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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Tricare overhaul 'life-altering' for families

BY DIANNA CAHN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The letters, as if coordinated, began going out the third week in January.

First Anchorage, Alaska, then Jacksonville, Fla. Soon, military families in Texas and Alabama hubs received notices, too.

Despite months of preparation, the 2018 overhaul of the military health insurance company Tricare was not going smoothly, the letters from service providers explained. Tricare's new management companies were not reimbursing providers and were not responding adequately to phone calls, emails or online submissions.

So therapy clinics such as Bloom Behavioral Solutions in Jacksonville, Integrated Solutions in San Antonio and A Perfect Fit, AK near Anchorage, which offer behavioral therapies for children with autism and other challenges, were finding themselves without recourse — unable to cover the costs of the expensive therapies for children of military families. Services would have to be slashed, each letter said.

For parents, the news was stunning. These therapies are not simply beneficial; they give their children skills to cope with everyday life. Losing them could be devastating for a child's progress.

"I walked into the clinic room and there were parents in tears," said Mary Nelson, a Coast Guard wife whose 7-year-old receives hours of behavioral therapy each week at Bloom. "Everything changed so abruptly. This is life-altering for these kids."

In Alaska, Jeri Romesha received a similar letter Jan. 17 from A Perfect Fit, AK, the center where her daughter, 6, and her son, 3, receive a total of 30 hours of therapy per week.

Romesha, whose husband is a senior master sergeant at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage, started pounding the phones. First she called HealthNet Federal Services, which took over the Tricare West contract Jan. 1. But after hours on hold and no way to leave a message without giving her entire Social Security number, Romesha took a different tack.

She reached out to HealthNet contacts she had through her work as a Transition Assistance Program manager on base. By chance, one of them was a regional director.

The director stepped in, and the providers got paid, Romesha said. "Frankly, we got lucky. If I hadn't reached out to the connections I had, we wouldn't have services now."

Across the country, parents and providers say they are facing overwhelming obstacles to sustaining services under Tricare following the Jan. 1 reorganization that included merging Tricare East and Tricare South and changing contracts for Tricare East and West.

Servicemembers and family members have reported difficulties connecting to online systems and hourslong waits to speak to customer service. Parents and providers said they learned more from each other in online forums than from attempts to reach their insurance representatives.

Anything but smooth

In rolling out Tricare's largest overhaul in two decades, the military consolidated its massive health care program from three regions into two, keeping Tricare West intact and merging north and south into a single Tricare East Region. New management contractors were brought in for both regions.

Months before the rollout,

providers said they sent their rosters and credentials to the new companies to ensure a smooth transition.

But the Jan. 1 transition was anything but smooth.

Some providers did not get their credentials. Referrals weren't going through, and soon problems emerged with claims processing.

'Nobody cares'

When she realized that problems with Tricare were happening around the country, Mandy Farmer fumed. How was it that she was getting calls weeks into the rollout of the Tricare changes saying that the new management company needed more information before it could approve her son's provider? How could Tricare and the Defense Health Agency, or DHA, spend months preparing for the 2018 transition and still get it so wrong?

This wasn't the first time Farmer has had Tricare problems, but she said she had never seen it this bad. The wife of an Air Force colonel at Ellsworth Air Force Base near Rapid City, S.D., and advocate for parents of autistic kids penned a scathing post on her blog "From Motherhood."

"I'm either going to cry or punch someone," she wrote. "Military families all over the country are receiving notice that services for their autistic children will cease because Tricare's new contractors are not paying providers. Tricare knows. The Defense Health Agency knows. Everybody knows. Nobody cares."

Farmer has a child struggling with autism who has benefited greatly from behavioral therapies that the family could not afford without insurance.

For an autistic child who thrives on structure and predictable planning, the sudden

changes were overwhelming.

It is "yanking the rug out from under them," said Farmer. "It's devastating to families."

'A number of challenges'

In a statement Thursday, the DHA said it was aware of the problems in credentialing providers and paying out claims — particularly for services to special-needs patients receiving applied behavioral analysis for autism-spectrum disorders. It committed to resolving the issue and to overseeing Humana's performance closely.

"Resolving the issues families are facing is our highest priority," the statement said.

It also outlined improvements, including adding a special customer service number for applied behavioral analysis providers and additional training for customer service representatives.

"All errors inappropriately denying ABA (applied behavioral analysis) provider claims were corrected as of Jan. 25," the statement said. "All claims are now processing correctly and all prior claims that were processed incorrectly have been reprocessed with no action needed by the provider. Claims from ABA providers are now processing and being paid in an average of seven to 10 days."

But providers said that while claims processing time has improved, problems continue. Providers said they still must spend hours on the phone to get errors corrected, and many still are not getting fixed.

For parents, the confusion remains. Many are receiving only partial services, and they worry about the short- and long-term consequences for their children.

"We need to get the word out there," Mary Nelson said. "These families are suffering."

US Olympians celebrate troops, families in Seoul

By KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

YONGSAN GARRISON, South Korea — Olympians past and present joined several entertainers to celebrate U.S. troops and their families during a festival at Yongsan Garrison in Seoul, South Korea, on Monday as the 2018 Winter Games being held nearby entered their second week.

“Getting to come here and meet the families and the men and women who are serving was a tremendous honor,” said Sasha Cohen, who won a silver medal in figure skating at the 2006 Olympics.

She noted the similarities between Olympians and soldiers, both of whom spend many years training for a singular moment. “I think that the sacrifice and dedication are definitely appreciated,” she said.

Cohen and other athletes appeared at the Winterfest, which was held at Yongsan’s Collier Community Fitness Center. Singer Rachel Platten, of “Fight Song” fame, TV personality Al Roker and Cedric the Entertainer were among the other headliners.

The athletes included American soldiers who competed in the Olympics as part of the Army’s World Class Athlete Program.

Sgt. Matt Mortensen and his civilian teammate, Jayson Terdiman, signed autographs after finishing a disappointing 10th in the doubles luge competition and missing a medal in the team relay by just about a tenth of a second last week in Pyeongchang.

“It was a little bit of a heartbreaker, but everybody put forth their best effort,” Terdiman told reporters at the festival.

Mortensen, 32, a National Guardsman from Huntington Station, N.Y., said he had a great time talking to his fellow soldiers and others on Yongsan.

“Always a pleasure to give back to those that have sacrificed for our country,” he tweeted.

The athletes welcomed North Korea’s participation in the Feb. 9-25 Pyeongchang Games, which helped ease security concerns amid tensions over the country’s nuclear weapons program.

“The ideals of the games are peace through sport, and it’s a powerful thing,” said Lt. Col. Garrett Hines, who won a silver medal in the four-man bobsled event in Salt Lake City, Utah, in 2002. “There has been ... some level of peace during these games and that’s what you want to see.”

Philippines: Risk of conflict elevated in South China Sea

Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — The risks of a “miscalculation” and armed conflict have risen in the disputed South China Sea, with a militarily stronger China now able to challenge the United States, which used to be the dominant power in the strategic waterway, the Philippine envoy to Beijing said Monday.

Ambassador Jose Santiago “Chito” Sta. Romana said the balance of power was shifting with the two global powers vying for control of the waters, adding the Philippines should not get entangled in the increasingly tense maritime rivalry.

China claims virtually the entire South China Sea, where the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei also have overlapping claims, and it has built seven mostly submerged reefs into islands that reportedly could be used as forward air naval bases and have been installed with a missile defense system.

The U.S. Navy has sailed warships on “freedom-of-navigation” operations near the artificial islands, actions China has protested as U.S. intervention in an Asian conflict.

“Whereas before the South China Sea was dominated by the U.S. 7th Fleet, now the Chinese navy is starting to challenge the dominance,” Sta. Romana told a news forum in Manila. “I think we will see a shift in the balance of power.”

“It is not the case that the South China Sea is now a Chinese lake, not at all,” Sta. Romana said. “Look at the U.S. aircraft carrier; it’s still going through the South China Sea,” he added, referring to the USS Carl Vinson that recently patrolled the disputed waters and is currently on a visit to the Philippines.

He compared the two powers to elephants fighting and trampling on the grass and said, “What we don’t want is for us to be the grass.”

Soldier says destiny brought her to serve at Camp Casey, South Korea

By MARCUS FICHTL
Stars and Stripes

CAMP CASEY, South Korea — Second Lt. Sarah Casey shares a name with her duty station, a small artillery outpost near the Korean Demilitarized Zone.

The artillery platoon leader from Collierville, Tenn., played along with the ribbing when folks greeted her with comments like, “Casey at Casey!” after glancing at her name tape. Until last month, when she revealed her secret.

The camp was named in honor of her great-uncle, Maj. Hugh B. Casey, a World War II veteran killed in the Korean War who was awarded two Silver Stars during the liberation of the Philippines.

“I’m not here to say, ‘Hi, I’m Sarah Casey at Camp Casey,’” she said. “I think it’s important to remember the sacrifices of all those who came before us; that’s what the real story is to me.”

Sarah Casey was 26 when she arrived in South Korea — the same age her great-uncle was when he lost his life. She said her path to Camp Casey was destined.

“I’m one of those people who believes everything happens for a reason,” she said.

Maj. Hugh Casey’s actions during the Korean War earned him two battlefield promotions and a third Silver Star.

During a counteroffensive against Chinese forces near Suwon, just south of Seoul, he led a task force of 7th Infantry Regiment soldiers deep into enemy territory. He was leading a company on a hill 700 yards from Chinese lines when the Communists opened fire on an American patrol, United Press International reported Feb. 5, 1951.

“(Hugh) Casey ordered his men to fix bayonets, and they charged the entire 700 yards into the enemy force, killing 60 in a furious melee of stabbing, grenading and close quarter rifle fire,” the report said.

On Jan. 11, 1952, he became one of the more than 40,000 Americans who gave their lives during the war. A small plane he was in crashed into a hill overlooking a temporary camp. Within weeks, the small base was renamed in his honor.

Sarah Casey, who leads 18 troops and four Multiple Launch Rocket Systems as a member of the 210th Field Artillery Brigade, is technically involved in the same war as her great-uncle. Conflict on the peninsula ended in 1953 with an armistice, not a peace treaty.

Iraqi Shiite-led force ambushed; 27 dead

Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Islamic State militants ambushed a group of Iraq's Shiite-led paramilitary fighters, killing at least 27 people, more than two months after Baghdad declared victory over the extremist group, officials said Monday.

The Popular Mobilization Forces, an umbrella group of mostly Shiite militias, said in a statement that the attack took place southwest of the northern city of Kirkuk, where the paramilitaries were conducting overnight raids.

The attackers were disguised in army uniforms and manning a fake checkpoint, the state-

ment said, adding that ensuing clashes lasted for at least two hours and that some of the militants were killed and others fled the area.

Brig. Gen. Yahya Rasool, an Iraqi military spokesman, blamed ISIS "sleeper cells" and said Iraqi forces were searching the area to find the perpetrators.

ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement carried by its Aamaq news agency.

Karim al-Nouri, a PMF spokesman, described the attack as a "heinous crime" and called for greater scrutiny of Iraqis returning to areas liber-

ated from ISIS. He said the attackers had taken advantage of heavy rains overnight.

Hadi al-Amiri, the leader of the Badr Brigade, one of the most prominent Shiite militias, vowed "revenge."

Speaking at a military airfield in Baghdad where the bodies were being flown in, he called on security forces to be vigilant, saying, "The war against terrorism is not over yet."

Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi's office put out a statement expressing condolences to family members of those killed. It said it had issued orders to hunt down those responsible

and other sleeper cells, and to investigate the incident and take any required steps.

At least 11 of the slain troops were from the southern city of Basra, where a three-day mourning period was declared.

Iraq declared victory over ISIS in December after more than three years of heavy fighting. The group has been driven from all the territory it seized in the summer of 2014, but U.S. and Iraqi officials have said it is likely to continue launching insurgent-style attacks.

Last month, ISIS launched back-to-back suicide bombings in central Baghdad, killing at least 38 people.

Turkey warns it may hit Syrian troops in enclave

Associated Press

BEIRUT — Turkey threatened on Monday to hit back at Syrian pro-government troops if they deploy in an enclave in northern Syria to protect a Kurdish militia that Ankara is battling there.

The warning by the Turkish foreign minister came shortly after Syrian state media said pro-government forces will begin entering the Kurdish-controlled enclave of Afrin in the country's northwest "within hours," after reaching an agreement with the Kurdish militia in control of the region.

The official SANA news agency said the forces will deploy in Afrin to "bolster" local forces in confronting Turkish "aggression," suggesting the Syrian government and Kurdish fighters have struck a deal under which the government forces would help repel an ongoing Turkish offensive on the enclave.

The agreement may prompt Turkey to pull out and end a monthlong air and ground offensive that aims to oust the Syrian Kurdish militia known as the People's Protection Units, or YPG, from Afrin. Ankara considers the YPG a "ter-

rorist group" linked to its own Kurdish insurgency within Turkey's borders.

Turkey's foreign minister promptly issued the warning, saying his country is ready to battle Syrian government troops if they enter Afrin to protect the Kurdish fighters.

Speaking in the Jordanian capital of Amman, Mevlut Cavusoglu added that "if the regime is entering to protect the YPG, then no one can stop us, stop Turkey or the Turkish soldiers."

On the other hand, he said that Ankara would have no problem if Syrian government forces enter Afrin to clear the area of YPG fighters.

The announcements came as violence continued in Afrin.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights and Syria's state media reported that Turkish troops pounded villages in the enclave with artillery shells.

SANA gave no further details about the deployment of the troops, known as "popular forces," to the area. The Syrian government withdrew from much of the border area with Turkey in 2012 and maintains no presence in Afrin.

"The popular forces joining the resistance against Turkish occupation in Afrin comes in the framework of supporting residents as well as defending Syria and its sovereignty," SANA said, adding that the deployment aims to "frustrate attempts by (Turkish President Recep Tayyip) Erdogan's regime and its mercenaries of terrorist organizations to occupy the area," referring to Turkish-backed Syrian insurgents.

A Syrian Kurdish official told The Associated Press that Syrian troops will enter Afrin from the Shiite villages of Nubul and Zahraa through the Ziyara crossing that links government-held parts of the country with those held by the YPG.

"The army will deploy in several border areas in coordination with the People's Protection Units and the Syrian Democratic force," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to reveal details of the agreement.

"The army will set up military positions in the border area, and the agreement is that the Syrian army and the YPG will defend Syria together," the

official said.

He added that the agreement so far does not include anything about running the administration affairs in Afrin, saying that will be discussed in the future.

The move could be a first step toward restoring the Syrian government presence along the border with Turkey, which has been an active supporter of President Bashar Assad's opponents and sponsored rebels fighting to oust him throughout the seven-year Syrian civil war.

However, Turkey in recent years has focused more on limiting expanding Kurdish influence along its borders.

Turkey's private Haberturk newspaper said the Syrian government forces were expected to deploy at 52 locations within the week and to four locations in the next two days.

The paper claimed that under the deal, the YPG had agreed to hand over heavy weapons it holds.

The paper did not provide a source for the report.

The Kurdish official told the AP that the reports about the YPG handing over their weapons are "totally untrue."

School shooting survivors face 'marathon' of funerals

The Washington Post

PARKLAND, Fla. — Under vacation-blue Florida skies, the young mourners have emerged from family SUVs and minivans at funeral after funeral, high school girls in black dresses and heels, and teen boys in black shirts and pants.

"This is physically and emotionally the kind of marathon I never want anyone else to have to run," said Ken Cutler, a city commissioner, following one of the funerals Sunday for victims of last week's shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. Seventeen people died, mainly teens.

"These are children who have never had death touch their lives," said Cutler, 58, whose wife is a teacher who survived the shooting.

Since Friday, they've attended a succession of funerals for teachers and fellow classmates. On Sunday, they memorialized

geography teacher Scott Beigel and two 14-year-old students — Jaime Guttenberg, a freshman girl who loved dancing, and Alex Schachter, a freshman boy who played trombone in the school band.

This affluent city of gated communities, private golf courses and top-notch schools is struggling to cope with the American tragedy of mass shootings. As in small communities before them, including Newtown, Conn., and Sutherland Springs, Texas, virtually everyone here knows someone who was killed. They are mourning together like family, with processions that clog streets and services that overflow hotel event rooms.

They are also fighting back with a focused fury. Parkland's teenagers have emerged since the shootings as a fearless and powerful political voice calling for stricter gun laws. On Sunday, in a round of appearances

on national television, teenage survivors of the shooting, propelled by their haunting experience, announced the creation of "March For Our Lives" and what they hope will be a huge demonstration in Washington on March 24.

On ABC's "This Week," 11th-grader Cameron Kasky said the movement, whose hashtag instantly went viral, aims to get beyond party politics to give a rising generation the chance to "create a new normal" out of entrenched gun politics.

"We are losing our lives while the adults are playing around," Kasky said.

But their raging activism is also mixed with quiet personal pain. At the same time that Parkland teens are trying to create a political force to challenge the National Rifle Association, they also are juggling funeral and burial schedules day after day.

Puerto Rico to slash energy reserves

Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — Puerto Rico's power company said Sunday that it will reduce its operating reserve to save money amid a cash shortfall as officials warned the move could destabilize the U.S. territory's fragile electrical grid.

William Rios, generation director at Puerto Rico's Electric Power Authority, said a plan to cut its reserve by 450 megawatts won't affect customers and will help save \$9 million a month.

Public Affairs Secretary Ramon Rosario said that while the measure is needed, it could affect a grid still experiencing frequent blackouts as nearly 250,000 customers remain without power more than five months after Hurricane Maria.

The storm destroyed two-thirds of the power distribution system and caused the longest blackout in U.S. history.

The company did not provide further details on the reduction, and officials did not return messages for further comment.

However, Puerto Rico had a very high reserve margin for its generation prior to the hurricane, according to Susan Tierney, a senior adviser for Denver-based consulting company Analysis Group who testified before a U.S. Senate committee on power restoration efforts in Puerto Rico. She told The Associated Press that the island's reserve margin was 90 percent, compared with 15 to 20 percent on the U.S. mainland. She said 90 percent was still high, even when taking into account the island's geography and need to import fuel, among other things.

"There's room to retire some generation," she said.

A December report, prepared in part by the Electric Power Research Institute, found Puerto Rico's power company could reduce its reserve margin as it rebuilds. It also recommended that a study be conducted to establish a new reserve margin closer to 50 percent.

Ex-Trump aide to plead guilty

Tribune Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — A former top aide to Donald Trump's presidential campaign will plead guilty to fraud-related charges within days and has made it clear to prosecutors that he would testify against Paul Manafort, the lawyer-lobbyist who once managed the campaign.

The change of heart by Trump's former deputy campaign manager, Rick Gates, who had pleaded not guilty after being indicted in October on charges similar to those against Manafort, was described in interviews by people familiar with the case.

"Rick Gates is going to change his plea to guilty," said a person with direct knowledge of the development, adding that the revised plea will be presented in federal court in Washington "within the next few days."

That individual and others who discussed the matter spoke on condition of anonymity, citing a judge's gag order restricting comments about the case to the news media or public.

Special Counsel Robert Mueller is heading the prosecutions of Gates and Manafort as part of the wide-ranging investigation into Russian med-

dling in the 2016 election and whether Trump or his aides committed crimes before, during or since the campaign.

The imminent change of Gates' plea follows negotiations over the last several weeks between Green and two of Mueller's prosecutors — senior assistant special counsels Andrew Weissmann and Greg D. Andres.

According to a person familiar with those talks, Gates, a longtime political consultant, can expect "a substantial reduction in his sentence" if he fully cooperates with the investigation. He said Gates is likely to serve about 18 months in prison.

The Oct. 27 indictment showed that prosecutors had amassed substantial documentation to support their charges that Manafort and Gates — who were colleagues in political consulting for about a decade — had engaged in a complex series of allegedly illegal transactions rooted in Ukraine.

If Manafort maintains his not-guilty plea and fights the charges at a trial, the testimony from Gates could provide prosecutors with first-person descriptions of much of the allegedly illegal conduct.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Candidate holds rifle raffle despite critics

MD BALTIMORE — A candidate for a Maryland House seat held a campaign fundraiser that included raffling off an AR-15 assault rifle, the same type used in the Florida school shooting last week.

The Baltimore Sun reported that Aaron Penman, a Republican, went ahead with the event Saturday night despite criticism that it was insensitive.

Before the sold-out fundraiser began at a local fire hall, about 15 people protested peacefully nearby. They read the names of the 17 people who were killed at the high school in Parkland, Fla., as well as victims in other mass shootings.

The Facebook posting for Penman's event said gun winners would have to complete background checks. Penman, who is a sheriff's deputy, said canceling the event would have been an infringement on the Second Amendment.

Man arrested in death of wife following fight

OK LAWTON — An Oklahoma man suspected of supplying his wife with methamphetamine and then binding her after she became combative has been arrested following her death.

Police said Brandon Harris, 49, was arrested on suspicion of second-degree manslaughter and drug charges following the death of Heather Harris at their home in Lawton.

An affidavit made public Friday says the woman died shortly after midnight Feb. 10 after the couple took meth that Brandon Harris had supplied. He told police that after consuming the drug, Heather Harris took her clothes off and went outside for at least half an hour

in temperatures near freezing.

Afterward, the affidavit says, the couple fought physically and Brandon Harris bound her "until she became unconscious and died."

Trees to be cut down to avert car crashes

MI DEXTER — Officials in a southeastern Michigan city plan to cut down more than 100 trees along a stretch of road because drivers keep veering off the road and hitting them.

The Washtenaw County Road Commission told The Ann Arbor News there have been at least six vehicle crashes along Mast Road north of Dexter since 2012. Commission officials said the trees are too close to the road and pose a safety hazard.

The commission plans to use federal safety grant funds for the project.

2 bears badly burned in fire back in forest

CA GOLETA — Two female bears badly burned in a wildfire are back home in Los Padres National Forest.

KABC-TV reported recent photos and GPS tracking show the bears are moving around and in good health in the forest after suffering burn injuries in December from a massive wildfire that affected Ventura and Santa Barbara counties.

The bears were released back into the wild in January.

Man hit by piece of fire escape dies

NY NEW YORK — A man died after being hit by a piece of fire escape from a New York City building.

Police said Richard March-

hart, 58, died Saturday from a skull fracture he sustained when he was hit by the debris Friday.

Police said Marchhart, of Garden City, was walking on Broadway in Manhattan's SoHo neighborhood when he was hit by a piece of a building's metal fire escape.

Officials said a worker was inspecting the fire escape seven stories up on a ladder when a piece of it broke off and fell.

Teen stuck between cave rocks rescued

PA PEQUEA — Authorities said a 15-year-old youth trapped in a cave in Pennsylvania was rescued after a lengthy effort.

The youth, who was part of a group accompanied by a cave guide, was about 200 feet into the Wind Cave in Lancaster County's Martic Township when he became wedged between some rocks.

Fire and emergency rescue agencies from York and Lancaster counties responded shortly after 5:30 p.m. Saturday. Heating pads were used to keep the youth warm as rescuers worked to free him.

A county dispatcher said the youth was freed shortly before midnight.

Hiker falls from cliff while seeking shortcut

OR BEND — A Bend hiker was rescued after falling at Smith Rock State Park while searching for a shortcut to the parking lot.

The Bend Bulletin reported that Caitlin Richmond called 911 at 5:30 p.m. Saturday to report her husband, Samuel Bedell, had fallen at the lower gorge near the park's north point parking lot.

The Deschutes County Sheriff's Office said rescue person-

nel found Bedell on a small ledge at the base of a cliff. He was lifted about 40 feet in a litter and was taken to a Bend hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

Man arrested in sale of AR-15s to agent

CA SACRAMENTO — Authorities said a California man was arrested for manufacturing and selling AR-15 rifles — known as "ghost guns" that are virtually untraceable — to an undercover federal agent.

The Sacramento Bee reported that court documents say the arrest Thursday stems from a five-month Homeland Security investigation that used the dark web, Bitcoin payments, secret meetings and discussions of buying grenades, anti-personnel mines and explosives.

A 31-page criminal complaint unsealed Friday unveiled the suspected plot.

Bathroom mullied after complaints

ME OLD ORCHARD BEACH — The Maine town of Old Orchard Beach is considering adding additional public restrooms after getting complaints about people relieving themselves near the town beach and on private property.

The Biddeford Journal reported that the town has public restrooms downtown but not at other access points to the beach. Some residents even have complained about visitors defecating in public places.

The town is now considering buying a self-contained restroom trailer that can be used in the summer months and stored in the winter.

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Dillon drives No. 3 back to Victory Lane at Daytona 500

Associated Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — The No. 3 is No. 1 again at Daytona, on a day, in a race and at a place forever linked with the great Dale Earnhardt.

Austin Dillon won the Daytona 500 on Sunday night driving the iconic No. 3 Chevrolet that Earnhardt piloted for most of his career. Earnhardt was behind the wheel of No. 3 when he won his only Daytona 500 in 1998, and when he was killed in an accident on the final lap of the race three years later.

Dillon's victory, in the 60th running of "The Great American Race," came 17 years to the day of Earnhardt's fatal crash.

Dillon wasn't a factor in his Richard Childress Racing Chevrolet until the final lap in overtime when he got a push from Darrell "Bubba" Wallace Jr. that helped him get to leader Aric Almirola. Dillon spun Almirola then whizzed on by to give Childress, his grandfather, another iconic victory in the beloved No. 3.

"My grandfather has done everything for me and everybody knows it," Dillon said. "There's a lot of pressure on me to perform because I've had a little bit of everything. But I like that pressure, the same with the No. 3, there's a lot of pressure behind it, but I'm willing to take it and go with it."

As for the aggressive move that wrecked Almirola? Dillon was doing what has to be done to win at Daytona.

"We just had a run and I stayed on the gas. It's what it is when you're at Daytona," he said. "I just had more momentum when he was trying to

block me and it turned him. Hate that for him, but it's the Daytona 500. He should do the same thing to me in that position."

Almirola, in his debut race for Stewart-Haas Racing, was devastated.

"My heart is broken. I thought I was going to win the Daytona 500," Almirola said.

Childress was overjoyed.

"I just, the emotions just flowing, to be able to win, with the 3 car, having it in the winner's circle, my grandson, 20 years after Dale won in '98, so special," Childress said.

The final scoring tower showed the No. 3 on top, then the No. 43 — two of the most seminal numbers in NASCAR.

Wallace, the first black driver in the Daytona 500 field since 1969, finished second in a 1-2 finish for Chevrolet and Childress' engine program. Wallace drives the No. 43 car for Richard Petty

Denny Hamlin, the 2016 winner, finished third in a Toyota.

The day was a bust for Danica Patrick, who made the Daytona 500 her final NASCAR race. With new boyfriend NFL quarterback Aaron Rodgers cheering her on, Patrick was collected in an accident and finished 35th. The only woman to lead laps in the Daytona 500 and win the pole for this race then told a story about an exchange she had earlier this week with four-time NASCAR champion Jeff Gordon.

"He said his last Daytona didn't go well, either, and I was like 'Oh wow, I don't remember that. I remember your career.' So I hope that is how it is with me with everybody," she said.

Wallace has milestone finish

Associated Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Darrell Wallace Jr. let the weight of his milestone in the Daytona 500 wallop him once he saw Mom. He sobbed as Desiree Wallace bounded onto the dais and wrapped her arms around her son for a hug neither wanted to end.

"You did that thing, baby," she said, sobbing. "I'm so proud of you. You have waited so long, baby."

Wallace's runner-up finish in the No. 43 Chevrolet to Austin Dillon in the Daytona 500 suddenly felt like a checkered flag.

"You act like we just won the race," he said, laughing.

"We did win that race, baby. I love you. I'm so proud of you," Desiree Wallace said.

"Dangit, Mom!" Wallace said.

His brief moment of levity gave way to an embrace with his sister Brittany, who as a child coined the "Bubba" nickname that has stuck to this day for Wallace.

"There's no good story about it," Brittany Wallace said, laughing.

Wallace bawled some more into a towel before he finally composed himself.

"Pull it together, bud. Pull it together," he told himself. "You just finished second. It's awesome."

Wallace carved a slice of NASCAR history Sunday night in only his fifth career start when he posted the best finish by a black driver in the Daytona 500. Wallace was the first black driver to start the Daytona 500 since Wendell Scott in 1969. Scott was 13th in the 1966 race, the previous best finish for a black driver at Daytona.

He handled the pressure with ease — until he collapsed in tears in the presence of family.

"I just try so hard to be successful at everything I do," Wallace said. "My family pushes me each and every day, and they might not even know it, but I just want to make them proud."

NHL roundup

McDavid gets hat trick, win

Associated Press

DENVER — Connor McDavid had his third hat trick of the season and the Edmonton Oilers beat the Colorado Avalanche 4-2 on Sunday to snap a six-game losing streak.

McDavid has 11 goals in the last nine games and two hat tricks. His first two goals tied it, and the third was into an empty net with 1:26 left. He has five goals in two games against Colorado this season.

Ryan Strome also scored, and Cam Talbot had 24 saves to help the Oilers snap Colorado's 10-game home winning streak. Tyson Jost and Alexander Kerfoot scored for the Avalanche.

Penguins 5, Blue Jackets 2: Riley Sheahan scored two goals in the first period and rookie Tristan Jarry made 35 saves in visiting Pittsburgh's victory.

Maple Leafs 3, Red Wings 2: Auston Matthews scored with 30.2 seconds left to push Toronto past host Detroit.

Matthews took William Nylander's pass and snapped a high shot into the roof of the net from a sharp angle for his 27th goal of the season, but just his fourth winner.

Flyers 7, Rangers 4: Travis Konecny broke a tie late in the second period and Alex Lyon made 25 saves in relief to help Philadelphia beat host New York.

Sharks 5, Stars 2: Mikkel Boedker scored twice in San Jose's four-goal first period and the host Sharks beat Dallas for their fourth victory in five games.

Devils 3, Hurricanes 2 (OT): Taylor Hall scored on a rebound with 22 seconds left in overtime to lift New Jersey past host Carolina and extend his NHL-best points streak to 11 games.

Jets 7, Panthers 2: Kyle Connor scored twice, Blake Wheeler and Tyler Myers each had three assists and host Winnipeg beat Florida to take the Central Division lead.

Team LeBron gets past Team Steph

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — LeBron James and Kevin Durant swarmed all over Stephen Curry in the final seconds, preventing the NBA's best shooter from finding even a patch of open air to launch a tying three-pointer.

Defense? In an All-Star Game?

That was just one of the many exciting surprises created by a big change to the league's mid-season showcase. After James and Curry got to draft their own teams, this exhibition really seemed to matter to basketball's best.

And LeBron picked a winner.

James scored 29 points and hit the go-ahead layup with 34.5 seconds to play, winning his third All-Star Game MVP award while his team rallied to win an uncommonly entertaining edition of the event, beating Team Stephen 148-145 Sunday night.

For the first time in 67 All-Star Games, the league abandoned the traditional East-West format used since 1951, instead allowing the two captains to pick their sides. That twist

turned a sometimes staid event into the world's richest pickup game, and the intrigue was reflected on the Staples Center court, where a real basketball game broke out.

"I think the format was great," said James, who added 10 rebounds and eight assists in front of LA fans salivating at the still-remote possibility of the Lakers landing the superstar as a free agent this summer.

"The great thing about our commissioner (Adam Silver), he's absolutely OK with trying something new, to change the format, and it definitely worked out for everybody," James added. "It worked out not only for the players, not only for the league, but for our fans, for everybody. It was a great weekend, and we capped it off the right way."

Both teams played real defense for long stretches and contested many shots, with LeBron's group even picking up full-court late in the first half.

And after an entertaining dunk contest won by Donovan Mitchell and a record-setting effort by Devin Booker in the Three-Point Shootout, the All-Star weekend ended with a recent novelty for the main event:

a thrilling finish.

"The game was so good," said a grinning Durant, who scored 19 points in his ninth All-Star Game. "It was so competitive. It was the best one I've been a part of."

Team LeBron rallied from an 11-point deficit with six minutes to play, finishing the game on a 25-11 run. James tied it at 144-144 on a step-back three-pointer with 1:31 to play.

LA native DeMar DeRozan hit one free throw to put Team Steph back ahead, but LeBron claimed the lead with his layup after some sharp passing by his teammates. DeRozan then made a turnover on an attempted pass to Giannis Antetokounmpo, and Russell Westbrook broke out for a layup with 10.7 seconds left.

Team Steph had one last chance, but even the usually unguardable Curry couldn't elude James and Durant, who forced him to give up the ball to DeRozan, who couldn't score over Durant's arm in his face.

"That was great defense by myself," said a grinning Durant, who scored 19 points in his ninth All-Star Game. "I'm patting myself on the back."

Curry finished with 11 points on 4-for-14 shooting.

"Two tall giants out there not letting me shoot," Curry said with a laugh when describing the last play. "Tried to make a play, and it just didn't work out."

The All-Stars' shooting percentages and final scores were way down from recent seasons, reflecting the effort on the floor. The relaxed All-Star vibe was still at Staples, however: Curry chomped down on a box of popcorn on the bench during the third quarter, and the stars made time and room for plenty of good-looking dunks and alley-oops.

Each member of the winning team made a cool \$100,000, a distinct raise from previous seasons in another attempt to make things more interesting.

"It was better," said Team Steph's Klay Thompson, who scored all 15 of his points on three-pointers in his fourth All-Star Game. "At the end, it was 100 percent. Throughout the game, it was probably 70, but guys were competitive and they really wanted to win that game."

Top 25 roundup

Shockers snap Bearcats' home win streak

Associated Press

HIGHLAND HEIGHTS, Ky. — Dave Stallworth was running the show the last time Wichita State beat a Top 5 team on the road. Landry Shamut took the lead as the Shockers did it again 54 years later.

This one, too, will be a reference point, given all that was at stake.

Shamut scored 19 points, and No. 19 Wichita State ended the nation's longest home-court winning streak, beating No. 5 Cincinnati 76-72 on Sunday to leave the American Athletic Conference race wide open.

The Shockers (21-5, 11-3) beat a Top 5 team on the road for the first time since 1964. They led most of the way, building an 11-point lead midway through the second half and holding on. Shaquille Morris'

dunk with 5 seconds left finished it off.

The Shockers ran onto the floor for congratulatory chest bumps. Coach Gregg Marshall got a celebratory dunking in the locker room, leaving his light-colored shirt clinging to him.

"It's tremendous," Marshall said. "Look at my shirt. College basketball has such tremendous parity. The games are decided by great players making great plays. Landry is a tremendous player."

The Bearcats (23-4, 12-2) had won their last 39 home games. In their first real home challenge of the season, they wound up playing catch-up and coming up short. Cincinnati hasn't beaten a ranked team all season, falling to 0-3 with losses to Xavier and Florida.

Cincinnati and Wichita State were ex-

pected to contend for the title in the Shockers' first season in the AAC. Wichita State gave itself a chance with a solid all-around game led by its point guard. Shamut had 16 points in the first half, when the Shockers shredded the nation's second-ranked defense to take control.

No. 6 Purdue 76, Penn State 73: Carsen Edwards scored 27 points to lead host Purdue.

No. 22 Michigan 74, No. 8 Ohio State 62: Jordan Poole scored 12 of his 15 points in the first half to help host Michigan take the lead, and it never trailed in the second half.

No. 12 Duke 66, No. 11 Clemson 57: Gary Trent Jr. hit three foul shots with 1:31 left to put Duke ahead for good and the Blue Devils beat host Clemson.

Russian curler charged with doping

Associated Press

PYEONGCHANG, South Korea — Russia could lose its chance to be reinstated before the end of the Winter Olympics because of a doping charge against curling bronze medalist Alexander Krushelnitsky.

The Court of Arbitration for Sport said in a statement Monday that it has “initiated a procedure involving” Krushelnitsky, who finished third in mixed doubles with his wife, Anastasia Bryzgalova.

IOC spokesman Mark Adams says a failed doping test could keep Russia’s banned team from marching under the national flag at the closing ceremony.

Russian athletes are participating in the Pyeongchang Olympics as “Olympic Athletes from Russia.” The IOC suspended the Russian Olympic committee last year in connection with a massive doping scheme at

the 2014 Olympics in Sochi but allowed 168 athletes to compete under neutral uniforms and without the Russian national flag.

Adams confirmed the positive test and says it could have “consequences” in evaluating the behavior the Russian team, which was required to abide by restrictions — including bans to some medal favorites — and to undergo extra drug tests.

“If confirmed this will be taken into account along with many other factors” regarding Russian behavior,” Adams said.

Russian curlers said a coach told them that Krushelnitsky tested positive for a banned substance. Women’s skip Viktoria Moiseeva said the coach “came to tell us the news” late Sunday.

She added the team wanted to comfort Krushelnitsky and Bryzgalova but “we thought that there are no words to comfort now. We just tried to stay away.”

Russian Curling Federation president Dmitry Svishchev told The Associated Press that Krushelnitsky tested clean as recently as January 22, the day before he flew to a pre-Olympic training camp in Japan.

Though to the uninitiated, the idea of a curler using performance-enhancing drugs may seem bizarre, the sport does demand a high level of athleticism at the Olympic level. Curlers need to have strong core muscles and upper body strength in order to manage the often rigorous sweeping that helps them guide the rock down the ice.

Fitness is even more important in mixed doubles, the event Krushelnitsky was competing in. Because there are just two curlers on each team instead of the four in traditional curling, there is little rest between throws, and both teammates are often heavily involved in sweeping.

Olympics roundup

Germany, Canada tie for two-man bobsled gold

Associated Press

PYEONGCHANG, South Korea — Justin Kripps and Francesco Friedrich stood side-by-side in celebration, the Canadian and German flags overlapping one another.

Even then, they couldn’t be separated as the closest bobsled race in Olympic history left two countries jumping for joy.

Canada and Germany will share the two-man gold medal from the Pyeongchang Games after Kripps and Friedrich made their way down nearly four miles of ice in exactly the same time. Kripps and brakeman Alexander Kopacz gave Canada its second gold in a two-man event, while Friedrich and Thorsten Margis gave Germany its fourth two-man win in the last five Olympics.

The winning time when everything was done Monday: 3 minutes, 16.86 seconds.

Latvia got bronze, with Oskars Melbardis and Janis Strenga finishing 0.05 seconds back to complete the closest three-sled finish in Olympic history.

Speedskating: Norway’s Harvard Lorentzen proved that a

program which has been in disarray for two decades is on the up by winning the 500-meter gold in an Olympic record time.

To make it even better, the Dutch were nowhere in sight, totally shut out in an event which they swept only four years ago.

The 25-year-old Norwegian speedskater gave his country, a powerhouse best known for its Alpine and cross-country skiers, its 10th gold medal and 27th overall. Germany later added a 10th gold in the two-man bobsled, but Norway moved back in front with an 11th in ski jumping’s team event.

Lorentzen won in 34.41 seconds at the Gangneung Oval. He beat Cha Min-Kyu of South Korea, who had equaled the Olympic record earlier, by 0.01 seconds. Twenty-year-old Gao Tingyu of China took bronze.

Ski jumping: The red handlebar mustache finally has a golden accoutrement.

After winning two bronze medals at the Pyeongchang Olympics, Robert Johansson helped Norway win the large hill team ski jumping title.

Johansson leapt 136 meters with the final jump as Norway

relied on its depth to accrue 1,098.5 points and overwhelm 2014 champion Germany, which finished 22.8 points behind for silver.

It’s been quite an Olympics for Johansson, the 27-year-old Lillehammer native with the distinctive red facial hair.

“This is way more than what I expected from my first Olympics,” Johansson said. “It’s a special situation to be in and to top it off with gold in the team event is a dream come true.”

He also won bronze medals in the normal and large hill individual finals to become the first ski jumper since Gregor Schlierenzauer of Austria in 2010 to win a medal in each of the three men’s ski jumping events at a single Olympics.

Poland took the bronze with 1,072.4 points.

Women’s hockey: The Americans played their way back into the only women’s hockey game that matters: a showdown with Canada for the Olympic gold medal.

The Americans are back in the title game for a third straight Olympics after shutting out Finland 5-0 on Monday in the semifinals. They will face

their arch-rival, which beat the “Olympic Athletes from Russia” 5-0 a few hours later, on Thursday. The Americans will be trying to win their first gold since 1998 when women’s hockey made its debut in the Olympics.

Figure skating: Canadians Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir broke their own record for a short program, piling up 83.67 points with a harmonious, rock-inspired performance.

That score edged their own record set last year by nearly a point, and left them more than a point ahead of their training partners and biggest rivals, Gabriella Papadakis and Guillaume Cizeron.

The French couple appeared a bit thrown off by Papadakis’s costume, which came unhooked at the neck during their program. They held things together despite the wardrobe malfunction and scored 81.93 points.

U.S. champs Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donohue were third, two-hundredths of a point ahead of their compatriots, Maia and Alex Shibutani. The third American couple, Madison Chock and Evan Bates, was seventh.