press

DURHAM, N.C. — Grayson Allen scored seemingly at will. Freshman Jayson Tatum put on a second-half show at the rim and on the boards.

And all of a sudden, No. 18 Duke looked more like the team that began the season as a national title favorite.

Allen scored 25 points, Tatum added all 19 of his in the second half and the Blue Devils beat No. 8 North Carolina 86-78 on Thursday night.

Luke Kennard added 20 points and Tatum had a team-best nine rebounds to help the Blue Devils (19-5, 7-4 Atlantic Coast Conference) win their fourth straight.

"We all grew up tonight," Kennard said. "We were all together, we were all tough and very unselfish."

The streak followed a stretch in which Duke looked uncharacteristically vulnerable, losing four of seven while dealing with the absences of key players — due to both injuries and a suspension — and Hall of Fame coach Mike Krzyzewski, who took a four-week leave for back surgery.

"We've had more interruptions than six teams," Krzyzewski said.

Justin Jackson scored 21 points and Joel Berry II finished with 15 for the Tar Heels (21-5, 9-3), who were just 10-for-18 from the free-throw line — 8-for-15 in the second half — in dropping into a first-place tie with Florida State.

This renewal of one of college basketball's fiercest rivalries lived up to its pedigree, with 17 lead changes, nine ties and neither team leading by more than eight points.

With former Duke greats Christian Laettner and J.J. Redick looking on from the crowd at Cameron Indoor Stadium, Allen hit the most important shot of the night — a three-pointer over Jackson with about 1:15 left to put the Blue Devils up 80-75.

After Berry hit two free throws with 1:02 left to pull the Tar Heels within three, Duke played keep away and that set up an open three-pointer for Tatum that bounced high off the back iron. Matt Jones beat Berry to the rebound and Frank Jackson then hit a free throw to put the Blue Devils up 81-77. Berry raced down court and missed an up-and-under layup, and Tatum grabbed the rebound with about 20 seconds remaining to put Duke in control.

North Carolina coach Roy Williams called not getting that long rebound "probably the biggest disappointment."

Big picture

North Carolina: The Tar Heels, who entered as the nation's second-best team on the offensive boards, couldn't turn enough of their misses into second-chance points. North Carolina, which averages more than 16 offensive rebounds, matched a season low with seven while Duke chased down 24 of UNC's misses. The Blue Devils outrebounded the Tar Heels 31-30.

Duke: Suddenly, the Blue Devils have a marquee victory on their NCAA Tournament resume. Before this, their best win probably came over No. 17 Florida in New York in December. This was their first victory over one of the ACC's top-five teams.

Holiday, Ball lift Bruins over Ducks

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Nothing was going right for UCLA when the Bruins trailed by 19 points in the first half. They were forced to call time out after Oregon scored 14 points in 5 minutes to start the second half.

Suddenly, the team with one of the nation's most explosive offenses started playing defense.

Aaron Holiday gave UCLA its first lead on a three-pointer with 4 minutes remaining in the game and the 10th-ranked Bruins rallied from a 19-point first-half deficit to beat No. 5 Oregon 82-79 on Thursday night.

"We know we can score with all the teams in the country so it's just about being tough on the defensive end," Holiday said.

Holiday and star freshman Lonzo Ball scored 15 points each, combining to score

UCLA's final seven points. Ball had 11 rebounds to help his team control the boards, 43-35. The Bruins (22-3, 9-3 Pac-12) moved into a third-place tie with idle California in the league standings.

"When you're down 19, you got to have help and our guys did a great job helping each other," UCLA coach Steve Alford said.

Dillon Brooks and Tyler Dorsey scored 19 points each for the second-place Ducks (21-4, 10-2). Dorsey missed a potential tying three-pointer with 23 seconds left.

"We just have to let this one go," Dorsey said. "We got the lead and we got too confident."

The Bruins closed with a furious rush, battling for rebounds after not getting back to defend early in the game. Holiday's go-ahead basket was part of a 33-

15 run to end the game.

"The second half we guarded a lot better," Ball said. "I'm glad our team came together."

Two free throws by Jordan Bell got the Ducks to 80-79 with 19 seconds to go. Holiday got fouled and made both to preserve the win before Payton Pritchard's three-pointer missed with 1 second left.

The Bruins made two runs in the first half that twice got them within five points after trailing by 19. But the Ducks quickly extended their lead to 15 points early in the second half when Brooks hit three three-pointers and Dorsey added another.

"We were ahead in all categories that we were supposed to be in the first half, but the second half it was different," Ducks coach Dana Altman said. "It's like at the 10-minute mark we were stuck in mud."

Oshie, Capitals double up on Red Wings

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Even when Alex Ovechkin goes without a shot, the Washington Capitals seem to be able to score at will, especially at home. And win, of course.

Ovechkin did not put a puck on net all game for the first time in nearly four years, and it didn't matter one bit, because T.J. Oshie scored twice and set up John Carlson's go-ahead goal for the NHL-leading Capitals, who collected their 11th consecutive home victory by beating the Detroit Red Wings 6-3 Thursday night.

Washington has scored at least five goals in each of its past 10 games at home. According to the Elias Sports Bureau, the only other NHL team with

such a streak was the 1970-71 Boston Bruins, who scored at least five in 11 consecutive home games.

"There are certain buildings that are tough buildings to come into. ... Hopefully we can continue it," Capitals coach Barry Trotz said. "You're coming into a building where you're going, 'Man, they come at you, come at you, come at you.'"

That's normally Ovechkin's style of play: He is one of three players in NHL history with at least seven 50-goal seasons and he has produced more than 500 more shots than any other player since the start of the 2000-01 season.

Bruins 6, Sharks 3: David Pastrnak scored two power-play goals, Patrice Bergeron had a goal and three assists

and host Boston beat San Jose in Bruce Cassidy's coaching debut.

Penguins 4, Avalanche 1: Patric Hornqvist scored twice while Sidney Crosby was held in check, and Matthew Murray made 27 saves to help visiting Pittsburgh beat Colorado.

Blues 2, Maple Leafs 1 (OT): Vladimir Tarasenko scored 20 seconds into overtime and visiting St. Louis kept rolling under new coach Mike Yeo, beating Toronto.

Rangers 4, Predators 3: J.T. Miller scored two goals and host New York rallied to beat Nashville for its fourth consecutive victory.

Canadiens 5, Coyotes 4 (OT): Alex Galchenyuk scored 2:13 into overtime to lift visiting Montreal past Arizona.

Islanders 3, Flyers 1: Jason Chimera scored the go-ahead goal early in the second period, and Thomas Greiss made 34 saves to lead visiting New York past Philadelphia.

Ducks 5, Sabres 2: Corey Perry scored twice and added an assist, and visiting Anaheim beat Buffalo to snap a three-game skid.

Kings 6, Panthers 3: Jeff Carter had two goals and two assists, and visiting Los Angeles beat Florida.

Canucks 3, Blue Jackets 0: Daniel Sedin had a goal and an assist and Ryan Miller stopped 33 shots in visiting Vancouver's victory over Columbus.

Senators 3, Stars 2: Mark Stone scored the go-ahead goal in the third period, leading host Ottawa past Dallas.

Sarkisian deals every day with being an alcoholic

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Since an embarrassing downfall at Southern Cal, Steve Sarkisian has certainly caught plenty of breaks in his professional life.

He called plays for Nick Saban and the Alabama Crimson Tide in the national championship game.

Now, he's got an opportunity to run the Atlanta Falcons' offense, inheriting a high-scoring team that just made it to the Super Bowl behind MVP quarterback Matt Ryan.

But Sarkisian's personal demons are something he must keep a handle on every day.

During a conference call Thursday introducing the Falcons' new offensive coordinator, he talked openly about the battle with alcoholism that cost him his last head coaching job in 2015.

"Everybody has issues they have to deal with, some physical, some mental, whatever it may be," Sarkisian said. "This happens to be an issue of mine that I work on daily. It's important to me so I can be the best person, the best father, the best

coach I can be. I'm diligent about that."

Sarkisian was fired by the Trojans after athletic director Pat Haden said the coach showed up for practice in no shape to work, on the heels of a bizarre display in which he appeared to be intoxicated during a rally with USC boosters. The 42-year-old sought treatment for alcoholism and continues to be involved in that program.

"It's not something that is necessarily in the past," Sarkisian said. "It's something I have to work on every single day, and I do work on it every single day. It's important to me, and it's important to who I am as a person. It's a piece of me, this disease of alcoholism. It's a piece of me, but it doesn't define me. I have a lot more to offer than that."

Saban gave Sarkisian a chance to get back into coaching, hiring him as an offensive analyst this past season. When offensive coordinator Lane Kiffin took the head coaching job at Florida Atlantic, Sarkisian was picked as his successor — and wound up getting a head-start on the job when Alabama parted with Kiffin a week be-

fore the national championship game against Clemson.

The Tide lost 35-31 on a touchdown pass with one second remaining.

Sarkisian said he was looking forward to his first full season as the Tide's coordinator, but his outlook changed when Dan Quinn called the day after Atlanta's Super Bowl loss to New England.

With Kyle Shanahan moving on to become San Francisco's head coach, Sarkisian got an offer to work with Ryan, All Pro receiver Julio Jones, 1,000-yard rusher Devonta Freeman and an offense that averaged nearly 34 points a game.

"I couldn't be more grateful to Coach Saban and everyone at the University of Alabama," Sarkisian said. "That's a heck of a football team with some really talented players. But when you get this type of opportunity — to come to a team that just competed in the Super Bowl, with all the talent they have offensively, to work with Dan — that was something I couldn't pass up."

Sarkisian will be under enormous pressure to make sure

there's no slippage in the wide zone scheme that worked so well under Shanahan, while also putting his own stamp on the offense.

Knowing how important it will be to develop chemistry with Ryan, the two met for lunch shortly after Sarkisian arrived in Atlanta.

"There's no question that my relationship with the starting quarterback is critical to our success," Sarkisian said. "That will be a point of emphasis the whole offseason and going into the season."

At the very least, the two have something in common.

Sarkisian's only game as Alabama's coordinator was a heartbreaking loss. Ryan and the Falcons experienced a similar fate in the Super Bowl, squandering a 25-point lead in the second half before losing 34-28 in overtime.

"This guy has a real fire in his eyes right now," Sarkisian said. "These guys were close. They're coming into the offenses with a chip on their shoulder. I feel the same way. I have a chip on my shoulder."

Westbrook, OKC knock off Cavaliers

Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — The Cleveland Cavaliers considered resting their stars, then played the Oklahoma City Thunder at full strength and lost anyway.

Russell Westbrook scored 29 points and had his 26th triple-double of the season to lead Oklahoma City to a 118-109 victory on Thursday night.

Cavaliers coach Tyrone Lue said after Wednesday's win at Indiana he was considering resting All-Stars LeBron James, Kyrie Irving and Kevin Love, but they all started.

"There was a lot of drama going on before the game," Thunder coach Billy Donovan said. "Who's playing? Who's not playing. They're in. They're out."

"I just really told our guys, even in shootaround this morning, it's about what we need to do and we need to understand personnel like we do for every scout."

Irving scored 28 points, James had 18 and Love added 15 points and 12 rebounds

for the Cavaliers.

"It was good to go through something tough," Lue said. "It was a tough game for us. Four games in six nights, and it was good to fight through and not give in, so our guys came out and played. I liked how we competed."

The Cavaliers beat New York, Washington and Indiana before ending their road trip in Oklahoma City.

"We would have loved to be 4-0, but coming off a back-to-back, you know they gave us everything they had," James said. "We go home extremely proud of what we did on this road trip."

Victor Oladipo scored 23 points, Steven Adams had 20 points and 13 rebounds, and Westbrook added 12 rebounds and 11 assists in the 63rd triple-double of his career. Oklahoma City now can focus on its showdown with former teammate Kevin Durant and the Golden State Warriors on Saturday.

Celtics 120, Trail Blazers 111: Isaiah Thomas scored 34 points, including 15 in

the fourth quarter, as visiting Boston rebounded from a loss the previous night to beat Portland.

Marcus Smart added 18 for the Celtics, who had seven scorers in double figures. Thomas, who went into the game as the NBA's No. 2 scorer behind Russell Westbrook, has scored 20 or more points in 37 straight games. He surpassed the 10.6 points he was averaging in fourth quarters to lead the league.

Rockets 107, Hornets 95: James Harden had 30 points, 11 rebounds and eight assists as visiting Houston beat Charlotte for its third straight win.

Mavericks 112, Jazz 105 (OT): Harrison Barnes scored 31 points, including eight in overtime to help host Dallas rally from a 21-point deficit to beat Utah.

76ers 112, Magic 111: T.J. McConnell made the go-ahead jumper with 5.8 seconds remaining, Dario Saric came off the bench to score 24 points and Philadelphia beat host Orlando.

Oakley persona non grata with Knicks

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Charles Oakley maintains he did nothing wrong before he was surrounded by Madison Square Garden security officials.

Something has happened, though, to turn him from popular player to persona non grata within his former franchise.

Oakley blamed his strained relationship with the Knicks and owner James Dolan on Thursday for the altercation that led to his ejection and arrest from New York's 119-115 loss to the Los Angeles Clippers on Wednesday night.

Oakley said during an ESPN Radio interview that he had been in his seat for just a few minutes when he was surrounded by security, denying that they approached him after he shouted at Dolan.

"Now I'm four rows from this guy, so I'm going to walk in this place and just start hollering, 'James Dolan! James Dolan!' I mean, that's embarrassing, man. I did not do none of that," Oakley said. "I didn't know the man was sitting in front of me at first until they walked over there."

Oakley said he has been told that Dolan must be informed by security whenever he is in the arena, and that MSG staff follows him when he leaves his seat to go to the bathroom.

But the Knicks said he was causing trouble Wednesday even before security reached his seat.

"There are dozens of security staff, employees and NYPD that witnessed Oakley's abusive behavior," the team said in a statement. "It started when he entered the building and continued until he was arrested and left the building. Every single statement we have received is consistent in describing his actions. Everything he said since the incident is pure fiction."

Clippers forward Blake Griffin said he recognized Oakley right away and saw him say something to Dolan before the altercation at his seat.

"I was walking down and I saw him. He stopped and he started talking to Dolan," Griffin said. "But it was crazy. I didn't know what it was about or anything. I just saw a bunch of commotion."

Oakley was charged with three counts of misdemeanor assault and one count of criminal trespass. He is accused of striking one security guard in the face with a closed fist, and when two other people tried to intervene, both were pushed and received cuts.

He is due back in court April 11.

He was back there brawling again Wednesday, only this time it was a sad sight in what's perhaps the team's sorriest era.

The Knicks have become one of the league's worst teams, winning just one playoff series since 2001 and falling to a franchise-worst 17 wins two years ago. Oakley has been a vocal critic of the per-

formance and that's led to his falling out with the organization.

The team gave him complimentary tickets and acknowledged him on the video board when he first retired, but stopped giving him passes after he blasted the team to reporters at a game. He is no longer invited to official team events and when he does go to games, pays his own way. He's not sure if will keep going.

"My thing is, I would love to be able to go to the Garden, but I don't want to keep going to the Garden if all this is going to keep happening," Oakley said. "My thing is, I feel sorry for the fans because those fans like me, and they appreciate me and I appreciate them."

Oakley was also appreciated by teammates, from Michael Jordan in Chicago to Patrick Ewing in New York, and he remains respected by current players. LeBron James and Dwyane Wade posted pictures of Oakley on their Instagram pages, and Clippers coach Doc Rivers said it was difficult watching his former Knicks teammate being dragged away and handcuffed during the first quarter of Wednesday's game.

"Listen, he was my teammate and he was a great teammate," Rivers said. "I don't know what happened. Obviously they had to do what they had to do. They were in the right. Security has to do what they have to do. But at the end of the day it's still your teammate. So that was tough."