

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## Dozens killed in Kabul vehicle explosion

BY PHILLIP WALTER  
WELLMAN

*Stars and Stripes*

KABUL, Afghanistan — At least 95 people were killed and more than 150 were wounded on Saturday when an ambulance packed with explosives was detonated in central Kabul, officials said.

The explosion was the third high-profile attack in Afghanistan in a week and the deadliest this year, highlighting the fragile security situation in the country more than 16 years after a U.S. invasion ousted the Taliban from power.

The vehicle made it past a checkpoint in a heavily secured area near the capital's Sadarat Square — about a mile from the U.S. Embassy and NATO's Resolute Support headquarters — before being stopped at a second

checkpoint, where it exploded, Basir Mujahid, a spokesman for Kabul police, said. It was lunchtime, and many people were in the street.

"Most of the victims are civilians," Mujahid said. "It was a terrible attack that killed women, children, shopkeepers and visitors to the area."

Dejan Panic, a coordinator with the NGO Emergency, which operates a nearby hospital that treated victims, described the scene as "a massacre." The Taliban claimed responsibility and said the bombing targeted a building used by the Interior Ministry and High Peace Council, a body set up in 2010 to negotiate with insurgents. A number of police officers were killed or wounded, a statement by the group added.

After the attack, dozens of people waited outside the Emer-

gency Hospital for news of their loved ones, including Mohammadullah, a young travel agent whose friend was missing. "Our government is doing nothing for us," said Mohammadullah, who like many Afghans uses just one name. "People are living in fear — they can't go to their jobs. Instead of getting better, it's getting worse day by day, and the attacks are getting deadlier."

Officials expect the death toll from the attack, already one of the highest of the war, to rise. The deadliest attack happened last May, when a truck bomb attributed to the Taliban-allied Haqqani Network exploded near the German Embassy in Kabul, killing over 150.

The U.S. recently has increased airstrikes against the Taliban and other militant groups in Afghanistan in the hopes of breaking a stalemate

and getting the insurgents to the negotiating table. After a recent visit to Afghanistan, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley said the aggressive policy was working and that peace talks were closer than ever.

Afghanistan's Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah condemned the most recent bombing, calling it "insane, inhuman, heinous and a war crime."

"We will bring its perpetrators to justice and take necessary measures to avoid such barbarism in the future," he tweeted.

Tadamichi Yamamoto, head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, said in a statement that the vehicle used in the attack may have been painted to look like an ambulance and not an official emergency vehicle.

## Trump plans to ask for 'big jump' in defense spending

*The Washington Post*

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump is expected to ask for \$716 billion in defense spending when he unveils his 2019 budget next month, a major increase that signals a shift away from concerns about rising deficits, U.S. officials said.

The proposed budget is a victory for Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, who recently unveiled a strategy that proposes retooling the military to deter and, if necessary, fight a potential conflict with a major power such as China or Russia.

And it represents a setback for deficit hawks, such as Mick Mulvaney, director of the Office of Management and Budget, who last year pressed for an increase in defense spending that could be offset by cuts to domestic programs.

The \$716 billion figure for 2019 would cover the Pentagon's annual budget as well as spending on ongoing wars and the maintenance of the U.S. nuclear arsenal. It would increase Pentagon spending by more than 7 percent over the 2018 budget, which still has not passed through Congress.

The proposed budget would be a 13 percent increase over 2017, when the United States spent about \$634 billion on defense. In the absence of a budget, spending continues at 2017 levels.

The proposed increase is "a huge deal," said Mark Cancian, a defense analyst with the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "It's a big jump in defense and means that the Trump administration is putting resources against an extremely aggressive defense strategy."

The Pentagon and the White House declined to comment on the president's proposal, which has been circulating among the military services and in Congress.

Trump touted his 2018 defense budget as one of the largest in U.S. history, but the proposal was seen as something of a disappointment inside the Pentagon and among defense hawks in Congress.

Many lawmakers have pushed for the military budget to increase far beyond what Trump proposed last year. Trump sought \$668 billion in spending for national defense in 2018, but Congress passed a bipartisan defense authorization bill late last year that would direct roughly \$700 billion to military spending. That bill authorizes military spending but does not actually appropriate it, which

would have to be done through a different act of Congress.

A senior U.S. official said that \$716 billion is the target the White House provided to lawmakers as they make plans to adjust congressionally mandated caps on spending.

Mattis recently said political dysfunction in Washington, congressionally mandated spending caps and lawmakers' inability to pass a budget were eroding the military's ability to retool and prepare for future threats.

"As hard as the last 16 years have been, no enemy in the field has done more to harm the readiness of the U.S. military than the combined impact of the Budget Control Act, defense spending cuts and operating in nine of the last 10 years under continuing resolutions," Mattis said.

# Research on PTSD sees positive results

Austin (Texas)  
American-Statesman

A recent Fort Hood, Texas-based study holds hope for a speedy recovery from post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms — in as little as two weeks — for servicemembers returning from combat.

Researchers say the study, which involved 370 active-duty servicemembers seeking PTSD treatment, already has led to a Defense Department directive to make the treatment more available at its clinics on military installations across the country.

At Fort Hood's Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center, researchers studied the effect of prolonged exposure therapy,

in which patients repeatedly recounted and discussed their most traumatic memories to process the trauma they experienced and reduce the anxiety caused by the memories. Servicemembers listened to recordings of those episodes, practiced confronting real-life situations that spark anxiety and did controlled breathing exercises.

The therapy previously had shown success among civilians, but the length of the treatment — eight to 15 weeks — can make it difficult for servicemembers to complete it.

But the Texas study found that two weeks of intensive daily treatment were as effective as a traditional eight-week course. Almost half of the study partici-

pants no longer tested positive for PTSD after the treatment, gains that researchers said largely held up over time.

"The shorter treatment is an optimal intervention for military personnel with PTSD, as it minimizes the time and inconvenience entailed by a longer treatment before continuing their military career or returning to civilian life," said Edna Foa, a University of Pennsylvania clinical psychology and psychiatry professor who developed prolonged exposure therapy and led the study.

The study, the first-ever randomized clinical trial of prolonged exposure therapy with active-duty military personnel and the largest study yet of prolonged exposure therapy, was

carried out by researchers affiliated with the STRONG STAR consortium, a multi-institutional research network funded by the Defense Department aimed at researching combat-related PTSD treatments.

In 2016, STRONG STAR announced the results of another Fort Hood study that found 12 sessions of therapy led to PTSD recovery in 40 percent to 50 percent of soldiers. Instead of confronting traumatic memories directly as in prolonged exposure therapy, cognitive processing therapy helps patients learn to think about their traumatic experiences in a clearer way, without "distorted thoughts" that perpetuate feelings of guilt, blame and anger, researchers said.

## Iraqi forces are killed by mistake in US airstrike

The Washington Post

BAGHDAD — At least six Iraqi police and allied militiamen were killed in American airstrikes early Saturday during a raid for a wanted Islamic State militant after they were apparently mistaken by Iraq's military for armed insurgents.

The apparent friendly fire incident is being investigated by Iraqi and American officials in Baghdad, but it has provoked some anger among critics of the United States who have long been suspicious or hostile to the U.S. military's involvement in the fight against ISIS.

Iraq's joint operations command, the umbrella for Iraq's military, police and militia forces, said that before dawn, a team of Iraqi troops was executing a search in the Anbar province town of al-Baghdadi for a man with links to ISIS. The team was backed by U.S. airpower, the command said.

Once the militant was arrested, the Iraqi forces encountered an armed group they did not recognize, and American helicopters swooped in and opened fire, according to the command statement. The command said it was launching an investigation into the incident.

A spokesman for the U.S.-led anti-ISIS coalition did not respond to a request for comment but said in a Twitter post that the

episode is being investigated.

The Twitter post also said United States air support comes only at the request of by approval of the Iraqi military.

Khalid al-Obaidi, a local tribal leader in al-Baghdadi, said in a telephone interview the airstrike also injured 20 people, including the heads of al-Baghdadi's police and local council.

Iraqi cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, long a critic of the American military presence in Iraq, said in a statement that the "American occupation proves its tyranny, its arrogance and its blatant aggression against the Iraqi government, its independence and its sovereignty by indiscriminately and unjustly bombarding Baghdad district which claimed innocent lives."

Sadr, who also recently positioned himself as a nationalist who opposes Iranian meddling in Iraq, demanded the "aggressors" be punished.

On Friday, the U.S.-led coalition said a total of 831 civilians had been killed in coalition airstrikes by the end of 2017 during the three-year war against ISIS in both Iraq and Syria. Airwars, an independent monitoring group, has said that number is implausible and that their research has shown that up to 9,210 noncombatants were killed by the end of last year.

## Christmas trees protect Va. base

The (Norfolk, Va.) Virginian-Pilot

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. — When the Chesapeake Bay's wind-blown waves crash into the shore, they can take precious sand back into the water with them.

That constant threat of erosion often leads to expensive beach nourishment projects and, in some cases, to people abandoning waterfront homes.

But the Navy has found another way to shore up the shoreline at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, which is home to Navy SEALs, amphibious warships and expeditionary combat forces.

The bayfront base asks sailors and civilians who work there to donate their used Christmas trees each January so they can help stabilize the base's sand dunes. In some cases, the base also will get trees donated from local Christmas tree lots.

The trees are put down on their sides in a line behind wooden sand fences that are in the dunes. The pine needles naturally stop blowing sand and help build the dunes into larger hills. Eventually, the trees are entirely covered in sand. The Navy also has planted sea grasses to keep the sand from blowing away.

More than 250 trees were donated to Little Creek this year, while about 50 were donated at Fort Story.

# Infighting could doom US' Syria strategy

*The Washington Post*

LONDON — Turkey's assault against Kurdish militants in Syria has exposed the limitations of the Trump administration's new Syria policy, calling into question the feasibility of Washington's plans to maintain a military presence in that country without becoming embroiled in a wider conflict.

The Turkish offensive targeting Afrin, a Kurdish enclave just over Turkey's border, was launched two days after Secretary of State Rex Tillerson unveiled a strategy that committed the United States to an apparently open-ended troop presence in the Kurdish areas of northeastern Syria.

This strategy aims to prevent Islamic State militants from returning to areas recently conquered from them, U.S. officials say. But Tillerson articulated a number of other goals for the new policy, including rolling back Iranian influence, defeating al-Qaida and securing a peaceful settlement of the Syrian conflict that excludes President Bashar Assad.

Washington's focus on providing military support to Syrian Kurds battling ISIS, however, has always been rife with contradictions, experts say. These are now coming to the fore as longtime U.S. ally and fellow NATO member Turkey takes on the United States' biggest Syrian ally in the fight against ISIS.

"This highlights the funda-

mental difficulty of a U.S. strategy that requires maintaining active alliances with two forces which are at war with each other," said Noah Bonsey, a Syria analyst at the International Crisis Group who is visiting the Kurdish areas of northeastern Syria. "There has never been an easy answer to that, and there isn't going to be one."

Since the assault began over a week ago, Washington has scrambled to strike a balance between its warring friends, acknowledging the validity of Turkey's security concerns while urging Ankara to restrict the scope of the offensive to the border region of Afrin and to limit casualties.

Turkey has been waging a decades-old war at home against Kurdish insurgents of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, which is allied with the U.S.-backed group controlling territory along the Turkish border in northern Syria. The PKK is designated a terrorist group by Washington and Ankara.

The U.S. military has made clear, meanwhile, that it will not go to the aid of the Kurds in Afrin because it does not regard them as allies on a par with the Kurds farther east who were trained and armed to fight ISIS. The Kurds in Afrin were not involved in fighting ISIS and have not received American assistance, U.S. officials say.

But with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan intensi-

fying his threats to extend the Turkish offensive to the areas farther east, where the U.S. military maintains troops, a larger conflict looms.

On Saturday, he issued an ultimatum to U.S. troops to withdraw from Manbij, which has been controlled by the U.S.-backed, Kurdish-led alliance since it was captured from ISIS in 2016. Manbij, in turn, borders a part of northern Syria controlled by other Syrian rebels backed by Turkey. U.S. troops have been conducting patrols in the area for nearly a year to keep their hostile allies apart.

A Turkish attack on Manbij would present the United States with a major dilemma, said Gonul Tol, director of the Center for Turkish Studies at the Middle East Institute in Washington.

If the Trump administration intends to remain in northern Syria, "they need the Kurds," she said. "On the other hand, Turkey is a NATO ally. They might be forced to pick a side."

In the past, U.S. officials have privately dismissed Erdogan's frequent threats to attack Manbij as rhetoric intended primarily for domestic consumption in Turkey. But domestic politics means such an attack could become inevitable, Tol said.

"Erdogan talked about this so much, it's going to be difficult for him to walk it back," she said. Erdogan's primary focus has been a presidential election in Turkey scheduled for

next year, and the intensifying confrontation with Washington works in his favor politically at home, she said.

Meanwhile, other regional players in Syria are hardly more enthusiastic than Turkey about the prospect of a long-term U.S. troop presence in Syria or about the existence of the Kurdish autonomous zone the troops appear to be cementing. Russia has given the nod to the Turkish offensive, which is unfolding in an area demarcated as under Russia's overall influence, U.S. officials say.

"Turkey and Russia struck an agreement to allow the Turkish offensive to take place," a senior U.S. administration official told a briefing for journalists in Washington. The Russians essentially "green-lighted" the operation, said the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive subject.

The bigger problem, said Faysal Itani, a resident senior fellow at the Atlantic Council, is that the U.S. presence in Syria is so small and the hostility to the U.S. troops so widespread that it is hard to see how they can influence events. The United States maintains 2,000 troops in an area the size of Indiana, alongside the Kurdish-Arab alliance known as the Syrian Democratic Forces. The dominant group in the alliance is the Kurdish People's Protection Units, or YPG, which has close ties to the PKK.

## Judge divides cases over Manson's remains, estate

*Associated Press*

LOS ANGELES — The fight for the corpse of Charles Manson was thrown out of a Los Angeles court Friday, as another potential heir stepped into the case, and the grandson of the cult leader made an emotional plea to a judge.

In a hearing to determine the venue for legal battles over Manson's estate and the disposition of his remains, Jason Freeman, whose father was born by Manson's first wife, echoed the frustration of several parties who have been trying to get control of the notorious criminal's body since he died in November.

"My grandfather has been on ice over 60 days," Freeman blurted in court as he choked up.

Judge David Cowan divided the two dueling Manson cases, deciding that litigation over the potentially lucrative estate should remain in Los Angeles because that's where Manson was living when he was arrested and convicted in the murders of pregnant actress Sharon Tate and eight others.

Cowan said the case over the remains, however, belongs either in Kings County, where the cult leader was imprisoned, or in Kern County, where he died in a Bakersfield, Calif., hospital on Nov. 19. A hearing already is scheduled Wednesday in Bakers-

field, and the Kern County coroner, which has the body, requested the case be decided there.

Each of the parties that have come to court all have said they want to collect Manson's body so he can be cremated or properly buried, though some have suggested others have less noble motives, such as selling cadaver photos or carving off Manson's tattoos for sale or display.

So far, three parties have staked claims in court to collect Manson's body from the morgue and take control of any assets, which could include rights to any property he left behind, the commercial right to use his image or royalties to songs he wrote.

# Immigration proposal raises ire on right

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Fearing betrayal on a signature campaign issue, President Donald Trump's loyalists are lashing out against his proposal to create a path to citizenship for nearly 2 million "Dreamer" immigrants.

Trump-aligned candidates from Nevada and Virginia rejected the notion outright. Breitbart News, attacked him as "Amnesty Don." And outside groups that cheered the hard-line rhetoric that dominated Trump's campaign warned of fierce backlash against the president's party in November's mid-term elections.

The public scolding is aimed at a president who has changed course under pressure before. It presents Trump with a significant test on an issue that dominated his outsider candidacy and inspired working-class voters who propelled his rise. Now, barely a year into his presidency, Trump can bend either to his fiery base or to the pressure to compromise.

His leadership may determine the fate of hundreds of thousands of young immigrants and whether his party can improve its standing among surging numbers of Hispanic voters.

Much of the country, including independents and moderate Republicans, favor protections for thousands of young people brought to the country as children illegally and raised here through no fault of their own. But a vocal conservative faction emboldened by Trump's anti-immigrant rhetoric will never accept anything viewed as "amnesty." Many view legal protection for these young immigrants as just that.

Trump's proposal includes billions for border security and significant changes to legal immigration long sought by hard-liners. Several Democrats and immigration activists rejected it outright. But his supporters' focus on "amnesty" for Dreamers highlights how little room Trump has to maneuver.

The president told journalists this week he favors a pathway to citizenship for those immigrants, embracing a notion he once specifically rejected.

Legal protection for roughly 700,000 immigrants enrolled in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, or DACA, has emerged as a driving priority for Democrats, who forced a government shutdown over this issue last week. The businessman president appears to have set out to cut a deal.

The consequences could be severe for the GOP as it struggles to energize voters heading into the 2018 midterm elections, when Republican majorities in the House and Senate are at stake.

Recent Democratic victories in Alabama and Virginia suggest that the GOP has cause for concern, especially as Trump's job approval hovers in the mid-30s.

## In letter to African leaders, Trump says Tillerson will visit

Associated Press

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia — President Donald Trump in a new letter to African leaders says he "deeply respects" the people of Africa and that Secretary of State Rex Tillerson will make an "extended visit" to the continent in March.

The letter dated Thursday is addressed to African leaders as they gather for an African Union summit this weekend in Ethiopia's capital.

U.S. diplomats have scrambled for days to address condemnation after Trump's reported comparison of African nations to a dirty toilet. Trump said he didn't use such language, while others present say he did.

On Friday, Trump met with Rwanda's president and new African Union chair Paul Kagame at the World Economic Forum, calling Kagame a "friend."

The 55-nation continental

body's summit is expected to respond to Trump's vulgar remark. An AU spokeswoman has said the organization was "frankly alarmed" by the comments.

Trump's letter, seen by The Associated Press and confirmed by two U.S. officials, says the U.S. "profoundly respects" the partnerships and values shared by the U.S. and Africans, and that the president's commitment to strong relationships with African nations is "firm."

The letter offers Trump's "deepest compliments" to the African leaders as they gather. It notes U.S. soldiers are "fighting side by side" against extremism on the continent and that the U.S. is working to increase "free, fair and reciprocal trade" with African countries and partnering to "safeguard legal immigration."

## Wynn Resorts founder denies misconduct claim

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Wynn Resorts is denying multiple allegations of sexual harassment and assault by founder Steve Wynn that were detailed in a Wall Street Journal report. Shares of the casino company tumbled more than 10 percent Friday.

The paper reported that a number of women say they were harassed or assaulted by the casino mogul and finance chair of the Republican National Committee.

One case led to a \$7.5 million settlement with a manicurist, the paper reported. The detailed report relies on interviews with dozens of people who corroborate a decadeslong pattern of sexual misconduct with female employees.

The company said it is committed to operating with the "highest ethical standards and maintaining a safe and respectful culture." In a statement sent to The Associated Press, it called the allegations part of a smear campaign related to divorce proceedings from Wynn's ex-wife.

Wynn also denied the allegations personally.

Wynn, who is chairman and CEO of the company he founded, is a titan in Las Vegas and played a major role in the revitalization of the Las Vegas Strip in the 1990s. It was Wynn's company that built the Golden Nugget, The Bellagio and Mirage Resorts in the heart of the town.

A wave of sexual misconduct claims against prominent figures in entertainment, media and politics gained momentum last fall in the aftermath of articles detailing movie producer's Harvey Weinstein's decades of alleged rape and harassment. But Wynn is the first CEO and founder of a major publicly held company to come under scrutiny since the Weinstein allegations surfaced.

In a statement, Wynn and his company both attributed the allegations to a campaign led by Wynn's ex-wife, Elaine Wynn.

Devon Spurgeon, a spokeswoman for Elaine Wynn, declined to comment on the allegations in the article or Steve Wynn's allegations responding to the article.

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Teen admits throwing sandbag that killed man

**OH** TOLEDO — A 13-year-old boy in Ohio acknowledged tossing a sandbag off an interstate overpass and killing a Michigan man riding in a car.

The boy pleaded guilty Friday to murder and felonious assault charges in juvenile court.

The maximum penalty he'll face when he's sentenced in March could keep him in a juvenile prison until he's 21.

The boy was one of four teenagers arrested after they, according to police, were throwing rocks and sandbags onto Interstate 75 in December.

One of the sandbags smashed through the windshield of a car and killed Marquise Byrd, 22, of Warren, Mich.

Two other boys pleaded guilty to involuntary manslaughter a week ago.

## Alleged road rage over bumper stickers

**MO** SPRINGFIELD — A southwest Missouri man accused of pointing a gun at a Democratic activist whose political bumper stickers he found "stupid" is headed for trial.

The Springfield News-Leader reported a judge ruled Wednesday that there is sufficient evidence for the case to proceed against Edward Burns, 48, of Ozark.

He is charged with unlawful use of a weapon in the alleged Aug. 24 road-rage incident that ended with Laura Umphenour crashing into a guardrail. Umphenour's minivan was covered with bumper stickers, including ones opposing President Donald Trump, Fox News and puppy mills. Court documents said Burns called the bumper stickers "stupid."

## Zoo is home to oldest tree kangaroo in US

**RI** PROVIDENCE — A kangaroo named Paul has become the oldest living tree kangaroo in the country.

Providence's Roger Williams Park Zoo said the Matschie's tree kangaroo turned 23 years, three months and four days old Friday.

The zoo said it knows of no other male tree kangaroo to reach this age anywhere.

The zoo said Matschie's tree kangaroos are native to Papua New Guinea and live to about 8 in the wild or 14 in captivity.

## Deputies interrupt inmate escape attempt

**TX** BEAUMONT — An inmate who escaped from a federal prison with the intention of breaking back in laden with bottles of alcohol and home-cooked treats was arrested in Southeast Texas.

The Jefferson County sheriff's office said Joshua Hansen, 25, of Dallas, has been charged with escape and possession of marijuana. He was originally imprisoned on a narcotics conviction.

Deputies spotted Hansen as he ran onto private land near the prison in Beaumont and grabbed a duffel bag containing three bottles of brandy, some whisky, tobacco and "a large amount of home-cooked food." They arrested him as he ran back toward the prison.

## Remains thought to be foot likely bear paw

**VA** SPRINGFIELD — Police said the partially decomposed body part found last weekend in Virginia is likely a bear paw, and not a human foot, as initially declared.

Fairfax County police said

in a statement Thursday that a consultation with an anthropologist determined the remains were likely of the ursine, not human, variety.

A Springfield resident had reported possible human remains in his backyard on Jan. 20. Police sent photographs of the suspected body part to the chief medical examiner's office, which advised its appearance was consistent with that of a human foot. The body part was then sent to the office for further investigation.

## Tunnel near Mexico found during road work

**TX** EL PASO — Investigators said road construction in West Texas led to the discovery of a makeshift tunnel just north of the border with Mexico.

Border Patrol Agent Oscar Cervantes said the tunnel was discovered Thursday near downtown El Paso. Authorities are working to determine its origin and purpose.

A Border Patrol statement said agents working near a water treatment plant were notified by the Texas Department of Transportation about a cave-in during construction of a roadway. Officials said the mishap led to the discovery of a tunnel originating north from the international border.

## Officials: Taxi driver had \$800K of meth in car

**NJ** FORT LEE — New Jersey prosecutors said a New York City taxi driver was arrested after officials said they found approximately \$800,000 in crystal meth in his vehicle.

Gerardo Camilo-Nolasco, 42, of the Bronx was pulled over in Fort Lee last week in connection with a Bergen County narcotics probe. Acting Bergen

County Prosecutor Dennis Calo said police found 10 pounds of methamphetamine in his vehicle, alongside four grams of cocaine.

Prosecutors say the meth has a street value estimated at \$800,000. Camilo-Nolasco faces several drug charges, including cocaine and meth possession.

## City officials may add driverless bus to fleet

**ND** BISMARCK — City officials in Bismarck are considering adding a driverless bus to the Capital Area Transit fleet as part of a pilot program testing the use of autonomous vehicle technology on city streets.

The Bismarck Tribune reported that if approved by the City Commission, the bus would be rented from March through October 2019.

The city would apply to the state for federal grant money to help pay the estimated \$80,000 cost. The city would be required to fund 20 percent.

## Customs agents find \$10K sewn into pocket

**MA** BOSTON — Customs agents at Boston's Logan International Airport said a traveler arriving from Israel was found to have \$10,000 sewn into his pants.

Customs officials said last week that the man significantly underreported the amount of cash he was carrying when he flew into the country. They said he claimed to have \$14,000 on him, but agents found and seized more than \$29,000, including the \$10,000 sewn into a pants pocket.

The man is a 51-year-old U.S. citizen. He has not been charged with a crime.

From wire reports

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STARS AND STRIPES®

## Australian Open

# Wozniacki wins her first major crown

Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — It took Caroline Wozniacki 43 majors and two failed attempts in finals before finally claiming her first Grand Slam singles title.

One of the first things she did as a champion was apologize to top-seeded Simona Halep following her 7-6 (2), 3-6, 6-4 win in the Australian Open final on Saturday night.

“I’m sorry, I’m just taking a second to hug Daphne,” Wozniacki said, pausing as she clutched the winner’s trophy in the on-court ceremony. “I dreamt of this moment so many years, to be here now it’s a dream come true.”

More than seven years after appearing in her first Grand Slam final at the 2009 U.S. Open — a straight sets loss to Serena Williams — Wozniacki can finally erase the “but never won a major” footnote that has long been attached to her résumé.

“I’m never going to get the question again about being a world No. 1 without a Slam,” she said after leaving the court.

Wozniacki will regain the top ranking next week for the first time in six years — beating Serena Williams’ record of 5 years, 29 days between stints at No. 1 on the women’s tour — in another benefit of beating the top-seeded Halep.

Neil Diamond’s “Sweet Caroline” played over the stadium speakers as the 27-year-old Danish player carried the Daphne Akhurst Memorial Cup around Rod Laver Arena.

Wozniacki lost two U.S. Open finals — in ’09 and 2014 — and Halep lost two French Open finals before their meeting at Melbourne Park.

It was the first time in the Open era that players ranked No. 1 and 2 were meeting in a major final without either having won a Grand Slam title.

So the pressure was on.

It was the first time in the Open era that both Australian Open finalists had saved match points before reaching the final, also, so in some ways the pressure was off.

In Halep’s case, she was the first player who had saved match points in multiple match-

es to have reached the final. She saved triple match point and rallied in the third set to beat Laura Davis 15-13 in the third set of her third-round match, and also needed to save match points in her semifinal against Angelique Kerber.

Wozniacki saved match points in her second-round win over Jana Fett and later said she was relaxed because for the rest of the tournament she was “playing with the house money.”

So both players rolled the dice in the 2-hour, 49-minute final, which featured some long, absorbing rallies and 10 service breaks — including six in an eight-game run in the third set.

“I know that today is a tough day,” Wozniacki said to Halep. “I’m sorry I had to win today but I’m sure we’ll have many matches in the future. Incredible match, incredible fight. And again, I’m sorry.”

Halep was playing with an injured left ankle, needed treatment for dizziness in the second set and had rallied from a break down in the third set to

lead 4-3 when Wozniacki took a medical timeout to have her left knee taped. In the end, she just ran out of steam.

“It’s not easy to talk now,” Halep said at the presentation. “It’s been a great tournament for me. I started not very well with the ankle injury. I just wanted to give my best every match, which I did. Of course I’m sad I couldn’t win today but Caroline was better than me.

“Sad that I couldn’t make it the third time, maybe the fourth time will be with luck.”

Wozniacki is the third first-time major winner in the four Grand Slam tournaments since Serena Williams won the 2017 Australian Open for her record 23rd Grand Slam title. Serena Williams, who beat her older sister, Venus, in last year’s final, took time out for her pregnancy and the birth of her first child in September, and is preparing to return to competition next month. She was ranked No. 1 for 67 weeks, including 49 straight from Feb. 21, 2011 until Victoria Azarenka replaced her on Jan. 30, 2012.

## Pro Bowl is more of a celebration than a competition

Associated Press

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — New Orleans Saints running back Mark Ingram has ridden every roller-coaster he could get to at Disney World the past few days.

Space Mountain. The Incredible Hulk. Expedition Everest.

His favorite? Rock ‘n’ Roller Coaster, which reaches nearly 60 mph.

The thrill rides are probably the only full-speed adventures Ingram will find this week.

Even though the Pro Bowl has more than 30 first-time participants, the NFL’s annual all-star game Sunday is expected to be another up-tempo walkthrough filled with big plays and plenty

of points. Avoiding injuries is more important than eluding criticism for looking little like a normal game.

“We’re out here, first and foremost, to have a little fun and put on a show for the fans,” Ingram said. “And we don’t want anyone to get hurt.”

The Pro Bowl returns to Camping World Stadium in nearby Orlando for the second straight year. The league has one year remaining on a three-year deal to play in the tourist city that’s home to Disney World. Teams practiced all week at ESPN’s Wide World of Sports complex.

It was a family affair, highlighted by Saints quarterback Drew Brees and

Pittsburgh Steelers receiver Antonio Brown bringing their kids along for loosely structured practices.

Brees, Brown and others have done this before.

All the newcomers have simply followed the veterans’ lead and asked questions along the way. The main one: How hard do you play in the game?

“You don’t know,” Jacksonville Jaguars linebacker Telvin Smith said. “You’ve got to either decide if you’re going to come here and play how you play or you’re going to come out here and be a Pro Bowler.”

Smith spent as much time as anyone signing autographs after every practice, working his way across one side of the

field one day and the other the next. He figured giving fans his time might offset for what they will see on the field Sunday.

“From the outside looking in, I can see how people would want to see the best go against each other,” Smith said. “But from the inside out, we just finished a long season and this is more of a celebration for doing something great, ‘Your hard work paid off this season. Y’all come out and have fun and take a little bit off your bodies.’”

None of the Pro Bowl players can afford to get hurt at this point in the season, especially with workout programs about 10 weeks away and free agency about six weeks out.

# NHL All-Star Game is returning to Tampa

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — The NHL All-Star game is being played in Tampa Bay for the first time since Wayne Gretzky made his last appearance in the showcase and many still questioned whether the league could prosper in a non-traditional market better known for sunshine and beaches than winning hockey.

Nearly two decades later, the answer is a resounding yes.

Not only has the league flourished in Tampa and other Sun Belt locations where the game continues to grow, the hometown Lightning have evolved into what generally is regarded as a model franchise — not merely for hockey, but all of pro sports.

Now a community that's hosted four Super Bowls, the World Series, two Stanley Cup Finals and last year's college football national championship game welcomes the spotlight for its first NHL All-Star game since 1999.

Gretzky made the last of his 18 All-Star appearances that

year and had a goal and two assists to capture MVP honors.

"It's very special to be named to an All-Star game, regardless of where it's played. But when it's in your home city, it's that much more special," said Lightning star Steven Stamkos, a five-time selection.

"I know the amount of work that's gone into preparing for it," Stamkos, one of four Tampa Bay players in this weekend's game, said. "It's going to be a great showcase of a hockey city. ... I'm sure we'll put on a great show."

Downtown Tampa, along with 19,000-seat Amalie Arena, has been transformed into a colorful tribute to the league's biggest stars.

Festivities began Friday with a free outdoor concert headlined by Fitz and the Tantrums and the opening of All-Star PreGame, a three-day fun fest open to the general public as well as fans fortunate enough to land game tickets.

Media Day and the All-Star Skills Competition are Satur-

day, followed by Sunday's main event featuring teams from the Atlantic, Metropolitan, Central and Pacific divisions playing a three-game tournament in a popular three-on-three format adopted in 2016.

And if the game's brightest stars coming to town isn't a big enough reason to celebrate, All-Star weekend is being held in conjunction with Tampa's annual Gasparilla Pirate Invasion, an annual event that attracts about 200,000 people for a parade along the city's downtown waterfront.

"It's a big block party. There's something for everyone, whether you're a season ticket member or somebody who just enjoys catching an occasional Lightning game on TV," former Lightning general manager Jay Feaster, now the club's executive director of community hockey development, said.

Feaster assembled the team that won Tampa Bay's only Stanley Cup title in 2004, however the Lightning never fully reaped the benefits of the

championship run because a labor strife wiped out the next season.

A growing fan base ready to embrace the club's success suddenly didn't have a defending champion to cheer.

Feaster is excited about a resurgence led by owner Jeff Vinik, coach Jon Cooper and Hall of Famer Steve Yzerman, who as the current general manager has composed a talented young roster built for long-term success.

The Lightning, celebrating their 25th season, reached the All-Star break with the league's best record and have re-emerged as a championship contender after narrowly missing the playoffs a year ago.

The Lightning dropped the Stanley Cup Final to Chicago in six games three years ago, then came within one victory of returning to the NHL's biggest stage the following season.

"What Steve Yzerman has done I think is just masterful, the way he's assembled this team," Feaster said.

## Sports briefs

### Jury finds man guilty of manslaughter in McKnight case

Associated Press

GRETNA, La. — The man who killed NFL running back Joe McKnight in a December 2016 road-rage confrontation was found guilty of manslaughter Friday by a jury in suburban New Orleans.

Jurors began deliberations Friday afternoon in the case of Ronald Gasser, 56. Manslaughter carries a maximum sentence of 40 years.

Defense attorneys had claimed Gasser feared for his life when he fired from his driver's seat at McKnight, who was standing at his open passenger-side window.

Police said the death had followed a 5-mile rolling confrontation that began with dangerously aggressive driving on

a New Orleans bridge and ended with McKnight being shot as he stood outside Gasser's car at a suburban intersection.

McKnight played three seasons for the New York Jets and one with the Kansas City Chiefs. He spent a season in the Canadian Football League, playing two games for the Edmonton Eskimos and three for the Saskatchewan Roughriders.

#### Palmer takes Farmers lead; Tiger makes cut

SAN DIEGO — Ryan Palmer is the 36-hole leader in the Farmers Insurance Open. Jon Rahm is right behind, poised to reach No. 1 in the world. And for the first time in 29 months, a PGA Tour event will feature Tiger Woods on the weekend.

Palmer finished eagle-birdie on the North Course at Torrey Pines for a 5-under 67. He had a one-shot lead over Rahm, the defending champion who birdied two of his last three holes on the North for a 66.

Woods had to rally to make the cut in his return from a fourth back surgery. He was on the wrong side of the green on the par-5 ninth on the North and two-putted from 75 feet for birdie for a 71 to make the cut on the number.

#### Bucks' Brown tased over parking spat

MILWAUKEE — Police officers used a stun gun on Milwaukee Bucks rookie guard Sterling Brown and arrested the 22-year-old Friday after a

confrontation at a Walgreens parking lot.

Police Sgt. Timothy Gauerke says the department is investigating what happened and the officers' use of force.

Gauerke says officers contacted a man after seeing a vehicle parked across two handicapped parking spots while doing a business check at about 2 a.m. Gauerke did not say what led to the officers' use of force and it wasn't immediately known whether Brown was cited for anything.

"It's a personal issue I'm dealing with right now. I know it's being handled. I'd appreciate it if you all respect that right now," Brown told reporters before the Bucks' home game Friday night against Brooklyn.

# Pelicans' Cousins injured in victory

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — DeMarcus Cousins raced down the lane after his missed free throw, trying to make a hustle play and help the New Orleans Pelicans preserve a signature victory over one of the NBA's elite teams.

Moments later, Cousins was sitting on the court, pain in his foot and shock on his face. He tried to get up as his teammates pursued the Houston Rockets toward the other end of the court, then went back down on his back and placed both hands on his head.

Anthony Davis scored 27 points, Cousins had 15 points, 13 rebounds and 11 assists before seriously injuring his left Achilles tendon, and New Or-

leans survived a furious Houston rally for a 115-113 victory on Friday night.

A person familiar with the situation said an MRI confirmed an Achilles tear, ending Cousins' season a little more than a week after he was voted an All-Star starter.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the Pelicans have not yet announced the imaging results.

The injury, which occurred with 12 seconds left in the game, all but squelched the jubilation from the Pelicans and their fans, who otherwise would have been celebrating not just a victory over the team with the NBA's second-best record, but a fourth straight victory overall and seventh in eight games.

## NBA roundup

# James, Cavs top Pacers

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — LeBron James had his 63rd career triple-double — overcoming 11 turnovers — and Cleveland showed signs of ending a stunning slump with a 115-108 victory over Indiana.

James finished with 26 points, 11 assists and 10 rebounds to help the Cavs win for just the fourth time in 11 games.

**Bucks 116, Nets 91:** Giannis Antetokounmpo had 41 points and 13 rebounds in host Milwaukee's win over Brooklyn.

**Jazz 97, Raptors 93:** Ricky Rubio made a three-pointer with 4 seconds left to lift visiting Utah past Toronto.

**Lakers 108, Bulls 103:** Brandon Ingram scored 25 points, including eight in the final 3:18, and Los Angeles rallied to beat host Chicago after losing a 12-point, fourth-quar-

ter lead.

**Clippers 109, Grizzlies 100:** Lou Williams had 40 points and matched his season-high with 10 assists in visiting Los Angeles' victory over Memphis.

**76ers 97, Spurs 78:** Ben Simmons scored 21 points, Joel Embiid had 18 points and 14 rebounds, and Philadelphia held host San Antonio to a season-low point total.

**Knicks 107, Suns 85:** Enes Kanter scored 15 of his 20 points in the first quarter and New York never trailed in ending its longest road trip of the season with a win over Phoenix.

**Hornets 121, Hawks 110:** Kemba Walker scored 29 points and made two key three-pointers down the stretch to help host Charlotte beat Atlanta.

**Trail Blazers 107, Mavericks 93:** Damian Lillard scored 28 points to lead visiting Portland past Dallas.

# No. 6 Michigan St. pounds Wisconsin

Associated Press

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Miles Bridges looked comfortable, effortlessly making jump shots toward the end of a tumultuous day at Michigan State.

Bridges scored 24 points and the sixth-ranked Spartans beat the Wisconsin Badgers 76-61 on Friday night, less than 12 hours after athletic director Mark Hollis announced his retirement amid the outcry over how the school handled allegations against Larry Nassar.

"There are a lot of things that happened today that are part of life," Michigan State coach Tom Izzo said.

Bridges was 8-for-13 overall and made four of six three-pointers.

"Adding the three to his game has made him a harder guard," Wisconsin coach Greg Gard said. "Obviously, he's explosive to the rim and he does a good job of putting it on the floor."

The Spartans (19-3, 7-2 Big Ten) have won three straight after losing two of the previous three games.

Wisconsin (10-12, 3-6) has lost five of six.

The court was surrounded by a sea of teal T-shirts worn by students hoping to raise awareness about sexual violence.

"Honoring our survivors was really neat that our students did it," Izzo said.

Hollis, a close friend of Izzo, is retiring as the latest leader to step away because of a sexual abuse scandal involving a former physician at the school. Michigan State President Lou Anna Simon announced her resignation Wednesday night, hours after Nassar was sentenced to decades in prison this week for molesting girls and young women.

Izzo refused to answer many questions related to the scandal, saying the top priority is for "our courageous survivors," during the healing process.

"I'm going to worry about my team, I'm going to worry about the survivors and I'm going

to worry about what I do," he said.

Izzo, though, said he has no intention on being the next to leave Michigan State.

"I'm not going anywhere, in my mind," Izzo said. "I'm definitely not retiring."

The recent series of events seemed to create a relatively subdued atmosphere at the usually raucous Breslin Center.

Cassius Winston had 17 points and six assists, Nick Ward had 12 points and 11 rebounds and Jaren Jackson had 11 points, seven rebounds and four blocks for the Spartans.

Wisconsin's Ethan Happ had 23 points and seven rebounds and Brevin Pritzl scored 13.

## Big picture

**Wisconsin:** The short-handed Badgers are competing hard, trying to overcome the loss of injured guards D'Mitrik Trice and Kobe King along with the loss of five seniors from last year's team. After being down 37-21 at halftime against Michigan State, the Badgers outscored the Spartans 40-39.

Wisconsin was held to 21 percent in the first half and finished making 36 percent of its shots.

**Michigan State:** Izzo's mood the rest of the season will be something to watch. Izzo was the best man at Hollis' wedding and they were roommates decades ago when they were starting their careers at Michigan State. Choosing to keep his emotions to himself, Izzo didn't answer a question asking for his reaction to Hollis' decision.

## They said it

Michigan State football coach Mark Dantonio briefly addressed reporters in response to an ESPN report detailing various allegations involving Michigan State football and basketball players.

"I'm here tonight to say that any accusations of my handling of any complaints of sexual assault individually are completely false," Dantonio said.