

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Flight system failures add to troubles for USS Ford

*Bloomberg*

The Navy's costliest warship, the \$13 billion USS Gerald R. Ford, had 20 failures of its aircraft launch-and-landing systems during operations at sea, according to the Pentagon's testing office.

The previously undisclosed failures with the electromagnetic systems made by General Atomics occurred during more than 740 sea trials since the aircraft carrier's delivery in May 2017 despite praise from Navy officials of its growing combat capabilities. The Navy must pay to fix such flaws under a "cost-plus" development contract.

The new reliability issues add to doubts the carrier, designated as CVN-78, will meet its planned rate of combat sorties per 24 hours — the prime metric for any aircraft carrier — according to the annual report on major weapons from the Defense Department's operational test office.

"None of the interruptions experienced during CVN-78 flight operations caused injury to personnel, or damage to the aircraft or ship," Michael Land, a Naval Air Systems Command spokesman, said in an email.

There were, he added, two "mission aborts" associated with the catapult launch system. In both cases, flight operations were briefly suspended and "a correction was implemented."

The launch-and-landing issue is separate from the ship's lack of 11 functioning elevators to lift munitions from below deck, an issue that's drawn scrutiny from Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman James Inhofe, an Oklahoma Republican.

The Ford "will probably not achieve" its sortie rate requirement because of "unrealistic assumptions" that "ignore the effects of weather, aircraft emergencies, ship maneuvers

and current air-wing composition on flight operations," Robert Behler, the Pentagon's director of operational testing, said in his assessment, obtained by Bloomberg News.

Behler's full weapons report for 2018 will be published this week — probably only days before the Navy announces a single multibillion-dollar design and construction contract to Huntington Ingalls Industries for the third and fourth carriers in the \$58 billion program. It's part of the service's push to expand its 284-ship fleet to 355 as soon as the mid-2030s.

In a memo to acting Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan transmitting the annual report, Behler highlighted the Ford's problems, saying that although "improvements have occurred, poor and unknown reliability continues to plague the ship and key systems."

President Donald Trump has expressed doubt about the electromagnetic catapult system, which has replaced an older steam-driven version. Navy Secretary Richard Spencer told a Washington audience last month that he's explained to Trump the advantages of the new system over steam and that "we've got the bugs out."

Ten "critical failures" occurred during 747 at-sea catapults of jets; another 10 "operational mission failures" occurred during 763 shipboard landing attempts, according to the testing office's report.

Meghan Ehlke, a spokeswoman for General Atomics, said in an email that "per our contract terms and conditions," the San Diego-based contractor won't comment and has deferred all questions to the Navy.

Land said in an email that the 747 launch and landings to date are "an insufficient number of events from which to draw conclusions with respect to reliability."

## Survey finds rise in sex assaults at military academies

*USA Today*

WASHINGTON — Incidents of sexual assault at U.S. military academies spiked nearly 50 percent during the last school year despite years of focus on the issue and declarations of zero tolerance, according to results of a survey conducted by the Pentagon.

The number of students reporting unwanted sexual contact totaled 747 during the 2017-18 academic year compared with 507 in 2015-16, according to anonymous surveys of cadets and midshipmen. Unwanted sexual contact ranges from groping to rape.

"We're disheartened and disappointed that the things and the strategies that we've employed just really aren't getting the results that we want," Nathan Galbreath, deputy director of the Pentagon's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office, told USA Today on Thursday.

The survey is part of the "Annual Report on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the Military Service Academies, Academic Program Year 2017-2018," which looks at the effectiveness of efforts by the schools to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and assault.

According to the report, the academies received 117 reports of sexual assault involving students, five more than last year.

The survey included in the report to determine the prevalence of sexual assault is done every other year. For the 2013-14 school year, 327 students

responded that they had been victims of such contact, less than half the figure reported in the latest year.

Another troubling finding: About 50 percent of female students said they were sexually harassed in the 2017-18 school year, up from 48 percent in the previous survey. For men, 16 percent said they were sexually harassed last year compared with 12 percent in the last survey.

Despite the increase in claims of sexual assaults, the willingness of cadets and midshipmen to lodge formal complaints has remained flat, Galbreath said. The 747 anonymous reports of sexual assaults generated only 92 formal complaints, Galbreath said, a rate of about 12 percent that has not changed.

"That's very concerning to us," he said.

About 12,000 students attend the Army, Navy and Air Force academies.

"Clearly there's a cultural problem at the academies," said Don Christensen, the former top prosecutor for the Air Force and president of Protect Our Defenders, a group that advocates for victims of sexual assault in the military. "There have been decades of the academies downplaying sexual assault. There are almost zero consequences for someone who commits sexual assault there."

The factors driving the increase in claims of assaults and harassment are not immediately clear from the data, Galbreath said.

# Urine sample fire leads to court-martial for Va. sailor

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — A sailor has been charged with setting fire to samples at a Virginia naval base in an extreme attempt to prevent results from a urinalysis from being used against him.

Logistics Spc. 3rd Class Curtis Dajuan Johnson was charged in May with setting the 2017 fire at Naval Air Station Oceana in Virginia Beach, Va.

According to the Virginian-Pilot newspaper, the fire was in a large metal cage locker that

contained about 900 urinalysis samples and records, causing extensive damage.

Johnson is accused of setting the fire to prevent the results of his urinalysis being used against him at an adverse administrative proceeding, which he believed would happen, according to the charge sheet.

His charges are “wrongful interference with an adverse administrative proceeding,” aggravated arson because he “willfully and maliciously” set a fire in a building knowing that a person was there, and for giv-

ing a false statement to a Naval Criminal Investigative Service special agent.

His court-martial date has been set for early April, said David Todd, public affairs specialist at Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic.

Johnson has been assigned to Fleet Readiness Center Mid-Atlantic in Virginia Beach since July 2015, according to his service record.

Originally from Pennsylvania, he enlisted in 2010 and served on the aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman.

## Declines seen in government control, Afghan troop numbers

By PHILLIP WALTER  
WELLMAN  
*Stars and Stripes*

KABUL, Afghanistan — The Afghan government’s hold over the countryside continues to wane, while the numbers of its security forces have shrunk to a record low, a U.S. government watchdog said Wednesday.

The figures, released amid unconfirmed reports that some American troops could be pulled out of the country as part of a cease-fire deal with the Taliban, represent a bleak assessment of U.S.-led efforts to make Afghan government forces self-sustainable. Over the weekend, U.S. officials concluded the latest round of peace negotiations with the Taliban, who are seeking a full withdrawal of foreign forces.

Kabul controlled just over half of Afghanistan’s roughly 400 districts as of Oct. 31, a slight drop since July, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction said in its latest quarterly report covering a three-month period ending Dec. 31.

During that time, government control or influence over Afghanistan’s population also fell slightly, with 63 percent of citizens living in government-held areas, SIGAR said.

Meanwhile, the number of districts and the number of people controlled or influenced by the Taliban and the number of areas contested by both sides increased during the last quarter, the report said.

Afghan and U.S. military officials have pledged to secure 80 percent of the country’s population by the end of this year. Arif Samin, deputy spokesman for President Ashraf Ghani’s office, says the government is still committed to achieving that goal.

“We fully trust our security forces and believe that they will be able to reach the target by the end of this year,” Samin told Stars and Stripes.

## Water park caps Hawaii training

By WYATT OLSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — On a typical day, thrill-seekers slide the likes of Tornado, Volcano Express and Big Kahuna at the Wet ‘n’ Wild Hawaii water park in suburban Honolulu.

But Tuesday night after visitors had left for the day, the deserted 25-acre park was the scene of a mock raid by Marines and sailors with the Okinawa-based 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, joined by local FBI agents and officers with the Honolulu Police Department.

The Maritime Raid Force — composed of roughly two Marine Corps platoons and almost a dozen FBI agents — stealthily breached the meeting site of a “high-value target,” capturing a quarry they’d hunted for days.

Marine and FBI snipers atop the towering Tornado ride fired live rounds into an enemy silhouette target placed in the center of the park — four-out-of-four shots to the head.

The raid concluded an 11-day Realistic Urban Training Exercise, parts of which were held at Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Barbers Point Harbor, Dill-

ingham Airfield and Dogs of War Airsoft Park and Proshop, which provides players with military simulation settings using BB guns.

As the only permanently forward-deployed MEU, the 31st is the go-to first responder for crisis situations in the Indo-Pacific region, routinely working closely with agencies in other countries during disaster relief and humanitarian assistance.

This was the first time the 31st MEU had undergone realistic urban training in Hawaii. It has normally been conducted in Guam, but after the Mariana Islands were hit by Typhoon Mangkhut in September and Typhoon Yutu in October, planners looked to Hawaii.

“This was a great opportunity here,” Capt. Jordan Vargas, a platoon commander in Tuesday night’s raid, said as the raiders were preparing to take their “prisoners” to the nearby FBI headquarters for interrogation.

“Hawaii provides pretty good realistic training that we just wouldn’t be able to do in Okinawa due to the possible sensitivities,” he said, alluding to ongoing complaints by some local residents about U.S. mili-

tary activities there.

Asked if he had seen any downsides to urban training in Hawaii, Vargas laughed.

“Not really; not that I’ve seen so far. I haven’t heard one Marine say he’s upset to be stationed in Hawaii.”

The training challenges the Marines by tossing them into unfamiliar yet realistic urban terrain for scenarios in which they must also communicate and collaborate with local law enforcement agents.

A series of night raids on sites on Oahu led up to the culminating event at the water park. On Monday, a reconnaissance team had scouted the water park during business hours to survey sites where the high-value target would likely hold a meeting.

On Tuesday, the Maritime Raid Force, outfitted with night-vision goggles, climbed up the hill in the rear of the park, quietly ascended on the target building and set off a blast as they breached the door.

Realistic urban training will return to Hawaii early next year, with plans for alternating the training between here and Guam.



# Historic deep freeze is expected to ease

Associated Press

CHICAGO — The painfully cold weather system that put much of the Midwest into a historic deep freeze was expected to ease Thursday, though temperatures still tumbled to record lows in some places.

Disruptions caused by the cold will persist, too, including power outages and canceled flights and trains. Crews in Detroit will need days to repair water mains that burst Wednesday, and other pipes can still burst in persistent subzero temperatures.

Before the worst of the cold begins to lift, more frigid weather is expected. Record-breaking cold hit northern Illinois early Thursday, when the temperature in Rockford dropped to negative 30 degrees. The previous record in the city, northwest of Chicago, was negative 27 degrees on Jan. 10, 1982.

Schools in parts of Wisconsin, Minne-

sota, Michigan, Illinois and Iowa remained closed. But students headed back to school Thursday in eastern North Dakota, where the weather was forecast to crawl out of double-digit sub-zero temperatures.

As temperatures bounced back into the single digits Thursday and into the comparative balmy 20s by Friday, more people were expected to return to work in the nation's third-largest city, which resembled a ghost town after most offices told employees to stay home.

The blast of polar air that enveloped much of the Midwest on Wednesday closed schools and businesses and strained infrastructure with some of the lowest temperatures in a generation. The deep freeze snapped rail lines, canceled hundreds of flights and strained utilities.

Chicago dropped to a low of around minus 23, slightly above the city's lowest-

ever reading of minus 27 from January 1985. Milwaukee had similar conditions. Minneapolis recorded minus 27. Sioux Falls, S.D., saw minus 25.

Wind chills reportedly made it feel like minus 50 or worse. Trains and buses in Chicago operated with few passengers. The hardest commuters ventured out only after covering nearly every square inch of flesh against the extreme chill, which froze ice crystals on eyelashes and eyebrows in minutes.

The Postal Service took the rare step of suspending mail delivery in many places, and in southeastern Minnesota even the snowplows were idled by the weather.

The bitter cold was the result of a split in the polar vortex, a mass of cold air that normally stays bottled up in the Arctic. The split allowed the air to spill much farther south than usual.

## Arctic warfare instructors offer cold-weather tips

BY CHAD GARLAND  
Stars and Stripes

A flat tire sidelined Maj. Chad Peltier's vehicle in minus 22-degree weather recently as he was on his way to pick up his wife, but he knew exactly how to handle the situation.

"I take two lug nuts off, get back in the car (to warm up), take two lug nuts off, get back in the car," said Peltier, who leads the Army's cold-weather training center in Alaska. "It's the longest tire change I've ever experienced, but I didn't get a cold-weather injury."

It's no harrowing Arctic survival tale, but Peltier, commandant of the Fairbanks-based Northern Warfare Training Center, said in a phone interview that "surviving" the cold isn't the point. "Thriving in that environment is what we're really aiming for."

The polar vortex has brought record-shattering Arctic temperatures to the Midwest, Great Lakes and Mid-Atlantic this week. Meanwhile, snowy conditions are affecting U.S. military bases in generally temperate parts of Europe and Asia.

In light of that, Peltier and other cold-weather operations veterans had a few "pro tips" for staying warm and safe in the biting cold.

"A lot of it's commonsense, but sometimes it's not so common," said Bill Hamilton, a Marine Corps veteran who spent more than five years as an instructor at the service's Mountain Warfare Training Center in Bridgeport, Calif. Now a contractor and Army reservist, he teaches a cold-weather

operations course at Fort McCoy, Wis.

All of the experts recommended dressing in clean, loose-fitting layers that allow for good circulation and movement. The Army, for example, has a seven-layer cold-weather clothing system with silk-weight long underwear as its base, another midweight underlayer, a fleece jacket and successive outer layers of wind and waterproof jackets.

Similar gear can be found on the civilian side, including lightweight, moisture-wicking athletic clothing for the base layer, said Joe Ernst, an Army veteran who's now a cold-weather trainer at Fort McCoy. He recommended merino wool for its moisture-wicking and insulating properties.

"No cotton — that's a big one," he said. "It doesn't repel moisture."

It's good to cover as much skin as possible, but not necessary to put on every piece of "snivel gear," Peltier said, using military slang for cold-weather equipment.

"We want our students to be comfortably cool," said Peltier, who's seen soldiers overheat in minus 35-degree weather and quickly become casualties of the cold, which can cause frostbite in minutes on clammy, sweaty skin. "To overdress in the cold is equally as hazardous as to underdress."

Another big key is managing exposure, he said. It's not always possible to avoid the frosty weather, but it's critical to take breaks to warm up.

That can mean a heated shelter — like an idling car — or exercise, even if it seems painful, as when instructors send students sprinting up hills in snowshoes, Peltier said.

No amount of training can prevent someone from getting cold, and eventually, he said, "the cold is going to eat through any amount of layers you have."

Some equipment also stops working at about minus 25, said Staff Sgt. Michael Berna, a Colorado native who has taught at NWTC for about two years. Car batteries can die and battery-powered electronics like cellphones are not dependable.

Cars should be outfitted with blankets, drinking water and Meals, Ready-To-Eat in case of a roadside emergency, the experts said.

Such winter preparation was a key lesson for Staff Sgt. Timothy Bridge, who grew up in South Texas and had avoided an Alaska assignment for much of his 17-year Army career. He moved to the 49th state just before winter broke a few years ago and now teaches at NWTC's Black Rapids Training Site south of Fort Greely.

"Growing up, my idea of cold was about 50 (degrees)," said Bridge, who's since adjusted to the weather — a balmy 19 degrees Wednesday afternoon. "It's warm for us right now."

He now keeps his gas tank full in case conditions leave him stuck on the road and allows more time for his vehicle to warm up in the bitter Alaskan winters.

A full tank also helps keep gas lines from freezing, said Hamilton, who was enduring temperatures of minus 25 at Fort McCoy on Wednesday — minus 45 with wind chill. At such lows, metal becomes brittle, plastic starts snapping and rubber hoses don't bend, "they just crack," he said.

# Trump sours over border security talks

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump took to Twitter on Thursday to ratchet up his demands on his long-stalled border wall, appearing to sour on congressional talks aimed at striking a deal with Democrats that he could sign.

In a barrage of morning tweets, Trump sent mixed messages in which he alternately hardened his wall demand but also suggested that repairing existing fencing is a big part of his plan.

“Let’s just call them WALLS from now on and stop playing political games! A WALL is a WALL!” Trump tweeted.

Trump’s tweets came a day after Democrats in the House offered a vague border security plan that would not provide a penny for his wall, ignoring — for now — his warnings that they’d be wasting their time if they don’t come up with wall money.

The Democratic offer Wednesday was just a starting point in House-Senate talks on border security funding that kicked off in a basement room in the Capitol. A top Democrat

acknowledged that “everything is on the table,” including the border barriers demanded by Trump. Lawmakers on both sides flashed signs of flexibility, eager to demonstrate willingness to compromise in hopes of resolving the standoff with Trump that sparked the 35-day partial government shutdown.

But Trump on Thursday tamped down expectations, telling GOP negotiators that they were “wasting their time.”

“Democrats, despite all of the evidence, proof and Caravans coming, are not going to give money to build the DESPERATELY needed WALL. I’ve got you covered. Wall is already being built, I don’t expect much help!” Trump tweeted.

The high-stakes talks are taking place against the backdrop of another possible shutdown in mid-February — an outcome Trump’s GOP allies in the Senate are especially eager to avoid. Trump and the White House have proven to be an unpredictable force in the shutdown debate, mixing softer rhetoric about a multi-faceted approach to border security with campaign-style bluster about the wall.

## ICE force-feeding detainees who are on a hunger strike

Associated Press

Federal immigration officials are force-feeding six immigrants through plastic nasal tubes during a hunger strike that’s gone on for a month inside a Texas detention facility, The Associated Press has learned.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement said 11 detainees at the El Paso Processing Center have been refusing food, some for more than 30 days. Detainees who reached the AP, along with a relative and an attorney representing hunger strikers, said nearly 30 detainees from India and Cuba have been refusing to eat, and some are now so weak they cannot stand up or talk.

Another four detainees are on hunger strikes in the agency’s Miami, Phoenix, San Diego and San Francisco areas of responsibility, ICE spokeswoman Leticia Zamarripa said Wednesday.

The men say they stopped eating to protest verbal abuse and threats of deportation from guards. They are also upset about lengthy lockups while awaiting legal proceedings.

In mid-January, two weeks after they stopped eating, a federal judge authorized force-

feeding of some El Paso detainees, Zamarripa said.

ICE officials say they closely monitor the food and water intake of detainees identified as being on a hunger strike to protect their health and safety.

The men with nasal tubes are having persistent nosebleeds, and are vomiting several times a day, said Amrit Singh, whose two nephews from the Indian state of Punjab have been on hunger strike for about a month.

“They are not well. Their bodies are really weak, they can’t talk and they have been hospitalized, back and forth,” said Singh, from California. “They want to know why they are still in the jail and want to get their rights and wake up the government immigration system.”

Singh’s nephews are both seeking asylum. Court records show they pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge in September after illegally walking across the border near El Paso.

Federal courts have not conclusively decided whether a judge must issue an order before ICE force-feeds an immigration detainee, so rules vary by district and type of court, and sometimes orders are filed secretly.

## High school students design \$1.25 piece to help protect B-2

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN

Stars and Stripes

One of the world’s most advanced bombers is flying with a plastic switch cover in its cockpit designed by high school students to prevent possible in-flight emergencies, the Air Force says.

The Stealth Panthers robotics team at Knob Noster High School near Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., worked with pilots and engineers last fall to create and test the 3D-printed prototype in a B-2 Spirit training simulator.

The covers, which cost about \$1.25 each to produce, are now installed in each operational B-

2 at Whiteman and the simulator cockpits, said Capt. Keenan Kunst, a base spokesman.

“The B-2 Spirit cockpit is equipped with state-of-the-art, cutting-edge technology, but is a very cramped space, so something was needed to keep the pilots or other items from bumping into the switches,” Kunst said. “The students were able to help us find a solution that was quick, affordable and effective.”

The Air Force sought the partnership after one of Whiteman’s B-2s made an emergency landing Oct. 23 in Colorado Springs, Colo. The landing was due to the inadvertent flip of

a switch combined with multiple rare malfunctions, Kunst said in an email to Stars and Stripes. Both pilots and the aircraft were unharmed.

The box with four switches is part of the Airframe Mounted Accessory Drive, a panel next to the pilot’s knee installed as an upgrade, he said.

The switches decouple certain components in the four-engine B-2. The switches could be used to maintain thrust in a situation that would typically call for an engine shutdown, Kunst said.

The pilots can flip the switches “to essentially turn off the generator and hydraulics but

keep the engine on,” while maintaining a safe altitude, Kunst said.

Though the switches aren’t particularly easy to flip, “the consequences could be catastrophic — especially if all four were flipped, in which case, ejection would be the only option,” he said.

The plastic cover attaches to the switch panel with Velcro and protects the switches from being accidentally flipped, base officials said.

Each cover is marked with a control number; pilots are assigned one when they step into the aircraft and return it at the end of the mission.



# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Mr. Hot Dog says it's too cold for school

**SD** PARKER — A school district in South Dakota had some fun as it announced that school would be closed Wednesday due to extreme cold.

A talking hot dog called “Mr. Hot Dog” — complete with a bun and mustard — told students in the Parker School District it was too cold for school.

In a video on the district's Facebook page, Mr. Hot Dog says: “I’m a hot dog! I need some heat! I’m not a cold dog! ... You cannot have school! It’s too cold outside.”

Mr. Hot Dog said he spoke with Superintendent Donavan DeBoer and school was closed Wednesday.

## Seals take over beach during shutdown

**CA** SAN FRANCISCO — Officials said dozens of elephant seals took over a beach in Northern California during the government shutdown when there was no staff to discourage the animals from congregating in the beach popular with tourists.

The San Francisco Chronicle reported about 60 adult seals that have birthed 35 pups took over at Drakes Beach in Point Reyes National Seashore, knocking down a fence and moving into the parking lot.

Park spokesman John Dell’Osso said it’s likely recent storms inundated the elephant seals’ normal habitat with water.

## 6-year-old white rhino dies at Baltimore zoo

**MD** BALTIMORE — The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore said one of its

white rhinoceros died.

News outlets quoted a zoo statement saying that Jaharo died Sunday. The zoo’s general curator, Mike McClure, said the 6-year-old rhino’s condition suddenly declined after he had been undergoing treatment for serious health issues, but he was eating, drinking and behaving normally for the past several weeks.

The zoo’s senior director of animal health, conservation and research, Dr. Ellen Bronson, said Jaharo was diagnosed last fall with a disorder in which the body’s immune system destroys red blood cells.

## Police: Would-be bank robber got cold feet

**MA** FALL RIVER — Police in Massachusetts were looking for a woman they said intended to rob a bank but got cold feet and left without a penny.

Fall River police told the Herald News that the woman walked into the Fall River Municipal Credit Union on Monday and approached a teller.

Police said the woman told the teller “give me a minute,” then went over to a counter and wrote a note on a piece of paper.

Then she ripped up the note, dropped the pieces in the trash and walked out.

Bank employees pieced the note together and it read, “Give me the money.”

## Vandalism delays classes at school

**NM** EUNICE — A New Mexico high school was forced to delay classes after authorities said vandals poured vegetable oil throughout the hallways.

The Hobbs News-Sun reported the oil was poured at Eunice

High School late Sunday and janitors cleaned up the mess Monday.

Principal Tracy Davis said surveillance cameras captured six people wearing black clothing with hoodies and gloves pouring the oil on floors. Davis said they got into the school through an unlocked classroom window.

No arrests have been made.

## Police: Teen faked abduction for \$130

**SC** SUMTER — A sheriff’s office in South Carolina said a Sumter teen faked his own kidnapping and led his mother to believe he’d be killed if she didn’t pay \$130.

The Sumter County Sheriff’s Office told news outlets that Emmanuel Franklin, 19, was arrested Sunday and charged with blackmail. Deputies said Franklin led his mother to believe he had been abducted and would be killed unless \$130 was placed in a neighborhood mailbox. An incident report said the mailbox belonged to Franklin’s father.

Deputies said Franklin later told authorities he made up the story to get money from his mother.

## Police: Botched laser surgery left scars

**NJ** PALISADES PARK — Police arrested a New Jersey barbershop owner accused of badly injuring a woman while performing a laser treatment on her face without a license.

The Bergen County Prosecutor’s Office said Tuesday that Young Hwan Choi, 72, faces charges of aggravated assault and unlicensed practice of medicine and surgery.

Prosecutors said Choi, owner of Shil La Barber Shop in Pali-

sades Park, performed the procedure in November 2017. They said the surgery left the victim with scars on her face and chin.

Investigators said Choi is not a doctor and was not licensed to provide the treatment.

## Live grenade found in garbage bin destroyed

**NE** TALMAGE — Law enforcement officials in southeastern Nebraska safely destroyed a live grenade found in a trash bin.

The Nebraska State Patrol said the grenade was found Monday in a dumpster in Talmage as the home of a person who had died was being cleaned out. The Otoe County Sheriff’s Office, which was initially contacted about the grenade, called the patrol’s bomb squad for help.

The patrol squad used a counter charge Monday night to destroy the grenade.

## Wife handcuffed in car over cheating concerns

**PA** BETHLEHEM — Authorities said a Pennsylvania man shackled his wife inside his vehicle numerous times while he went to work because he was concerned she was cheating on him.

John VanHorn was charged with false imprisonment.

Bethlehem police found the woman when they responded to reports of a woman who was handcuffed inside a parked vehicle and needed help. Officers found a metal device locked to her ankle and secured to the underside of the front passenger seat.

Authorities said Van Horn, 49, had the keys to the shackles and two realistic looking BB guns.

From wire reports

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STARS AND STRIPES®

# Brady stands alone in pursuit of 6th ring

Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — Seventeen years ago, Tom Brady was 24 years old and in his second NFL season when he led the Patriots to a last-second victory over the St. Louis Rams for New England's first Super Bowl title.

Four rings later, Brady will arrive in Atlanta for the Patriots' Super Bowl matchup with the Los Angeles Rams having already established himself as the most-decorated Super Bowl quarterback in league history.

But as Brady prepares to play in his ninth Super Bowl, he will have another chance to do something no other NFL player has done.

If New England beats Los Angeles, the 41-year-old quarterback will break a tie with Hall of Fame defensive end Charles Haley and become the first player to win six rings.

But to his coaches, teammates and admirers across the sporting world, he already stands alone.

Known to Brady affectionately as "Jules," receiver Julian Edelman called it an honor to be a part of the quarterback's career.

"He's a really good football player," Edelman said. "The best. And he goes out and he consistently proves it."

Patriots tight end Rob Gronkowski has caught more passes from Brady than any other player and will play alongside him in a Super Bowl for the fourth time. He said Brady's approach has been the same since their first practice together back in 2010.

"The guy is just so precise with every-

thing. Just the way he is out on the field, the way he prepares," Gronkowski said. "You know every single time you're going to get the best out of him no matter what the situations are."

After New England's divisional round win over the Chargers, Brady was openly miffed about what he perceived as pessimism outside of the Patriots' locker room about their chances of reaching a third straight Super Bowl following a regular season which they started 1-2 and lost five games.

"I know everybody thinks we suck and, you know, we can't win any games," Brady said. "We'll see. It'll be fun."

A week later, Brady led the Patriots on a winning drive in overtime to beat the Kansas City Chiefs in the AFC championship game — his 12th such drive in the postseason in the fourth-quarter or overtime.

The next day he posted a video on Instagram of himself and Gronkowski walking to the team bus after the game. Both are smiling and Gronkowski flashes his AFC championship T-shirt.

It was the kind humble brag that Brady has steered away from in the past. But this postseason he has been more open with his emotions and acknowledged after the AFC title win he was "as excited as I have been in a long time."

"When you have 70,000 people cheering against you, it is pretty sweet when you win on the road," Brady said.

On Twitter, congratulations came from all corners of sports.

Among them was one from Paul Pierce, who helped lead the Celtics to the NBA

championship in 2008. "There's aliens there's Pegasus and there's Tom Brady," Pierce wrote.

Left tackle Trent Brown is in his first season in New England after being traded to the Patriots last April. He said sharing the huddle with Brady has lived up to his expectations.

"There's one word, G.O.A.T. That's it," Brown said. "He's one of those great leaders and it trickles down to the rest of the team."

Brown is a member of a starting lineup on offense that, excluding Brady, has an average age of 27.

Brady's continued ability to lead and inspire teammates more than a decade his junior is a unique skill, offensive coordinator Josh McDaniels said.

"He communicates well with every player," McDaniels said. "One of the things that's always impressed me is how he's one of the first guys in the building to know a new person's name, which speaks to how important that is to him, to introduce himself to somebody and also get to know that person, whether it be a practice squad player, a rookie, whatever it is."

Brady's introductions to new players is always the same. At some point after they arrive Brady seeks them out, walks up and says plainly, "Hi, I'm Tom Brady."

"Those little things are why he's where he's at," Linebacker Kyle Van Noy said. "Those little things that people don't pay attention to, those detailed things, that just separates him. He's really good at what he does. ... That's what makes him Tom."

## Pats' Slater carries on proud family football tradition

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Matthew Slater is more than halfway to his father's longevity as an NFL player. He doesn't plan to equal it.

The star special teamer of the New England Patriots just completed his 11th pro season, and he's at his fifth Super Bowl, with two wins. In his dad Jackie's 20-season NFL career, he made one Super Bowl — coincidentally, with the Rams in 1980 — and lost to Pittsburgh.

"That's a long time to do anything," Slater said Tuesday. As for the New England kick coverage ace lasting so long, he added with a laugh: "Absolutely not."

Of course, when your team becomes a regular visitor to the

Super Bowl, it lengthens the season by more than a month. No one in the NFL would want to pass on that, but in reality Slater has played nearly 12 seasons, making All-Pro in 2016 and being voted to seven Pro Bowls.

Not bad for someone whose Hall of Fame father didn't necessarily want Matthew to play football.

"He felt that way for two reasons," Matthew Slater said. "First, he didn't want me to feel the pressure of living up to his name. He thought the expectations could be unfair."

"He also wanted me to avoid injury. He knew the toll it takes on you physically."

Matthew and his brother played plenty of sports, and

Jackie was often their coach.

"Sports have always been a big part of my life and have so many life lessons from being on a team, and the disciplines of preparing to compete and how you compete, and having teammates around you. I thought they were good lessons to learn," Jackie Slater said.

"I discouraged them to play football. I didn't think [Matthew] would be big enough to play football. I coached in basketball, soccer, track and field, even some flag football. I didn't see football as something that he would excel. But when he played flag, he had good speed and he caught the ball and ran well."

Matthew kept improving in high school and grew, though

not to Jackie's offensive tackle measurements. Jackie turned to teammates Ron Brown — a 1984 Olympic champion speedster, who played wideout and returned kicks — and outstanding cornerback LeRoy Irvin to refine Matthew's technique and speed.

Matthew, now 33, credits pretty much everything he has achieved in football to his father, who entered the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2001.

"He made every effort to be present," the son says. "That's what I appreciate the most: He was a father first. So many young kids ... many black kids ... I see they don't have a presence like that."



# Faced with questions on diversity, referees, Goodell must scramble

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Faced with a blitz of officiating questions and queries about the effectiveness of the Rooney Rule, Colin Kaepernick's football unemployment and the cancellation of a news conference for a Super Bowl halftime show that has drawn hefty criticism, Roger Goodell scrambled.

The NFL commissioner did provide some nuggets of news on Wednesday. He noted establishing a quarterbacks summit at Morehouse College in June to help get more minority coaches into the pipeline of higher-level assistant coaching jobs that are quicker pathways to head coaching opportunities. Otherwise, Goodell generally ducked the rush at his annual State of the NFL appearance as effectively as Russell Wilson.

Naturally, Goodell was peppered with questions, some bordering on demands, to upgrade the officiating 10 days after a noncall late in the NFC championship game pretty much cost the Saints a spot in the Super Bowl.

While agreeing that game officials missed the helmet-to-helmet hit and pass interference penalty by Rams defensive back Nickell Robey-Coleman, he said the league will re-examine the officiating process. He didn't rule out adding plays to the video review system, and he didn't endorse such a move.

"We will look again at instant replay," said Goodell, who added that league executives recognize the frustration of Saints fans. "There have been a variety of proposals over the last — frankly 15 to 20 years — of should replay be expanded? It does not cover judgment calls. This was a judgment call.

"The other complication is that it was a no-call. And our coaches and clubs have been very resistant and there has not been support to date about having a replay official or somebody in New York throw a flag when there is no flag (thrown). They have not voted for that in

the past. It doesn't mean that we won't."

Goodell completely ruled out any use of commissioner's powers to change the call or resume the game; a lawsuit was filed in New Orleans seeking that. He also stressed that he and the competition committee will examine a potential expansion of replay to include helmet-to-helmet hits.

## ■ On the Rooney rule:

Many advocates of diversity in the league have questioned the effectiveness of the Rooney Rule, in which teams are required to interview at least one minority candidate for any head coach or general manager vacancy.

"We don't look at the success or failure of the Rooney Rule in one-year increments," Goodell said. "We've had the Rooney Rule around for nearly 20 years. It has had an extraordinary impact on the NFL. Over 20 clubs have hired minority (head) coaches in that period of time."

■ On Kaepernick, who some claim has been blackballed by the league for sparking social injustice and police brutality demonstrations during the national anthem, Goodell said:

"I think if a team decides that Colin Kaepernick or any other player can help their team win, that's what they'll do. Our clubs are the ones that make decisions on players they want to have on their roster. They make that decision individually in the best interests of their team."

■ On the cancellation of the halftime news conference following widespread condemnation of the choice of Maroon 5 and several artists refusing to participate as a sign of support for Kaepernick, Goodell said:

"We're extremely pleased with the diversity, quality and the excitement surrounding our entertainers. This is the biggest stage in the world, and I know people want to be part of that."

## NHL roundup

# Dallas GK Bishop blanks Buffalo

Associated Press

DALLAS — Ben Bishop was so solid in net it didn't matter that the Dallas Stars were held under two goals for the fifth time in six games.

Jamie Benn scored in the first period and Bishop stopped 30 shots to help Dallas beat the Buffalo Sabres 1-0 on Wednesday night.

"As the game progressed, I thought [Bishop] got better and better," Stars coach Jim Montgomery said. "In the third, he was our best player and he had to be and he really broke pucks out really well."

Bishop made 13 saves in the final period, earning his third shutout this season and the 27th of his career. He is 11-0-1 against Buffalo.

"I've got to keep it going. I don't want to talk about it," Bishop said with a laugh. "So far, so good, and knock on wood. I don't know what it is about them."

Benn scored 8:39 in off a pass from ex-Sabre Taylor Fedun. Benn stickhandled to the front of the net, put the puck on his forehand and sent a wrist shot inside the right post.

"There was kind of a slow-moving puck out of the zone," Fedun said, "and I was able to grab it before it hit the blue line, and then (Benn) was able to beat his guy back to the net. When you see a guy like Jamie Benn going to the net and he's all alone, it's a pretty mindless play to just slide it to him."

Linus Ullmark stopped Dallas' other 26 shots on goal.

"[Benn's] a terrific player. You saw their goal, kind of a nifty move and puts it five-hole," he said.

Buffalo appeared to score 4:28 into the third when Marco Scandella's shot from the left point went over Bishop and into the net. The goal was disallowed because a referee

ruled Nathan Beaulieu interfered with Bishop.

The Sabres challenged the call, but a replay review upheld the decision.

## Penguins 4, Lightning 2:

After a baffling loss to a last-place team and with a visit from the NHL's best club looming, the Pittsburgh Penguins called a players-only meeting on Tuesday in an effort to clear the air.

"We needed an answer," defenseman Kris Letang said.

For a night, they found one.

Playing with an edge they lacked two nights earlier against struggling New Jersey, the host Penguins turned away Tampa Bay to send a message that when they are fully engaged, they remain as dangerous as ever.

"We all know that Tampa Bay right now is at the top of the league," Letang said. "They're a really good measuring stick for any team. Tonight was important, especially [after] the two points that slipped the night before. It was a good effort, and I think it brought the best out of us."

Matt Murray finished with 33 saves to keep the NHL's highest scoring team in check, and Letang tied Hall of Famer Paul Coffey's franchise record for career goals by a defenseman. Letang's shot from the right circle 6:02 into the second period beat Andrei Vasilevskiy to give him 12 goals on the season and 108 since his NHL debut in 2007.

Letang, a five-time All-Star, called the milestone "surreal." He's still a long way off from Coffey's 396 career goals over 21 NHL seasons.

"Growing up watching him, I never thought I would have my name next to his," Letang said.

## NBA roundup

# Short-handed Celtics blow out Hornets

Associated Press

BOSTON — Jaylen Brown had 24 points and 10 rebounds, Jayson Tatum scored 20 points and the Boston Celtics rolled over the Charlotte Hornets 126-94 on Wednesday night despite Kyrie Irving's absence.

Terry Rozier had 17 points and tied a career high with 10 assists in place of Irving, the star guard who missed his second straight game with a left hip strain.

Marcus Morris scored 15 points, Al Horford had 14 and Gordon Hayward 12 to help the Celtics win for the seventh time in eight games. Kemba Walker had 21 points for Charlotte.

**Nuggets 105, Pelicans 99:** Nikola Jokic had 20 points, 13 rebounds and 10 assists for his eighth triple-double of the season and visiting Denver beat undermanned New Orleans.

Malik Beasley scored 22 points, and Monte Morris added 20 to help the Northwest Division-leading Nuggets win their

fourth straight.

**Timberwolves 99, Grizzlies 97 (OT):** Karl-Anthony Towns hit a buzzer-beating desperation shot in overtime to lift host Minnesota past Memphis.

Towns scored all 16 of his points after halftime. Jerryd Bayless had 19 points and a career-high 12 assists for the Timberwolves.

Mike Conley had 26 points and eight assists for Memphis.

**Mavericks 114, Knicks 90:** Dirk Nowitzki scored a season-high 14 points in what may have been his final appearance at Madison Square Garden, Luka Doncic warmed up after an airball on his first shot in the arena to score 16 points, and Dallas routed New York.

Dennis Smith Jr. had his second career triple-double with 13 points, 15 assists and 10 boards.

**Wizards 107, Pacers 89:** Bradley Beal scored 25 points, Jeff Green added 23 to

lead another productive night from Washington's bench, and the Wizards beat visiting Indiana.

Green had 16 points in the first half to help spell Beal, who came in second in the NBA in minutes at 37.2 per game, and the Wizards' reserves scored 58 points.

**Bulls 105, Heat 89:** Bobby Portis scored 22 of his 26 points in the second half, Wayne Selden added 20 and Chicago ran away in the second half to beat host Miami.

**Kings 135, Hawks 113:** Harry Giles came off the bench and scored 12 of his season-high 20 points in the third quarter, Marvin Bagley III added 17 points and 12 rebounds, and Sacramento romped past visiting Atlanta behind its two prized rookies.

**Trail Blazers 132, Jazz 105:** Damian Lillard had 36 points and 11 assists to lead host Portland to a win over Utah.

## College basketball roundup

# No. 10 Marquette earns rare victory at Butler

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Markus Howard scored 32 points and Sam Hauser added 19 to help No. 10 Marquette pull away from Butler for a 76-58 victory Wednesday night.

The Golden Eagles (19-3, 8-1 Big East) have won eight straight overall and picked up their first win at Hinkle Fieldhouse since the 1989-90 season. Howard finished 14-for-23 from the field and had five rebounds.

Kamar Baldwin led Butler (12-10, 3-6) with 16 points. The Bulldogs have lost three in a row and five of seven.

**No. 12 Virginia Tech 82, Miami 70:** Nickeil Alexander-Walker tied a season high with 25 points and added a highlight-reel assist as the Hokies shot 59 percent to win on the road.

Justin Robinson scored 17 points for Virginia Tech but limped to the locker room midway through the second half. He watched the final seconds from the bench with his left

foot in a boot. Hokies coach Buzz Williams declined to discuss the nature or severity of the injury.

Virginia Tech (17-3, 6-2 Atlantic Coast Conference) closed within one game of the league lead, but now it might be without Robinson, who holds the school record for career assists.

**No. 14 Villanova 86, DePaul 74:** Eric Paschall scored 20 points, Phil Booth added 19 points and eight assists, and the Wildcats won on the road for their ninth straight victory.

Freshman forward Saddiq Bey matched a career high with 16 points and set one with 11 rebounds for Villanova. He shot 4-for-6 on three-pointers.

**No. 15 Louisville 82, Wake Forest 54:** Jordan Nwora scored 20 points and the visiting Cardinals routed the Demon Deacons for their sixth straight victory.

Dwayne Sutton added 17 points and 10 rebounds, Malik Williams finished with 13 points and Ryan McMahon had 12 on

four three-pointers for Louisville (16-5, 7-1 Atlantic Coast Conference). The Cardinals shot 52 percent and led by 35.

**No. 19 LSU 72, Texas A&M 57:** Tremont Waters scored a season-high 36 points and made a career-best six three-pointers to carry the visiting Tigers past the Aggies for their 10th straight victory.

Waters was hot early, making five of seven three-point attempts and piling up 23 points by halftime. He cooled down a bit after the break, but did enough to lead LSU (17-3, 7-0 Southeastern Conference) to the victory on a night when much of the team struggled offensively.

**No. 20 Iowa State 93, West Virginia 68:** Lindell Wigginton scored a season-high 28 points off the bench and the host Cyclones took their fourth win in five games.

Marial Shayok had 18 points for Iowa State (16-5, 5-3 Big 12), which shot 26-for-40 inside the three-point line and 29-for-32

from the free throw line. Nick Weiler-Babb had 14 points with six rebounds and four steals for Iowa State.

**Colgate 76, Army 56:** Will Rayman scored a season-high 23 points and tied his career-best with 12 rebounds to help the host Raiders beat the Black Knights in the 125th meeting between the programs.

Tommy Funk led Army (11-11, 6-3) with 18 points on 7-of-11 shooting.

**San Diego St. 66, Air Force 51:** Jalen McDaniels finished with 11 points and 11 rebounds to lead the host Aztecs in the first time in more than a month they have won consecutive games.

Lavelle Scottie scored 22 and A.J. Walker 10 for Air Force (9-12, 4-5).

**Bucknell 69, Navy 57:** Kimbal Mackenzie and Avi Toomer scored 14 points apiece and the host Bison defeated the Middies.