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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Navy offers enticements to extend tours

BY WYATT OLSON
AND CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

The Navy on Wednesday announced new incentives that include allowing first-term enlisted sailors to have their families with them overseas to make longer sea duties in Japan, Guam and Spain more enticing.

Effective immediately, first-term sailors E-3 and below can bring family members to overseas locations where dependents are authorized. There are about 3,800 sailors in those grades in Japan and about 400 in Guam, the Navy said.

The Navy's forward-deployed fleet in the Pacific has been under a microscope since back-to-back collisions of destroyers last year left 17 sailors dead.

Reports by the U.S. Government Accountability Office and the Navy have documented numerous deficiencies in the

forward-deployed fleet, including insufficient manning and training, delayed maintenance and general sailor fatigue from overwork.

The Navy is in the process of instituting reforms to address those problems.

Seaman Legree Hairston, an aviation ordnanceman on the USS Ronald Reagan, said accompanied tours for E-3 sailors and below would bolster morale for those experiencing life abroad for the first time. "I would find things easier — I wouldn't be so stressed out," said Hairston, who has been stationed in Yokosuka, Japan for just a few months. "I wouldn't miss home so much."

Another incentive announced Wednesday calls on sailors to extend their sea duty in Japan, Guam and Spain voluntarily to a minimum of four years. Those sailors will have any remaining sea time on their prescribed tour length waived and would

be guaranteed shore duty for their next assigned tour.

Petty Officer 3rd Class Amaechi McMillan, a culinary specialist aboard the Ronald Reagan who's set to transfer this summer, said he would have extended his tour in Japan in exchange for shore duty on his next rotation if he had the opportunity.

"It is beneficial to someone in my shoes because in my rate, you don't get shore duty until [you have served] five years," he said.

Additionally, sailors extending their tours by a year or more will be given preferential consideration for announced billets in the Career Management System/Interactive Detailing, a web-based system used to view and apply for jobs.

"If multiple preferential applications are made for the same advertised billet, the best qualified member will be selected," the Navy said.

Sailors who extend their tours for at least a year will still have the option to receive Sea Duty Incentive Pay, the Navy said. The armed forces-wide Overseas Tour Extension Incentive Program also remains an option for eligible sailors.

"Our goal is to reward those sailors who volunteer to extend to meet the demands from the fleet," said Rear Adm. John Meier, director of the Career Management Department for the Navy Personnel Command.

During a talk in January with sailors and family members at Yokosuka Naval Station in Japan, Vice Adm. Robert Burke, chief of naval personnel and deputy chief of naval operations, said tour lengths of four years could become mandatory.

Many overseas tours for military personnel are capped at two or three years and that has contributed to the forward fleet's crisis.

Trump endorses higher age limit to buy some guns

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump endorsed stricter gun control measures Thursday, including raising the minimum age to 21 for possessing a broader range of weapons than at present. He tweeted his strongest stance as president one day after an emotional White House session in which students and parents poured out wrenching tales of lost lives and pleaded for action.

Trump said on Twitter: "I will be strongly pushing Comprehensive Background Checks with an emphasis on Mental Health. Raise age to 21 and end sale of Bump Stocks!"

He did not immediately offer

more details.

The current federal minimum age for buying or possessing handguns is 21, but the limit is 18 for rifles, including assault-type weapons such as the AR-15 used by a former student in last week's attack on a Florida high school that killed 17 students and staff members.

A White House official said the president was not endorsing or ruling out any specific policy.

In another tweet, Trump repeated his urgent call for trained teachers or others in schools to carry guns as a deterrent to attacks.

"If a potential 'sicko shooter' knows that a school has a large number of very weapons talented teachers (and others) who

will be instantly shooting, the sicko will NEVER attack that school. Cowards won't go there... problem solved. Must be offensive, defense alone won't work!" Trump tweeted.

He previously has expressed an interest in efforts to strengthen the federal background check system. It was not clear if he would back closing loopholes that permit loose, private sales on the internet and at gun shows.

On Wednesday, Trump listened intently at the White House as students described the horror of the shootings at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla. The students and their parents appealed to him to press for stricter gun controls.

"I turned 18 the day after" the shooting, said tearful student Samuel Zeif. "Woke up to the news that my best friend was gone. And I don't understand why I can still go in a store and buy a weapon of war. An AR. How is it that easy to buy this type of weapon? How do we not stop this after Columbine? After Sandy Hook?"

The president had invited the teen survivors of school violence and parents of murdered children in a show of his resolve against gun violence in the wake of last week's shootings in Florida.

Trump asked his guests to suggest solutions and solicited feedback.

US ships heading to Sri Lanka, Vietnam for Pacific Partnership

BY TYLER HLAVAC
Stars and Stripes

The Asia-Pacific region's largest humanitarian assistance and disaster-relief preparedness mission is returning to Vietnam and Sri Lanka as the U.S. continues to cultivate partnerships in the region.

During this year's Pacific Partnership exercise, which begins Friday and runs through June, the Navy hospital ship USNS Mercy will travel to Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam while the USNS Fall River heads to Malaysia, Palau, Thailand and Yap in Micronesia.

Events will include civic-action projects, community health exchanges, medical symposiums and disaster-response training.

More than 800 personnel from the Navy and other countries are involved in the mission, which began in response to a deadly tsunami that ravaged parts of the region in 2004.

This marks the second year Pacific Partnership will visit Sri Lanka, whose location next to a critical sea lane attracts both the U.S. and China.

In October, the USS Nimitz and its strike group made a port call on the capital, Colombo, becoming the first U.S. air-

craft carrier to do so in three decades.

This year's Sri Lanka stop will be similar to 2017's mission, said Task Force 73 spokesman Lt. Cmdr. Arlo Abrahamson.

"The scope of engagements is on a similar scale with a variety of medical, civil engineering products and community engagements over the course of two weeks," he said.

Abrahamson said the Mercy's Vietnam visit will come sometime after March, when the USS Carl Vinson is expected to stop in Danang, becoming the first U.S. carrier to do so since the Vietnam War.

A multinational response is necessary when dealing with disasters that aren't confined to a nation's border, said Rear Adm. Don Gabrielson, who serves as commander of Task Force 73 and the executive agent for the mission.

"The challenges we face with natural and man-made disasters do not respect borders or national sovereignty," he said in a Navy statement. "This dynamic mission enables many nations and subject matter experts to come together to pursue solutions to complex problems while enhancing preparations for disaster emergencies that reduce the severity of their impact."

First troops of new adviser unit arrive in Afghanistan

BY PHILLIP
WALTER WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — A new Army unit created specifically to advise and assist conventional foreign military forces has begun deploying to Afghanistan.

The 1st Security Forces Assistance Brigade — whose members will be dispersed at outposts throughout the country and will be closer to the front lines of the war than most U.S. troops have been in years — is a key component of the Trump administration's strategy for ending a stalemate with the Taliban.

Instead of advising high-ranking Afghan commanders, as is done now, the new brigade will work with battalion-level personnel. U.S. military officials in Afghanistan often have cited this as a vital, missing component of their advising efforts.

The 1st SFAB's leadership has arrived in Kabul, according to a post Wednesday on the unit's Facebook page, and was welcomed by Gen. John Nicholson, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan. More than 800 members of the brigade will arrive over the coming weeks in preparation for the spring fighting season, which generally begins in early April.

The brigade will participate in NATO's Resolute Support mission, which is focused on training, advising and assisting Afghan forces, and is separate from the U.S. counterterrorism

mission in the country.

Historically, conventional Army units have been used in an ad hoc fashion to advise and assist forces in Afghanistan and other theaters. The new SFABs, trained specifically for combat advising, are intended to make advisory efforts more effective and efficient.

From World War II to Korea and Vietnam, the Army has carried out advise-and-assist missions to help allies strengthen their forces. But with the current advisory mission lasting longer, the Army has brought in the new, dedicated units.

The 1st SFAB, based at Fort Benning, Ga., and under the command of Col. Scott Jackson, is one of six planned SFAB brigades of roughly 1,000 soldiers each that will be deployed worldwide.

The White House plans to increase the number of American troops in Afghanistan from 11,000 last summer to about 15,000 by spring.

After the new strategy was announced in August, the SFAB's training was cut short significantly so the unit would be able to deploy by spring, The New York Times reported. The move prompted questions as to whether the new brigade would be sufficiently prepared for the task.

The 1st SFAB comprises volunteers from across the Army, primarily noncommissioned and commissioned officers from regular units who trained at the Military Adviser Training Academy in Fort Benning.

Officials probe reports of drug use at Naval Academy

The (Annapolis, Md.) Capital

The Naval Academy and Naval Criminal Investigative Service are investigating alleged recreational drug use within the Brigade of Midshipmen, a spokesman said in a statement Tuesday.

Officials have been investigating the allegations for 2½ months, Cmdr. David

McKinney, academy spokesman, wrote in an email. The results of the investigation are pending.

"We are continuing to work with NCIS on these reported allegations," McKinney said. "The Navy has a zero tolerance for drug abuse and takes all allegations of misconduct very seriously."

Citing the ongoing investigation, McK-

inney declined to answer questions about what drugs were allegedly used, how many midshipmen were involved in the alleged abuse and whether drug sales occurred on Naval Academy grounds.

NCIS spokesman Ed Buice also declined to answer questions, citing the ongoing investigation.

'Karaoke' event to feature military PowerPoint slides

BY MARTIN EGNASH
Stars and Stripes

"Death by PowerPoint" is what peeling potatoes was to military generations of the past — a shared experience of droning misery that servicemembers are often "voluntold" to attend.

The heavy use of dry, no-nonsense PowerPoint presentations in the military, combined with the massive amounts of information servicemembers need to know, has led to some profoundly boring presentations.

On March 6, participants will gather in San Francisco to have a little fun with all the tedium, poor formatting and unintentional humor.

"Military PowerPoint Karaoke" will be put on by the Internet Archive, a digital archive of the internet's past. It will feature slides from what organizers describe as the "Military Industrial Powerpoint Complex," a collection of publicly available slides from .mil sites.

The slides will cover a wide range of military topics, such as infantry tactics, combating human trafficking and the intricate procedures required

for servicemembers to request leave.

PowerPoint karaoke, also known as Battle Decks, is an increasingly popular improvisational game that can be played in front of audiences or at home for fun. But using military presentations might add to the challenge.

Annual training requirements like sexual assault awareness and suicide prevention are particularly bad presentations, said Marine Sgt. Ruben Poot, of Marine Corps Recruiting Station Twin Cities, because they repeat the same information every time.

While he acknowledges the information is important, being forced to sit through the same presentation "is basically death by PowerPoint" for the Marines in the audience, he said.

Presenters at the upcoming karaoke event in San Francisco will have more than 57,000 presentation decks to choose from.

"Once you finish one, there is another right behind it, and they just keep coming in an endless cycle," said Army veteran Jonathan Ryan.

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New raids kill 13 in Syria; calls to end carnage mount

Associated Press

BEIRUT — A new wave of deadly Syrian government bombardment in the opposition-held eastern suburbs of the capital Damascus on Thursday killed 13 people as world leaders and aid groups called for an end to the carnage that has left hundreds of people dead in recent days.

The airstrikes on rebel towns in the suburb known as eastern Ghouta were reported by several local opposition activist groups and a Britain-based war monitor. The Syrian Civil Defense that works in opposition-held areas said its paramedics rushed to several areas after

the shelling.

Syrian government forces have been pounding the area for days, hitting residential buildings, hospitals and infrastructure and overwhelming medics and rescue workers. The bombardment has forced many among the nearly 400,000 residents to sleep in basements and makeshift shelters, and has overwhelmed rescue workers who have spent days digging survivors out of the wreckage of bombed-out buildings.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for an immediate suspension of "all war activities" in the area where he said people are living "in hell on earth."

Lawmakers seek more info on Niger ambush

BY JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

Democratic lawmakers want the White House to provide more information about the October ambush in Niger that left four U.S. soldiers dead as pressure mounts on the military to provide a full accounting of the attack.

Rep. Elijah Cummings, of Maryland, the ranking Democratic member of the House Oversight Committee, called upon Republicans on Wednesday to join an effort to seek a wide range of documents from the Trump administration on what it knows about the Oct. 4 ambush.

Defense Department officials provided Congress in November with a classified briefing during which military officials laid out their understanding of the operation's timeline. But key questions remain about the mission, its timeline and White House knowledge of the operation and its aftermath, lawmakers said.

"As a result, it is now clear that, in order to conduct our investigation in a thorough manner, we need information that only the White House can provide," Cummings wrote in a letter Wednesday to Rep. Trey Gowdy, R-S.C., chairman of the Oversight Committee.

What is not disputed is that a small U.S. special operations team led by a captain came under attack in a remote swath of terrain in western Niger where military officials say they were conducting an advise-and-assist mission.

However, a report by The New York Times, citing unnamed sources, said the operation was more than a routine patrol. The soldiers were given a surprise order to seek out a terrorist camp, which extended their mission longer than had been anticipated and put the team at risk, the Times

reported.

They eventually came under attack, outnumbered and outgunned as militants unloaded with small arms, machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades. Staff Sgts. Bryan C. Black, Jeremiah W. Johnson, La David Johnson and Dustin M. Wright were killed in the fight. According to video surveillance obtained by the Times, the soldiers appear to have been separated from the rest of their team on the ground.

In the wake of the attacks, some members of Congress expressed surprise that substantial numbers of U.S. forces were operating in Niger, home to various militant groups but none that have demonstrated a clear threat to the United States. There are about 800 troops in Niger.

Since the ambush, a team of U.S. Africa Command investigators has been reconstructing events to determine what went wrong. A report was initially expected to be released in January, but work continues on the document, which is expected to be several thousand pages long.

"Investigations such as this take as long as required to get to the truth and determine exactly what transpired in a particular circumstance," said Maj. Karl Wiest, an AFRICOM spokesman. "Although time is very important, investigations are conducted to a standard not necessarily to a timetable."

AFRICOM commander Gen. Thomas Waldhauser is expected to testify before Congress in March as part of an annual appearance by Combatant Command chiefs to update lawmakers on their respective areas of operation. Questioning about the ambush in Niger is likely to be at the top of the agenda.

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Swath of US under flood warning

Associated Press

ELKHART, Ind. — Shelters were open Thursday to assist people forced from their homes by flooding in the Midwest as rivers swollen by heavy rain and melting snow continue to rise in Indiana, Michigan and other states.

Flood warnings were in effect across a wide swath of the central and southern U.S., from Wisconsin, Illinois and Ohio to Texas and Louisiana. The American Red Cross said it has opened eight shelters in northern Indiana, where crews used boats to help residents evacuate their homes.

In Elkhart and nearby Goshen, local officials declared a state of emergency and asked that traffic be limited to first responders and emergency personnel. Indiana University-South Bend canceled Thursday classes, and residents of a student apartment complex were encouraged to leave.

In Michigan, states of emergency were declared in the Lansing area as officials recommended the evacuations of several neighborhoods. City officials said anyone living in the possible flood areas should temporarily leave their home by midday Thursday.

“While the rain has stopped, we are expecting significant flooding,” Lansing Mayor Andy Schor said.

Flooding also hit nearby Michigan State University, where some roads, parking lots and athletic fields were covered by water from the Red Cedar River that runs through its East Lansing campus. Classes in several buildings have been relocated, and the school put up sand-filled barriers in an attempt to curb flooding.

“Be careful if you’re trying to come to campus,” Schor said Wednesday, noting that the river was at its highest levels since 1975. “Changing conditions are

affecting not only the roads but sidewalks and walkways.”

The storm system started pushing heavy rain, snow and ice into the region this week, affecting roads and other low-lying areas. The weather has been blamed for hundreds of car crashes and several deaths, including a crash that killed four people along a slippery interstate in Nebraska.

In central Michigan’s Fairplain Township, a 1-year-old girl was found dead Wednesday in standing water from rains and snowmelt in her backyard.

Homes and streets also were flooded in the South Bend area of Indiana, and forecasters predicted that the swollen St. Joseph River wouldn’t crest until Thursday. Firefighters in Lake Station, Ind., about 30 miles southeast of Chicago, evacuated some residents Wednesday after 15 to 20 homes were surrounded by about 2 to 3 feet of water.

Authorities are mum on MS-13 sweep

Associated Press

NEW YORK — It was a tally so impressive that President Donald Trump touted it at his State of the Union address: Since May, agents cracking down on the violent gangs terrorizing the working-class suburbs of Long Island had swept up 428 gang suspects, including 220 members of the notorious MS-13.

But the sweep called “Operation Matador” also has been shrouded in secrecy. Federal and state authorities have declined repeated requests from The Associated Press for even basic information made public in most law enforcement operations, such as the names of those arrested and the crimes they are accused of committing.

They won’t divulge their ages, immigration status or current whereabouts. And while they say 44 of those arrested have been deported, they refuse to say what happened to the rest, including whether they are even still in custody. Both federal and state officials said releasing more details could endanger the suspect and could jeopardize ongoing investigations.

The lack of transparency comes amid accusations by immigration rights groups that the government is using unsubstantiated rumors of gang affiliations to detain people who are wholly innocent. Federal immigration judges already have ordered the release of some detainees arrested on suspicion of being MS-13 members when the government couldn’t produce any evidence of gang activity.

Some parents and activists say some of those included in the tally are innocent teens who came to the U.S. as unaccompanied minors, spending weeks locked in maximum-security detention centers based on flimsy and false allegations of gang activity. Civil liberties lawyers say that in some cases, their suspected “activity” was wearing a black T-shirt or making a hand gesture.

Ivanka Trump at Olympics raises speculation

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea will send a high-level delegation led by a former spymaster to attend the closing ceremony of the Olympics on Sunday, raising speculation about the possibility of a meeting with Ivanka Trump, who also will be in the audience.

The announcement was the latest in a whirlwind of diplomatic developments set off by North Korea’s agreement to participate in the Feb. 9-25 Winter Games, which are being held in the South Korean alpine town of Pyeongchang.

South Korean officials have expressed hope they could extend the Olympics detente to bring all sides to the table in a bid to ease months of tensions over the North’s nuclear weapons program. But critics accuse the North of waging a charm offensive aimed at easing punishing economic sanctions and diplomatic pressure against it.

The North Korean lineup will

include Kim Yong Chol, vice chairman of the ruling Workers’ Party; Ri Son Gwon, head of the state agency in charge of inter-Korean affairs; and six support staff, South Korea’s Unification Ministry said Thursday.

They will travel to South Korea by rail ahead of the ceremony Sunday and will stay for three days, the ministry said in a statement.

That could bring them face to face with President Donald Trump’s daughter, a fashion designer and former model who serves as one of his senior advisers.

Unification Minister Cho Myoung-gyon told lawmakers Thursday that it’s too early to predict whether the U.S. and the North Koreans will meet on the sidelines of the Olympics.

“But the government will make efforts to lead the U.S. and North Korea to open dialogue,” Cho was quoted as saying by the Yonhap News Agency.

Another government official said on condition of anonymity that a meeting between the U.S.

and North Korean delegations on the sidelines of the closing ceremony looks unlikely.

Vice President Mike Pence led the U.S. delegation to the opening ceremony in what the administration called an effort to offset what it called a “propaganda charade” by the North Korean delegation, which was led by leader Kim Jong Un’s sister.

Administration officials have said Ivanka Trump has no plans to meet with the North Koreans and the purpose of her trip is to cheer on American athletes and to reaffirm the U.S.-South Korean alliance.

Kim Yong Chol, a general and former chief of the military intelligence agency, has been blacklisted by Washington and Seoul in unilateral sanctions. He is suspected of having orchestrated several attacks on South Korea, including the deadly sinking of the South Korean Cheonan warship and the shelling of Yeonpyeong Island in 2010.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Police: Handyman took \$10K in jewelry

CT SOUTHLINGTON — Police allege a Connecticut handyman stole \$10,000 worth of jewelry from a home where he was doing work.

The New Britain Herald reported that Jeffrey Couture, 37, of Plymouth, turned himself in Tuesday and was charged with second-degree larceny.

Police allege Couture stole the jewelry from a Southington home while he was being paid to do handyman work there. Police alleged Couture sold the stolen items at area pawn shops. Some of the stolen items have been recovered.

Bank staff fed up with hawk scarfing pigeons

NY DEWITT — The feeding habits of a Cooper's hawk may fascinate birdwatchers, but employees of an upstate New York bank are fed up with the feathery remnants of slaughtered pigeons at their doorstep.

A hawk has been killing and devouring pigeons near the entrance to M&T Bank in suburban Syracuse for several weeks.

Property manager Joseph Mathlin said the bank tried putting up a fake owl to shoo the hawk away. Jake McGowan, of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, said the hawk probably won't care about the owl but its pigeon prey might be scared off.

Pastor accused in Sunday school robbery

OH TOLEDO — An Ohio judge set bond at \$75,000 for a man described by police as a gun-wielding pastor who helped rob a teacher dur-

ing a Sunday school class at his church.

The Blade in Toledo reported a judge set matching bond amounts Tuesday for Anthony Morris, 49, and his wife, Zelda, 46.

They were jailed on aggravated robbery charges after the alleged confrontation at St. Paul's AME Zion Church. Their 19-year-old daughter was sought on the same charge.

Police said the teacher alleged that the teen grabbed her hair, the pastor threw her to the ground and held a gun on her and the pastor's wife punched her and took items from the woman's purse, including a cellphone and a stun gun.

Man destroys home in bid to expel skunks

MI FERNDALE — Authorities said a suburban Detroit man destroyed a home by using a smoke bomb in an attempt to get skunks out of a crawlspace.

The Detroit Free Press reported firefighters responded Monday night in Ferndale and found flames in the crawlspace and on the first floor. The fire spread through the walls of the rental home to the attic.

Crews put out the fire, but it burned through the roof. Fire Chief Kevin P. Sullivan said no skunk carcasses were found.

Cemetery worker falls, gets trapped in grave

NJ EAST HANOVER TOWNSHIP — A New Jersey cemetery said a worker was temporarily trapped in a grave he was digging.

A Hanover Cemetery spokesperson said Peter Ferencze, 59, of Flemington was digging a grave Tuesday afternoon when an 800-pound vault cover fell on top of him, pinning him in the

open grave. The Daily Record reported emergency responders rushed to exhume Ferencze by digging out the vault cover then manually lifting the cover out of the grave.

The cemetery said Ferencze was released from the hospital after being treated for chest injuries.

Roswell woman turns in \$300 left at ATM

NM ROSWELL — A New Mexico man was reunited with cash he left at an ATM after a woman found it and turned it in to police.

Roswell police said the man called authorities Monday to report he had left \$300 on top of the machine. His call came in just as the woman had dropped by the station to turn in the money.

She told officers there was no receipt or other information with the money to identify the owner but that she had noticed a man making a transaction while she waited her turn.

Target practice leaves bullet holes in walls

FL CAPE CORAL — Authorities said a Florida man who was taking target practice in his home was arrested after bullets went through the wall into his neighbors' apartment.

A Cape Coral police news release said Ivan Bakh, 61, was arrested Sunday and charged with firing a weapon in public and shooting into a dwelling.

Police said Bakh's neighbors called them Sunday morning after awaking to a loud bang and finding holes in their bedroom and living room walls.

When officers went to Bakh's apartment, they reported seeing holes in the wall he shared with his neighbors. Police said they also found a loaded handgun.

Man: Devil, drugs led him to commit crime

MS COLUMBUS — A Mississippi man was given two life sentences for sexually abusing two people and kidnapping one of them.

The Commercial Dispatch reported Autravious Gaston, 36, blames drugs and the devil for the 2015 incident in which he stole a car, robbed a store at gunpoint and sexually assaulted two people. He then forced one of the victims into his car and continued to assault her as he drove.

Judge Jim Kitchens, who said Gaston showed no remorse, also sentenced him to five years for grand larceny, 30 years for kidnapping, 30 years for each count of sexual battery and 10 years for possession of a weapon by a convicted felon.

Sex offender shown on 'Trump Dating' site

NC GREENSBORO — A North Carolina man with a felony conviction for indecent liberties with a child was one-half of the poster couple for a new "Trump Dating" website.

News outlets reported Monday that visitors to the dating site geared toward supporters of the president were greeted with the faces of Jodi and William Barrett Riddleberger, conservative activists involved in the tea party-inspired political action committee Conservatives for Guilford County.

State records show Riddleberger was convicted in 1995 on the charge stemming from filming sex with a 15-year-old girl. He was 25 at the time.

As of Tuesday morning the site, trump.dating, featured a different couple.

From wire reports

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and Military News

US women nip Canada for hockey gold

Associated Press

GANGNEUNG, South Korea — The Americans' gold medal drought is finally over. They needed the first shootout in an Olympic women's final to do it, too.

Jocelyne Lamoureux-Davidson scored a dazzling, triple-deke goal in the sixth round of a shootout thriller and Maddie Rooney stuffed the last two Canadians to wrap up a 3-2 victory over archrival Canada on Thursday.

The Americans piled over the boards, throwing gloves in the air before huddling and hugging on the ice — 20 years after the women's last gold medal in hockey and 38 years to the day after the men's famous "Miracle on Ice" victory over the Russians in group play at Lake Placid.

"I can't put it into words," defenseman Kacey Bellamy said. "This whole year is for everyone that came before us. This is for (former USA team captain) Julie Chu and for all our families at home, the schools that we went to, everyone supporting us."

Lamoureux-Davidson's shootout goal was the talk of the game. She feinted a wrist shot, then drew goalie Shannon Szabados out of the net by faking a backhand and came back to slide the puck past Szabados' outstretched leg into the open net for the clinching score.

Gigi Marvin and Amanda Kessel also scored in the shootout, another nail-biter ending four years after Canada won its fourth-straight gold medal in Sochi after rallying to stun the Americans in overtime.

Monique Lamoureux-Moran-

do tied it up with a breakaway with 6:21 left in regulation. Hilary Knight also had a goal and Rooney was spectacular, making 29 saves for the win. The 20-year-old goalie stopped the last two Canadian shots in the shootout by Brienne Jenner and then Meghan Agosta on her second attempt.

It was sweet redemption for the 10 Americans who watched the Canadians snatch gold away in Sochi. Not only did the Americans end the Canadians' stranglehold on Olympic gold, they ended a skid of five straight against their rival coming into this game.

"It is everything for our country," U.S. coach Robb Stauber said. "I am just so thankful for the outcome. It was a thrilling final. It was unreal."

Marie-Philip Poulin and Haley Irwin scored goals for

Canada. Agosta and Melodie Daoust scored in the shootout.

The Canadians, who had pushed the Americans around for much of the game and taken penalties for it, wept on the ice as they accepted their silver medals. Jocelyne Larocque took hers off immediately and held it in her hands as the Americans stood nearby awaiting their gold.

"It's just hard," Larocque said. "You work so hard. We wanted gold but didn't get it."

Added Canada coach Laura Schuler: "There's not a lot of words that can describe how you feel. It was a great game of hockey. It's what we expected: back and forth hockey."

This was the eighth time these North American rivals had met in the Olympics and the fifth with gold on the line.

Shiffrin takes silver in combined; Vonn DNF

Associated Press

JEONGSEON, South Korea — Mikaela Shiffrin already was assured of earning her third career medal, each in a different event, when Lindsey Vonn prepared to propel herself out of the starting gate as the final starter in the final race of her Olympic career.

This slalom portion of the two-leg Alpine combined would be the first — and only — time Vonn, 33, and U.S. teammate Shiffrin, 22, would compete against each other at any Olympics. Could Vonn possibly summon a "miracle," as she called it, a slalom performance from somewhere in her past to make a lead from the downhill portion stand up? Could Shiffrin hold onto her silver?

With the snow carefully descending under the artificial lights lining the course, the drama quickly dimmed. Vonn's slalom lasted all of about 10 seconds before she went off-course, leaving Shiffrin in second place Thursday between two women from Switzerland: gold medalist Michelle Gisin and bronze medalist Wendy Holdener.

Gisin, whose older sister Dominique tied for first in the 2014 Olympic downhill, produced a total time of 2 minutes, 20.90 seconds that was 0.97 seconds better than Shiffrin's.

Shiffrin ranked sixth in the downhill, 1.21 seconds slower than Gisin, and wasn't

able to make up that deficit in the slalom, which was a much shorter track. The downhill took about 100 seconds; the slalom about 40.

"Clearly," said Shiffrin's coach, Mike Day, "the downhill didn't go quite to plan."

Still, Shiffrin added the combined silver to her giant slalom gold from a week earlier, giving her two medals — plus a surprisingly low fourth-place finish in the slalom — in three races. She arrived in South Korea to chatter about entering five, but after a series of weather-related schedule changes, wound up dropping two.

"It's really nice to be at the end of it," she said, "and know that I do have two medals."

With her slalom gold from the 2014 Games, Shiffrin joins Bode Miller and Julia Mancuso as the only Americans with a medal in at least three Alpine disciplines.

"It's like being a great butterflyer, being a great breaststroker, being a great freestyler and being a great backstroker," Day said. "There's not many people who do all of those really well."

Eight years ago, it was Vonn who went to the Vancouver Olympics accompanied by outsized anticipation and unrealistic speculation (by others) about four or five medals. She, too, came away with two, then missed the Sochi Olympics after tearing knee ligaments.

At what she has said must be her last Olympics because her oft-injured body cannot endure another four years, Vonn added a bronze on Wednesday in the downhill.

After Vonn's slalom ended suddenly, she crossed paths with Shiffrin in the finish area. They had a brief exchange.

"I mean, it's incredible what she's able to accomplish. She's so young and she approaches ski racing much different than pretty much anyone else," Vonn said later. "I think she had potential to do a lot more at these Games, but at the same time — same like me, you can't expect everything all the time."

So, then, there they were as the sun settled behind the clouds, the temperature dipped and the last individual Alpine race of the Pyeongchang Games concluded. Yes, there is a team event Saturday, but neither Vonn nor Shiffrin is expected to enter.

Shiffrin is the best female skier of today, chasing a second consecutive overall title; Vonn is the best female skier in history, just five World Cup race wins away from tying Ingemar Stenmark's all-time record of 86.

Tears gathered in Vonn's eyes as she spoke about wishing she could be at Beijing in 2022, but knowing "that's just not the way it is," because, she explained, "My mind is still telling me I can do things that my body is telling me I can't."

Americans go 1-2 in skiing's halfpipe

Associated Press

PYEONGCHANG, South Korea — They give their bodies for this sport. Sometimes little pieces of their hearts and souls, too.

Maybe that's why David Wise decided there was nothing left to lose Thursday when he stood atop a halfpipe that had sent one third of the 12 riders limping off with injuries, facing an all-or-nothing run after his ski bindings had failed him in his two previous trips down.

"We cranked my bindings up as high as they would go," Wise said. "We're like, 'You know what, my leg's coming off before the ski does.'"

The skis stayed on.

Wise put down the most difficult, technically precise run ever seen in the sport of halfpipe skiing, scoring a 97.2.

He edged out his Olympic roommate and fellow American, Alex Ferreira, to win his second straight Olympic gold medal. He and Ferreira gave the United States its fifth and sixth medals on the halfpipe — producing a glimmer of good news for a U.S. team that has struggled at these Games.

In Seoul a few weeks ago, Wise and Ferreira huddled up and decided to get matching tattoos of the logo for the Pyeongchang Games on their arms. They were fitting tributes to all the work they put in and the suffering they endured on the road to South Korea.

"I certainly felt like I needed to do something epic to commemorate this journey, because it's been a really hard struggle the last couple years," Wise said. "I've been through

a lot, and making the team for me was a lifetime accomplishment. Freeskiing won."

Four years ago in Sochi, Wise won but freeskiing did not.

A poorly made halfpipe was made worse by wet, sloppy snow that fell on the night of the contest.

As the gold medalist and leader of his sport, Wise set out on a plan to make sure that wouldn't happen again. His goal was to become the first halfpipe freeskiier to put down double corks — two head-over-heels flips — in all four directions on the same run: forward spinning right; forward spinning left; backward spinning right; backward spinning left.

He did it last month at the Winter X Games, then again in his final run of the Olympics.

He made it look effortless,

but it isn't.

Spinning in an unnatural direction in the halfpipe, as U.S. coach Mike Jankowski put it, "is like throwing a baseball with your left hand if you're right-handed."

Or, in the words of Jonny Moseley, the moguls gold medalist who is the godfather of progression in freestyle skiing: "It's like learning two sports."

It's a lot to handle, even when other parts of life aren't getting in the way.

While Wise was training for those tricks, his father-in-law died. His sister, Christy, lost her right leg when a hit-and-run boater sideswiped her. Wise endured concussions that left him wobbly and on the sidelines for months. He hurt his back so badly, he could barely turn around.

Shuster leads US men's curling team into final

Associated Press

GANGNEUNG, South Korea — John Shuster and his U.S. team will play for a gold medal against Sweden after a 5-3 semifinal upset over Canada, a country that has struggled at the Pyeongchang Olympics despite dominating the world of curling for years.

The U.S. victory Thursday was a remarkable comeback story for a team which had never beaten Canada at the Olympics and hadn't made the podium since the 2006 Turin Games, when they won a bronze medal.

Just as remarkable was the loss for Canada, which has won the gold in men's curling at the last three Winter Olympics. The Canadian women's team, meanwhile, didn't even make the semifinals, despite being the defending world champions.

Shuster's victory follows a particularly rocky Olympic path. After winning the bronze in Turin, he was benched at the 2010 Vancouver Games in the

middle of the tournament because his performance was so poor. In Sochi, Shuster's team finished in ninth place.

"It's a pretty good story. This is just another step," Shuster said. "I just decided that, 50 years from now, maybe I'm long gone, when my kids are showing my grandkids video from the Olympics, I don't want all my videos to be me failing."

The turning point in the semifinal game came in the eighth end. The teams were tied 2-2, and Canada had a distinct advantage known as the hammer, the right to throw the final rock of the end. But Kevin Koe, the team's "skip," or captain, threw the stone too light and it came up short of the target known as the house. The U.S. had two rocks in the target, giving them a two-point steal and putting them ahead 4-2.

In the next end, Canada blew its chance to score two points with its final rock, when Koe threw the stone a bit too hard and it skittered out of the house. The Canadians had to settle for one point, bringing the score to

4-3.

In the final end, Shuster threw the last rock, which knocked the lone Canadian stone out of the center of the house, adding one point to their score and sealing their win.

An elated Shuster pumped his fist in victory and the Americans whooped with joy. Vice-skip Tyler George ran up and down the arena holding up his index finger in a symbol of No. 1 as the crowd chanted, "USA! USA!"

Matt Hamilton said he planned to celebrate by going back to the athletes' village and ordering a McFlurry.

"The U.S. has been waiting for something like this and needing a sort of spark," he said.

Kelsey Landsteiner, whose husband John Landsteiner is on the team, burst into tears after the win. She said the men had been determined to show the world that they were worthy of the gold.

"They wanted to prove to everybody that they could do it as well and really just bring

it back for America," she said. "We need to prove our curling game is just as high and just as good as the Canadians, and I think we've proved that."

The Canadians will play for a bronze medal against Switzerland, which fell 9-3 to the Swedes in another semifinal match.

Swedish lead Christoffer Sundgren was talking to reporters after the victory when coach Peja Lindholm came up and kissed him on the cheek. That was about the only celebrating the team did after ensuring they could finish no worse than second.

"We're here for the gold, that's for sure," said Sundgren, whose team finished first in the round robin.

The Americans acknowledged they have another huge challenge on their hands against the Swedes.

"They're a fantastic curling team," Shuster said. "We're going to have some fun and put on a show, and may the best team win."

NHL roundup

Miller stops 41 shots as Ducks blank Stars

Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Ryan Miller couldn't help but crack a smile when remembering the mess the Anaheim Ducks found themselves in.

After two Ducks players put the puck over the glass on back-to-back plays while already on the penalty kill in the third period, Miller just dug in and helped drag Anaheim to its longest winning streak of the season.

Miller stopped 41 shots for his 42nd career shutout as the Ducks beat the Dallas Stars 2-0 Wednesday night for their fourth straight win.

"We can laugh about it now, but when you watch those two float out of the rink you get a little anxious," said Miller, who picked up his third shutout of the season.

Ryan Getzlaf scored short-handed and Hampus Lindholm had a power-play goal for the Ducks, who took sole posses-

sion of third place in the Pacific Division.

Blackhawks 3, Senators 2: Nick Schmaltz scored in the seventh round of the shootout to lift host Chicago over Ottawa for just the Blackhawks' second victory in 11 games.

Schmaltz fired a wrist shot between the legs of Mike Condon after Patrick Kane and rookie Alex DeBrincat connected in the tiebreaker. Matt Duchene and Mike Hoffman scored for Ottawa in the shootout.

Golden Knights 7, Flames 3: Alex Tuch scored the tie-breaking goal in the second period and host Vegas pulled away with three goals in the third period.

The Golden Knights moved back atop the NHL standings with 84 points — one ahead of Eastern Conference-leading Tampa Bay.

Ryan Carpenter, William Karlsson, Reilly Smith, Luca Sbisa, Erik Haula and Cody Eakin also scored for Vegas.

Top 25 roundup

Smith, Oklahoma State knock off No. 6 Texas Tech

Associated Press

STILLWATER, Okla. — Oklahoma State rewarded fans who braved the snow and ice with a memorable experience.

Kendall Smith scored 21 points to help the Cowboys stun No. 6 Texas Tech 79-71 on Wednesday night. Many students who were part of the crowd of 7,092 rushed the court after the game, though it was tame by Oklahoma State's standards.

"We didn't expect many people here, then once the game starts, it starts filling up," Oklahoma State guard Lindy Waters said. "The students were rowdy as usual. It gives us the energy to keep playing."

The end of the game wasn't even the most exciting moment of the night. A text circulated during the game that school would be out Thursday due to the weather. The crowd went crazy, and when the text was shown on the big screen, the players knew, too.

"We were like, 'For sure, let's get this win so we can chill tomorrow,'" Smith said.

No. 1 Virginia 65, Georgia Tech 54: Ty Jerome scored 18 points and the top-ranked Cavaliers held off the depleted Yellow Jackets, clinching the

regular-season title and top seed next month in the Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament.

Host Virginia (25-2, 14-1) won its eighth regular-season title and third in five years.

No. 3 Villanova 93, DePaul 62: Mikal Bridges scored 27 points and Phil Booth added 14 in his return to the lineup to lead the host Wildcats past the Blue Demons.

Booth played 16 minutes, going 4-for-6 from the field and 2-for-4 from the arc in his comeback from a broken right hand that sidelined him seven games.

No. 4 Xavier 89, Georgetown 77: Naji Marshall scored a career-high 21 points and the Musketeers beat the host Hoyas, bouncing back from their loss to No. 3 Villanova.

J.P. Macura added 20 points, including four three-pointers, and Quentin Goodin had 19 points to help Xavier (25-4, 13-3 Big East) sweep the season series with Georgetown for the second straight season.

No. 5 Duke 82, Louisville 56: Grayson Allen scored 28 points and the host Blue Devils routed the Cardinals.

Freshman big man Wendell Carter Jr. finished with 18 points and a season-high five assists, and Gary Trent Jr. had

11 points to help Duke (23-5, 11-4 Atlantic Coast Conference) win its fourth straight game — all coming with star freshman Marvin Bagley III out with a sprained knee.

No. 10 North Carolina 78, Syracuse 74: Theo Pinson scored a career-high 23 points, Joel Berry II added 18, including the tiebreaking layup with 1:36 left, and the Tar Heels held off the host Orange.

North Carolina (22-7, 11-5 Atlantic Coast Conference) has won six straight, but this was the most difficult against a team fighting for its postseason life. Syracuse (18-10, 7-8) was coming off an important victory over Miami and was teetering on the NCAA Tournament bubble entering the game.

No. 12 Auburn 90, Alabama 71: Jared Harper scored 21 points, Chuma Okeke had 16 points and 10 rebounds, and the host Tigers beat the rival crimson Tide even without ailing star Mustapha Heron.

No. 13 Wichita State 93, Tulane 86: Shaquille Morris had 25 points and nine rebounds to help the host Shockers outlast the Green Wave.

Virginia Tech 65, No. 15 Clemson 58: Justin Robinson and Kerry Blackshear Jr. had 14 points each for the host

Hokies.

Virginia Tech (20-8, 9-6 Atlantic Coast Conference) has won six of its last eight games to move into a tie for fifth place in the conference standings. Marcquise Reed led Clemson (20-7, 9-6) with 23 points.

No. 17 Michigan 72, Penn State 63: Duncan Robinson scored 19 points and Moritz Wagner added 18 for the visiting Wolverines.

Jordan Poole had 13 for Michigan (23-7, 12-5 Big Ten) which won its fourth straight.

No. 19 Tennessee 62, Florida 57: Grant Williams bounced back from one of his worst performances of the season to score 23 points for the host Volunteers.

Williams had a season-low five points Saturday in a 73-62 loss at Georgia. The Tennessee scoring leader responded Wednesday by shooting 8-for-13 from the floor and 7-for-8 from the foul line.

No. 20 Nevada 80, San Jose State 67: Kendall Stephens scored a career-high 30 points and the host Wolf Pack hit 14 three-pointers.

Jordan Caroline and Hallice Cooke had 15 points apiece for Nevada (24-5, 13-2 Mountain West).