

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Supreme Court allows transgender ban

BY CLAUDIA GRISALES

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Tuesday ruled in favor of a controversial Trump administration ban of transgender personnel in the military, allowing the measure to stay in place pending several lawsuits to fight the move.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia said recently that a lower-court judge erred in blocking the policy, also known as the “Mattis Plan,” which was named for former Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, who drafted its specifics. The policy originated from a proposal in 2017 by President Donald Trump.

The Supreme Court’s 5-4 decision on Tuesday was issued along ideological lines, with the court’s Republican-controlled majority backing a pair of lower-court decisions to allow

the ban to be enforced.

A White House effort to ban transgender people from military service has been mired in confusion, chaos and a web of litigation nearly two years after Trump fired off tweets that ignited the controversy, experts have said.

A 2016 Pentagon policy to open the military to transgender individuals had remained in place, but a Trump administration effort to reverse that plan created a chilling effect for potential recruits and heightened fears for some servicemembers, some advocates for transgender personnel have said.

The Defense Department lauded the ruling Tuesday.

“The Department is pleased with the orders issued by the Supreme Court today,” said Air Force Lt. Col. Carla Gleason, a Pentagon spokeswoman. “We will continue to work with the Department of Justice regard-

ing next steps in the pending lawsuits.”

However, Gleason stressed the Supreme Court ruling does not affect current servicemembers; it affects only people joining or attempting to join the military. “As always, we treat all transgender persons with respect and dignity,” Gleason said. “[The Defense Department’s] proposed policy is not a ban on service by transgender persons. It is critical that DOD be permitted to implement personnel policies that it determines are necessary to ensure the most lethal and combat-effective fighting force in the world.”

The Justice Department also praised the decision Tuesday.

“We are pleased the Supreme Court granted stays in these cases, clearing the way for the policy to go into effect while litigation continues,” said Kerri Kupec, a Justice Department spokeswoman. “The Depart-

ment of Defense has the authority to create and implement personnel policies it has determined are necessary to best defend our nation.”

LGBTQ rights organizations immediately criticized Tuesday’s decision.

Lambda Legal and OutServe-SLDN filed the first complaint against the transgender ban. Their case, filed on behalf of transgender servicemembers and transgender individuals aspiring to join the military, is working its way through the U.S. District Court in Seattle. The organizations called the Supreme Court decision “perplexing,” and “disappointing.”

“For more than 30 months, transgender troops have been serving our country openly with valor and distinction, but now the rug has been ripped out from under them, once again,” Lambda Legal Counsel Peter Renn said.

## Russia watches as US destroyer arrives in Georgia

BY SCOTT WYLAND

*Stars and Stripes*

The destroyer USS Donald Cook arrived for a port visit in the Black Sea nation of Georgia as Russia monitors the ship’s movements at a time of heightened tensions in the region.

The ship docked Monday at Batumi on the sea’s eastern coast after transiting the Dardanelles Strait on Saturday, the Navy said in a statement.

The destroyer’s visit to Georgia and the Black Sea follows the Russian seizure of three Ukrainian vessels and arrest of 24 sailors in late November at the Kerch Strait, a move condemned by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and much of the West.

The USS Fort McHenry, a dock-landing ship, conducted a Black Sea operation earlier this month which included transporting teams from the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit. The last destroyer to patrol the Black Sea was the USS Carney in August.

The Russian state news agency Tass reported that Russia’s Black Sea Fleet has been monitoring the Donald Cook since it entered the Black Sea on Saturday.

A destroyer patrolling the Black Sea would make Moscow uneasy because of its missile defense and strike capabilities, said Michael Petersen, director of the Naval War College’s Russia Maritime Studies Institute.

“The Russians place great

stock in both of these American capabilities and view them as inherently destabilizing,” Petersen said.

Moscow is also wary of Georgia’s relationship with the West. In 2008, Russia and Georgia — whose president at the time wanted to join NATO — fought a weeklong war over two Georgian territories claimed by Russia-backed separatists. Georgia lost control over about 20 percent of its territory as a result, and Moscow continues to protect and recognize the regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent nations despite international condemnation.

A Navy statement said the destroyer visit is part of an ongoing mission to “demonstrate the collective resolve to Black Sea

security.”

“The United States and the U.S. Navy continue to stand alongside our allies and partners in support of shared regional interests and maritime stability,” Cmdr. Matthew J. Powel, the Donald Cook’s commanding officer, said in a statement.

According to an international convention which governs foreign naval access to the Black Sea, warships from non-Black Sea countries can remain in the area for a maximum of 21 days.

Tensions have simmered in the region since Russia took the Crimean Peninsula from Ukraine in 2014. Most of the world still considers Crimea to be rightfully Ukrainian territory.

## Destroyer named for SEAL set to be commissioned

*Bangor (Maine) Daily News*

The second of three Zumwalt-class destroyers built at Bath Iron Works in Maine will be commissioned Saturday in its homeport of San Diego.

The DDG 1001, the USS Michael Monsoor, will be commissioned at 10 a.m. at Naval Air Station North Island, according to a news release from the Navy. Monsoor's mother, Sally Monsoor, will serve as the ship's sponsor.

The ship honors Petty Officer 2nd Class Michael Monsoor, a Navy SEAL who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions in Ramadi, Iraq, on Sept. 29, 2006.

Monsoor threw himself onto a grenade to protect nearby members of his unit and others. His actions saved three fellow SEALs and eight Iraqi soldiers, Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, said at the destroyer's christening in 2016.

Monsoor was "a consummate professional who faced terrorist enemies with aplomb and stoicism," former Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter said at the ship's 2008 naming ceremony.

The DDG 1001 departed Bath for the final time Nov. 9. It completed acceptance trials in February and the Navy took partial delivery in April.

In July, the destroyer's turbine blades were damaged during acceptance trials, and it returned to Bath Iron Works ahead of schedule for repairs.

The DDG 1001 also had problems with the electrical system during sea trials in December 2017, when it returned to the Bath shipyard one day after departing. It resumed sea trials after repairs.

The future USS Michael Monsoor, at 16,000 tons, is 610 feet long with a beam of 87 feet and a navigational draft of 27 feet, according to the Navy. It is powered by two Rolls-Royce main turbine generators, two Rolls-Royce auxiliary turbine generators and two 34.6 MW advanced induction motors to speeds of more than 30 knots.

The DDG 1002, the future USS Lyndon B. Johnson, was launched in December at Bath Iron Works. The third of the Zumwalt line, the ship is scheduled to be christened this spring.

The Navy decided to build only three so-called stealth Zumwalt-class destroyers amid concerns about elevated construction cost estimates.

# Army officer hurt in attack in Syria fighting to survive

BY CHAD GARLAND  
*Stars and Stripes*

A U.S. Army officer wounded in a deadly bombing in the Syrian town of Manbij last week is fighting for his life in a military hospital in Germany, according to family and friends.

Capt. Jonathan Turnbull, 32, a native of Gaylord, Mich., is being treated at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and is in serious condition, a spokeswoman said Tuesday. She declined to provide details due to privacy laws.

Serious condition means vital signs may be unstable and outside normal limits and that the patient's prospects remain uncertain, according to the Landstuhl hospital's website.

After the deadly attack Wednesday, which killed four Americans and more than a dozen others, Turnbull was evacuated for treatment first to Baghdad to be stabilized and then to Germany, the family had said in statements to the press and on social media.

A fundraiser on GoFundMe.com seeking donations to support what Turnbull's

family said would be a long recovery was shuttered over "security concerns" after raising about \$8,600 of an original \$50,000 goal in a matter of hours.

Defense officials on Friday had identified an Army Green Beret, a Navy linguist and a Defense Intelligence Agency civilian who had been killed by the blast, the deadliest incident in Syria for the U.S. military since it began operating there in 2015. They were identified as Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jonathan R. Farmer, 37, of Boynton Beach, Fla.; Chief Petty Officer Shannon M. Kent, 35, of Pine Plains, N.Y.; and former Navy SEAL Scott A. Wirtz, 42, of St. Louis.

Officials had declined to identify the three wounded U.S. troops who had survived the blast, but Turnbull's family members named him online last week and in interviews with Michigan news outlets, saying he was in bad shape but expected to recover from his wounds.

An investigation into the incident is ongoing.

Turnbull was slated to return home days before last week's blast, friends and family have said, but his deployment got extended.

## Afghan security lost dozens in attack

*Associated Press*

KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghan officials confirmed Tuesday that dozens of victims killed the previous day in a brazen Taliban attack on a military base not far from Kabul were members of the country's intelligence agency — a severe blow to the government that has already lost control of nearly half of Afghanistan to insurgents.

Provincial officials said at least 45 people were killed and as many as 70 wounded when a suicide bomber drove a Humvee into the base in eastern Maidan Wardak province and detonated his load as he rammed the vehicle into its main building Monday.

There were fears that the death toll from the daytime assault on the base, which also serves as a training center for a pro-government militia and is run by the country's intelligence service known as the National Directorate for Security, or NDS, is even higher.

The NDS on Tuesday said its reports show 36 military personnel were killed and 58

were wounded. Though the agency's figures were lower than what provincial officials had reported, it was still an unprecedented casualty toll for the agency, among the best-equipped and -trained in Afghanistan.

The agency said the suicide bomber in the armored Humvee penetrated the gate of the base on the outskirts of Maidan Shar, the provincial capital about 25 miles from Kabul, even though guards fired at the vehicle.

Khawanin Sultani, a council member in the province, said the building collapsed from the explosion, which likely contributed to the high casualty numbers.

"Most of the bodies were under the destroyed building," he said.

The Taliban, who promptly claimed responsibility in a statement to the media just hours after the attack, later said in a separate statement that they had met again Monday with U.S. representatives to discuss "ending the invasion of Afghanistan" in talks that were to continue Tuesday.

# Report IDs secret N. Korean missile base

*The Washington Post*

Days after the White House announced plans for a second nuclear summit between the United States and North Korea, a new think tank report has identified a secret North Korean ballistic missile base about 160 miles northwest of Seoul that is reportedly the headquarters of the country's strategic missile force.

A report released Monday by the Center for Strategic and International Studies said the base is one of about 20 undeclared missile operating bases, part of North Korea's ongoing ballistic missile program. Researchers at the center's Beyond Parallel project said the latest report provides more evidence that

North Korea is not dismantling its weapons facilities.

"While diplomacy is critical, and should be the primary way to resolve the North Korean nuclear problem, any future agreement must take account of all of the operational missile base facilities that are a threat to U.S. and South Korean security," the report said.

"North Korea is not supposed to have these ballistic missile bases," said Victor Cha, one of the report's authors. "And of course they have them and have not disclosed them."

After President Donald Trump's historic summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un last summer, Trump wrote on Twitter that there was "no longer a nuclear threat from

North Korea."

The White House announced Friday that Trump would hold a second summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in February as the two sides seek to jump-start nuclear talks that have stalled since their historic first meeting in summer.

"North Korea basically wants to trade away things they won't do in the future, or to give up things from the past they don't need anymore, while not negotiating over things like this, their actual capabilities," said Cha, a former National Security Council official focused on Asian affairs.

Trump has said his own negotiating skills can bypass stalled talks among lower-level diplomats to strike a deal for North

Korea to relinquish a nuclear weapons program that analysts said can now reliably strike the United States.

Experts have said there has been no demonstrable progress since the first summit in Singapore in June. Trump's claims that North Korea is a diminished threat have been contradicted by the Pentagon and U.S. intelligence agencies.

The White House declined to comment.

Of the 20 or so undeclared missile bases, CSIS researchers have located 13. In November, researchers released a report on the first of the 13 bases; Monday's report describes the second.

## Trump's proposal faces uncertain fate in Senate

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's proposal to reopen the government, sweetened with immigration provisions that are aimed at mollifying Democrats but that have alienated some conservatives, is headed for Senate action, its prospects uncertain.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell will try to muscle through the 1,300-page spending measure, which includes \$5.7 billion to fund Trump's proposed wall along the U.S.-Mexi-

co border, the sticking point in the standoff between Trump and Democrats that has led to a partial government shutdown, now in its 32nd day.

Meanwhile, another missed paycheck looms for hundreds of thousands of federal workers.

Senate Republicans late Monday unveiled the legislation, dubbed the "End The Shutdown And Secure The Border Act," but its passage this week is by no means certain.

Republicans hold a 53-47 majority in the chamber but need

Democrats to reach the usual 60-vote threshold for bills to advance. No Democrat has publicly expressed support for the proposal Trump announced over the weekend.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer's office reiterated that Democrats are unwilling to negotiate any border security funding until Trump reopens the government.

"Nothing has changed with the latest Republican offer," Schumer spokesman Justin Goodman said. "President

Trump and Senate Republicans are still saying, 'Support my plan or the government stays shut.' That isn't a compromise or a negotiation — it's simply more hostage taking."

The Republican plan is a trade-off: Trump's border wall funding in exchange for temporary protection from deportation for some immigrants. To try to draw more bipartisan support, it adds \$12.7 billion in supplemental funding for regions hit by hurricanes, wildfires and other natural disasters.

## Supervisor of SEAL accused of murder to plead not guilty

*Associated Press*

SAN DIEGO — The Navy officer who supervised a SEAL accused of fatally stabbing an Islamic State prisoner in Iraq in 2017 is due in a military court to face various charges Tuesday, including allegedly conducting the SEAL's re-enlistment ceremony next to the corpse and encouraging enlisted personnel to pose for photos with the body, prosecutors said.

Lt. Jacob Portier plans to

plead not guilty to all charges during a court-martial at the Navy base in San Diego, said his attorney, Jay Sullivan. Portier also is accused of failing to report a war crime, destroying evidence and impeding the investigation of Special Operations Chief Edward Gallagher.

Sullivan said Navy prosecutors have not provided photos that show Portier, and he said conducting a re-enlistment ceremony in a war zone is not new.

"Battlefield re-enlistment

ceremonies have been done since World War I," he said. "Our fighters are proud to serve our country in harm's way."

Portier was the officer in charge of Gallagher's platoon during the deployment.

Gallagher pleaded not guilty earlier this month to charges of premeditated murder and other offenses, including opening fire on crowds of Iraqi civilians and shooting a female and a male in separate incidents.

Navy prosecutors have paint-

ed a picture of a decorated SEAL going off the rails on his eighth deployment, indiscriminately shooting at Iraqi civilians and stabbing to death a captured ISIS fighter estimated to be 15 years old. They say he also posed with the corpse, including at his re-enlistment ceremony.

His lawyers have said the allegations were made by disgruntled SEALs out to get Gallagher because he was a demanding platoon leader.

# Oscar nominations move in new directions

Associated Press

Oscar voters on Tuesday showered Alfonso Cuarón's "Roma" and Yorgos Lanthimos' "The Favourite" with a leading 10 nominations to the 91st Academy Awards, while two dominant but contentious Hollywood forces — Netflix and Marvel — each scored their first best picture nomination.

Though many expected "A Star Is Born," Bradley Cooper's tear-inducing revival of one of Hollywood's most oft-remade show-business myths, to top the nominations, Cooper was surprisingly overlooked as director and the academy instead put its fullest support behind a pair of indies by international directors.

With the black-and-white, Spanish-language "Roma," Netflix scored its first best picture nomination, a prize the streaming giant has dearly sought. Marvel, too, joined the club with Ryan Coogler's "Black Panther," the first superhero movie ever nominated for best picture.

Cuarón tied the record for most deco-

rated Oscar nominee ever for one film with four individual nods for "Roma," his deeply personal exhumation of his Mexico City childhood. Cuarón was nominated for direction, cinematography, original screenplay and best picture.

Just as rewarded Tuesday was Lanthimos' period romp, which resounded most in the acting categories thanks to its trio of actresses: Olivia Colman in the best actress category and Rachel Weisz and Emma Stone in supporting.

Along with "Roma" and "The Favourite," the eight nominees for best picture were: Peter Farrelly's interracial road trip tale "Green Book," Ryan Coogler's superhero sensation "Black Panther," Spike Lee's white supremacist evisceration "BlacKkKlansman," the Freddie Mercury biopic "Bohemian Rhapsody," Adam McKay's highly critical Dick Cheney biopic "Vice" and "A Star Is Born," which still landed eight nominations, including best actress for Lady Gaga and best supporting actor for Sam Elliott.

"Black Panther," the year's biggest domestic box-office hit and a bona fide cultural event, finally cracked the category long kryptonite to superheroes. Despite the overwhelming popularity of comic book movies, they had previously been shunned from Hollywood's top honor.

"Black Panther" was rewarded with seven nominations.

Thirty years after landing a writing nod for 1989's "Do the Right Thing," Spike Lee was nominated for his first directing Oscar for his "BlacKkKlansman." The other directing nominees were Lanthimos, Cuarón, Pawel Pawlikowski ("Cold War") and McKay ("Vice") — a field that, a year after continued focus on gender inequality in Hollywood, included no female directors.

In best actor, the expected front runner, Christian Bale, was nominated for his transformation into Cheney in "Vice" (his fourth Oscar nod), along with Cooper, Willem Dafoe ("At Eternity's Gate"), Rami Malek ("Bohemian Rhapsody") and Viggo Mortensen ("Green Book").

## Lawyer: US spy suspect had classified docs

Associated Press

MOSCOW — The lawyer for an American man being held in Moscow on suspicion of spying said Tuesday that his client was given a flash drive containing Russian "state secrets" before he was arrested, but did not know he had them and had not looked at them.

Paul Whelan, a former U.S. Marine, was detained in Moscow at the end of December. The arrest raised speculation that he could be swapped for

one of the Russians held in the U.S., such as gun rights activist Maria Butina, who has pleaded guilty to acting as a foreign agent in the U.S.

Whelan made his first public appearance in court Tuesday to hear the appeal of his arrest. The judge upheld the previous ruling that ordered him to be kept behind bars at least until the end of February. Whelan was kept in a glass cage and did not speak to reporters.

Spying charges carry a pris-

on sentence of up to 20 years in Russia.

Whelan's lawyer, Vladimir Zherebenkov, told Russian news agencies on Tuesday that when his client was detained at a Moscow hotel at the end of December he had something with him that contained "state secrets."

The lawyer said that Whelan was a frequent visitor to Russia and that he asked an unnamed person to email him something about travel around the country. Whelan reportedly was not

able to download it and then asked that person to put it on a flash-drive.

"He was expecting to see on the flash drive some personal information like pictures or videos, something like that, about that person's previous trips around Russia," Zherebenkov told reporters. "We don't know how the materials that contain state secrets ended up there."

The lawyer said the American was detained before he could open the files.

## Judge to weigh GOP claim in North Carolina election

Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. — A North Carolina judge was scheduled to hear arguments Tuesday into declaring the Republican in the country's last undecided congressional race the winner despite an investigation into whether his lead was boosted by illegal vote-collection tactics.

A trial judge in the state capital was expected to hear lawyers for candidate Mark Harris argue that the now-disbanded elections board was supposed to have declared him the winner in November, delayed act-

ing to sort out ballot-fraud allegations, and now can't certify him as the winner. Because GOP reshuffling of the old elections board's membership had been declared unconstitutional, its investigation into alleged ballot fraud by an operative hired by the Republican's campaign was invalid, Harris' attorneys claimed.

The elections board was dissolved Dec. 28 by state judges who in October declared its makeup unconstitutional but had allowed investigations to continue. A revamped board comes into existence starting Jan. 31.

Harris narrowly led Democrat Dan McCready in the 9th District race before the investigation started. Lawyers for McCready, an Iraq War veteran and head of a solar energy investment firm, and the state elections board want the lawsuit dismissed. They say a completed investigation is needed into allegations that mail-in ballots could have been altered or discarded by a Harris subcontractor.

Democrats who this month took control of the U.S. House said they wouldn't seat Harris without an investigation.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Arrest made in \$1.4M comic books heist

**FL** BOCA RATON — A few comic books from a stolen Batman collection worth \$1.4 million were recovered after an arrest in Arizona.

News station ABC-15 in Phoenix reported that police charged Phillip Weisbauer, of Royal Palm Beach, with theft and trafficking in stolen property after he allegedly tried to sell four comic books. Those items alone are valued at nearly \$100,000 and are part of a collection of nearly 450 comic books stolen from a storage unit in Boca Raton.

Their owner, Randy Lawrence, told the South Florida Sun Sentinel that someone broke into the unit through the ceiling. He discovered the theft on Jan. 8.

### Tractor-trailer hits subway entrance

**NY** NEW YORK — A tractor-trailer separated from the truck cab it was attached to and hit the entrance to a subway station. No one was injured.

The New York Police Department said the accident happened Monday at the entrance for the F and M trains on Sixth Avenue and 23rd Street in Manhattan.

The impact ended with the trailer diagonal across multiple street lanes. One part of the trailer had gone up on the curb and into the subway entrance structure.

### 8 teenagers arrested after port car thefts

**DE** NEW CASTLE — Delaware State Police said eight Pennsylvania teenagers were arrested in connec-

tion with the theft of cars from two companies at the Port of Wilmington.

The News Journal of Wilmington reported that police said the cars were stolen from Trans Cargo and Auto Port Inc.

The Port of Wilmington said Trans Cargo ships more than 100,000 specially built cars and trucks to the Middle East, Africa and the Mediterranean each year. It works with Auto-Port Inc., which modifies the vehicles.

The teens range in age from 15 to 18. Six are from Philadelphia.

Police allege the teens are tied to nine incidents dating to Oct. 31, 2018.

### Report: Lava didn't harm sea turtles

**HI** HILO — A survey conducted by a Hawaii wildlife conservation group found the Kilauea volcano eruption did not critically damage sea turtle populations on the Big Island.

The Hawaii Tribune-Herald reported the Hawaii Wildlife Fund concluded this month that lava did not harm turtle populations despite the persistence of unsubstantiated claims warning of turtle deaths during the eruption that began in May.

The wildlife organization conducted two helicopter flights above the lava-impacted coastline, observing 50 live turtles and other sea life.

The organization's education coordinator, Kallie Barnes, said turtle experts consulted for the survey agreed that sea turtles were likely able to escape lava en masse.

### Ski area road closed twice during storm

**VT** JAY — Vermont State Police said a road to

a Vermont ski resort had to be closed twice during a recent snowstorm for vehicles unable to make it up the hill.

Police said Sunday an accident was reported on Vermont Route 242 leading to the Jay Peak ski area, with one vehicle in a snow bank. Authorities said there were 47 vehicles that were unable to make it up the hill to the resort and were blocking traffic. The road was closed for about an hour.

Police said the road was closed again later in the morning after two tour buses got stuck trying to go up the hill.

### 3 vehicles go through ice on lake in 1 day

**MN** MANKATO — Three vehicles went through the ice the same day on Madison Lake in Blue Earth County, prompting a fresh warning about the dangers of driving on Minnesota's lakes.

A total of 10 people were in the vehicles. They all escaped unharmed Saturday.

Authorities contacted local businesses and put up extra signs near the landings where the vehicles broke through to spread the word about the danger.

### Firefighters free horse trapped in swamp

**RI** NORTHSMITHFIELD — It was an unusual rescue effort for some Rhode Island firefighters after a horse became stuck in a muddy swamp.

Authorities in North Smithfield said the horse, named Fiona, ran off from the Phoenix Rising Horse Farm on Saturday after being startled by something and wound up in the swamp.

WPRI-TV reported that workers at the farm were able to coax Fiona back closer to dry

land, but as they did the horse got stuck in the mud and began to sink.

Firefighters responded and tied a section of a fire hose to the horse's midsection. They then used an excavator to hoist the animal out of the mud and get it to safety.

### Man arrested in theft of mail truck

**CA** FRESNO — Authorities in central California said a man is accused of stealing a mail truck after allegedly crashing the vehicle and then breaking into a business while trying to hide.

Police said officers were dispatched Saturday afternoon following reports of a crash involving a postal truck in northwest Fresno.

The Fresno Bee reported a suspect smashed the window of a nearby business and hid inside. Officers arrested the man, who was not identified.

### Mural by students uncovered in remodel

**AK** KENAI — A mural created by students in Kenai more than four decades ago was discovered by construction crews working on a remodel of the airport.

The Peninsula Clarion reported the mural was designed and painted in the spring of 1977 by Kenai Central High School students from an advanced art class.

It was found last week by workers at Kenai Municipal Airport. An airport expansion project in the 1980s had led to the artwork being covered with metal panels.

The mural depicts local icons, including the Russian Orthodox Church and a fishing net with crab.

From wire reports

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# Players causing a racket with tantrums

Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Way behind in a match he soon would lose, Alexander Zverev leaned forward in his Australian Open sideline seat to repeatedly, and violently, crack his racket against the court with a reverberating THWACK — one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight times in all, before throwing down the offending, and now-mangled, piece of equipment.

Caused quite a, well, racket.

“I heard it,” said Zverev’s opponent Monday, 2016 Wimbledon finalist Milos Raonic. “I don’t think I looked over. I think it was pretty clear what was going on.”

It certainly was not unusual. Smashing, spiking, bouncing or otherwise harming rackets is the most public form of anger, um, mismanagement in professional tennis, done all the time by all kinds of players, whether they are men or women, famous or unknown, seeded or otherwise, winning or losing. Over the first week of the Australian Open, Naomi Osaka, Dominic Thiem, Ryan Harrison and Daniil Medvedev, just to name a few, joined Zverev in producing GIF-worthy outbursts.

For better or for worse, racket-breaking is as inescapable

an element of the sport as forehands and backhands, often revealing frustration, sometimes reversing the course of a contest, usually resulting in a fine of thousands of dollars, and even — as was the case with Serena Williams during her U.S. Open final loss to Osaka last September — occasionally costing a player a point (in Williams’ case, because of an earlier warning).

“I love it!” exclaimed Henri Leconte, the 1988 French Open runner-up.

“I mean, sure, it’s not good for kids to see,” he said. “But sometimes, it’s very important to show emotion. ... In my generation, we had so many players who did that: John McEnroe was doing it a lot; Goran Ivanisevic was breaking rackets. Sometimes, when you see your opponent doing that, you say: ‘Oh, he’s really upset. That’s good.’ But if you were playing McEnroe, you were in trouble, because he played better afterward.”

Current players will cite McEnroe or Andy Roddick or Marat Safin, among others, when the subject is raised. They’ll talk about all-time classic displays, such as three-time major champion Stan Wawrinka’s signature move of bending a racket in half over his

knee, the way a Major League Baseball slugger might try to break a bat. Or Marcos Baghdatis reaching into his bag for additional rackets during a changeover at the 2012 Australian Open (in a match against Wawrinka), until he’d slammed four and discarded them. Or Benoit Paire and his multiple-racket, sitting-then-standing tantrum (in a match against Baghdatis) that drew \$16,500 in fines, more than double his prize money from last year’s Washington tournament.

“If we see a guy break a racket, someone will say to me, ‘Ah, yours was better,’” said Baghdatis, the 2006 runner-up in Melbourne.

“There are worse things. For me, it’s something that it’s fun to see. It’s good for tennis. There is some character and it should be like that,” he said. “You have a bad day at the office, (and) you have a fight with your wife. You have a fight with your brother, your mother, your sister, your father. It’s the way life is. Sometimes you have bad days and it just comes out.”

Leconte is hardly the only one who wonders about what sort of example is being set for children who are watching, especially those who play tennis.

“It’s become all too common-

place. And it seems like other players see it happening and they think, ‘Oh, this is OK to do.’ I think it’s bad modeling, and the rackets are obviously expensive,” said Tracy Austin, the 1979 and 1981 U.S. Open champion. “Emoting is good. We want to see personalities. But actually being destructive is not helpful for anybody.”

Ernest Gulbis, a former top-10 player known for raising racket abuse to an art form, says he wishes he could avoid ever doing it again.

He also admits that’s not likely.

“Sometimes the emotions just take over. It’s a fight. It’s like a gladiator fight. It’s not like you’re laying in bed and can just be relaxed,” Gulbis said. “Emotions just come out. I’m against it, personally, because you can fix your problems on court in a different way. But to be honest, sometimes it helps.”

That’s a popular take.

“It made me feel better. I was very angry, so I let my anger out,” Zverev said Monday.

Didn’t do him a bit of good on the scoreboard, though.

He was trailing Raonic 6-1, 4-1 when he destroyed his racket at a changeover, then proceeded to drop the next two games and the third set, too.

## Tsitsipas, American Collins reach semifinals

Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — A post-millennial through and through, Stefanos Tsitsipas sounded as excited about doubling his YouTube channel’s followers to more than 30,000 within a few hours — “Oh, my God. Really?!” — as he was about to become the youngest Grand Slam semifinalist since 2007.

Ah, to be 20, emerging as possibly the Next Big Thing in tennis and getting the opportunity to promote your travel vlogs.

“Guys,” he urged folks watching the Australian Open on Tuesday in person or on TV, “if you haven’t subscribed, please subscribe.”

Lest anyone get the idea that Tsitsipas’ stunning victory over Roger Federer at Melbourne Park was a fluke, he followed it

up by beating No. 22-seeded Roberto Bautista Agut of Spain 7-5, 4-6, 6-4, 7-6 (2) to become the first player from Greece to reach the final four at a major tournament.

“I knew that win against Federer was important, played a huge role in my image — like, who I am,” said Tsitsipas, who eliminated the two-time defending champion in the fourth round Sunday. “But I knew that the biggest challenge was today’s match, that I can prove myself once again.”

Next for Tsitsipas will be 17-time major champion Rafael Nadal, who stopped the career-best run of another up-and-coming member of the sport’s new generation, 21-year-old American Frances Tiafoe, by dominating him 6-3, 6-4, 6-2.

Nadal saved the only two break points he faced and broke Tiafoe the first time he

served in each set.

In women’s action, unseeded 25-year-old Danielle Collins of the U.S. reached her first Slam semifinal with a 2-6, 7-5, 6-1 victory against Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova of Russia. Collins was an NCAA champion at the University of Virginia who began this tournament with an 0-5 record at majors and now has strung together five victories in a row, including over 2016 champion Angelique Kerber.

Collins will now face two-time Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova, who is back in the semis at a major for the first time since she was stabbed during an attack at her home in December 2016.

“I didn’t really imagine being back,” a teary Kvitova said after defeating No. 15 Ash Barty of Australia 6-1, 6-4.

# McVay offers his own view of blown call

Associated Press

THOUSAND OAKS, Calif. — When the Los Angeles Rams' team bus rolled into their suburban training complex after a boisterous flight from New Orleans, the players and coaches were greeted by rowdy fans welcoming home the new NFC champions in the middle of the night.

The Rams and their fans lost some sleep Sunday night — but not over that missed pass interference on Nickell Robey-Coleman that could have altered the outcome of Los Angeles' 26-23 overtime victory in the NFC championship game.

"I'm not going to sit here and say there clearly wasn't a little bit of contact before that

ball actually arrived," Rams coach Sean McVay said Monday. "But whether he catches it or not, there's a lot of things that go into that. ... I feel bad for when it occurred in the framework of the game, but I thought (Saints coach) Sean (Payton) said it best: There's a lot of other opportunities, and there's a lot of things that do dictate and determine the outcome of the game."

And after watching the tape of their remarkable win, the Rams had a few questions of their own for the officiating crew.

Specifically, the Rams couldn't understand how the refs didn't call Saints linebacker A.J. Klein's apparent grab of Jared Goff's facemask

on the Rams' previous drive. A penalty would have given a first down to the Rams at the New Orleans 1, putting them in prime position to take a 24-20 lead with a touchdown with 5:03 to play.

"When you slow it down, clearly you can see some of the things that took place. If you want to do that on every single play, though, there's a lot of instances. You want to slow some things down with a facemask on Goff, some different things," McVay said. "What we try to do a good job of understanding is that it is an imperfect game."

The Rams' latest victory wasn't perfect, but it was historic. This franchise is still deep in the years-long process

of rebuilding its once-huge fan base in Southern California after 21 years away in St. Louis.

"We've been through a lot, and for us to go out there and grind through all this adversity just shows you how close we are in this room," said guard Rodger Saffold, the longest-tenured Rams player in his ninth season. "The fans were excited for us to come back, and now, three years later, we're on the biggest stage in sports. The city is electric for us."

Aside from the late-game theatrics and twists, the Rams' victory was even more surprising because of the relatively small role played by their biggest offensive star.

## College basketball roundup

# Henry, No. 6 Michigan State stifle No. 13 Maryland

Associated Press

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Aaron Henry made the most of his opportunity to play in place of injured starter Joshua Langford.

The freshman forward had a season-high 12 points, helping No. 6 Michigan State beat No. 13 Maryland 69-55 on Monday night with balanced offense and stifling defense.

"The Henry kid, he's really good," Terrapins coach Mark Turgeon said. "Great defender, hard to box out. And, he makes shots. That was a key."

The Spartans (17-2, 8-0 Big Ten) have won 12 straight this season and are in sole possession of first in the conference. They have won a school-record 20 consecutive Big Ten regular-season games dating to last year. The run ties the fifth-longest winning streak in Big Ten history and is conference's longest since Illinois won 25 straight during the 2003-04 and 2004-05 seasons.

"I don't think they give a trophy for it," Michigan State

coach Tom Izzo said.

Cassius Winston and Kenny Goins each scored 14 points while Matt McQuaid and Xavier Tillman had 10 points apiece for the Spartans.

The Terrapins (16-4, 7-2) had a shot to move into first place in the conference, but couldn't extend their seven-game winning streak.

"We couldn't guard them," Turgeon said. "We went a few possessions with zone, but that's not who we are."

"We let our offense affect our defense."

Maryland's leading scorer, Anthony Cowan, was held to a season-low seven points.

"That was huge," Henry said. "We looked at him on film and said, 'He's the guy we've got to lock down.' I felt we did that."

The Terrapins connected on just 34.4 percent of their shots and matched their season low against the Spartans. They shot 58 percent of in their previous game, a 14-point win at Ohio State.

**No. 9 Kansas 80, No. 24 Iowa State 76:** Dedric Lawson

had 29 points and 15 rebounds, Devon Dotson hit the clinching free throws with 5.9 seconds left and the host Jayhawks held on to beat the Cyclones.

Marcus Garrett added 16 points and Lagerald Vick had 14 for Kansas (16-3, 5-2 Big 12), which blew a late lead at West Virginia over the weekend but this time slammed the door down the stretch.

Iowa State (14-5, 4-3) got within 72-71 on a driving layup by Marial Shayok with 1:44 to go, but Garrett followed a swap of empty possessions with a layup. Michael Jacobson hit a free throw for the Cyclones, but Lawson's three from the top of the key made it 77-72 with 22.3 seconds left.

Shayok added the last of his team-high 26 points for Iowa State, and after Dotson made the second of two free throws, Tyrese Haliburton made two of his own to get within 78-76 with 7.5 seconds left.

Dotson was immediately fouled on the inbound and this time he made both of his free throws.

**No. 11 North Carolina 103, No. 10 Virginia Tech 82:** Freshman Coby White scored 27 points and the host Tar Heels knocked down a season-high 16 three-pointers to beat the Hokies.

Fellow rookie Nassir Little added a season-high 23 points for North Carolina (15-4, 5-1 Atlantic Coast Conference), which struggled out of the gate to fall behind by nine while making just one of its first 12 threes.

But it wasn't long before just about everything started falling from behind the arc, an avalanche that sparked a game-turning 20-0 run that pushed UNC to a 45-31 lead by halftime.

UNC made 15 of its last 22 three-pointers, finished the game shooting 54 percent and led by as many as 27 points.

Ahmed Hill scored 20 points for the Hokies (15-3, 4-2), who made six of seven three-pointers in a fast start only to end the half by going nearly 6 minutes without a basket.

## NBA roundup

# Thompson leads Warriors past Lakers

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Nothing could stop Klay Thompson, certainly not the Lakers' defense.

The Golden State Warriors made sure of it, too, setting screens and calling plays for the star guard, who tied an NBA record by making his first 10 attempts from three-point range on his way to scoring 44 points in a 130-111 victory Monday night.

"I've never hit 10 threes in a row in a game. That's hard to do," Thompson said. "I just happened to be on tonight and I'm happy I was able to do it in front of my family."

The Warriors equaled a season high with their eighth consecutive victory. The two-time defending champions won their seventh straight road game, too.

"They're starting to find their stride, not just against us, but against the league," Los Angeles coach Luke Walton said.

Thompson stopped and popped from everywhere, finishing 10-for-11 from beyond the arc and 17-for-20 from the floor overall.

"We kind of sold out to look for Klay, to be honest," Kevin Durant said. "When you're knocking shots down like that, you have to continue to feed him until he goes cold and tonight I didn't see that in sight."

Thompson had 23 points in the third quarter, connecting on seven threes as the Warriors stretched their lead to 36. He hopped and let his right arm hang in the air after hitting his seventh while Golden State fans at Staples Center cheered. He finally missed from deep late in the period.

"We had two, three guys flying at him," Walton said.

**76ers 121, Rockets 93:** Joel Embiid had 32 points and 14 rebounds to lead host Philadelphia past fellow MVP contender James Harden and

Houston. Harden finished with 37 points — giving him 20 straight games with at least 30.

**Celtics 107, Heat 99:** Kyrie Irving had 26 points and 10 assists, Al Horford added 16 points and 12 rebounds and host Boston earned its fourth straight victory.

**Bucks 116, Mavericks 106:** Giannis Antetokounmpo had 31 points and 15 rebounds, and host Milwaukee beat Dallas.

**Trail Blazers 109, Jazz 104:** Damian Lillard scored 26 points and Jusuf Nurkic had 17 in the third quarter to lift visiting Portland past Utah.

**Pelicans 105, Grizzlies 85:** Jrue Holiday and Nikola Mirotic scored 21 points, Jahlil Okafor and Julius Randle had 20, and balanced New Orleans beat host Memphis without injured star Anthony Davis.

**Nets 123, Kings 94:** D'Angelo Russell had 31 points and eight assists, and surging Brooklyn won its fourth

straight game by running away from visiting Sacramento in the second half.

**Thunder 127, Knicks 109:** Paul George scored 31 points and Russell Westbrook had 17 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists for visiting Oklahoma City.

**Wizards 101, Pistons 87:** Trevor Ariza scored 20 points, Otto Porter Jr. added 19 and host Washington turned in its best defensive performance this season.

**Magic 122, Hawks 103:** Evan Fournier and Nikola Vucevic scored 29 points apiece to lead Orlando past host Atlanta in the season's first matchup between the Southeast Division rivals.

**Bulls 104, Cavaliers 88:** Zach LaVine scored 25 points and visiting Chicago broke a 10-game losing streak in a meeting of teams that began the day with the worst records in the NBA.

## NHL roundup

# Coyle scores game winner as Wild top Golden Knights

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — The Vegas Golden Knights' home arena has a reputation among some NHL players as being one of the toughest to play in and the loudest in the league.

The Minnesota Wild don't mind it a bit.

Charlie Coyle scored his second game-winning goal of the season with 5:31 remaining Monday to lift the Wild past the Golden Knights 4-2.

Minnesota, which is 4-0-1 against the Golden Knights since they entered the league, is 2-0-0 in Vegas.

"It's a huge win, obviously. You get into the later part of the season, so make sure you get every point you can, especially those (close) games," Coyle

said. "It's a pretty good show here, it's cool to watch, it's cool to be part of — we love playing here."

With the puck loose in front of the net, Jared Spurgeon sent a perfect pass to Coyle, who beat Vegas goaltender Marc-Andre Fleury with a high shot that put the Wild in front.

Marcos Foligno, Eric Staal and Mikko Koivu also scored for the Wild. Devan Dubnyk, who has stopped 64 of 67 shots in his last three games, made 30 saves to improve to 3-0-1 against Vegas.

**Kings 4, Blues 3:** Paul LaDue scored the go-ahead goal midway through the third period, and host Los Angeles rallied past St. Louis.

Jonathan Quick stopped 33

shots in his 302nd NHL victory, which is fourth-best among U.S.-born goaltenders.

Anze Kopitar and Tyler Tofoli each had a goal and an assist, while Brendan Leipsic had two assists. Drew Doughty also scored for Los Angeles, which has won three of its last five.

**Predators 4, Avalanche 1:** Pekka Rinne stopped a penalty shot among his 35 saves and visiting Nashville knocked off Colorado as Peter Laviolette captured win No. 600 of his NHL coaching career.

Nick Bonino and Viktor Arvidsson scored 1:34 apart in the second period, while Roman Josi added another and Ryan Ellis contributed a late empty-netter from deep in his zone. The Predators beat their Cen-

tral Division rivals for the 12th time over the last 13 regular-season meetings.

Alexander Kerfoot had the lone goal for the Avalanche, who have dropped five of seven.

**Panthers 6, Sharks 2:** Frank Vatrano had a goal and three assists for a career-high four points to lift host Florida over San Jose.

Vincent Trocheck, Keith Yandle and Nick Bjugstad each had a power-play goal for the Panthers. Mike Matheson and Aaron Ekblad also scored, Roberto Luongo stopped 27 shots and Aleksander Barkov added three assists.

The Panthers have won three straight after losing their previous seven games.