

Invasion is not going as Russia planned

The Washington Post

The war in Ukraine isn't going Russia's way.

Videos posted on social media show whole columns of tanks and armored vehicles have been wiped out. Others have been stopped in their tracks by ordinary Ukrainians standing on the street to block their advance.

Lightly armed units propelled deep into the country without support have been surrounded and their soldiers captured or killed. Warplanes have been shot out of the skies and helicopters have been downed, according to Ukrainian and U.S. military officials.

Logistics supply chains have failed, leaving troops stranded on roadsides to be captured because their vehicles ran out of fuel.

Most critically, Russia has proved unable to secure air superiority over the tiny Ukrainian air force — despite having the sec-

ond-largest air force in the world, Pentagon officials have said. Its troops have yet to take control of any significant city or meaningful chunk of territory, a senior U.S. defense official said Sunday.

On Sunday, a Russian attempt to seize control of the city of Kharkiv, less than 30 miles from the Russian border, was repelled. A fresh push toward the capital, Kyiv, came to a smoking end in the suburb of Irpin, where videos posted on social media showed the charred remains of Russian tanks and armored vehicles strewn around the streets while Ukrainian soldiers removed weapons from the bodies of dead Russians.

These scenes of humiliation have played out widely on social media. Multiple videos from around the country have portrayed scenes of burned Russian tanks, dead Russian soldiers and captured Russians making plain-

tive calls home to their parents.

The Russian military has meanwhile issued little in the way of reporting on the Ukraine war, in contrast to the prolific reporting that came out of its intervention in Syria. On Sunday, a spokesman acknowledged that there had been Russian casualties and losses, while saying they were "many times less" than those suffered by Ukraine.

"Russian servicemen are showing courage and heroism while fulfilling combat tasks in the special military operation. Unfortunately, there are killed and injured among our comrades," the state news agency Tass quoted military spokesman Igor Konashenkov as saying.

U.S. officials and military experts have cautioned that it is still too early to draw conclusions about the eventual trajectory of a war that is only days old.

"We are in Day 4. The Russians

will learn and will adapt and will try to overcome these challenges. I think we need to be pragmatic about that," said the senior U.S. defense official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to candidly discuss the situation.

What is clear, however, is that Russian President Vladimir Putin's gamble on a swift and decisive takeover has not paid off.

Military experts have been stunned, too, at the tactical blunders and military shortcomings that the feared Russian army has demonstrated so far.

"Russia is actually showing the world they are not as strong as we thought they were. This is bolstering NATO's confidence," said John Spencer, an Army veteran who chairs the Urban Warfare Studies department at the U.S. Military Academy's Modern War Institute. "It's not showing a superpower military, that's for sure. It's showing major weakness."

Ukraine seeking to join EU as round of talks with Russia ends

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — An embattled Ukraine moved to solidify its bond with the West on Monday by applying to join the European Union, while the first round of Ukraine-Russia talks aimed at ending the fighting concluded with no deal but an agreement to keep talking.

Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy posted photos of himself signing the EU application, a largely symbolic move that could take years to become reality and is unlikely to sit well with Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has long accused the West of trying to pull Ukraine into its orbit.

Russian and Ukrainian officials held their meeting on Day Five of the war under the shadow of Putin's nuclear threats, and

with Moscow's invasion of Ukraine running into unexpectedly fierce resistance and Western sanctions beginning to wreak havoc on the economy at home.

A top Zelenskyy adviser, Mykhailo Podolyak, said the talks, held near the Ukraine-Belarus border, were focused on a possible cease-fire and that a second round could take place "in the near future."

A top Putin aide and head of the Russian delegation, Vladimir Medinsky, said that the discussions lasted nearly five hours and that the envoys "found certain points on which common positions could be foreseen." He said they agreed to continue the talks in the coming days.

As the discussions wrapped up, several blasts could be heard in

Kyiv, though no details were immediately known. Russian troops, who are attacking Ukraine on multiple fronts, were advancing slowly on the capital city and were about 15 miles from the city center, according to a senior U.S. defense official who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss military assessments.

Messages aimed at the advancing soldiers popped up across Kyiv. Some used profanity to encourage Russians to leave. Others appealed to their humanity. "Russian soldier — Stop! Remember your family. Go home with a clean conscience," one read.

Meanwhile, social media video from Ukraine's second-largest city, Kharkiv, showed residential areas being shelled, with apart-

ment buildings shaken by repeated, powerful blasts. Authorities in Kharkiv said at least seven people had been killed and dozens injured. They warned that casualties could be far higher.

"They wanted to have a blitzkrieg, but it failed, so they act this way," said Valentin Petrovich, 83, using just his first name and his Russian-style middle name over fear for his safety. He described watching the shelling from his downtown apartment.

For the second day in a row, the Kremlin raised the specter of nuclear war, reporting that its land, air and sea nuclear forces had been put on high alert following Putin's weekend order. And stepping up his rhetoric, Putin denounced the United States and its allies as an "empire of lies."

Army offers new recruits 1st choice of assignments

BY ALEXANDER W. RIEDEL
Stars and Stripes

Potential U.S. Army enlistees will find a new deal on the table at recruiting offices nationwide.

New active-duty recruits now have the option of selecting their first duty assignment following basic training, U.S. Army Recruiting Command announced in a statement Friday.

The duty station of choice enlisted program is available at select bases in eight states and features 5,600 vacancies in 17 different career fields including infantry, cavalry, aviation and information technology.

The program allows new soldiers to choose a station depending on personal preference, job compatibility and needs of the Army.

"The Army understands that having the option to stay closer to home and loved ones is a big deal, and it's taking steps to make the decision easier on applicants," said Brig. Gen. John Cushing, the deputy commanding general for operations at U.S. Army Recruiting Command, in the statement.

Available bases include Fort Carson, Colo.; Joint Base Lewis-McCord, Wash.; Fort Bliss and Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Polk, La.;

Fort Riley, Kan.; Fort Stewart, Ga.; Fort Drum, N.Y.; and installations in Alaska.

The list is subject to change based on the needs of the Army and the program does not apply to overseas locations, a spokesman for Army Recruiting told Stars and Stripes.

The offer comes a month after the Army announced shorter two-year enlistment terms for 84 different career fields and larger cash sign-up bonuses in January. Depending on the military specialties they select, qualified people can receive up to a combined total of \$50,000 in bonuses when they sign up for a six-year enlistment.

The bonuses target career fields with large personnel needs, like the infantry, and fields with high attrition, such as Special Forces and Ranger school, which beckon recruits with up to \$20,000.

Other hard-to-fill jobs include radar repairers, truck drivers and missile defense crew members, the Army said.

Active-duty recruiters finished 2021 with 106 more recruits than their goal of 57,500 new members, while the Army Reserve did not meet its goal for the fiscal year ending in September, according to the Army Recruiting Command.

Marine infantry will get next-gen targeting device

BY JONATHAN SNYDER
Stars and Stripes

The Marine Corps awarded a \$252 million contract to Northrop Grumman to supply infantry troops with the next generation of targeting equipment, according to a company news release.

The Next Generation Handheld Targeting System, or NGHTS, will allow a Marine to transmit targeting information to artillery, aircraft, loitering drones, missile systems or warships waiting offshore. The system will operate even when GPS is denied or unavailable, according to the defense contractor.

"NGHTS will significantly enhance the ability of Marines to identify ground targets under a wide range of conditions," company vice president Bob Gough said in the Tuesday release.

"Connected to military networks, NGHTS can provide superior situational awareness and accurate coordinates for the delivery of effects from beyond the line of sight."

The system can rapidly acquire targets, provide laser guidance and laser spot imaging, according to Northrop Grumman. It is equipped with high-definition infrared sensors good over extended ranges, a high-definition color display and a day-and-night celestial compass.

Each unit weighs less than 10 pounds, including batteries, Gough said in an email to Stars and Stripes on Friday. Delivery of the first units is expected in 2023.

NGHTS is designed to replace four legacy targeting systems in use by the Marines, Gough said. They employ the Portable Lightweight Designator Rangefinder, Joint Terminal Attack Controller, Laser Target Designator and Thermal Laser Spot Imager, according to the Marines' Systems Command website.

"NGHTS is a multifunction device that combines the capabilities of multiple legacy systems into a single, handheld unit," Gough said in his email. "For the customer, this translates to fewer systems that need to be maintained over time. In an operational scenario, it means Marines need to carry less gear to get the same or better capability."

North Korea says that it launched a reconnaissance satellite Sunday

BY DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — North Korea conducted an "important test" of a "reconnaissance satellite" to verify the capabilities of its high-definition photographing and data-transmission systems, its state-run news agency said Monday.

The country's aerospace and military science organizations conducted the test, according to the Korean Central News Agency. KCNA's report did not include photographs of the launch but had pictures of Earth from space that it said were taken by cameras "loaded on the recon-

naissance satellite."

"The test is of great significance in developing the reconnaissance satellite," KCNA claimed in its report.

The communist regime on Sunday launched what South Korea's military believes was a ballistic missile off its eastern coast around 7:52 a.m. The missile, according to the South's military, flew about 186 miles at a peak altitude of 385 miles. The Japan Coast Guard also confirmed the launch and its specifications.

Several countries, including the United States, have assessed that North Korea uses its space launches as cover for ballistic missile tests.

American, family flee their home in Ukraine

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

KORCZOWA, Poland — Raymond Heckard, an Oklahoma City native who calls Ukraine home, stepped off a bus packed with refugees, dazed and exhausted after days of travel to reach the Polish border.

"I'm looking for a welcome center for Americans," the 58-year-old said aloud, looking for direction from anyone within earshot amid the chaotic swarm of people.

Heckard, an English teacher who arrived at the border crossing in Korczowa, Poland, on Sunday afternoon with his Ukrainian wife and daughter, made the 200-mile trip from Khmelnytskyi, a city in western Ukraine roughly halfway between Lviv and Kyiv.

The trip was a stop-and-go journey of multiple hitched rides, traffic jams and roadside campfires at night to stay warm, they said.

"But with what is going on, we felt it was better to leave now (rather) than later," he said. "If the Russians don't stop, there's going to be nothing to go back to."

Heckard was among the tens of thousands of evacuees from Ukraine following Russia's invasion, which also has prompted the Pentagon to send thousands of extra troops to Poland to be available to assist with an influx of refugees if called upon.

Since the full-scale invasion started Thursday, more than 500,000 people have left Ukraine, according to the United Nations, with nearly half crossing into Poland. Others have sought refuge in Moldova, Hungary, Slovakia and Romania. Polish officials have said the country could take in up to 1 million people if needed.

Heckard's daughter, Maria, teared up as she spoke about the life she was leaving behind in Ky-

iv, possibly for good. When explosions rocked Ukraine's capital last week, she and a friend raced out of Kyiv by car, heading for her hometown like thousands of others who fled the city as fighting intensified.

"The feeling was shock and panic," said Maria, 20.

At the Korczowa border crossing, refugees board buses and are taken to a nearby industrial area, which has been transformed into a site where some people link up with waiting family members.

Mixed in with the flood of people have been a smattering of American expatriates like Heckard. In anticipation that some Americans could be lost in the confusion of the unfolding crisis, the U.S. Embassy in Poland set up a small welcome center at the SPA Hotel Gloria in Przemyśl, not far from the Ukrainian border.

After arriving at the border

crossing, the Heckards were going to make the U.S. welcome center their next stop, which meant 20 miles more to go. Stars and Stripes reporters who overheard Raymond Heckard asking for help gave the family a ride.

At the embassy center, Americans in transit can get refreshments and help with planning their next steps. For the Heckards, the plan was to take a 3-hour train ride to Krakow and find a hotel, as rooms are hard to come by near the border. His wife, Irina, said the family isn't sure where to go next. Since she doesn't have a U.S. visa, they could move to Israel, where she has family, if returning to Ukraine isn't a viable option, she said.

Everything they could carry from their lives in Kyiv and Khmelnytskyi was packed into four suitcases. The family cat, Romeo, was carried along too.

US military spouses in Europe set up donations for Ukraine

By PHILLIP WALTER
WELLMAN
AND JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

Spouses of U.S. service members and civilians in Europe are stepping up efforts to help Ukrainians affected by Russia's invasion, while helping some in their communities cope with fears for their loved ones in Ukraine.

In Belgium, a spouses group formed on Facebook will collect clothes, blankets and other donations every Thursday from 4-7 p.m. at the gym at U.S. Army Garrison Benelux in Chievres, said Claire Carter, who is helping to organize the effort. Volunteers will take the supplies to the Ukrainian Embassy in Brussels, about 35 miles away, every Friday to be delivered, she said.

On its Facebook page, the embassy posted a list of useful donation items including clothes, generators, various medicines and medical supplies. The spouses

group is also trying to get solar battery chargers for cellphones to Ukraine so that soldiers can communicate with each other and with their family members.

The spouses have purchased 15, but each device costs \$70 and "we need hundreds," Carter said.

Meanwhile, at Ramstein Air Base in Germany, two Ukrainian women married to Americans are spearheading a separate donation drive.

Evgeniya Cole, 38, and Anya Douglas, 37, are asking for items that friends and family in Ukraine say are desperately needed.

They need bandages, rubbing alcohol and other disinfectants, over-the-counter painkillers, cotton balls, sanitary pads, thermometers, medical gloves, diapers and baby wipes, batteries, blankets, gloves and nonperishable snacks. They also are supplying medical and hygienic supplies for combatants, along with flashlights and binoculars.

4th Marine pleads to trying to smuggle cannabis on Okinawa

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND MARI HIGA
Stars and Stripes

NAHA, Okinawa — A U.S. Marine received a 2½-year suspended sentence Monday in a Japanese court after pleading guilty to attempting to smuggle cannabis liquid into the country last summer.

Lance Cpl. Scott Drebsky, 21, admitted violating Japan's Cannabis Control Act and Customs Law in his first appearance in Naha District Court. He apologized for "not respecting" Japanese law and tradition.

"At that time, I was not thinking clearly, and I made a mistake," he told sentencing Judge Tatsuto Sakamoto. His attorney argued that Drebsky wanted the cannabis for his personal use only.

On Aug. 20, customs officials at the Camp Kinser post office intercepted a package with a quarter-ounce of liquid cannabis meant for Drebsky, a spokeswoman for

Naha District Public Prosecutors Office told Stars and Stripes by phone Monday. Drebsky had a gram of the liquid on him Aug. 27 when authorities confronted him at Camp Schwab, the spokeswoman said. Drebsky was indicted Dec. 2.

Japanese government spokespeople customarily speak to the media on condition of anonymity.

Sakamoto sentenced Drebsky to 2½ years with hard labor but suspended the sentence for four years. He likely will not serve jail time unless convicted again in Japan.

Prosecutors asked for "strict" punishment for Drebsky importing the cannabis liquid, which was sent from Illinois on Aug. 10 by unidentified individuals. The package arrived at Kadena Air Base on Aug. 19.

Drebsky is the fourth Marine to appear in Japanese courts on Okinawa in February on cannabis-smuggling charges.

China demands US action to improve ties

Associated Press

BEIJING — China's top diplomat called on the United States to take steps to improve ties, as tensions simmer over Taiwan, trade and other issues.

Foreign Minister Wang Yi's remarks on Monday were delivered virtually to a forum marking the 50th anniversary of the Shanghai Communique signed during the icebreaking 1972 visit to China by President Richard Nixon.

That trip led to the U.S. and China establishing diplomatic relations seven years later, upon which the U.S. cut formal ties with Taiwan, which China claims as its own territory to be brought under its control by force if necessary.

Wang urged Washington to

"reinstatement of a reasonable and pragmatic China policy" and work with China to put their relations on track. He reiterated China's complaints that the U.S. was not upholding its commitments but didn't mention any specific steps China would take.

The sides need to view their relations "in the broader perspective, with a more inclusive attitude, and choose dialogue over confrontation, cooperation over conflict, openness over seclusion and integration over decoupling," Wang said.

China has been particularly irked by U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken's characterization of ties as "competitive when it should be, collaborative when it can be, adversarial when it must be," saying the sides should be

cooperating across the board, in spite of their sharp differences.

"The United States should truly see China as a partner in the course of development, rather than an adversary, and power games," Wang said.

Rapprochement between Washington and Beijing in 1972 was largely driven by their mutual distrust of the Soviet Union. In the decades since, China has grown increasingly close to Moscow, while U.S.-Russia tensions have soared over the war in Ukraine.

Chinese leader Xi Jinping met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Beijing earlier this month and China has refused to either condemn or endorse Russia's actions, despite its insistence on upholding national sov-

ereignty above all.

China, along with India and the United Arab Emirates, abstained in Friday's 11-1 vote on a U.N. Security Council resolution demanding that Moscow immediately stop its attack on Ukraine. On Monday, the Foreign Ministry said the imposition of sanctions on Russia would "disrupt the process of political settlement."

"China must decide where to stand and understand that bilateral relations with the U.S. will only become more strained in the absence of a clear choice to stand with international law," said forum participant Jacob Lew, chair of the influential National Committee on U.S.-China Relations and a former U.S. treasury secretary.

UN climate report: Global suffering is worse, bigger

Associated Press

Deadly with extreme weather now, climate change is about to get much worse. It is likely going to make the world sicker, hungrier, poorer, gloomier and more dangerous in the next 18 years with an "unavoidable" increase in risks, a new United Nations science report says.

And after that, watch out.

The U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report said Monday that if human-caused global warming isn't limited to just another couple tenths of a degree, an Earth now struck regularly by deadly heat, fires, floods and drought in future decades will degrade in 127 ways, with some being "potentially irreversible."

"The cumulative scientific evidence is unequivocal: Climate change is a threat to human well-being and planetary health," says the major report designed to guide world leaders in their efforts to curb climate change. Delaying cuts in heat-

trapping carbon emissions and waiting on adapting to warming's impacts, it warns, "will miss a brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all."

Today's children who may still be alive in the year 2100 are going to experience four times more climate extremes than they do now even with only a few more tenths of a degree of warming over today's heat. But if temperatures increase nearly 3.4 more degrees Fahrenheit from now, they would feel five times the floods, storms, drought and heat waves, according to the collection of scientists at the IPCC.

Already at least 3.3 billion people's daily lives "are highly vulnerable to climate change" and they are 15 times more likely to die from extreme weather, the report says. Large numbers of people are being displaced by worsening weather extremes, and the world's poor are being hit by far the hardest, it says.

Moderna faces new lawsuit over lucrative virus vaccine

The Washington Post

Moderna faces yet another patent challenge over its coronavirus vaccine after Arbutus Biopharma and Genevant Sciences, both small biotechnology companies, filed a lawsuit on Monday alleging Moderna hijacked its technology to develop the multibillion-dollar vaccine.

Arbutus and Genevant said in their lawsuit that Moderna infringed on their patent for so-called lipid nanoparticle technology, which they say was key in the development of Moderna's mRNA vaccine and took scientists from Arbutus and Genevant "years of painstaking work to develop and refine." The suit was expected after Moderna lost a U.S. Court of Appeals ruling last year in the lengthy patent battle.

Moderna, a 10-year-old Cambridge, Mass.-based biotechnology firm that had not marketed any product before the pandemic, has said it expects coronavirus vaccine sales to top \$19 billion in 2022. Arbutus and Genevant, a

company spearheaded by former Arbutus scientists, could demand some of that as royalties if their challenge succeeds.

Moderna and Arbutus had been operating under licensing terms for Moderna's earlier experimental use of the nanoparticles, Arbutus and Genevant contend in their suit.

"Relying on Arbutus' LNP [lipid nanotechnology particle] technology ... Moderna was able to begin producing its COVID-19 vaccine within just a few days of the SARS-CoV-2 genomic sequence entering the public domain," the lawsuit says.

"Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine could not have been developed, much less on a timeline unprecedented in human history, without Arbutus' proven and patented LNP delivery technology — technology that had transformed vaccine design from a yearslong project into one that could be performed within an hour over a January weekend," the lawsuit says.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Dozens of animals die in petting zoo barn fire

AR AUSTIN — Dozens of animals including prairie dogs, lemurs and hedgehogs were killed when a fire broke out in a barn at an Arkansas petting zoo, according to a woman who volunteers at the zoo.

At a news conference Friday, Jennifer Williams, who volunteers at Cockrill's Country Critters, estimated that 40 to 50 animals died in Thursday's fire in a barn at the petting zoo near Austin, located about 30 miles north-east of Little Rock.

Williams said most of the animals died due to smoke inhalation. She said some reptiles, including snakes and iguanas, survived.

Austin Fire Chief Chris Nelson told the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette that the cause of the fire is still under investigation. He said damage was confined to a room, and there was no structural damage.

Ferry service to replace vessel with hybrid model

ME PORTLAND — A ferry service in Maine is slated to receive more than \$3.5 million for a vessel that will be propelled by a low-emission system.

Casco Bay Island Transit District provides ferry service to islands and island communities off Portland. The district said it is receiving the federal funding to replace an aging vessel in its fleet.

The district said it plans to replace the Maquoit II, which takes passengers and freight almost 50 miles every day and also

delivers mail. It said the replacement vessel will use a diesel electric hybrid propulsion system instead of a conventional diesel mechanical propulsion system.

The new type of propulsion system will eliminate more than 1,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions over the span of the vessel's 30-year expected lifespan, the district said. It will also reduce exhaust fumes and excessive engine noise, it said.

New law to allow dogs in outdoor dining areas

NH CONCORD — There will be more puppies on patios this spring now that New Hampshire has passed a law allowing dogs in outdoor dining areas of restaurants.

Gov. Chris Sununu signed a bill Thursday that clears restaurant owners to allow dogs in any outdoor dining areas of their restaurants.

Dogs must be licensed and vaccinated against rabies, they have to stay on the ground and they can't eat or drink using the restaurant's glasses, plates or utensils. Restaurant staff, meanwhile, are prohibited from petting or playing with the animals.

The new law takes effect in 60 days.

Woman sentenced for voter fraud has new trial

TN MEMPHIS — A Tennessee woman sentenced to prison for illegally registering to vote while on probation will get a new trial on that charge.

Shelby County Criminal Court Judge Mark Ward on Friday granted a motion for the new

trial for Pamela Moses, according to media reports.

Moses, 44, was convicted in November of registering to vote illegally in Memphis in 2019 and was sentenced earlier this month to six years and one day. She has said she was unaware that she was ineligible to vote.

Prosecutors said in a release that Moses' sentence was overturned and a new trial ordered because the "Tennessee Department of Correction failed to turn over a necessary document in the case." Ward said Friday that he was treating that error as "an inadvertent failure."

3 hospitalized after floor collapses at house party

CO DENVER — Three people were taken to a hospital after a floor collapsed during a house party in a Denver area suburb, authorities said.

South Metro Fire Rescue said crews responded Saturday at about 9:30 p.m. to the home southeast of Aurora, KUSA-TV reported.

Firefighters said a portion of the first floor fell into the basement because of a party involving more than 100 people.

Three people were injured, including one seriously, authorities said. No one was trapped.

Pony swim, auction resume after hiatus

VA CHINCOTEAGUE — The famed ponies of Virginia's Chincoteague Island will be back in the spotlight this summer after events were postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Daily Times of Salisbury (Md.) reported that the Chincoteague Pony Penning and auc-

tion are returning in July. For the past two years, pony lovers have had to participate in an online pony auction.

Pony Penning week begins with "Saltwater Cowboys" on horseback rounding up about 150 adult wild ponies that live on Assateague Island, along with scores of foals that were born in the spring. The ponies swim the Assateague Channel and come ashore on the east side of Chincoteague Island. The foals are then auctioned off to help control the size of the herd, although a few are designated to return to Assateague Island to remain and help replenish the herd.

The Pony Penning week and associated carnival are the biggest annual fundraisers for the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company, which maintains the herd.

Camping World CEO gives Marquette \$15M

WI MILWAUKEE — Marquette University has received a \$15 million gift from Marcus Lemonis, Camping World CEO and star of CNBC reality TV show "The Profit," who graduated from the Milwaukee school in 1995.

Lemonis was a javelin thrower for Marquette's track team from 1991-95. The school announced the donation from Lemonis and his wife, Bobbi, during its Saturday afternoon men's basketball game with Butler.

The \$15 million gift will fund the renovation of the university's Memorial Library, which will now be known as the Lemonis Center for Student Success.

— From wire reports

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PG Doncic crucial to Mavs' success

Associated Press

Through all the triple-doubles, buzzer-beaters and three All-Star Game trips in four seasons, Luka Doncic never averaged 40 points over a four-game stretch until the final quartet before the break.

Those games also happened to be the first ones since a trade ended Doncic's European pairing with Kristaps Porzingis that never developed the way the Dallas Mavericks had hoped.

Not that the focus wasn't already on the Slovenian superstar, who turned 23 yesterday, but the timing of the 41.5-point-per-game outburst that included Doncic's first 50-point effort made it perfectly clear.

If the Mavericks are going to get past the first round of the playoffs for the first time since winning the franchise's only championship 11 years ago, their point guard will have to dominate.

Nobody knows it better than the point guard from 2011: Jason Kidd, who helped guide a club led by another European star in Dirk Nowitzki.

"Luka's that type of player that can carry the load, for not just four games but for most of the season," said Kidd, the first-year Dallas coach. "He's playing not just at an All-Star but at an MVP level right now, and that's what we need going into the second half."

A few hours after Porzingis was traded to Washington in a deal that brought Spencer Dinwiddie and Davis Bertans, Doncic scored 28 points in the first quarter of a 112-105 victory over the Los Angeles Clippers. He finished with a career-high 51.

In a rematch two nights later, Doncic scored 23 of his 45 points in the fourth quarter of a 99-97 loss, the only defeat in the four-game stretch. He had 49 in a victory over New Orleans after missing two late free throws.

"It was just games," said Doncic, who was busy from three-point range during the four games, going 22 of 48. "I know everybody talks it was after the trade, after something. It was just games. Sometimes you feel good, sometimes you don't. I just felt good."

The Clippers and coach Tyronn Lue prefer to focus on making Doncic a scorer because they think he's more dangerous when he's distributing as well.

Indeed, just before the scoring burst started, the franchise leader in triple-doubles had four in a six-game stretch. The 51-point night ended a career-best run of seven consecutive games with double-digit assists because the game was close and Doncic had to keep scoring.

Doncic is sixth in the NBA in scoring (27.6 points per game) and fifth in assists (8.9).

The latest scoring flurry from Doncic tops his run in the 2020 playoffs, when his buzzer-beater to even the series in Game 4 against the Los Angeles Clippers was the talk of the playoff bubble. Doncic had two 40-point games and just missed a third in a six-game loss in his postseason debut.

Doncic hasn't kept up the 40-point pace in Dallas' two games since the break, scoring just 23 in a 114-109 loss to the Utah Jazz on Friday before bouncing back with 34 in a 107-101 win over the Warriors.

This isn't entirely surprising as the Mavericks figure out the new pecking order among scorers without Porzingis. It's worth noting that shooting guard Tim Hardaway Jr. should return for the playoffs after missing at least two months with a broken left foot.

"When you've got a guy that's able to break down the defense so efficiently, you've got to be ready to knock down shots, you've got to be ready to cut, you've got to be ready to balance the floor in different situations offensively," forward-center Dwight Powell said. "At the end of the day, we're trying to find ways to support each other regardless of who has it going and the find ways to contribute to win."

The Mavericks know who's likely to have it going on most nights.

Two much: Embiid, Harden lead 76ers past Knicks

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Joel Embiid scored 37 points and made a career and NBA season-high 23 free throws, James Harden had 29 points, 16 assists and 10 rebounds, and the Philadelphia 76ers made it two straight wins with their new duo by beating the New York Knicks 125-109 on Sunday.

The 76ers made 39 free throws, most in the NBA this season, and almost all their work to break open a close game midway through the fourth quarter came from the line.

Embiid finished 23 of 27 on free throws and the NBA's leading scorer added nine rebounds.

After a powerful performance in a 133-102 win at Minnesota on Friday in Harden's

76ers debut, this one became a grind-it-out game that the 76ers handled better.

Mavericks 107, Warriors 101: Luka Doncic made two free throws with 7.9 seconds left on the way to 34 points, and Dallas came back from 21 down on the road to stun Golden State.

Spencer Dinwiddie scored 10 of his 24 points in the final period off Dallas.

Stephen Curry hit a three-pointer with 10 seconds remaining and had 27 points and 10 assists in his first game at home since earning All-Star Game MVP honors, but the Warriors couldn't do enough right on either end during crunch time as Dallas hit all the big shots.

Doncic went 10 for 21 from the floor in the first of two matchups

in five days between a pair of top-five NBA defenses: No. 1 Golden State and the fifth-ranked Mavericks. Dinwiddie scored five straight points midway through the fourth that got Dallas to 93-90.

Jazz 118, Suns 114: Donovan Mitchell scored 26 points, Rudy Gobert added 16 points and 14 rebounds and visiting Utah beat NBA-leading Phoenix.

The Jazz have won eight of nine to improve to 38-22.

Pelicans 123, Lakers 95: CJ McCollum scored 22 points, Jonas Valanciunas and Brandon Ingram added 19 apiece and New Orleans rolled past host Los Angeles.

Pacers 128, Celtics 107: Oshae Brissett scored 27 points

and Buddy Hield had 11 of his 21 points in the final eight minutes to help Indiana beat visiting Boston.

Pistons 127, Hornets 126 (OT): Kelly Olynyk made a fadeaway jumper from the baseline at the overtime buzzer and Detroit beat host Charlotte for the first time nearly 4½ years.

Clippers 99, Rockets 98: Reggie Jackson scored 26 points, including three key points down the stretch to lead Los Angeles to a victory over visiting Houston to open a two-game series.

Nuggets 124, Trail Blazers 92: JaMychal Green had 20 points and 10 rebounds off the bench and Denver won at Portland to push its winning streak to six games.

Blues blank Blackhawks

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Jordan Kyrou, Pavel Buchnevich and David Perron scored during St. Louis' dominant second period, and the Blues beat the Chicago Blackhawks 4-0 on Sunday for their fourth straight win.

Perron tacked on a third-period goal in the opener of a four-game trip. Brayden Schenn had two assists for St. Louis, and Jordan Binnington made 30 saves in his second shutout of the season.

The Blues improved to 3-0-1 against Chicago, closing out their season series. They also pounded the Blackhawks in their previous meeting, winning 5-1 in St. Louis on Feb. 12.

Marc-Andre Fleury made 31 stops for Chicago, turning away several quality chances. The Blackhawks (19-27-8) lost for the fourth time in their last five games.

The Blues (32-14-6) went ahead to stay when Kyrou finished a pretty passing sequence with Schenn 2:26 into the second.

Stars 4, Sabres 2: Michael Raffl scored twice to end a 16-game drought without a goal and Jake Oettinger made 38 saves for host Dallas in a win over Buffalo.

Raffl scored the game's first goal midway through the first period, his first since Jan. 6, and added his sixth of the season late in the second period. It was the 33-year-old's third multigoal game in 560 NHL appearances.

Hurricanes 2, Oilers 1: Teuvo Teravainen

had a goal and an assist, Sebastian Aho also scored and host Carolina won its fifth game in a row.

Andrei Svechnikov provided two assists for the Hurricanes, and Frederik Andersen made 29 saves for his league-leading 29th victory.

One day after his first career hat trick, Derek Ryan scored an unassisted goal for Edmonton, which was on its third stop of a five-game trip.

Jets 5, Coyotes 3: Kyle Connor scored twice in the third period and Winnipeg broke a four-game skid with a win at Arizona.

Adam Lowry, Evgeny Svechnikov and Blake Wheeler also scored for the Jets, who rallied from a 3-2 deficit in the third period.

Penguins 3, Blue Jackets 2: Sidney Crosby scored with 2:14 left to rally visiting Pittsburgh over Columbus and bolster its hold on second place in the Metropolitan Division.

Canucks 5, Rangers 2: Thatcher Demko made 31 saves and visiting Vancouver won for the fifth time in six games.

Islanders 4, Ducks 0: Casey Cizikas had a goal and an assist and Ilya Sorokin made 34 saves for his fifth shutout of the season to lead New York to a win at Anaheim.

Sharks 3, Kraken 1: Scott Reedy and Jonathan Gadjovich each scored their first NHL goals, Ryan Dzingel got his first with host San Jose.

Russia banned from matches by FIFA, UEFA

Associated Press

GENEVA — Russian teams were suspended Monday from all international soccer, including qualifying matches for the 2022 World Cup, as Moscow was pushed toward pariah status in sports after its invasion of Ukraine.

World soccer body FIFA and European authority UEFA banned Russian national and clubs teams from their competitions "until further notice." Russia's men's national team had been scheduled to play in World Cup qualifying playoffs in just three weeks' time.

"Football is fully united here and in full solidarity with all the people affected in Ukraine," FIFA and UEFA said in a joint statement.

The high-level punishment involving sports and politics — not seen for decades — came after the International Olympic Committee pushed dozens of sports governing bodies to exclude Russian athletes and officials from international events. The IOC said this was needed to "protect the integrity of global sports competitions and for the safety of all the participants."

Denying Russia a place on the international stage should deliver a financial and psychological blow to the country, along with tarnishing its image as an elite sports powerhouse.

FIFA's move excluded Russia from the World Cup ahead of a qualifying playoff on March 24. Poland already had refused to play its scheduled game against Russia.

UEFA also took the last remaining Russians in European club competitions this season, Spartak Moscow, out of the second-tier Europa League. Spartak's scheduled opponent on March 10 and 17, Leipzig of Germany, advances directly to the quarterfinals, UEFA said.

It was not immediately clear how the IOC's request to sports bodies will affect Russian hockey players in the NHL and tennis players, including top-ranked Daniil Medvedev, in Grand Slam, ATP and WTA tournaments outside the authority of the International Tennis Federation.

The Olympic body's call also applied to athletes and officials from Belarus, which has abetted Russia's invasion by allowing its territory to be used to station troops and launch military attacks.

It was not a total blanket ban by the IOC, which also did not specifically suspend the national Olympic committees of Russia and Belarus.

No. 15 Illinois holds off Michigan

Associated Press

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — Kofi Cockburn scored 27 points and Alfonso Plummer had 26, helping No. 15 Illinois beat Michigan 93-85 on Sunday.

Plummer had 23 points in the first half as the Illini led by eight. They were ahead by 15 midway through the second half before the Wolverines rallied to give themselves a shot at a comeback win. But Illinois put Michigan away with a jump hook and a three to pull within a game of Big Ten-leading and 13th-ranked Wisconsin.

Frazier finished with 17 points and Andre Curbelo scored 12 for the Illini (20-8, 13-5).

The Wolverines were without suspended coach Juwan Howard, who missed the second of five games for hitting a Wisconsin assistant coach a week ago. DeVante' Jones had a season-high 25 points and matched a career high with 10 assists for Michigan.

No. 14 Houston 75, SMU 61: Fabian White Jr. had 21 points and nine rebounds and Josh Carlton added 19 points and eight rebounds to lead the host Cougars.

Taze Moore chipped in 11 points, and Jamal Shead finished with 10 points and 11 assists for Houston (24-4, 13-2 American Athletic Conference).

No. 21 Connecticut 86, Georgetown 77: R.J. Cole scored 18 points and the visiting Huskies excelled from behind the arc while sending the Hoyas to their school-record 18th straight loss.

Connecticut (21-7, 12-5 Big East) shot 11-for-20 on three-pointers. Isaiah Whaley scored 14 points as UConn matched its longest winning streak of the season at five.

Maryland 75, No. 22 Ohio State 60: Fatts Russell matched his career high with 27 points, Eric Ayala scored 23 and the host Terrapins took down the Buckeyes.

Larson holds off Suarez, Dillon to win at Fontana

Associated Press

FONTANA, Calif. — Even after Kyle Larson's dominant finish to 2021, he entered the new NASCAR Cup Series season full of uncertainty.

"Going into a new car, you just don't know if you're going to win or not," he said.

Just two races into the new year in the new car, Larson no longer has to wonder — although his path to victory included a fateful collision with furious teammate Chase Elliott on a wild day at Fontana.

The defending NASCAR Cup Series champion held off Austin Dillon and Daniel Suarez in a tense finish Sunday, surviving a restart with four laps left to win at Auto Club Speedway for the second time.

Before the chaotic finish, Larson and Elliott made contact with just under 20 laps to go, with Larson pinching his Hendrick Motorsports teammate into the wall while he fought to stay in front of Joey Logano. Larson apologized for the collision over the radio, saying he hadn't seen Elliott making a bold move to get past him — but Elliott, who finished 26th, and his team were decidedly displeased.

"I had no clue he was even coming," Larson said. "I hate that I ended his day after they had worked so hard to get back to the lead lap. It was probably just an honest mistake on both of our parts. ... I know they're upset, but I would never run into my teammate and block them on purpose that late."

Larson then had victory in sight with eight laps to go when Elliott spun, forcing a race-record 12th caution. NASCAR fans went wild with online speculation that Elliott's spin was a deliberate attempt to hurt Larson's chances to win.

Larson and crew chief Cliff Daniels dismissed that notion, and they believe there won't be long-term damage to their Hendrick relationship.

"I know we're all great teammates together," Daniels said. "I know it's nothing they would ever do intentionally. I don't blame Chase at all for making what could have been the race-winning move (earlier). ... Unfortunate, but I know we're all going to get on the same page."

The brouhaha with Elliott colored another superb race for Larson, who hadn't won any races anywhere yet in 2022.

Deadline day to salvage opening day, full season

Associated Press

JUPITER, Fla. — Max Scherzer and Andrew Miller were leading the players' bargaining team Monday for the final day of negotiations to end the lockout before Major League Baseball's deadline to salvage a March 31 start to the regular season and a 162-game schedule.

The sides agreed to arrive at Roger Dean Stadium at 10 a.m., three hours earlier than usual. It was the eighth straight day of talks at the vacant spring training home of the Miami Marlins and St. Louis Cardinals.

MLB Deputy Commissioner Dan Halem and Executive Vice President Morgan Sword met with the union for about 45 minutes in the day's first session, which ended about noon.

The lockout was in its 89th day. MLB has not fixed an exact time to the deadline.

Sides were still far apart, but pressure is increasing. Players would lose \$20.5 million in salary for each day of the season that is canceled, according to a study by The Associated Press, and the 30 teams would lose large sums that are harder to pin down.

Monday was picked as a deadline because MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred said at least 28 days of training are needed before the season starts. The union has not said whether it agrees.

Spring training games were to have begun Saturday and have already been canceled through March 7.

Halem phoned union chief negotiator Bruce Meyer on Sunday morning and asked for a 1-on-1 session in place of the scheduled larger group gathering.

That started a series of four short meetings characterized as an exchange of ideas that gave the union and MLB a better idea of the tradeoffs it would take to reach the endpoint of bargaining that began last spring and resulted in the sport's first work stoppage since 1995.

The most contentious proposals involve luxury tax thresholds and rates, the size of a new bonus pool for pre-arbitration players, minimum salaries, salary arbitration eligibility and the union's desire to change the club revenue-sharing formula.

In addition, MLB has tied the elimination of direct free-agent compensation to players agreeing to higher luxury tax rates and still wants to expand the playoffs to 14 teams rather than the union's preference for 12. MLB has also kept its proposal for an international amateur draft on the table.

McLaughlin gets 1st IndyCar win

Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Scott McLaughlin drove to his first IndyCar victory and tumbled off his winning car during the celebration.

Out of breath under a clear sky, he sat on the car to collect himself. Then he jumped again, this time because the heat from his exhaust was burning his behind through his firesuit.

He then sat on the ground to video call his parents in New Zealand, who listened to the race on the IndyCar app. The pandemic has kept McLaughlin from his family for two years and they've yet to see him race in his new home and new series.

He at last called for a cold beer, but when McLaughlin noticed Australian fans in victory lane, he amped up the party. He took off his racing boot and dumped the beer inside for a "Shoey" — Aussie style. The move ruined his favorite racing shoes.

It was quite the day for McLaughlin, who at last proved his decision to leave Australia af-

ter three consecutive V8 Supercars championships to join IndyCar. The 28-year-old had a difficult first year but broke through Sunday for his first IndyCar victory in the season-opening race through the downtown streets of St. Petersburg.

"I knew I'm a rookie and I wasn't kidding myself, but at the same time it's hard to go from the mindset of, 'OK, win every week and that's all that matters, nothing less,' to going, 'Hey, I'd love a top-15,'" McLaughlin said. "I don't work like that. I'm a competitive bloke. I want to win. I want to get poles. I want to dominate races and not even worry about things. I did that for four years, and then coming here ... it just mucks with your head, and you've got to be realistic about things."

"I put a lot of pressure on myself, like, 'Why isn't this happening? Why am I sucking in qualifying when I'm good?' I've done that before, I've proved that. It's a mind game, man, and you've got to be on top of it. You've got to just believe in yourself."