

STARS AND STRIPES®

Wednesday, July 19, 2017

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

N. Korean missiles' accuracy questioned

BY KIM GAMEL

Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea “clearly” has the range to reach the United States, but it lacks the ability to strike “with any degree of accuracy,” a senior U.S. military official says.

On July 4, the North tested an intercontinental ballistic missile that experts said could reach Alaska if launched at a normal trajectory. It marked a major advance toward Pyongyang’s efforts to develop a nuclear-tipped missile that could target the U.S. mainland.

“I do agree in principle with the assessment that the North Koreans are moving quickly to develop an intercontinental ballistic missile capability,” Gen. Paul Selva, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said

Tuesday.

But, he said, the communist state has not shown it has “the capacity to strike the United States with any degree of accuracy or reasonable confidence of success” due to doubts about its guidance and control abilities.

South Korea’s intelligence agency also has said it does not believe North Korea has perfected the re-entry technology that would be needed for successful ICBM targeting.

Officials have said the missile — called Hwasong-14 — reached an altitude of about 1,550 miles and traveled about 580 miles before crashing into the sea between the Korean Peninsula and Japan.

It was fired at a steep angle — a technique called lofting — to avoid threatening neighboring countries. But experts have

put its potential range at more than 5,000 miles.

“On range they clearly have the capability,” Selva said in his testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee in Washington.

Tensions have spiked over the North’s progress with its nuclear weapons program despite punishing U.N. economic sanctions and diplomatic pressure. It has conducted five nuclear tests, including two last year, in addition to its missile-testing program.

Selva also said he was “reasonably confident in the ability of our intelligence community to monitor the testing but not the deployment of these missile systems.”

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and his forces “are very good at camouflage, concealment and deception,” he

added.

The United States has about 28,500 servicemembers deployed in South Korea, which remains technically at war with the North after their 1950-53 conflict ended in an armistice instead of a peace treaty.

President Donald Trump’s administration has called for strengthening sanctions in response to the latest provocations while stressing military action remains on the table.

When asked about the possibility of pre-emptive military options against the North, Selva said, “I think we have to entertain that potential option.”

“We need to think seriously about what the consequences of that action might be,” Selva said, adding it was important to strengthen U.S. missile defense systems at the same time.

Aquilino nominated to lead 5th Fleet

BY TYLER HLAVAC

Stars and Stripes

The Pentagon has nominated Vice Adm. John Aquilino to lead the Navy’s 5th Fleet as naval forces in the region continue airstrikes against Islamic State and face increased tensions with Iran.

Aquilino, currently deputy chief of Naval Operations for Operations, Plans and Strategy, has been chosen to take over the Bahrain-based fleet, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis announced Friday. Aquilino would also assume command of Naval Forces Central Command.

If confirmed, Aquilino would take command of a fleet whose area of operations consists of roughly 2.5 million square miles of sea and includes the Arabian Gulf, Red Sea, Gulf

of Oman, parts of the Indian Ocean and choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, the Suez Canal and the Bab el Mandeb strait at the southern tip of Yemen, according to the 5th Fleet’s website.

Aquilino would also assume command of a force that is in a nearly three-year air campaign to eliminate ISIS as part of Operation Inherent Resolve. Naval forces in the region began the air campaign in August 2014 when the aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush launched airstrikes against ISIS targets in Iraq.

The Navy announced in a press release last month that the carrier, which is on its second deployment in support of the operation, resumed its anti-ISIS strike missions June 6

after a several-month pause.

Naval forces have also faced several provocative acts at sea from Iranian forces that peaked in January 2016 after 10 U.S. sailors were detained by members of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps after their riverine patrol boats accidentally crossed into Iranian territorial waters.

Last year, Navy ships were swarmed on multiple occasions by Iranian fast boats, requiring the USS Squall to fire warning shots. Also last year, Iran threatened to fire on two Navy patrol aircraft in three separate incidents.

Aquilino — a career fighter pilot who earned his wings in 1986 — has flown the F-14 A/B Tomcat and the F-18 C/E/F Hornet and is a graduate of the

Navy Fighter Weapons School, also known as Top Gun, according to his official biography.

His command tours include serving as the commander for Strike Fighter Squadron VF-11, Carrier Air Wing 2, and the USS George H.W. Bush strike group. He has also served as director of Strategy and Policy at U.S. Joint Forces Command, deputy director for Joint Force Coordinator at the Joint Staff, and director of Maritime Operations at U.S. Pacific Fleet, his biography said.

Aquilino, who has deployed in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, has completed more than 5,100 mishap-free flight hours and more than 1,150 arrested carrier landings, it said.

Revenge killers target ISIS suspects

Associated Press

MOSUL, Iraq — For one Iraqi lieutenant, the fight against Islamic State in Mosul has been a slow, methodical quest for revenge. For three years, he has hunted for two ISIS militants from his village who he believes killed his father. Along the way, he has shot to death detained militants after interrogating them, he acknowledges unapologetically.

And if he catches either of the men he is searching for, the lieutenant vows he will inflict on him “a slow death” and hang his body from a post in the village after forcing him to reveal where his father’s body is buried.

That sort of thirst for vengeance in the wake of military victories is fueling extrajudicial killings of suspected ISIS members at the hands of Iraqi security forces in and around Mosul. Videos that emerged last week showed troops in Mosul taking captured ISIS suspects and throwing them one by one off a high wall next to the Tigris River, then shooting their bodies below.

Speaking to The Associated Press, four Iraqi officers from three different branches of the military and security forces openly admitted that their troops killed unarmed and captured ISIS suspects, and they defended the practice. They, like the lieutenant, spoke on condition of anonymity because they acknowledged such practices were against international law, but all those interviewed by the AP said they believed the fight against ISIS should be exempt from such rules of war because militant rule in Iraq was so cruel.

The bloodshed reflects the deeply personal nature of the fight against ISIS. When the militants overran Mosul and large parts of northern and western Iraq in 2014, they specifically targeted members of the military and security forces and their families for brutal atrocities. Near Tikrit, ISIS massacred some 1,700

Many suspects held in cramped Iraqi prison

MOSUL, Iraq — Hundreds of suspected Islamic State members swept up by Iraqi forces in Mosul are being held in a cramped and stifling prison just outside the city.

Associated Press reporters visiting the facility saw more than 100 prisoners packed into a dark room, lined up shoulder to shoulder on the floor. There was no electricity or ventilation, despite daytime temperatures well over 110 degrees.

The Iraqi officer who oversees the facility said it currently holds some 370 prisoners. He said authorities were overwhelmed with detainees as Iraqi forces cleared the last neighborhoods of the city earlier this month at the end of a grueling nine-month campaign.

“Prisoners are infected with diseases, lots of health and skin problems, because they’re not exposed to the sun,” he said. “The majority can’t walk. Their legs are swollen because they can’t move.” He said a provincial health team checks on the prisoners “occasionally.”

More than 1,150 detainees have passed through the prison over the past three months, with 540 sent to Baghdad for further investigation, the officer said. Another 2,800 prisoners are being held in the Qayara air base south of Mosul, and hundreds more in a few smaller facilities. The officer spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to brief reporters.

From The Associated Press

captured military recruits and buried them in mass graves that since have been uncovered. Hundreds of policemen and soldiers in Mosul are believed to have been killed after the takeover. Militants did not hide atrocities.

Defense Ministry spokesman Brig. Gen. Tahseen Ibrahim said that authorities “have not registered any incident of revenge killing, whether carried out by security forces or residents. The situation is under full control and we will not allow such incidents to happen because this issue is very sensitive and leads to violent reactions.”

But a senior Iraqi officer said his troops regularly killed men who were said to be ISIS among civilians fleeing the city at screening centers in and around Mosul. He spoke on condition of anonymity because of the possibility it could prompt legal repercussions.

“When you’re facing a man who has killed your friends, your family, yes, sometimes the

men get rough,” he said. “But for us, this is personal.”

The lieutenant said the two men who killed his father were well known in his hometown, a small village south of Mosul. He agreed to share his story with the AP because he wanted to show how personal the fight is for Iraqi troops. Two of his colleagues confirmed his version of events. The AP is not revealing the names of the men he is pursuing because there is no way to confirm independently they belonged to ISIS.

The lieutenant said his father was an officer in the security forces who fought al-Qaida in Iraq, the predecessor to ISIS, in 2007. After ISIS seized the village in 2014, the tribes that were once kicked out for al-Qaida ties moved back in, and ISIS installed them in security and administrative positions.

According to the lieutenant, two men grabbed the lieutenant’s father outside his home. The two were among those previously expelled for al-Qaida ties, he said. The lieutenant was

away, and his neighbors told him his father had been killed and who did it. He said he was told the men boasted about it in public. ISIS fighters also killed the lieutenant’s uncle and more than a dozen other friends and relatives.

As Iraqi forces advanced toward the lieutenant’s village last year in the lead-up to Mosul, he began interrogating captured ISIS suspects. He said he has killed more than 40 militants, whether in combat or in interrogations on the sidelines of the battle. He acknowledged most were not directly responsible for his relatives’ deaths.

“I’m not selfish with my revenge; what I’m doing is for all Iraqis,” he said.

Early on in the Mosul operation, he said he learned that one of the two men was in Tal Afar, a town west of Mosul that remains in ISIS hands, or had fled to Syria.

In early July, as Iraqi forces pushed into Mosul’s Old City, he received a tip on the location of the second man. He said a colleague, an intelligence officer, called and said he was holding an ISIS suspect from the lieutenant’s home town.

“I told him don’t do anything, keep him there. I’m on my way,” the lieutenant said.

The detainee was the uncle of the lieutenant’s second target. The man was left alone with the lieutenant in a bare concrete room.

“I didn’t torture him. I cut the plastic handcuffs from his wrists and gave him water,” the lieutenant said. The man was elderly, with a gray beard and hair.

Eventually, the man told the lieutenant that his second target was in Mosul’s Old City.

“After I questioned him I sent him to hell,” the lieutenant said flatly. He said he shot the man and left his body on the floor.

“I know some people believe that this kind of killing is wrong, but Daesh, they are not human beings,” he said, using the Arabic acronym for ISIS. “I am the one who still has my humanity.”

Senate panel seeks help from leaders of '80s military buildup

BY DIANNA CAHN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The architects of the 1980s military buildup came before senators Tuesday to explain how they were able to rebuild and expand the Navy by 75 ships in just seven years under conditions not so different than they are today.

The Navy at the time faced shortfalls due to budget cuts, it was struggling with cost overruns, and shipbuilding programs were stagnating, testified former Navy Secretary John Lehman.

“As a result, we as a nation were losing our ability to deter disturbers of the peace,” he told the Senate Armed Services seapower subcommittee. “The same situation with very different actors is true today.”

But while members of the subcommittee are unanimous in their support for a similar buildup today from 276 ships to 355, there are differences.

Today’s Congress remains deadlocked over spending, and this huge military expansion lacks the push of a broadly popular president. Ronald Reagan

enjoyed a 58 percent approval rating six months into his presidency; President Donald Trump’s rating this week was under 40 percent.

William Schneider, who served as a former associate director in Reagan’s office of management and budget, said Reagan was able to build “very effective collaboration” in Congress to fund the very substantial increase in defense.

“His success in building a 600-ship Navy was a remarkable story of committed executive and legislative branch leadership,” he said.

Lehman told the committee that the 1980s effort was successful because it had a cohesive strategy based on the nation’s vital defense interests that enjoyed widespread bipartisan support as well as support from the White House, budget office, the Pentagon and the Navy and Marine Corps.

In addition, there was a deep commitment to discipline in procurement, reining in the kind of cost overruns that have plagued the building of the design and construction of the first Ford-class aircraft carrier.

That means completing and freezing the design before going out to bid and ensuring there is accountability to keeping to the fixed price, he said.

With 22 Defense Department administrators able to sign on for increased spending, the only way to keep that discipline is to hold someone accountable, he said.

“There should be one person where the buck stops and that has got to be the service secretary,” he said.

Everett Pyatt, former secretary of the Navy for Shipbuilding and Logistics, said another way to avoid runaway costs is to abolish incremental funding for ships. By approving the full amount for a complete ship up front, they were able to control the costs and not get into the kinds of problems today’s military is facing. He said he just learned of \$700 million “buried in the post-delivery cost” for the Gerald R. Ford aircraft carrier.

“For a ship that’s already been delivered — I don’t understand that,” he said.

Va. police fatally shoot sailor after she shot husband

Associated Press

NORFOLK, Va. — A police officer fatally shot a woman after she shot and wounded her husband at the scene of a car crash, authorities in Virginia said Tuesday.

Virginia State Police said that India N. Nelson, 25, had been in a domestic dispute with her husband Monday in Norfolk. About 7 p.m. that evening, she and her husband were driving separate cars when they crashed into each other near a gate at Norfolk Naval Station, where both were active-duty sailors.

After Norfolk police responded and began to investigate, Nelson shot and wounded her husband, state police said. Authorities said a Norfolk police officer then “engaged the woman and returned fire.”

Nelson was pronounced dead at the scene. Her husband, who was treated at a hospital and released, has not been identified.

Navy spokesman Matthew Allen said Tuesday that the husband is assigned to a unit on Naval Station Norfolk. He said Nelson was a nuclear technician assigned to the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower aircraft carrier.

Pick for Pentagon’s No. 2 post confirmed

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump’s pick to serve as the Pentagon’s No. 2 civilian was confirmed by the Senate on Tuesday, but three dozen top Defense Department jobs remain unfilled six months into the new administration.

The Senate easily confirmed former Boeing executive Patrick Shanahan as deputy defense secretary with a 92-7 vote, filling an important job that had been occupied by Robert Work, a holdover from former Presi-

dent Barack Obama’s administration and whose last day was Friday. Shanahan was officially sworn into his new role Wednesday morning at the Pentagon, said Navy Cmdr. Sarah Higgins, a Pentagon spokeswoman.

Shanahan is only the seventh person confirmed to fill one of 53 top White House-appointed jobs at the Pentagon.

That is a rate that lags behind the last two administrations, according to analysis from the Partnership for Public Service, a nonpartisan Washington think tank. According to the group’s

data, former President George W. Bush’s administration had filled 23 positions at this point and the Obama administration had filled 21.

The White House has placed blame squarely on Senate Democrats, who in many cases have slowed the process to approve nominees by forcing formal “cloture” votes, including for Shanahan, which delay confirmation votes for several days. Under cloture procedures, the Senate majority leader must request a cloture vote, wait a day for that vote and, if it succeeds,

wait another 30 hours for debate before a final vote can be administered.

Despite the Democrats’ use of cloture procedures — a process often used by Republican senators during Obama’s presidency — to avoid fast-tracking Trump nominees, the Trump administration has been slow to fill vacant jobs, according to the Partnership for Public Service analysis.

At the Pentagon, the White House has yet to formally nominate someone to fill 22 of those 53 top positions.

Lunch focuses on health care bill support

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Wednesday stepped up the pressure on reluctant Republicans to erase much of Barack Obama's health care law, tweeting, "They MUST keep their promise to America" and vowing the measure would improve at his White House lunch with senators.

In a last-ditch effort to revive the bill, Trump invited all 52 Republicans to the White House, a day after the GOP's seven-year quest crashed and burned in a humiliating defeat for the president, Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and the GOP.

Trump tweeted ahead of the session, "The Republicans never discuss how good their healthcare bill is, & it will get even better at lunchtime. The Dems scream death as OCare dies!" and "I will be having lunch at the White House today with Republican Senators concerning healthcare. They MUST keep their promise to America!"

Trump stayed largely on the sidelines as McConnell struggled unsuccessfully

to round up support to make good on the GOP's years of promises to repeal and replace Obama's health care law. But with McConnell's third and final effort — on a repeal-only bill — looking like it, too, had collapsed, Trump urged McConnell to delay a make-or-break vote until early next week.

Trump's lunch echoes a similar move in June after McConnell fell short on his first health care effort, and it yielded no apparent results. Indeed Trump seated himself between two GOP senators — Susan Collins, of Maine, and Lisa Murkowski, of Alaska — who announced Tuesday they would oppose McConnell's efforts to move forward with the latest bill.

Along with opposition from a third GOP senator, Shelley Moore Capito, of West Virginia, that was enough to kill the legislation. McConnell can lose only two votes and still move forward in the closely divided Senate.

Still, speaking on the Senate floor Wednesday, McConnell continued to call on his caucus to support the repeal-only bill,

and thanked Trump and other members of the administration for their support.

Despite the rhetoric from Trump and McConnell, it looks like after seven years of campaigning on repealing "Obamacare," Republicans have discovered they can't deliver. Their own divisions are blocking them.

McConnell was ready to hold the show-down vote Wednesday, to get senators on record on the issue and move on to other priorities like overhauling the tax code. But in a closed-door GOP lunch on Tuesday, fellow Republican senators urged him to wait, according to Republicans present who demanded anonymity to discuss the private issue. McConnell announced late Tuesday that the vote would occur early next week, "at the request of the president and vice president and after consulting with our members."

Despite the current law's problems, most health care experts do not believe it is at immediate risk of outright failure, and Democratic cooperation to adjust the law is far from assured.

Second Trump-Putin G-20 meeting disclosed

The Washington Post

After his much-publicized, 2¼-hour meeting early this month with Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Group of 20 summit in Germany, President Donald Trump chatted informally with the Russian leader for up to an additional hour later the same day.

The second meeting, undisclosed at the time, took place at a dinner for G-20 leaders, a senior administration official said. At some point during the meal, Trump left his own seat to occupy a chair next to Putin. Trump approached alone, and Putin was attended only by his official interpreter.

In a statement issued Tuesday night after published reports of the conversation, the White House said that "there was no 'second meeting' between Trump and Putin, just a brief conversation at the end of a dinner. The insinuation that the White House has tried to 'hide' a second meeting is false,

malicious and absurd," it said.

"All the leaders" circulated around the room throughout the dinner, and "President Trump spoke with many leaders," the statement said.

The dinner conversation with Putin was first reported Monday by Ian Bremmer, president of the New York-based Eurasia Group, in a newsletter to group clients.

Meeting each other face-to-face for the first time at the Hamburg summit, the two presidents seemed to have a chemistry in their more formal bilateral session, evidenced by the fact that, despite being scheduled for 35 minutes, it continued for more than two hours.

But Trump's newly revealed conversation with Putin at the G-20 dinner is likely to stoke criticism, including perhaps from some fellow Republicans in Congress, that he is too cozy with the leader of a major U.S. adversary.

Wife of state senator on military duty to fill in

Associated Press

OLYMPIA, Wash. — The wife of a state senator has been sworn in as a temporary senator to fill in for the Centralia Republican while he's participating in required military training with the U.S. Navy Reserve.

Sen. John Braun's wife, Marlo Braun, a registered nurse at Providence Hospital in Centralia, was sworn in by Lewis County District Court Judge Wade Samuelson on the Senate floor. The move comes following majority approval by county officials in District 20 of a request of her husband, who invoked a little-used provision for a fill-in so his district wouldn't go unrepresented during the final days of the third special session that ends Thursday. Lawmakers are still working to try and reach a deal on both a two-year capital budget and a water rights bill before they adjourn.

Marlo Braun, 50, said that while serving in the Senate was

never in her game plan, she's "happy to fill in for him while he's serving our country."

Sen. John Braun is serving as commanding officer of a U.S. Navy Reserve detachment supporting U.S. Pacific Command at Camp Smith, Hawaii.

The state statute allows for elected officials to be temporarily replaced if they are called up to active service or training. Under the language of the resolution adopted by the counties, Marlo Braun was retroactively appointed to the Senate as of the time her husband's duty started, on July 15. Her appointment runs until "approximately Sunday."

John Braun had originally selected Chehalis attorney and former lawmaker J. Vander Stoep as his replacement, but he was not available, thus leading to the request for Marlo Braun to step in. Cowlitz officials said they did not originally see the follow-up request for the change.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Water department probes cockroach swarm

PA PHILADELPHIA — The Philadelphia Water Department is trying to figure out what caused thousands of cockroaches to emerge from a manhole and swarm a neighborhood.

Pat Wall told WCAU-TV that the bugs emerged Sunday night and have been invading her Bridgesburg neighborhood ever since. She said the bugs were so thick residents couldn't see the ground.

Water department spokesman John DiGiulio said crews will investigate. He said the sewer inlet might be clogged with food and trash that can attract the bugs, which are also known to multiply in warmer weather. Residents say they're spraying their homes and stomping the bugs.

Bus hops curb, collides with memorial cannon

PA PITTSBURGH — Authorities said a bus hopped a curb and dislodged a war memorial cannon at a parklet in Pittsburgh.

Spokesman Jim Ritchie, of the Port Authority of Allegheny County, said no bus passengers were injured in the Saturday afternoon accident in the Brookline neighborhood. He said someone in a car struck by the bus had a minor injury.

Police: Man threatened to pull gun over taco

NM LOS ALAMOS — A New Mexico man is facing charges after police say he threatened to pull a gun on a taco shop employee for giving him the wrong order.

The Los Alamos Monitor reported that Lex Norman Deines was arrested Sunday following

a heated exchange with an employee at Rigoberto's Taco Shop near one of the nation's premier weapons labs. Los Alamos Police Department Cpl. Jemuel Montoya said an employee said Deines promised to retrieve a gun out of his car over the allegedly botched tacos. Witnesses said they heard the threat.

Deines, 48, is facing disorderly conduct and aggravated assault with a deadly weapon charges.

Dorm director teaches dog to bark in whisper

IL GREENVILLE — A resident director who lives in a dorm at a college in southern Illinois has taught his dog to bark in a whisper.

Brian Gertler, 24, lives in an apartment with his wife and 1-year-old dog Dudley in a freshman dorm at Greenville University, about 50 miles east of St. Louis. WGN-TV reported that Gertler found that Dudley's excited barking when they played together was waking up students at night.

Gertler said he noticed that Dudley didn't bark out loud during a game of fetch because he was winded from running back and forth. He said he slowly trained the dog to bark in a whisper.

Fighting roosters, pot plants seized in desert

CA VICTORVILLE — Authorities arrested three people including a 78-year-old man after finding nearly 2,000 marijuana plants and 200 fighting roosters in a raid at a Southern California desert property.

KABC-TV reported that San Bernardino County sheriff's deputies made the discoveries while serving a search warrant in the El Mirage area.

Three men could face charg-

es related to the marijuana. Officials plan to seek charges against the older man related to the cockfighting birds.

Raccoon to blame in fire, power outage

CO CRAIG — Thirty-one homeowners in Colorado have a pesky raccoon to blame for a power outage and fire on Sunday.

The Craig Daily Press reported the raccoon had climbed on a power pole transformer, causing it to spark and igniting a fire that burned about seven acres on private property southwest of Craig.

Yampa Valley Electric Member Outreach Specialist Tammi Strickland said the raccoon did not survive the incident.

Drunken man dangles from fence, spike in leg

NY NEW YORK — Authorities in New York City said they rescued a drunken man who was dangling off a wrought-iron park fence with a spike driven through his leg.

The New York Post said the man was found around 3 a.m. Tuesday in Manhattan near the East River. The man apparently was trying to take a short-cut through the locked park after getting out of a cab.

Raccoon gives birth in back seat of convertible

FL SARASOTA — A pregnant raccoon decided to get busy in the back seat of a convertible — giving birth.

Employees at an auto detailing shop in Florida's Manatee County first discovered the mother, who crawled through a plastic cover on the car's window.

Devon Straight, who works with a wildlife rescue group, said they initially found just

one baby Wednesday. When they opened the trunk, there was another newborn.

Straight put the mother and babies into a kennel and released them into the woods.

Police: Toddler's arm broken for wetting pants

FL DAYTONA BEACH — Authorities say a baby sitter broke a 3-year-old's arm with a spatula for wetting his pants.

Daytona Beach police said Haillee Howell, 21, had been baby-sitting the child and his two brothers for five months. According to an arrest report, the children's mother dropped them off at Howell's home Thursday. When she picked them up, her 3-year-old was crying and said his arm hurt. X-rays revealed three broken bones.

According to the report, hospital officials also discovered bruising under the boy's eyes and in both ears.

State welfare officials interviewed the boy, who said Howell hurt his arm because he wet his pants. She was charged with aggravated child abuse.

Couple with 111 cats pleads guilty to neglect

IN MUNCIE — A central Indiana couple who lived in a house with 111 cats pleaded guilty to child neglect charges but avoided any jail time.

A Delaware County judge ordered a one-year suspended sentence and 35 hours of community service for both.

The (Muncie) Star Press reported they were charged last August over the conditions of their home in Daleville where they lived with their daughter.

From wire reports

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Wide Open at Royal Birkdale

Associated Press

An era of dominance in the majors ended the last time the British Open was at Royal Birkdale, even if nobody knew it.

Tiger Woods piled up so many majors so quickly that when he had knee surgery following his 2008 U.S. Open victory at Torrey Pines and had to sit out the last two majors, a few wags suggested that the next name engraved on the claret jug should include an asterisk.

Woods won 13 out of 36 majors in the nine years leading up to that 2008 British Open, and only three other players — Phil Mickelson, Vijay Singh and Retief Goosen — won more than one. Sixteen players captured one major during that stretch.

In the 36 majors leading up to this next Open at Royal Birkdale, six players have won multiple majors. Rory McIlroy has won four of them. No one else has won more than twice, while 22 players have each won once.

There is no longer talk about an asterisk. Now it's more like a question mark.

Who's next?

"I think the competition on a weekly basis is so tight out there and so tough," defending champion Henrik Stenson said. "Whether it's a trend or if this is going to continue or not, or if there is going to be a few guys stepping up and becoming second and third-time winners, I guess that's yet to be seen. But in general, it's very hard to predict who is going to do well any other week. It's been like that in the last year-and-a-half in the majors, for sure."

Brooks Koepka won the U.S. Open at Erin Hills and became the seventh consecutive first-time major champion, a streak that began with Jason Day in the 2015 PGA Championship at Whistling Straits.

It is the second-longest streak since 1934 when the Masters began. The longest streak was nine consecutive first-timers from Graeme McDowell (2010 U.S. Open) to Webb Simpson (2012 U.S. Open), which coincided with Woods' recovery from the mess in his personal

life. The reason there wasn't a long stretch of first-time major champions was a dominant figure — Woods, Nick Faldo and Nick Price, Tom Watson, Jack Nicklaus, Gary Player and Arnold Palmer.

Whether it's a trend or merely a cycle, odds would seem to favor the streak ending at Royal Birkdale when the 146th edition of the British Open starts July 20.

No other links course in the current Open rotation has a better track record of rewarding major champions.

Padraig Harrington won at Birkdale in 2008 for his second straight British Open title (no asterisk necessary). A decade earlier, Mark O'Meara won his second major of the year when he beat Brian Watts in a playoff.

Only two of the eight British Open champions at Royal Birkdale had not previously won a major — Ian Baker-Finch in 1991 and Peter Thomson, who won the first of his five Open titles in 1954 — giving the links along the Lancashire Coast of England the lowest rate of first-time major champions on the Open rotation.

"It's very difficult to win a first major," Jordan Spieth said. "You're dealing with somebody that has been there before."

Maybe so.

But in six of the last seven Grand Slam events, a major champion was the runner-up. The exception was the U.S. Open last month, in which none of the top 20 on the leaderboard in Wisconsin had ever won a major.

There are more candidates than ever to become a multiple major winner because 23 of the last 33 major champions had never won one before. Odds are one of them — Dustin Johnson, Justin Rose, Adam Scott, Day — will pick off another one.

Then again, Jon Rahm, Hideki Matsuyama and Rickie Fowler are among those who could keep the streak of first-timers going.

"Winning a major is very big," said Scott, who finally got his at the 2013 Masters but hasn't come close to another

since then. "You want to be one of those guys who is winning majors walking through the locker room, because we do all have a high level of respect for each other and the amount of work that we put in and the level of golf that's being played now. I think Brooks will now find out what that feels like, and I think that can spur people on, as well."

"There are a lot of guys playing at this level, and now they will be very motivated."

No one is as motivated as Johnson, the No. 1 player in the world for the last five months. As dominant as he was in February and March, winning three straight tournaments against the strongest fields of the year at the time, the majors have been a mystery since he won the U.S. Open last year at Oakmont.

Johnson hasn't played the weekend of a major since the British Open last year at Royal Troon. He missed the cut at the PGA Championship, withdrew from the Masters after wrenching his back from a slip down the stairs and then missed the cut at the U.S. Open. He has not played a tournament since then.

Royal Birkdale would seem to be right in his wheelhouse.

It's not the longest course, but it plays big because of the wind, and it weaves along massive dunes by the Irish Sea. Harrington won last time at 3-over 283. No one has done better than 272 (Baker-Finch) at Royal Birkdale. Odds are against another scoring exhibition that Stenson and Phil Mickelson delivered last year. Mickelson opened with a 63. Stenson closed with a 63 and won with the lowest score (264) in major championship history.

Rose has mix memories of Royal Birkdale. As a 17-year-old amateur, he chipped in for birdie on the final hole in 1998 and tied for fourth. In 2008, he shot 82 in the third round to tumble out of contention.

An Englishman has not won an Open in England since Tony Jacklin in 196. The home hope might be Tommy Fleetwood, who started the year at No. 99 in the world and now is up to No. 14.

Rose seeks 2nd Lego moment

Associated Press

SOUTHPORT, England — Royal Birkdale is where it all began for Justin Rose.

Now, there's a Lego scene to prove it.

Rose was a slight 17-year-old golfer wearing a baggy red sweater and a wide smile when he produced one of the British Open's iconic moments in 1998, holing out from 45 yards for eagle at the 72nd hole to secure a tie for fourth place.

He was the talk of Birkdale that week. Trash-collection staff stopped working to catch a glimpse of the English amateur making a run at the claret jug on home turf.

It was a summer that defined him, and still does in many ways.

One of the first places he sought out when arriving for a practice round at the course last week was that piece of rough to the left of the fairway on No. 18, where he holed the shot of a lifetime.

Days later, the moment was recreated in a video animation in Lego form and got the attention of Rose's kids and his 3-year-old nephew, Billy.

"You see them watch it and see them so impressed," Rose said. "It's a Lego scene, that's how you know it was a cool achievement."

Rose looks back at that moment and that particular British Open — his first — and sees someone playing with "freedom" and the "innocence" of youth. He is trying to use that as a model going forward.

He's also amazed that it remains his best finish at his home major.

"It's disappointing," he said Tuesday. "Maybe the expectation for a number of years afterwards took its toll coming back, trying to live up to it. I feel now, though, at this stage of my career I've sort of somewhat proved that that wasn't a flash in the pan, so I can come back to the Open a little freer than I could."

Rookie Roglic wins 17th stage of Tour

Associated Press

BRIANCON, France — Speeding downhill at 45 mph on unprotected Alpine roads, Tour de France rookie Primoz Roglic scaled the race's highest peak and then barreled down the other side while holding off the competition on the famed Galibier climb to win Stage 17 on Wednesday.

Chris Froome consolidated his overall lead as Fabio Aru lost touch with the three-time champion's group on the punishing gradients of the Galibier.

Froome finished just over a minute after Roglic in a group

with Rigoberto Uran and Romain Bardet, who climbed to second and third overall. Aru dropped from second to fourth.

Aru couldn't keep up with Froome's group on the Galibier climb, falling behind as Bardet and Irish rider Dan Martin accelerated. Mouth open, the Sicilian repeatedly labored his way back to them until a final burst of speed toward the top from Bardet left Aru behind for good.

Bardet, with Froome, Uran, French rider Warren Barguil and Mikel Landa, zoomed down the long descent from the top together, never slowing to

make sure that Aru could not catch them.

Aru is now 53 seconds behind Froome overall. Uran and Bardet trail the leader by 27 seconds.

"I felt good," Froome said. "We saw Aru was in difficulty."

Froome was greeted at the finish by French President Emmanuel Macron, who followed the stage in a car with the race director.

Another tough day of climbing awaits Thursday with a mountain-top finish on the Col d'Izoard. If the overall standings remain as close as they

are now, the final time trial on Saturday could be decisive in determining the podium places at the finish in Paris the next day.

Roglic, a former ski jumper from Slovenia, sped away from his own four-man group, which included two-time champion Alberto Contador, with 3 miles still left to climb on the Galibier. He reached the top, through barren slopes of scree and patchy grass, and then raced down alone over the last 17 miles to the finish at the Serre Chevalier ski station.

"It's unbelievable," Roglic said. "A really crazy stage."

Diamondbacks acquire All-Star Martinez from Tigers

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — J.D. Martinez had been the subject of trade speculation for weeks, and it reached such a crescendo Monday night that even his mom texted to ask if Detroit's star outfielder had been dealt when he left a game in Kansas City with a sore back.

Turns out she was only off by a day.

The Arizona Diamondbacks acquired Martinez for a trio of prospects on Tuesday, hoping to solidify a trouble spot in the outfield with a sorely needed right-handed bat for a run at the playoffs.

"I don't think he was surprised," Tigers general manager Al Avila said. "I think he was hoping it didn't happen, quite frankly. I didn't want it to happen. I wanted to be out here in first place. I think it was hard for him because, like he said, this is his home. This is where he became J.D. Martinez."

Martinez, who is making \$11.75 million this year and can become a free agent after the season, acknowledged he would likely be traded with the Tigers sliding from contention. The 29-year-old former All-Star is hitting .305 with 16 homers and 39 RBIs, making him one of the

premier right-handed bats on the market.

"You knew it was going to happen. You don't really know how you're going to feel. It doesn't hit you until they tell you," he said. "It's definitely tough. I love this organization. I love the fans. I love everything in Detroit. That's home for me. I've always said that."

Detroit received Double-A third baseman Dawel Lugo, switch-hitting infield prospect Sergio Alcantara and shortstop Jose King in the deal Tuesday. Lugo, a sterling defensive third baseman with a solid bat, is regarded as the Diamondbacks' No. 2 overall prospect. Avila said he wanted to bolster the Tigers' farm system with position prospects and jumped at the chance to add three infielders.

In other baseball news:

■ The New York Yankees made an early push for a playoff run Tuesday night, acquiring infielder Todd Frazier and relievers David Robertson and Tommy Kahnle from the Chicago White Sox for reliever Tyler Clippard and three prospects.

The Yankees currently hold the second AL wild-card spot.

Along with Clippard, the White Sox got left-handed pitcher Ian Clarkin and outfielders Blake Rutherford and Tito

Polo. They also announced top prospect Yoan Moncada would be called up for Wednesday's game against the Dodgers.

■ All-Star shortstop Carlos Correa of the AL West-leading Houston Astros is expected to miss six to eight weeks because of a torn ligament in his left thumb.

The Astros put Correa on the 10-day disabled list Tuesday, a day after he hurt himself taking a swing against Seattle. They expect to have him back in the lineup for the stretch run in September.

The Astros opened the day with a 15½-game lead over Seattle. Infielder Colin Moran was recalled from Triple-A Fresno in time for the game against the Mariners.

Crawford picks team

MINNEAPOLIS — After meeting in the NBA Finals for three straight seasons, the Warriors and Cavaliers were in another duel this summer when both came calling for Jamal Crawford.

To the surprise of many, Crawford chose the Minnesota Timberwolves instead.

The veteran guard says that playing time and fit both were things he looked at when choos-

ing a team that has not made the playoffs in 13 seasons. But he also says he didn't want to go ring chasing, even at 37 years old.

Crawford says he is looking forward to building something in Minnesota rather than joining a ready-made team in Golden State or Cleveland.

Crawford signed a two-year deal worth that will pay him more than \$4.2 million this season.

Carolina rehires GM

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — The Panthers have turned to a familiar face to run their front office and bring some stability to the organization.

Carolina rehired Marty Hurney as their interim general manager on Wednesday, two days after owner Jerry Richardson surprisingly fired Dave Gettleman.

Hurney served as Panthers general manager from 1998-2012.

Hurney drafted quarterback Cam Newton, linebackers Luke Kuechly and Thomas Davis, center Ryan Kalil and defensive end Charles Johnson, and traded for tight end Greg Olsen — all of whom are team captains.

Dodgers stretch winning streak to 10

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Clayton Kershaw might not have been as sharp as usual coming off a rare nine-day gap between starts.

Then again, the Dodgers' ace is awfully good, even when he's not at his best.

Kershaw pitched seven innings for his major league-leading 15th victory and the Los Angeles Dodgers edged the Chicago White Sox 1-0 on Tuesday night for their 10th straight victory.

Kershaw (15-2) made his first start since the All-Star break, allowing seven hits and a walk to post his 11th win in a row.

"I was little rusty tonight,"

said Kershaw, who struck out seven and lowered his ERA to 2.07. "The fastball command wasn't great the first few innings. It got a little better as we went along. Nine days off is definitely not something I'm used to. I'm thankful to get out of this unscathed and get the win."

The Dodgers, with the best record in baseball at 65-29, have won 30 of 34 — the best 34-game stretch in the franchise's rich history. This is the second 10-game winning streak of the season for the NL West leaders.

Relievers Pedro Baez and Kenley Jansen closed it out. Jansen survived a deep fly by Matt Davidson to record his

24th save in 24 chances.

Chris Taylor had four hits and scored on rookie Cody Bellinger's single in the first inning off Miguel Gonzalez (4-9), who lasted six innings and induced three of the Dodgers' four double plays.

Both teams struggled with runners in scoring position, with the Dodgers going 1-for-10 and the White Sox 1-for-8.

"To me, we won a baseball game, which is the most important thing, but you're not always gonna be able to escape games like this," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said. "So, you gotta cash in. I expect us to be better offensively tomorrow."

Chicago's best chance off Kershaw, who had not allowed

more than six hits in a game since a no-decision on May 28, came in the sixth.

With runners on first and third and one out, Tyler Saladino bunted a safety squeeze attempt into the air for an easy play by catcher Yasmani Grandal, then Kershaw ended the rally by getting Yolmer Sanchez to ground out.

"If you look at the line tonight, domination, but it's all relative with Clayton because he's so special," Roberts said.

"When everything isn't synced up, you think something's wrong. But he is human and he's not perfect, but he still finds a way to go out there and give us quality innings."

Ramirez lifts Red Sox over Blue Jays in 15th inning

Associated Press

BOSTON — Hanley Ramirez finally ended another long night for the Boston Red Sox, and his teammates found just enough energy to celebrate his walk-off shot.

Ramirez hit a drive out of Fenway Park in the 15th inning, giving the Red Sox a 5-4 win over the Toronto Blue Jays in a rain-delayed game that ended at 1:09 a.m. Wednesday.

"This was a gritty win and a very important win," Boston manager John Farrell said.

It was also an exhausting one. After the start was pushed back an hour Tuesday night because of thunderstorms, the Blue Jays and Red Sox played for 4 hours and 59 minutes. The Red Sox rallied from a 3-1 deficit to tie it in the seventh, and came back again after Toronto regained the lead with one run in the 11th.

The 4-all tie lasted until Ramirez drove the first pitch of the bottom of the 15th high into the Boston night — or morning — and trotted around the bases for a subdued celebration with his weary teammates at home plate.

The Red Sox haven't gotten

a lot of rest lately. They lost in 16 innings to the Yankees on Saturday, then split a day-night doubleheader with New York on Sunday. Boston lost to Toronto 4-3 on Monday night — albeit in just nine innings.

"There's a lot of toll and it's not just the number of innings pitched. It's the hours on the feet by every guy that's manning his position," Farrell said. "They've done an outstanding job to go through this stretch of four days we've just come through."

A few hundred fans stayed until the end, including a solid contingent of Blue Jays' supporters. Sometime around the second seventh-inning stretch in the middle of the 14th, the opposing sides joined together in an anti-Yankees chant.

Nationals 4, Angels 3: Bryce Harper went 4-for-4 with a homer, and he tripled and scored on Ryan Zimmerman's tiebreaking RBI single in the eighth inning of visiting Washington's sixth straight victory.

Cubs 5, Braves 1: Willson Contreras hit a three-run homer, John Lackey (6-9) earned his first win in a month and Chicago won its fifth straight game.

Pirates 4, Brewers 3: Francisco Cervelli and Josh Harrison homered during a sixth-inning rally and streaking Pittsburgh welcomed outfielder Starling Marte back with a victory over visiting Milwaukee.

Yankees 6, Twins 3: Bartolo Colon faltered in the fifth inning after a decent start by the burly 44-year-old, whose Minnesota debut ended with a two-run double by Gary Sanchez that sent visiting New York on its way to a victory.

Diamondbacks 11, Reds 2: Chris Herrmann capped a six-run fifth inning with a two-run homer, and visiting Arizona slugged its way past Cincinnati shortly after trading for slugger J.D. Martinez.

Orioles 12, Rangers 1: Chris Davis homered in a six-run first inning, added a grand slam in the fourth and finished with a career-high six RBIs to help host Baltimore breeze past Texas.

Astros 6, Mariners 2: Evan Gattis homered twice to back up a solid start by Brad Peacock (8-1) and help host Houston beat Seattle.

Tigers 9, Royals 3: Nicholas Castellanos homered twice and

drove in five runs, and visiting Detroit scored five times in the second inning and cruised from there past Kansas City.

Phillies 5, Marlins 2: Maikel Franco had three hits, including a tiebreaking home run in the eighth inning, to help lift visiting Philadelphia over Miami.

Cardinals 5, Mets 0: Michael Wacha (7-3) threw a three-hitter for his first career shutout, Matt Carpenter had four hits, and visiting St. Louis beat New York.

Giants 2, Indians 1 (10): Eduardo Nunez hit a game-ending RBI single in the 10th inning and host San Francisco snapped a three-game losing streak.

Rays 4, Athletics 3: Adeiny Hechavarria and Shane Peterson hit consecutive two-out RBI singles off closer Santiago Casilla (2-4) in the ninth inning and visiting Tampa Bay rallied to beat Oakland.

Rockies 9, Padres 7: Carlos Gonzalez lined a two-run double for his first extra-base hit in nearly a month, Gerardo Parra reached base five times and host Colorado beat San Diego.