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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Trump scolds Russia, backs NATO Article 5

BY JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

President Donald Trump reaffirmed America's commitment to security in Eastern Europe during a visit Thursday to Warsaw, Poland, where he singled out Russia for its "destabilizing behavior" on the continent and signaled U.S. willingness to defend allies if they come under attack.

Trump voiced explicit support for NATO's Article 5, which states that an attack on one ally is an attack on all. In the past, the president has been criticized for statements about wanting closer ties with Moscow and for delivering mixed messages about the U.S. commitment to NATO, including an equivocal endorsement of Article 5.

But in Poland, a country anxious about a more aggressive Russia, Trump spoke of

America's unity with allies and offered backing for NATO's collective security policy.

"To those who would criticize our tough stance, I would point out the United States demonstrated, not merely with words, but with its actions, that we stand firmly behind Article 5, the mutual defense commitment," Trump said before a large American flag-waving crowd in downtown Warsaw.

In perhaps his clearest terms to date, Trump blamed Russia for a security environment that has become increasingly unsettled since Moscow's 2014 intervention in Ukraine.

"We are working with Poland in response to Russia's actions and destabilizing behavior," Trump said earlier in the day during an appearance with Polish President Andrzej Duda.

In an apparent reference to Russia, Trump said NATO must

adapt to counter misinformation campaigns and cyberthreats.

Trump, who arrived in Poland on Wednesday, is next headed to Germany for a summit of G-20 leaders in Hamburg on Friday and Saturday. The summit will be the first time Trump meets with his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin.

Immediately after Trump's comments in Warsaw, Moscow disputed the claim that its behavior is destabilizing.

"We disagree with this approach," said Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov, according to state media.

The U.S. military now has about 5,000 troops in Poland as part of an effort to enhance NATO's presence in a region worried about Russia's intentions. Moscow, which has repeatedly stated it has no designs on any Western nation, considers the U.S. military presence

close to its borders to be a provocative threat.

However, critics have accused Trump of damaging the NATO alliance by failing to call out Russia for its aggression in Ukraine, as well as for campaign rhetoric that suggested the U.S. might be willing to leave allies in the lurch if they are attacked.

Trump thanked Warsaw for hosting U.S. forces. But when asked whether he could guarantee an indefinite American military presence in the country, he hesitated.

Trump praised Poland for its efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, its role in the U.S.-led coalition against the Islamic State and its commitment to investing in defense. Poland is one of five NATO states that meet the alliance spending target of 2 percent of economic output to its armed forces.

US renews offer to work with Russia in Syria conflict

BY MATTHEW LEE

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration has renewed an offer to cooperate with Russia in the Syrian conflict, including on military matters, ahead of President Donald Trump's meeting with Russian leader Vladimir Putin this week.

In a statement Wednesday, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said the U.S. is open to establishing no-fly zones in Syria in coordination with Russia as well as jointly setting up a truce-monitoring and humanitarian-aid-delivery mechanism. The statement came as Trump prepared to meet with Putin on Friday in Germany and as the U.S. seeks to consolidate gains made against Islamic State in recent weeks and amid preparations for a post-ISIS future.

Tillerson noted that the U.S. and Russia have a variety of unresolved differences but said that Syria is an opportunity for the

two countries to create stability. He said that ISIS had been "badly wounded" and may be on the "brink of complete defeat" as U.S.-backed forces continue their assault on the self-proclaimed ISIS capital of Raqqa. But he stressed that Russia has to play a constructive role.

"While there are no perfect options for guaranteeing stability, we must explore all possibilities for holding the line against the resurgence of ISIS or other terrorist groups," Tillerson said. "The United States and Russia certainly have unresolved differences on a number of issues, but we have the potential to appropriately coordinate in Syria in order to produce stability and serve our mutual security interests."

He said that Russia, as an ally of Syrian President Bashar Assad and a participant in the conflict, "has a responsibility to ensure that the needs of the Syrian people are met and that no faction in Syria illegitimately re-takes or occupies areas liberated from

ISIS' or other terrorist groups' control." Tillerson added that Russia has "an obligation to prevent any further use of chemical weapons of any kind by the Assad regime."

The appeal echoed similar entreaties made to Putin by the Obama administration that were largely ignored by Moscow, but the latest offer came just two days ahead of Trump's first face-to-face meeting with Putin, which is set to take place on Friday on the sidelines of the G-20 summit in Hamburg, Germany.

And the offer went beyond the Obama administration's previous proposal, suggesting that cooperation in establishing no-fly zones was possible. Tillerson noted that despite differences, the U.S. and Russia are having success in avoiding accidents between American and Russian planes flying over an extremely complex conflict zone. Minor incidents, he said, had been dealt with "quickly and peacefully."

ICBM test exposes lack of options on N. Korea

BY KIM GAMEL

Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — The Trump administration warned it's prepared to use military force if necessary after North Korea ratcheted up tensions this week by test-firing a missile that may be capable of hitting Alaska.

ANALYSIS South Korean President Moon Jae-in, meanwhile, called for tougher sanctions and pressure against the North but continued to press for dialogue and engagement with the communist state.

The successful launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile on Tuesday has prompted calls for urgency in dealing with the growing threat from North Korea but also exposed the lack of good options to try to stop it.

Nikki Haley, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, called the ICBM test a "clear and sharp military escalation."

"Their actions are quickly closing off the possibility of a diplomatic solution," she said Wednesday during an emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council. "One of our capabilities lies with our considerable military forces. We will use them if we must, but we prefer not to have to go in that

direction."

The U.S. maintains 28,500 servicemembers in South Korea and 50,000 in Japan. The military also has deployed numerous warships to the region and sent supersonic bombers soaring over the divided peninsula following previous provocations.

To underscore its strength, the Army fired its own missiles into the sea off South Korea's coast in a live-fire drill a day after North Korea's launch.

But experts note that military conflict would be catastrophic for all sides, leaving them locked in an uneasy stalemate that has existed since the 1950-53 Korean War ended with an armistice instead of a peace treaty.

"Bombing North Korea has always been a hugely risky option," Robert Kelly, an associate professor of international relations at South Korea's Pusan National University, wrote in *The National Interest* magazine. "This pushes the likely response back to what it [has] always been, the much-decried 'strategic patience.'"

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said that the U.S. will continue to pursue diplomatic options.

"I do not believe this capability brings us closer to war," Mattis told reporters Thurs-

day at the Pentagon. "Diplomacy has not failed. It is our self-restraint that has prevented war. ... Our self-restraint holds."

President Donald Trump has insisted his predecessor's "strategic patience" policy is over and promised a new approach to North Korea including a threat of possible unilateral action.

But his administration's pursuit of "maximum pressure and engagement" has many similarities with its emphasis on punishing economic sanctions that so far have failed to curb North Korea's nuclear ambitions.

Trump also has been disappointed in his hopes that China would use its economic influence to curb the nuclear ambitions of its isolated communist ally in exchange for favorable trade agreements.

Haley told the Security Council that the U.S. will put forward a new resolution in coming days that "raises the international response in a way that is proportionate to North Korea's escalation." She didn't provide specifics but said a united international community could cut off major sources of hard currency to North Korea, restrict oil for military and weapons programs, increase air and maritime restrictions and hold senior officials accountable.

US considers sanctions against Chinese companies

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Having lost patience with China, the Trump administration is studying new steps to starve North Korea of cash for its nuclear program, including an option that would infuriate Beijing: sanctions on Chinese companies that help keep the North's economy afloat.

It's an approach that's paid off for the U.S. in the past, especially with Iran, where American economic penalties helped drive Tehran to the nuclear negotiating table. Yet there are significant risks, too, including the possibility of opening a new rift with Beijing that could complicate U.S. diplomatic efforts on other critical issues.

The renewed look at "secondary sanctions" comes as Washington seeks a forceful response to North Korea's test this week of an intercontinental ballistic missile that could strike the U.S. Few are advocating a military intervention that could endanger millions of lives in allied South Korea across the border. But options for turning the screw on the North financially also are imperfect.

"I don't like to talk about what I have planned, but I have some pretty severe

things that we're thinking about," President Donald Trump said Thursday during an appearance at a news conference in Poland. "That doesn't mean we're going to do them."

He said the U.S. would be watching what happens in the coming weeks and months but chided North Korea for "behaving in a very, very dangerous manner" and added: "Something will have to be done about it."

Already, a wide array of U.S. and international sanctions target North Korean entities and officials, making it illegal for Americans to do business with them. The U.S. also has pursued companies outside North Korea accused of surreptitiously helping the communist country, such as a small Chinese bank the U.S. penalized last week for allegedly laundering money for North Korea.

But the U.S. thus far has avoided what sanctions experts describe as a logical escalation: secondary sanctions targeting banks and companies that do any business with North Korea — even legitimate transactions that aren't explicitly prohibited by U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Nikki Haley, Trump's U.N. ambassador, told an emergency session of the council

Wednesday that the world must do more to "cut off the major sources of hard currency to the North Korean regime."

"We will look at any country that chooses to do business with this outlaw regime," Haley said.

On the Korean Peninsula on Thursday, South Korean jets and navy ships fired a barrage of guided missiles into the ocean during drills, a display of military power two days after North Korea test-launched its first intercontinental ballistic missile. The live-fire drills off South Korea's east coast were previously scheduled.

In a show of force, South Korea and the U.S. also staged "deep strike" precision missile firing drills on Wednesday as a warning to the North. Thursday's drills were aimed at boosting readiness against possible maritime North Korean aggression. They involved 15 warships including a 3,200-ton-class destroyer, as well as helicopters and fighter jets, South Korea's navy said.

Potential sanctions targets previously identified by the Treasury Department include companies based in China, U.S. officials have said.

Naval officer fights Pa. town's call to quiet taps broadcast

Associated Press

Lawyers for a naval officer who broadcasts taps nightly from speakers outside his home in tribute to the military told a Pennsylvania borough council president to expect legal action if officials don't stop trying to restrict the practice.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania said in a letter Wednesday that Glen Rock's cease-and-desist order against Lt. Cmdr. Josh Corney is unconstitutional.

Corney is complying with a demand from the borough last month that he play taps on Sundays and certain holidays only, but he wants that rule overturned.

"When the borough singles out Lt. Cmdr. Corney's 'Taps' performances on private property for censorship as a 'nuisance,' while allowing other similarly loud or louder, longer-lasting religious or commercial musical performances on private property to continue, it is engaging in content-based discrimination," his lawyers wrote.

The lawyers said they will seek a federal injunction if the borough in south-central Pennsylvania doesn't reverse itself by Friday. Messages seeking comment weren't returned by the council president, Doug Young, or by the borough's solicitor.

Corney, 38, on active duty and stationed in Maryland, has been deployed overseas eight times, including to Iraq and Afghanistan. He said it was seeing Americans killed while serving their country that inspired his musical gesture.

"I thought to myself and prayed to God that if he brought me home, I would do something to remember the sacrifices that our men and women made for myself, my family and my country," he said.

"A nearby church is permitted to play amplified recordings of hymns twice a day, church bells are allowed to peal at regular intervals, and a local restaurant has been granted permission to amplify its live outdoor musical performances," Corney's lawyers wrote to Young.

China wary as US, India, Japan prep for naval drills

BY TYLER HLAVAC

Stars and Stripes

The U.S., India and Japan are gearing up for trilateral Malabar naval drills next week amid reports of increased Chinese activity in the Indian Ocean.

About 6,500 U.S. sailors and 700 from the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force are expected to train alongside the Indian navy in the exercise, which begins Monday and wraps up July 17.

Participating U.S. ships include the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz and its air wing along with the cruiser USS Princeton and the guided-missile destroyers USS Howard, USS Shoup and USS Kidd, a Navy statement said. A P-8A Poseidon aircraft — designed for surveillance and anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare — and a Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine also will join the drills.

Japanese vessels include the carrier-like destroyer JS Izumo — the country's largest warship — and the destroyer JS Sazanami, a JMSDF statement said.

At-sea training in the Bay of Bengal will include submarine familiarization; air-defense and surface-warfare exercises; visit, board, search and seizure drills; and anti-submarine warfare, the Navy statement said. Shore training in Chennai, India, will consist of exchanges on carrier-strike-group operations, maritime patrol and reconnaissance ops; surface and anti-submarine warfare; and VBSS.

China has been critical of the annual exercise. The government-affiliated

Global Times published an editorial in December saying Malabar's purpose is to target China's submarine activities in the East and South China seas. The editorial noted that both the U.S. and Indian navies operate variations of the P-8 Poseidon.

The Chinese government also has questioned the purpose of deploying the Izumo, which spent time in the South China Sea before heading to India, implying the JMSDF is using the vessel to provoke China. It carries up to nine helicopters and conducts some flight operations similar to those of a U.S. amphibious assault ship.

"If this is only about normal visits and normal transit through the South China Sea, we hold no objection and hope that such normal exchanges between relevant countries can help promote peace and stability in the region. But if it is going to the South China Sea for other motives, it would be a different story," Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told reporters at a March news conference, according to a transcript on the China Foreign Ministry website. "As we have indeed seen the Japanese side stirring up troubles on the South China Sea issue, we hope the Japanese side can truly play a responsible role for peace and stability in this region."

Multiple Indian news outlets have reported that government officials are claiming to see a significant increase in Chinese naval activity in the Indian Ocean ahead of Malabar, with a surge in the number of Chinese warships and submarines in the region.

Lawmaker continues effort to rename Navy Department

The (Jacksonville, N.C.) Daily News

As Rep. Walter Jones R-N.C., continues a 15-year effort in Washington to re-designate the title of the Department of the Navy, not everyone in the military community sees the need.

Retired Marine Col. Pete Grimes of Hubert refers to the adage "If it's not broke, don't fix it" when asked about Jones' fight to rename the Department of Navy the Department of Navy and Marine Corps.

Beyond the surface of the name change, Grimes doesn't see any benefit to the orga-

nization by disrupting the status quo.

"Why change the name? What does it achieve? At the end, I can't think of anything that would improve the stature of the Marine Corps," Grimes.

Jones has seen things differently.

He first introduced a proposal to change the title of the department to Department of the Navy and Marine Corps in 2001 and has stuck to his belief that the two separate services deserve equal recognition.

The House Armed Services Committee passed the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2018. As a member of the

committee, Jones was involved in drafting the defense bill and has several measures attached, including the re-designation of the Department of the Navy title.

"The Marine Corps is an equal member of this department, and therefore deserves equal recognition in its title," Jones said in remarks on getting the language included in the defense bill.

Jones said the defense bill is expected to go to the House floor for a vote in July. If successful, NDAA then will go to the Senate.

Oregon bill would make insurers cover abortions

Associated Press

SALEM, Ore. — Insurance companies in Oregon would be required to cover abortions and other reproductive services at no cost to the patient regardless of income, citizenship status or gender identity under a bill approved Wednesday by lawmakers.

Oregon already has some of the most liberal abortion laws in the U.S., leaving out common requirements for waiting periods or spending limits on taxpayer funds.

The measure, which does offer some religious-based exemptions, comes as the federal government and other states are seeking restrictions on abortion services.

President Donald Trump earlier this year signed legislation allowing states to withhold federal family planning funds from Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers. In May, the Texas Legislature approved a package of new abortion limits.

Oregon's legislation has been in the making for years but was introduced in early March, largely in response to Republican congressional leaders' earliest attempts to repeal former President Barack Obama's health care law, which includes coverage requirements for re-

productive services.

The Democratic-controlled Oregon Senate approved the measure in a 17-13 vote along party lines. It now heads to Democratic Gov. Kate Brown.

The bill would allocate almost \$500,000 over the next two years to expand cost-free reproductive health coverage, including abortions, to immigrants who are otherwise ineligible under the Oregon Health Plan — the state's Medicaid program that currently spends nearly \$2 million per year to pay for roughly 3,500 abortions statewide.

Oregon's \$10 million reproductive health care bill would also provide public funds for family planning services and postpartum care for low-income residents.

All government and private-sector health plans must also cover birth control, vasectomies, prenatal and post-partum care, counseling for domestic abuse victims as well as screenings for cervical and breast cancer and sexually transmitted diseases.

Insurers would be prohibited from shifting costs of those mandates to enrollees' deductibles, coinsurance or copayments, although the bill offers some religious-based exemptions as well.

NYPD probes motive for officer's slaying

Associated Press

NEW YORK — At the start of her midnight shift, Officer Miosotis Familia was in a New York Police Department mobile command post, writing in her notebook, when a gunman strode toward her.

She never saw Alexander Bonds coming before he shot her in the head through the passenger-side window, killing her before officers ultimately killed him, police said.

Police are investigating what may have prompted Wednesday's shooting, which Police Commissioner James O'Neill described as an officer being "assassinated in an unprovoked attack on cops."

"Officer Familia was murdered for her uniform and for the responsibility she embraced," O'Neill said in a message to officers Wednesday night.

A 12-year NYPD veteran, Familia, 48, had come to police work later in life than most on the force. She had been a nurse and a medical assistant first, according to her profile on the career site LinkedIn. A mother of three who lived with her own mother in the Bronx, she felt a

calling to help her community, friends said.

"She'd give you the shirt off her back," said Tom Ritter, 59, a plumber who lived downstairs from Familia and said she treated his now-22-year-old son like one of her own children.

Familia worked her entire police career in the Bronx precinct where she was killed while staffing the RV-like command post, stationed to help combat rising crime in the neighborhood after a triple shooting in March.

Her policing earned praise even from a woman whose husband she had arrested.

"She gave me good advice, like a mother to a daughter," said Keisha Williams, 31, who said her husband was arrested on a marijuana charge last year. "She's good, but she's a tough cookie. She's a good cop. I'm just sad it was her."

While tensions have been running high in recent years between police and black people around the country, there was no immediate indication the killing had a racial dimension. Bonds was black; Familia was black and Hispanic, her family having come from the Dominican Republic.

Philippines earthquake topples building, injures dozens

Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — A strong, shallow earthquake shook the central Philippines on Thursday, injuring dozens of people, including at least 10 in a collapsed building, knocking out power in some areas and sending villagers fleeing from their homes, officials said.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the quake had a magnitude of 6.5 and struck at a depth of 4 miles in Leyte province. Filipino seismologists measured the depth at just 1.2 miles and said it was felt most strongly in Leyte's Kananga and Jaro towns.

Shallow earthquakes generally cause more damage on the Earth's surface.

A building collapsed in Kananga, injur-

ing at least 10 people and trapping an unspecified number of others, Vice Mayor Elmer Codilla said. "There's an ongoing rescue," he told DZMM radio.

Codilla said he wasn't aware of how many people were in the building, which had a grocery store and a beauty parlor on the ground floor. Police said it had two floors.

Thousands of residents, office workers and students fled from homes, buildings and schools and some were knocked over as the ground shook.

Mayor Richard Gomez of Ormoc city, about 17 miles from Kananga, told DZMM that at least 29 people were injured in his area, including 16 who were taken to a hospital because they had slight injuries

or were traumatized. The strong shaking caused cracks in some buildings and roads in the city and power was shut off automatically, Gomez said.

Delia Vilbar, the treasurer of Ormoc, said she was attending a meeting on the second floor of City Hall when the earthquake struck.

"It was very strong, and the building was shaking," she said. "I sat down while others in the room went under the table."

When she went outside to the street, she saw people crying and embracing each other, she said.

Asked about the earthquake, President Rodrigo Duterte, who was visiting southern Bukidnon province, said he had not received any reports of major damage.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Former postal worker admits to drug bribes

FL BOCA RATON — A former U.S. Postal Service worker in Florida has admitted to taking cash bribes in exchange for delivering packages that contained drugs.

The Sun Sentinel reported that Evelyn Ramona Price, 53, pleaded guilty June 30 to bribery of a public official.

Price told investigators she met a man named "Steve" in 2016 and agreed to provide him with addresses on her Boca Raton route where packages could be sent. They would then meet to exchange the packages. She was paid \$50 per package.

Authorities later seized four packages, which they say contained more than 20 pounds of marijuana.

Popular cop to reduce time on social media

AR NORTH LITTLE ROCK — A central Arkansas police officer with a million Instagram followers said he plans to post less on social media during work hours.

Tommy Norman, an officer with the North Little Rock Police Department, established a charitable foundation after Los Angeles rapper The Game and his son, Harlem, supported Norman in a 2016 social media fundraising campaign.

Norman's posts on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter include videos and photos of him greeting and interacting with the community he patrols. He recently announced on his Instagram page that he isn't allowed to post "interactions with the community on city time," the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette reported.

The police department responded in a statement, saying Norman will be allowed to post on social media about such in-

teractions while on duty if he gets approval from the media department.

Man charged with firing shots at motor home

MO PERRYVILLE — Prosecutors in southeast Missouri's Perry County have charged a man with shooting at a motor home while the vehicles were traveling on Interstate 55.

The Cape Girardeau Southeast Missourian reported that David Paul Ellis, 28, of Ste. Genevieve is charged with first-degree assault, armed criminal action and unlawful use of a weapon.

The Missouri State Highway Patrol said no serious injuries resulted from the shooting about 3:45 p.m. June 30.

Court records allege that the motor home's driver told investigators her vehicle and a car had passed each other several times when the car's driver fired twice through his car's back window. The bullets went through the motor home's windshield.

Teen helps save life on second day on new job

OH CINCINNATI — It was only his second day on the job, but one 16-year-old has been credited with helping save a man's life.

WKRC-TV reported that Austin Goddard was cleaning a table at Skyline Chili in Cincinnati when a man collapsed where he was eating. Austin said he ran to the man and started performing CPR. The man was later rushed to a hospital.

A few days later, the man's family came to back to the restaurant with a photo of him smiling in his hospital bed in front of a tray of chili.

Last year, all of the students

in Goddard's 10th-grade class at South Ripley High School in Indiana were certified in CPR.

Resort plans to offer year-round skiing

CT MIDDLEFIELD — A Connecticut ski resort is planning to offer year-round skiing.

Powder Ridge in Middlefield said it will open a 500-foot run in August that features a "high-tech" surface that acts as artificial snow. The resort also plans to open two tubing lanes covered in the same material, made by a Swiss company.

Sean Hayes, who runs the resort, said similar ski runs have been offered in Europe for years. Hayes said skiers and snowboarders will be required to wear long pants and helmets. Hayes said they hope to expand the synthetic surface to the top of the mountain by next summer.

Groom says 'I do' with pot bud in his pocket

NV LAS VEGAS — A groom donned a bud of marijuana in his coat pocket as he and his bride said "I do" inside a Las Vegas facility growing the drug that's newly legal to buy.

Anna Balfe-Taylor said she had to think about it when Mark Balfe-Taylor asked her to marry him inside the grow house but eventually supported it. The two were sober when they tied the knot Saturday, the same day Nevada launched recreational pot sales, and said they plan to stay that way. The couple said a grow house wedding was more about supporting Nevada's marijuana laws.

Mark Balfe-Taylor said his father was once imprisoned because of a marijuana-related offense, so the issue has always been personal for him.

Former officer gets jail time for fatal accident

NJ MOUNT HOLLY — A former police officer in New Jersey who was driving drunk when he caused a fatal off-duty crash last year is headed to state prison.

Burlington County prosecutors said Justin Rodriguez, 25, of Burlington Township, received a four-year sentence June 30. Rodriguez pleaded guilty in May to a vehicular homicide stemming from a Sept. 23 crash in Florence Township. The crash killed his passenger, Ariana Williams, 27, and left Rodriguez critically injured.

Authorities have said he was speeding when he lost control of his car and struck a pole.

Rodriguez was suspended without pay after being charged and was fired following his guilty plea.

Distressed man leaps from an ambulance

AL FALKVILLE — Authorities said a man threatened to jump off a bridge on Interstate 65 in Alabama and later leaped from an ambulance.

AL.com reported that Joseph Matthew Russell was charged with disorderly conduct Tuesday.

Falkville police Sgt. Aaron Burgess said a deputy was patrolling the bridge when he saw a man's head appear. Burgess said the deputy then saw the man standing on the edge of the bridge. Another deputy, who was familiar with Russell, arrived on the scene and persuaded him to surrender.

Authorities said Russell briefly escaped from an ambulance that was going to Decatur Morgan Hospital's psychiatric unit.

From wire reports

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Edmonton locks up star McDavid with 8-year, \$100M deal

Associated Press

EDMONTON, Alberta — The Edmonton Oilers paid a huge price to lock up superstar captain Connor McDavid.

But it could have been even higher.

The Oilers said Wednesday that the team and McDavid have agreed to an eight-year, \$100 million extension.

That makes the 20-year-old league MVP the highest-paid player in the NHL on an annual basis (\$12.5 million per season), but it's about \$750,000 a year less than what reports last week figured he would be getting.

"It easily could have been a lot higher in value and shorter in term," Oilers general manager Peter Chiarelli said.

McDavid's extension kicks in after he finishes the final year of his entry-level deal next season. If the NHL's salary cap stays at its current level of \$75 million, McDavid's salary alone would take up 16.6 percent of the Oilers' cap.

But any cap relief would be welcome to Edmonton. The Oilers are also working to re-sign Leon Draisaitl, who is a restricted free agent after finishing his entry-level deal and due a big raise.

"Part of this partnership was talking about building a team, and Connor was emphatic as was I about keeping this team competitive," Chiarelli said.

"There are challenges at every juncture when you are building a winning team in the salary cap era. Connor recognizes that, Jeff Jackson (McDavid's agent) recognizes that and we're confident we'll be able to ice a winning team, one that can contend and win the Cup."

McDavid led the NHL in scoring with 100 points last season en route to winning the Hart

Trophy as league MVP. In just his second season he helped the Oilers transition from league doormat to a potential contender in the Western Conference.

Edmonton made the playoffs for the first time in a decade last season and advanced to the conference semifinal, where it took the Anaheim Ducks to seven games.

"I'm so excited to be able to wear the Oilers jersey for the next nine years of my life and play with some of the greatest guys that I know," McDavid said. "I can't wait to get back at it."

"I wanted to show that I'm in it for the long haul, and I want to win here."

Drafted first overall by the Oilers in 2015, McDavid became the youngest captain in NHL history last season. Barely out of his teens, McDavid proved his leadership qualities in the playoffs by helping the young Oilers overcome potentially painful losses.

"We showed a lot of resilience," he said. "We got some big blowout losses, some tough losses, some games that we definitely should have won and they were heartbreakers, but we always found a way to bounce back and get a win play our best hockey, and I think that's a good sign moving forward. That's something that winning teams do."

A generational talent, McDavid is worth his mammoth contract, though the Oilers will need to be creative with their remaining cap space.

For his part, McDavid seemed uninterested at all the talk of figures and cap space at the news conference.

"It really doesn't matter how we got to a number, the important thing is I'm going to be here for the next nine years," he said.

Tigers ace Verlander could be on the move

Associated Press

DETROIT — Justin Verlander is a rarity in baseball these days — a veteran in his 13th season who has played for only one franchise.

His future in Detroit, once so secure, has become increasingly uncertain.

"Even though I think of this organization as family, you always know that there is that underlying business tone," Verlander said. "This isn't just kind of happy go lucky. This is an organization that needs to be run."

With the Tigers languishing below .500, the next few weeks could be a tumultuous stretch in Detroit. The team was already planning to cut payroll before next season, and if the Tigers don't show some real signs of contending soon, the pressure will be on general manager Al Avila to trade some of his biggest stars and get something in return. That could even include Verlander, the 34-year-old former MVP who has helped Detroit win four AL Central titles and two pennants.

"Obviously, where there's smoke, there's fire," Verlander said before Wednesday night's game against San Francisco.

Verlander made his debut for the Tigers in 2005, and there aren't many other active players who have been around that long while spending their whole careers with one team. Joe Mauer is another — he's been with Minnesota since 2004. Yadier Molina began his tenure with St. Louis in '04, as well.

Verlander won the AL MVP and Cy Young Award in 2011, and he's surpassed 200 innings nine times in his career. The right-hander has been a fan favorite in Detroit, and he has the right to block any trade.

"It's just the way sports are now," Verlander said. "It's the aberration the other way around, for a player to stay with their organization over his whole career — the Jeters, the Chipper Joneses of the world."

Verlander's trade value is a complex question. He's 5-5 with a 4.96 ERA this year, and

Defending champ Stanton top seed in home run derby

NEW YORK — Defending champion Giancarlo Stanton will be the top seed in the Home Run Derby on Monday night at his home ballpark in Miami.

Stanton received the No. 1 seed after winning the event during All-Star week last year in San Diego. He will face New York Yankees catcher Gary Sanchez, the No. 8 seed, in the opening round at Marlins Park.

Yankees rookie Aaron Judge, who leads the majors with 29 home runs, is the No. 2 seed and will square off against seventh-seeded Justin Bour of the hometown Marlins. Another rookie, No. 3 seed Cody Bellinger of the Los Angeles Dodgers, is paired with sixth-seeded Charlie Blackmon of Colorado. No. 4 seed Mike Moustakas from the Kansas City Royals is matched against Minnesota slugger Miguel Sano, the fifth seed.

Major League Baseball announced the bracket Wednesday night. After Stanton, players were seeded based on their home run totals through Tuesday's games. In the case of a tie, the higher seed went to the player with the most home runs since June 15.

he's at an age when a decline like that can be particularly worrisome. But Verlander experienced a resurgence last season, finishing a close second in the Cy Young vote.

Then there's his contract, which calls for him to be paid \$28 million in both 2018 and 2019, and includes a \$22 million vesting option in 2020 that becomes guaranteed if he's in the top five of the 2019 Cy Young vote. That price tag could limit what the Tigers can receive in return if they were to trade Verlander — unless they're willing to cover some of the cost.

Rangers end Red Sox's streak at six

Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — Andrew Cashner didn't have to dodge any broken bats, and finally gave up a hit only after an error kept an inning alive for Boston.

Cashner held the hot-hitting Red Sox hitless into the sixth, Rougned Odor hit an early two-run homer and the Texas Rangers ended the longest winning streak in the majors at six games with a rain-delayed 8-2 victory over Boston on Wednesday night.

Cashner (4-7) was wild into the third inning, then retired 10 straight batters before first baseman Pete Kozma's error on a dropped throw kept the sixth going. The next batter, Xander Bogaerts, ended the no-hit bid with a two-run homer just over the 14-foot wall in left field.

Kozma had just entered the

game at first after pinch-hitting in the fifth for slugger Joey Gallo, who exited with a sore left hamstring. The drop came on a slightly low throw from shortstop Jurickson Profar on an easy grounder by Dustin Pedroia.

"These guys are too good to think about (a no-hitter)," Cashner said. "My job is to think about one pitch at a time. Keep executing. If you don't execute, think about the next pitch."

The right-hander allowed three hits, three walks and two unearned runs with four strikeouts in seven innings. It was his first start since getting hit on the elbow by a broken bat in a loss at Cleveland — the second straight rough outing for the Houston-area native.

Boston, which had at least 10 hits and six runs in every game

during the winning streak, missed a chance to be the first team to sweep a season series of more than three games against the Rangers since they moved to Texas in 1972. The Red Sox won the first five meetings this year.

"We hit some balls hard, we hit some balls right at people," Boston manager John Farrell said. "But make no mistake, Cashner, that was one of the better games he's thrown this year. He's in the mid-90s (mph) with heavy sink."

After a delay of nearly 90 minutes to start the game, Odor's 16th homer put Texas ahead 2-0 in the second. Carlos Gomez had a solo shot, his 12th, in the third.

Odor scored three times before leaving with a bruised left hand after the fifth inning, when he was hit by a pitch.

It was the second straight hit batter by lefty reliever Robby Scott, who first plunked Adrian Beltre on the leg.

Doug Fister (0-2) gave up six runs — four earned — over 3 2/3 innings in his third start since Boston claimed him off waivers from the Los Angeles Angels last month.

Profar had two doubles, including a two-run liner to right-center for an 8-0 lead in the fifth, after being called up from Triple-A Round Rock when shortstop Elvis Andrus went on the paternity list.

The day after: Andrew Benintendi went 0-for-2 with a pair of walks the day after becoming the first Red Sox rookie to have multiple five-hit games in one season. He also had a two-run single in the 11th inning of Boston's 7-5 win in the series opener.

Jay's third career homer helps Cubs rally past Rays

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Jon Jay connected for his third career pinch-hit homer and Ian Happ hit a tiebreaking, two-run single an inning later, helping the Chicago Cubs rally for a 7-3 victory over the Tampa Bay Rays on Wednesday.

The Cubs appeared to be headed for their sixth loss in eight games before Jay drove a 1-2 pitch from Erasmo Ramirez (4-3) over the wall in left-center for a tying three-run shot with two outs in the sixth. Jay then popped out of the dugout for a curtain call, obliging the crowd of 39,855 on a picturesque day at Wrigley Field.

Happ got his big hit in the seventh, driving in Kris Bryant and Anthony Rizzo with a bouncer up the middle against Tampa Bay's drawn-in infield.

Dodgers 1, Diamondbacks 0: Alex Wood pitched three-hit ball over seven innings to start the season 10-0 and NL West-leading host Los Angeles beat second-place Arizona.

Wood became the first Dodgers starter to reach 10-0 since Don Newcombe in 1955, when the Brooklyn Dodgers won the first of the franchise's six World Series championships.

The 26-year-old left-hander hasn't lost since May 30, 2016 — a span of 13 starts. Wood struck out 10 and walked two.

Rockies 5, Reds 3: Jon Gray hit his first career homer an estimated 467 feet — the farthest by anyone on his team this season — and pitched effectively into the sixth inning to lead Colorado past visiting Cincinnati on a sweltering night.

Gray's two-run drive in the second was the longest among pitchers since MLB's Statcast began tracking distances in 2015.

Blue Jays 7, Yankees 6: Dellin Betances forced in the go-ahead run with four walks in the eighth inning, and Toronto beat host New York after wasting a five-run lead.

Brewers 4, Orioles 0: Matt Garza pitched into the seventh inning and Keon Broxton hit a

two-run homer to lift host Milwaukee to a three-game sweep of Baltimore.

Astros 10, Braves 4: George Springer drove in the go-ahead run in the seventh inning, Josh Reddick and Marwin Gonzalez each had three RBIs and visiting Houston beat Atlanta.

Houston has won four straight and 12 of 15 to improve to 58-27 overall, best in the majors. The first three batters — Springer, Jose Altuve and Reddick — went 8 for 15 with six RBIs in this one and hit a combined .581 in the two-game series with 15 RBIs in 31 at-bats.

Royals 9, Mariners 6 (10): Salvador Perez hit a two-run homer in the 10th, Alex Gordon added a two-out RBI single later in the inning and Kansas City completed a three-game sweep with a win over host Seattle.

Pirates 5, Phillies 2: Gerrit Cole pitched six strong innings and drove in his first runs of the season with a tiebreaking two-run single to lead visiting Pittsburgh over Philadelphia.

Athletics 7, White Sox 4: Sonny Gray pitched six mostly sharp innings for host Oakland to beat Chicago for the second time in two weeks.

Padres 6, Indians 2: Cory Spangenberg hit a two-run homer, Luis Perdomo won his third straight start and San Diego got another rare road win, beating Cleveland, which played again without manager Terry Francona.

Giants 5, Tigers 4: Ty Blach took a shutout into the seventh inning, and visiting San Francisco held off a late Detroit rally.

Angels 2, Twins 1: Parker Bridwell tossed six scoreless innings, Kole Calhoun hit his 12th home run and Los Angeles edged Minnesota to avoid a road sweep.

Marlins 9, Cardinals 6: Giancarlo Stanton homered twice, his 22nd career multihomer game, and Marcell Ozuna and Justin Bour also went deep as Miami beat host St. Louis.

Djokovic needs just 3 sets to advance

Associated Press

LONDON — Novak Djokovic had to play all three sets at Wimbledon this time.

The three-time champion advanced to the third round by beating Adam Pavlasek 6-2, 6-2, 6-1 Thursday, two days after his opening match ended early when his opponent retired with an injury.

Djokovic won the Wimbledon title in 2011, '14 and '15. But he has not won a major title since completing a career Grand Slam at the 2016 French Open.

In his opening two matches at the All England Club, Djokovic has only lost eight games.

"It's perfect. Exactly what I want," Djokovic said. "I don't want to have any five-set matches in there."

Djokovic will next face Ernests Gulbis. The unseeded Latvian defeated Juan Martin del Potro 6-4, 6-4, 7-6 (3).

Roger Federer and Angelique Kerber were scheduled to play later on Thursday.

Federer, a seven-time cham-

pion at the All England Club, will play on Centre Court against Dusan Lajovic in the second round. The top-ranked Kerber will face Kirsten Flipkens on No. 1 Court.

Grigor Dimitrov, Gael Monfils and David Ferrer also reached the third round. Ferrer advanced when opponent Steve Darcis retired with an injury while trailing 3-0.

Darcis is the eighth man to retire during a match this week. The Belgian took a medical timeout after 18 minutes of play and was unable to continue.

Karolina Pliskova became the highest-seeded player to fall at Wimbledon, losing to Magdalena Rybarikova in the second round.

Pliskova, the No. 3-seeded player, was the runner-up at the U.S. Open last year and had reached at least the quarter-finals of her last three Grand Slam events. Despite the 3-6, 7-5, 6-2 loss, Pliskova still has a chance to move up to No. 1 in the rankings after Wimbledon depending on how Angelique

Kerber and Simona Halep fare the rest of the tournament.

Rybarikova, making her 10th appearance at the All England Club, has never been past the third round in any of her 35 previous Grand Slams. Ranked No. 87, she reached the third round at Wimbledon once, in 2015, and the third round of the U.S. Open twice, in 2008 and 2009.

She lost in the first round at Wimbledon last year and underwent wrist and knee surgeries that prevented her from playing again until February, when she played in an ITF event in Germany.

Two-time major champion Svetlana Kuznetsova, seeded seventh, advanced to the third round along with ninth-seeded Agnieszka Radwanska, 14th-seeded Garbine Muguruza and 24th-seeded CoCo Vandeweghe.

Also, American wild-card entry Bethanie Mattek-Sands injured her right knee during a point and retired from her second-round match.

Moving up toward the net in the opening game of the third set against Sorana Cirstea of Romania, Mattek-Sands slipped and fell. She immediately clutched her right knee. She could be heard screaming in pain and sobbing.

The 32-year-old Mattek-Sands is ranked No. 1 in women's doubles. She and her partner, Lucie Safarova, have won three consecutive Grand Slam doubles titles, including at the French Open last month.

Two players previously eliminated from the tournament were handed fines on Thursday.

Bernard Tomic of Australia was fined \$15,000 for unsportsmanlike conduct two days after he spoke about feeling "a little bit bored out there" during his match.

Daniil Medvedev of Russia, who threw a handful coins in the direction of the chair umpire after a second-round loss on Wednesday, was given three fines totaling \$14,500.

Kittel wins sixth stage; Froome keeps yellow jersey

Associated Press

TROYES, France — Marcel Kittel had little trouble winning the sixth stage of the Tour de France in a mass sprint finish Thursday with Peter Sagan and Mark Cavendish both no longer in the race.

Chris Froome held on to the leader's yellow jersey after a sultry but uneventful day in the peloton.

It was Kittel's second victory in this year's race and 11th overall in his Tour career.

As the other contenders bunched together on the right side of the road, Kittel burst forward around them on the left and easily created a comfortable gap allowing him to celebrate as he crossed the line.

"I was really confident in my team," Kittel said. "I was also really confident in myself today. There was just a moment

when I broke free and started to go ahead."

Stage 4 winner Arnaud Demare finished second and Andre Greipel was third.

Sagan, the world champion, was disqualified for elbowing Cavendish to the ground two days ago. The fall resulted in Cavendish, who has 30 Tour wins, abandoning the race with a broken shoulder.

Kittel said the absence of Cavendish and Sagan has altered the racing in that their teams are no longer battling out the sprint finishes.

He was repeatedly asked after his win about their absence.

"It's a bit sad that it's all about this decision," he said. "The level that we have here for the sprints is still very, very high."

Kittel required slightly more than five hours to ride the mostly flat 134-mile leg from Vesoul to Troyes, and then bent down

over his handlebars, close to tears, as he took in the victory.

The route in northeastern France passed through Colombey-les-Deux-Eglises, the hometown of France's wartime hero and former president, Gen. Charles de Gaulle, and ended in champagne country.

A three-man breakaway rode out front for most of the stage. Perrig Quemeneur, Frederik Backaert and Vegard Stake Laengen were caught by the peloton with 3 kilometers to go.

Otherwise, the only incident of note came when a beach umbrella floated across the pack with about 90 kilometers left prompting Froome and his Sky teammates to veer out of the way.

"There was a bit of wind and the parasol took off and ended up in the road," he said. "That's the Tour."

Froome remained 12 seconds

ahead of Sky teammate Geraint Thomas and 14 seconds ahead of Fabio Aru of Italy.

Richie Porte in fifth place overall and other riders eyeing victory in Paris on July 23 were simply pleased to get the long, hot stage over without incident.

"It was such a long day. Probably, you know, could have had the same result with half the distance but it's a nice one to get done," Porte said.

On such days, Porte said, "there's nothing to gain but there's so much to lose. ... It was quite a frantic finish."

The Tour remains in Troyes for the start of Stage 7 on Friday, a 133-mile leg that again sets up well for sprinters with a finish in the Burgundy wine town of Nuits-Saint-Georges.

Friday is "another long day and I think the aim of that is just to sap the energy a bit," Porte said.