

STARS AND STRIPES[®]

Saturday, July 29, 2017

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Iran: US Navy carrier fired warning shot

Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran's elite Revolutionary Guard said Saturday a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier fired a warning shot in an "unprofessional" confrontation with Iranian vessels, the official IRNA news agency reported.

IRNA quoted a statement from the Guard as saying that the USS Nimitz and an accompanying ship came near an Iranian oil offshore platform in the Persian Gulf, and a helicopter from the ship hovered near vessels manned by Iran's Revolutionary Guard.

The report said the confrontation took place Friday afternoon, and the U.S. navy ships left the area following the encounter.

The U.S. Navy's Bahrain-based 5th Fleet had no immediate comment.

The incident comes after a U.S. Navy patrol boat fired warning shots Tuesday near an

Iranian vessel that American sailors said came dangerously close to them during a tense encounter.

Iran and the U.S. frequently have run-ins in the Persian Gulf, nearly all involving the Revolutionary Guard, a separate force from Iran's military that answers only to the country's supreme leader. In January, near the end of then-President Barack Obama's term, the USS Mahan fired shots toward Iranian fast-attack boats as they neared the destroyer in the Strait of Hormuz.

Iranian forces view the American presence in the Gulf as a provocation. They have accused the U.S. Navy of unprofessional behavior, especially in the Strait of Hormuz, the mouth of the Persian Gulf, through which a third of all oil trade passes by sea.

Also on Saturday, Iran's parliamentary committee on

national security and foreign policy held an urgent meeting with deputy foreign minister and senior Iranian negotiator Abbas Araghchi in which they reviewed measures that the country could apply in response to a package of sanctions the U.S. Senate approved Friday against Iran and sent to President Donald Trump for signing.

Araghchi told state TV on Saturday that the decision is a "hostile" breach of the deal.

"It is a breach of the deal in articles 26, 28 and 29," said Araghchi. "A strong answer will be given to the action by the U.S."

The articles say the U.S. administration, acting consistently with the respective roles of the president and Congress, will refrain from reimposing the sanctions or any policy specifically intended to directly and adversely affect the normalization of trade and

economic relations with Iran.

The U.S. legislation imposes mandatory penalties on people involved in Iran's ballistic missile program and anyone who does business with them. The measure also would apply anti-terrorism sanctions to Iran's elite Revolutionary Guard and would enforce an arms embargo. Democrats said the new sanctions would not conflict with the landmark 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers.

On Friday, the U.S., France, Germany and Britain, which brokered the 2015 deal along with China, Russia and the European Union, said they're raising concerns with the United Nations over Iran's launch Thursday of a satellite-carrying rocket into space. In a joint statement, they said Iran's launch was "inconsistent" with a U.N. Security Council resolution that enshrined the nuclear deal.

N. Korea says ICBM test a 'stern warning' to US

BY AARON KIDD

Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un boasted Saturday that the communist regime's latest intercontinental ballistic missile launch proves that the U.S. mainland is now in reach of its long-range weapons.

The suspected Hwasong-14 missile — the second ICBM North Korea has tested successfully so far this month — was fired late Friday from Mupyong-ni, in the country's far northwest, and splashed down into the Sea of Japan about 620 miles east of the launch site, a Pentagon statement said.

The U.S. military, which detected and tracked the mis-

sile throughout its flight, determined it posed no threat to North America.

Kim expressed "great satisfaction" after the ICBM reached its maximum height of 2,314 miles before splashing down accurately off Hokkaido, Japan, according to a statement released Saturday by the Korean Central News Agency.

Kim, who reportedly was present at the launch site, said the successful test demonstrated Pyongyang's ability to launch a surprise ICBM attack from any place and at any time, and proved that the regime's missiles can now reach "all across the continental U.S."

The launch sends a "stern warning" to the U.S., which "loses its mind and makes un-

called-for remarks," Kim said in the statement.

President Donald Trump condemned the launch as "reckless and dangerous," while Secretary of State Rex Tillerson suggested China and Russia should do more to rein in their communist ally.

Tillerson also said the U.S. "will never accept a nuclear-armed North Korea nor abandon our commitment to our allies in the region."

Trump said the U.S. will take all necessary steps to protect itself and its allies in the region.

"The United States condemns this test and rejects the regime's claim that these tests — and these weapons — ensure North Korea's security," he said in a statement. "In reality,

they have the opposite effect. By threatening the world, these weapons and tests further isolate North Korea, weaken its economy and deprive its people."

Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Navy Adm. Harry Harris, the chief of U.S. Pacific Command, spoke by phone with South Korea's top military officer, Gen. Lee Sun Jin, after the missile's launch, said Navy Capt. Greg Hicks, a spokesman for Dunford.

Dunford and Harris expressed their commitment to South Korea's defense and "also discussed military response options," Hicks said in a statement.

Ohio fair reopens rides after accident

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Rides at the Ohio State Fair's Kidland and some elsewhere in the amusement park reopened Friday with the OK of inspectors two days after the governor shut them all down following a thrill ride malfunction that killed a teen who recently had enlisted in the Marines.

The teen's girlfriend was among seven other people who were injured when the Fire Ball flung riders through the air Wednesday. A few people on the midway were hit by debris.

The ride's Dutch manufacturer has told operators of the attraction at fairs and festivals worldwide to stop using it until more is learned about what caused the malfunction. Ohio Gov. John Kasich shut down all rides for new inspections after the accident.

Ohio Department of Agriculture spokesman Mark Bruce said 28 rides were cleared to resume operations Friday afternoon.

Keep trans troops, senators say

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — A bloc of 45 U.S. senators is asking the Pentagon not to discharge any transgender servicemembers until the Defense Department completes an ongoing review of whether they should be able to continue serving in uniform.

The letter holds no legal sway over the Pentagon, and lawmakers cannot stop President Donald Trump from carrying out his stated intention to ban transgender people from serving in uniform, but the letter puts almost half of the U.S. Senate on record as opposing the surprise announcement.

Despite Trump's directive, issued in a series of tweets on Wednesday, the military's highest-ranking officer said in a letter to senior military leaders Thursday that there would be "no modifications" to the current policy on transgender troops until further direction was received from the president.

"In the meantime, we will continue to treat all of our personnel with respect," said Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The White House has not yet said whether or when it would issue detailed instructions to the Pentagon to carry out Trump's tweeted orders.

The letter from senators was written by Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., a member of the Armed Services Committee who focuses especially on personnel matters. Aides said it is intended to encourage Defense Secretary Jim Mattis to complete the review he has started to explore whether transgender people should be allowed to serve.

The senators ask that "at a minimum, you do not separate any service member due to the person's gender identity until you have completed the

assessment that you announced on June 30, have reported back to Congress about any challenges that you foresee in the accession and retention of transgender troops, and determined the Department is unable to mitigate these challenges.

"Any American who wants to serve and meets the standards should be allowed to serve our country," the senators added.

The letter was finalized late Thursday and early Friday amid the drama of the unexpected end to the Senate's weeklong debate over health care reform.

While most senators watched as Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., deliberated with colleagues over how he planned to vote on a proposed watered-down repeal of the Affordable Care Act, Gillibrand was spotted working her way around the Senate chamber seeking signatures for her letter. With paper and pen in hand, she was seen talking to Sens. Susan Collins, R-Maine; Joni Ernst, R-Iowa; and Dan Sullivan, R-Alaska, as well as several other Democrats.

Ultimately, 45 senators signed her letter — all Democrats except Collins. Sen. Jack Reed, D-R.I., the top Democrat on the Armed Services panel, was among the signatories.

Gillibrand told CNN on Thursday she was "outraged" by Trump's unexpected announcement and said she would be introducing legislation to block Trump from banning transgender troops as part of consideration of the annual defense policy bill.

"These are men and women who woke up that morning ... only to find out by Twitter that their president doesn't want their service. I can't think of something more disrespectful, more outrageous," she told CNN.

Army to send hazardous wastewater to Texas

Associated Press

PUEBLO, Colo. — The U.S. Army plans to start trucking hazardous wastewater this week from a chemical weapons destruction plant in Colorado to an incineration facility in Texas because the Colorado plant isn't yet fully operational, officials said Friday.

The incinerator in Port Arthur, Texas, will destroy about 250,000 gallons of wastewater from the Pueblo Chemical Depot. Shipments from the southern Colorado plant to Port Arthur, about a 1,400-mile trek, could start Monday, depot spokesman Tom Schultz said.

Pueblo is dismantling and neutralizing shells containing mustard agent but can't yet process all of the wastewater. The shipments to Texas are expected to take

a month to complete, and by that time, the Pueblo depot should be able to process all wastewater on-site.

The waste is primarily salt water but could irritate human skin because it contains caustic chemicals used to neutralize the mustard. Officials say the wastewater contains no mustard agent.

Colorado state agencies approved the plan, and authorities along the shipping route have been notified, Schultz said. Each truck's two drivers are trained first responders, and their progress will be tracked by satellite.

Veolia North America, which operates the incinerator, has handled similar wastewater shipments from chemical weapons facilities in Indiana and elsewhere.

"We are doing everything we can to

make sure this goes smoothly," Schultz said. "We're sensitive to the public's concerns because it was at one time mustard agent."

Mustard agent can maim or kill by blistering skin, scarring eyes and inflaming airways. Under most conditions, it's a thick liquid, not a gas. It is colorless and almost odorless but got its name because impurities made early versions smell like mustard.

The \$4.5 billion Pueblo plant is destroying more than 780,000 shells filled with 2,500 tons of mustard agent under an international treaty. It's the largest remaining stockpile of chemical weapons in the U.S.

So far, it has destroyed more than 38,500 shells and more than 227 tons of chemical agent, Schultz said.

Trump dumps White House chief of staff

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump ousted White House chief of staff Reince Priebus and replaced him with Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly on Friday, a major shake-up designed to bring order and military precision to a West Wing beset for six straight months by chaos and infighting, and with few tangible accomplishments.

With his legislative agenda largely stalled and after being lobbied intensely by rival advisers to remove the establishment Republican fixture, Trump became convinced Priebus was a “weak” leader.

Kelly, a retired four-star Marine general, intends to bring some semblance of traditional discipline to the West Wing, where warring advisers have been able to circumvent the chief of staff and report directly to the president, according to people with knowledge of his plans.

The announcement comes after deep personal animus between Priebus and Anthony Scaramucci, newly appointed as White House communications director, burst into public view Thursday when Scaramucci accused the chief of staff of leaking damaging information about him and savaged Priebus in a profanity-laced interview with *The New Yorker*.

Allies to Priebus said he told them he had resigned Thursday. One Priebus friend said the chief of staff felt demeaned by the president’s treatment of him and was frustrated he could not assert control over basic White House functions, such as policy development, communications and even White House announcements — which sometimes were made impulsively by the president.

But some White House officials said the decision for Priebus to depart was made by Trump, and that the president forced him out on Friday. These officials noted Priebus presided

over the Friday morning senior staff meeting and accompanied Trump to a law enforcement event in New York.

Regardless, his final departure was a humiliating coda for what had been a largely demeaning tenure during which Priebus endured regular belittling and emasculation from rival advisers — and even, at times, the president himself.

When Air Force One touched down Friday afternoon at Andrew’s Air Force Base, Priebus, senior policy adviser Stephen Miller and social media director Dan Scavino all loaded into a Suburban. But moments later, Miller and Scavino hopped out of the vehicle, and as word trickled out about the chief of staff’s ouster, reporters inched close to snap photos of Priebus, who sat alone on the rain-soaked tarmac. Priebus’ vehicle then pulled out of the presidential motorcade, which proceeded along to the White House without him.

Kelly is expected to be sworn

into the job on Monday morning and convene a Cabinet meeting.

Priebus became consumed by internal battles, clashing not only with Scaramucci but finding himself under siege by Trump advisers inside and outside of the White House who complained that he was ineffectual and more concerned with his own public image than the president’s.

Rumors of Priebus’ firing have circulated for months. As one senior White House official put it, there was a “phony death march for six months.”

But the dynamic changed over the past 10 days or so.

“It reached a fever pitch of the president complaining about Reince to all of us,” said this official, who requested anonymity to speak candidly. “If we heard it once, we heard it 20 times in the last week — this erosion of confidence. The word was ‘weak,’ ‘weak,’ ‘weak,’ ‘weak.’ ‘Can’t get it done.’”

Kelly likely to bring discipline to White House

The Washington Post

John Kelly was not the sort of Marine general who dreamed of working in Washington. He likely never expected he would work in the White House.

In choosing Kelly to be his new chief of staff, President Donald Trump has turned to someone who in many ways is the opposite of his predecessor Reince Priebus, a seasoned political operator.

Kelly, like the president, has limited experience in politics and only passing familiarity with many of the big domestic issues that will cross Trump’s desk. Instead of a deft political sense, he will bring some plain-spoken discipline to an often chaotic West Wing.

Kelly, 67, has bonded quickly with a president who has often seemed overwhelmed and isolated in Washington.

In Kelly, Trump’s Homeland Security secretary, the president has picked both an enforcer for the West Wing and

someone who can be a friend.

In his 40 years in the military, Kelly developed a reputation for bluntness that won him the respect of his fellow Marines and sometimes grated on senior officials in President Barack Obama’s administration. He is best known in Washington as an experienced battlefield commander who led U.S. troops in Iraq and lost a son in Afghanistan in 2010 to a Taliban bomb.

But the most relevant experience he will bring to the chief of staff job is a tour as senior military adviser to defense secretaries Robert Gates and Leon Panetta. The job demanded Kelly act as a disciplinarian, pressing to make sure the military service chiefs and the sprawling Pentagon bureaucracy were executing the defense secretary’s agenda.

He also acted as a gatekeeper, deciding which of the military’s top brass would get time with the defense secretary each day.

The president “clearly needed some adults in the room,” said Kelly’s longtime friend, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to offer frank opinions. “It’s the end of the end of the chaos. Not with John Kelly around.”

But in Trump, Kelly will be serving a boss who is far different than Gates and Panetta, two disciplined Washington hands. He will be working in a free-wheeling Trump White House that has little in common with the regimented and hierarchical world of the Pentagon or Marine Corps.

As a four-star general, Kelly was frequently at odds with the Obama White House. He spoke out forcefully on issues ranging from Obama’s plan to shutter the prison complex in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to the perceived vulnerability of America’s borders. At a time when the Obama administration was trying to wind down America’s wars and calm fears of a terrorist attack, Kelly often spoke of the threat posed

by groups like the Taliban in dire terms.

Kelly was similarly a voice of doubt as the Obama administration pressed to open combat jobs to women.

As the four star general in charge of U.S. Southern Command, Kelly oversaw the military detention center at Guantanamo Bay. His weekly updates on the prison, which were blasted out to dozens of White House and Pentagon officials, became well known for their candor. “His vernacular wasn’t the typical government prose,” said one former White House official. “He would call out some of the military commission judges, saying that they had no idea what they were doing.”

Kelly’s move to the chief of staff job alongside Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster, the national security adviser, means military officers will now occupy two of the most senior positions in the White House.

Militant threat remains despite defeats

Los Angeles Times

MOSUL, Iraq — For a time, the caliphate really did exist: a medieval prophecy sprung to life and captured in the pitiless freeze-frames of propaganda videos. Even as U.S.-led forces in Iraq and Syria deal decisive blows to Islamic State, the group remains a potent threat.

In 2014, ensconced amid the looted bank vaults of Mosul, Iraq, and on the killing fields of Raqqa, Syria, ISIS was at the apex of its strength. From its twin bases in Iraq and Syria, it subjugated millions, dispatched operatives to strike European capitals, bestrode the cyberbattlefield, and beheaded captive Americans and other foreigners whom the world's mightiest militaries couldn't save.

Now, ISIS — largely driven from Mosul and besieged in its self-declared capital, Raqqa — might seem poised for oblivion.

But longtime observers warn the group's virulent ideology is still alive, along with its ability to threaten both the immediate region and the wider world.

In May 2016, as U.S.-backed forces were seizing large chunks of ISIS territory, the group's then-spokesman, Abu Mohammad Adnani — who would die a few months later in

a U.S. airstrike — shrugged off these losses as part of a divine plan that would leave the group ultimately victorious.

"Defeat is to lose the will to fight," he said. "And you will only win, America, if you rip the Quran from our hearts."

The nine-month battle for Mosul, where Iraqi forces are clearing out the last jihadi strongholds in the city's western half, is all but done. But the price in what was once Iraq's second-largest city has been heavy, both in lives lost and the immense scope of destruction.

Swaths of Mosul's Old City are now a denuded landscape. Railings and signs dangle from buildings reduced to crumbled masonry. Surviving civilians, still terrified, welcome coalition soldiers as liberators but gesture toward ruins under which loved ones lie buried.

In the few structures still standing, remnants of ISIS rule still can be seen: here, a scatter of charred religious pamphlets, one with a special prayer for patients healing from wounds and injuries; there, an explosives belt with its detonator parts scattered. On a battered wall, a smear of graffiti with a signature ISIS slogan: "Baqi-yah wa tatamadad," or "Endur-

ing and Expanding."

Even before Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi traveled to Mosul to proclaim victory in the fight to retake the city, the group already was reverting to its roots as an insurgency, melting into desert hinterlands on the Syria-Iraq border, launching attacks from areas that had been deemed primarily pacified.

The Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, N.Y., in a report last month found ISIS as of April had launched 1,468 attacks in 16 cities that had been "liberated" from its control, resulting in nearly 2,600 deaths.

The largest number was in west Mosul, which saw 130 attacks in the 30 days that followed that part of the city's recapture from ISIS.

A recent case in point is the eastern Syrian town of Mansoura, about 50 miles from Raqqa, among the areas freed by coalition forces. Displaced families from areas still controlled by ISIS have swelled its original population of about 12,000 to more than four times that. On street corners and on the walls of former government buildings, the group's telltale black-and-white signs have yet to be painted over.

A local leader of the Kurdish forces known as the People's Protection Units, or YPG, acknowledged that many in the town still live in fear of the militants. Women still wear black, full-body gowns, with heads and faces covered.

Days ago, he said, Kurdish forces unmasked a suspected militant disguised as a woman, mixing with shoppers at a market. The suspect, whom they believed was spying or plotting an attack, was handed over to military intelligence officials.

The caliphate may have lost its caliph; July brought a new flurry of speculation about the fate of the group's chieftain, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. The American general who heads the coalition confronting ISIS, Lt. Gen. Stephen Townsend, said he had no idea if the latest reports of al-Baghdadi's death were true.

But even if those reports are borne out, the group can in all likelihood reconstitute its leadership, analysts believe. ISIS has also shown its ability to withstand the loss of enormous numbers of foot soldiers in recent fighting.

Is CIA program to arm Syrian rebels still secret?

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump seemed to blow the lid on the cancellation of a covert CIA program in Syria when he tweeted about it last week. But, intelligence agencies still won't talk about it.

The program arming Syrian rebels has long been an open secret, but for years no one was authorized to discuss it — and few would despite recent news reports that Trump had ordered the CIA to end it.

But Trump essentially confirmed the existence of the program and its cancellation last Monday night when he lashed out at *The Washington Post*. The president tweeted that the newspaper "fabricated the facts on my ending massive, dangerous, and wasteful payments to Syrian rebels fighting (Syrian President Bashar) Assad."

Yet intelligence agencies still are mum. The CIA declined comment on Tuesday.

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence also declined to discuss it. The tweet was a topic of chatter among staffers on Capitol Hill, but even there, lawmakers refused to comment publicly because in their minds, the program is still classified.

"Technically, I doubt that the tweet would constitute declassification, though it appears to be a disclosure of classified information," said Steven Aftergood, director of the government secrecy project at the Federation of American Scientists.

This isn't the first instance Trump has casually disclosed classified information. In May, Trump shared intelligence about an Islamic State threat involving laptops carried on airplanes with Russia's foreign minister and Moscow's ambassador to Washington in an Oval Office meeting.

A president is authorized by law to declassify anything he wants. It's not against the law when he does it. In January 2012, for

example, former President Barack Obama officially acknowledged the classified CIA drone program to kill terrorism suspects.

The Syrian program, which was started by Obama, was aimed at putting pressure on Assad to relinquish power. The CIA began the covert operation in 2013 to arm, fund and train a moderate opposition to Assad.

For years, the CIA effort had foundered, and some lawmakers had proposed cutting its budget. Some CIA-supported rebels had been captured; others had defected to extremist groups. But in late 2015, CIA-backed groups, fighting alongside more extremist factions, had begun to make progress in south and northwest Syria.

At the Aspen Security Forum, in Colorado this month, Gen. Raymond Thomas, commander of U.S. Special Operations Command, did acknowledge the program's existence — and that it had ended.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Woman entangled by boa constrictor rescued

OH SHEFFIELD LAKE — Authorities said firefighters have rescued an Ohio woman after a boa constrictor wrapped around her neck and began biting her face.

The Elyria Chronicle-Telegram reported the Sheffield Lake woman called 911 Thursday afternoon asking for help. The boa constrictor was one of two snakes she'd rescued the day before.

Firefighters found the woman lying in the driveway of her home with the snake wrapped around her neck and biting her. A firefighter used a pocketknife to cut off the snake's head.

Tortoise with family after wandering away

NY MASSAPEQUA — The owners of a 77-pound tortoise found on the side of a Long Island road in New York have claimed their wayward, slow-moving pet.

Newsday reported police in Nassau County brought the African spurred tortoise to Dr. Ned Horowitz and his staff at the Massapequa Pet Vet on Wednesday after finding it wandering along a town road. Horowitz said the owner contacted him shortly after news stories about the lost tortoise were posted on social media.

The family said Tito got loose after someone left their backyard gate open.

Man allegedly threw coins at Muslim women

CA IRVINE — A Southern California man is facing hate crime charges after he allegedly yelled a religious slur and threw coins at two Muslim women — one wearing a hijab.

The Los Angeles Times said Brandon Ricardo Pascual, 35, was charged with two felony counts of assault-hate crime with ability to cause injury.

Investigators said the women had just left a store and were walking to their car in March when Pascual drove up and berated them.

A few minutes later, while the pair had stopped at a red light, Pascual pulled beside them and threw coins at them through an open window.

State workers get day off for the eclipse

MO JEFFERSON CITY — Missouri state workers in Jefferson City get an extra holiday this year — Aug. 21, the day of the solar eclipse.

State officials said Friday that with up to 50,000 visitors expected in Jefferson City to see the eclipse from one of the best viewing spots in the nation, state workers in nonessential jobs in the capital city will get the day off.

State workers elsewhere in Missouri will have to report to work.

The eclipse will be visible in 14 states diagonally from Oregon to South Carolina, and parts of Missouri offer some of the longest periods of total darkness. A large festival is planned for the Capitol grounds in Jefferson City.

It will be the first solar eclipse visible coast to coast since 1918.

Law makes it illegal to look at devices in street

HI HONOLULU — A law banning Honolulu pedestrians from using cellphones and other electronic devices while crossing the street will be going into effect Oct. 25.

Mayor Kirk Caldwell said the city's new law is one he

wishes it didn't have to pass, but common sense does not always prevail, Hawaii News Now reported.

The first violation can earn a pedestrian a \$15 to \$35 fine. Additional violations will be \$75 to \$99. For comparison, jaywalking is a \$130 fine.

The measure, known as the electronic devices pedestrian safety bill, was introduced by Councilman Brandon Elefante and aims to increase responsibility of pedestrians while on the road. The fines are low because the law is meant to be a reminder to stay aware while crossing the street, Elefante said.

Dull, Boring and Bland have extraordinary bond

OR BORING — Boring, Ore., and Dull, Scotland, two small communities united by unexciting names, have joined forces with a third: Bland Shire, Australia.

Dull and Boring became sister communities in 2012, after a Scottish woman passed through the U.S. town on a cycling holiday.

Dull officials on Friday hosted the mayor of the region of Bland Shire, New South Wales, to celebrate the third member of a club dubbed the League of Extraordinary Communities.

Bland Shire and Boring are both named after early residents, William Bland and William Boring, while Dull's name may come from a Gaelic word for meadow.

Dennis Melloy, provost of the Perth and Kinross region that's home to Dull, said the relationship with Boring and Bland had "created a real feel-good factor for their communities with quirky names."

He said the alliance could expand: "We've found Ordinary and Dreary, both in America, and I think they could ... be part of it."

Flame retardant turns neighborhood pink

CA WINDSOR — A fire-fighting air tanker unintentionally dropped retardant Thursday, turning cars and lawns in a Northern California neighborhood a reddish-pink before workers cleaned it up.

The Santa Rosa Press Democrat reported that a Cal Fire air tanker was returning from a grass fire when the pilot released about 100 gallons of water mixed with Phos-Chek over the Sonoma County town of Windsor.

Phos-Chek is a fertilizer that both stops fire and encourages growth.

Firefighters washed vehicles and cleaned the road. Windsor city staff worked to prevent retardant from slipping into storm drains.

Man allegedly dropped TV 3 stories on woman

MO KANSAS CITY — A Missouri man is accused of injuring a woman by purposely dropping an old TV set onto her from a third-floor balcony.

Jackson County prosecutors charged Otishus Kirkwood, 36, with first-degree assault and armed criminal action.

Authorities said the victim sustained life-threatening injuries.

Investigators allege in court filings that officers found the victim unconscious in front of the apartment building, near a broken tube television set.

A witness reportedly said Kirkwood threw the large TV from an apartment's third-floor balcony, striking the victim on the head. The apartment's occupant said the victim and Kirkwood were homeless, and he allowed them to occasionally sleep in his apartment.

From wire reports

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Reporting
World, National
and Military News

Long road to Cooperstown

Associated Press

COOPERSTOWN, N.Y. — Tim Raines played in the major leagues for more than two decades, and yet one at-bat still sticks in his mind.

Nervous about making the Montreal Expos' roster after two brief call-ups that didn't work out so well (one hit in 20 at-bats), his performance on Opening Day 1981 in Pittsburgh erased any doubt. Raines led off the game with a walk, stole second on the first pitch to the next batter and scored after the errant throw to second eluded the outfielders.

A star was born.

"I think that was the beginning of the type of player Tim Raines could be," Raines recalled. "It kind of got me going. I think if I would have struck out and not do anything offensively that game, I'm not sure what would have happened to my career. I hadn't really proven to anyone what type of player that I was. It kind of just took off from there."

His baseball journey ends Sunday in Cooperstown, when the 57-year-old Raines will be inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. Joining him are Jeff Bagwell and Ivan Rodriguez, along with former Commissioner Bud Selig and retired Kansas City and Atlanta executive John Schuerholz, both elected by a veterans committee.

Raines received 86 percent of the vote by the Baseball Writers' Association of America to easily top the 75 percent threshold needed. That tally came on his final year on the ballot, an oversight that's difficult to fathom in retrospect.

The switch-hitting Raines batted .294 and had a .385 on-base percentage in his 23-year career, finishing with 2,605 hits, 1,571 runs and 808 stolen bases. The stolen bases are the fifth-highest total in major league history and include 70 or more steals in each season from 1981-86, a streak that stands alone in baseball history. Take a closer look at his accomplishments on the basepaths, and they are quite remarkable — his 84.7 percent success rate tops the list among players with at least 400 steal attempts.

Raines credits his fortune to the increasing popularity of sabermetrics, advanced statistics that give greater insight into a player's worth.

"I think they kind of looked at the numbers on the baseball cards," said Raines, who overcame a recreational drug addiction that hampered his production early in his career. "There's more to the game than just those numbers. Guys can be just as important to a team and an organization in a lot of different ways."

Rodriguez, who holds the major league records for games caught (2,427) and putouts by a catcher (12,376), hit 311 homers and batted .296 in his career. No surprise that he's only the second catcher elected on the first ballot, following in the footsteps of his childhood idol, former Cincinnati Reds star Johnny Bench.

In 21 seasons spent mostly with the Texas Rangers, Rodriguez was a 14-time All-Star, won a record 13 Gold Gloves and took home seven Silver Slugger awards.

"I think I just prepared myself," said the 45-year-old Rodriguez, affectionately known as "Pudge." "I'm talking about blocking thousands of balls, making thousands of throws to second base, trying to throw the ball to the right side of the base.

"You can have ability, but if you don't have discipline, if you don't work on things you have to do, it's going to be hard for you to do it in your career."

The 48-year-old Bagwell, who played his entire 15-year career with the Houston Astros, was elected in his seventh year on the ballot. He's the only first baseman in history with 400 career home runs and 200 stolen bases.

"This is all overwhelming to me," Bagwell said. "Parts of me wonder, 'Why am I in here?'"

Bagwell ended his career with 449 home runs, was 1991 NL Rookie of the Year and in the strike-shortened 1994 season hit .368 with 39 homers and 116 RBIs in just 110 games to unanimously capture MVP honors.

Just as impressive: From 1996-2001, Bagwell had at least 30 home runs, 100 runs scored and 100 RBIs per season, only the sixth player in major league history to reach those marks in at least six straight years.

Schuerholz, who played second base at Towson University and became a junior high school teacher in the Baltimore suburbs in the mid-1960s, always wanted to be a major leaguer and couldn't get baseball off his mind. So he sent a letter to Jerry Hoffberger, owner of the hometown Orioles.

The team gave him a spot in its minor league system. In 1969, Schuerholz joined the expansion Kansas City Royals and became general manager 12 years later. After the Royals won the 1985 World Series, he moved on to even greater success with the Braves. With Schuerholz calling the front-office shots, Atlanta won a remarkable 14 straight division championships.

In 26 years as a GM, Schuerholz's teams won 16 division titles, six pennants and two World Series. He was the first general manager in history to win a World Series in each league.

"I feel awed," said Schuerholz, whose only regret is that the Braves turned those division titles into only one World Series championship (1995).

Selig never realized his childhood dream of replacing Joe DiMaggio in center field for the New York Yankees — he couldn't hit a curve ball — but he left a large imprint during more than 22 years as the leader of the game. He was instrumental in the approval of interleague play, the expansion of the playoffs, splitting each league into three divisions with wild cards, instituting video review and revenue-sharing in an era that saw the construction of 20 new ballparks.

Fans haven't forgotten that his tenure also included the Steroids Era and the cancellation of the 1994 World Series amid a players' strike.

Still, Selig left baseball in excellent shape economically — without labor strife and with a strict drug-testing policy that has helped clean up the game.

Trade roundup

Kendrick headed to Nationals

PHILADELPHIA — Howie Kendrick is excited for the chance to play for a World Series contender — even if he has to bat toward the bottom of the batting order.

Kendrick was traded from the Philadelphia Phillies to the Washington Nationals on Friday night for minor league pitcher McKenzie Mills.

The 34-year-old is hitting .340 with two homers and 16 RBIs this season, but he has been limited to 39 games due to injuries.

Mets get reliever Ramos from Marlins

SEATTLE — The New York Mets acquired reliever A.J. Ramos from the Miami Marlins for a pair of prospects: Class A pitcher Merandy Gonzalez and outfielder Ricardo Cespedes.

New York is seeking stability in a bullpen that's been a mess since the loss of Jeurys Familia, who served a domestic violence suspension at the start of the season and then got hurt. The Mets have blown 13 of 36 save opportunities entering Friday's game in Seattle and rank 26th in the major leagues in bullpen ERA at 4.81.

O's acquire starter Hellickson from Phils

ARLINGTON, Texas — The Baltimore Orioles acquired starting pitcher Jeremy Hellickson in a trade late Friday night, a move made in hopes of boosting a struggling rotation and maybe keeping them in the chase for a wild card spot.

Hellickson's acquisition from the Philadelphia Phillies was announced after Baltimore's 8-2 loss at Texas. That dropped the Orioles 6½ games back for the AL's second wild card, with five teams between them and that spot.

From The Associated Press

Rangers' Beltre two hits away from 3,000

Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — Adrian Beltre wants to get to 3,000 hits as soon as possible. The Texas Rangers third baseman could reach that rare milestone in his next game.

Beltre had two more hits Friday night, pushing his career total to 2,998 with two RBI singles in the Rangers' 8-2 victory over the Baltimore Orioles.

"I got closer, and I want to get it over with," Beltre said. "Hopefully I can get it done sooner than later."

The 38-year-old third baseman, in his 20th major league season, will soon become only the 31st player in the 3,000-hit club — maybe Saturday night. He is 9-for-14 in the four games since the Rangers returned home this week.

"High energy inside that dugout. A lot of energy from Adrian. It's fun to watch," manager Jeff Banister said. "A total buzz inside the dugout when he's at the plate. Watch, everybody's on the rail. They want to watch. They want to see it. They want to be part of it."

After grounding out in the first, Beltre shattered his bat on a bloop single to center in the third, grounded a ball up the middle for a hit in the fifth, and had an infield popout in the seventh.

"You pull for him, but you'd rather it be against somebody else," Orioles manager Buck Showalter said. "I think everybody in baseball is proud of the way he's handled himself through the years."

Beltre, who won his fifth Gold Glove last season, has also played 62 consecutive games at third base without an error — a career best and the club record.

Ichiro Suzuki is the only current active player in the 3,000-hit club after reaching that milestone last season.

Dodgers rally to beat Giants

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — For Corey Seager, the pitch he recognized allowed him to get over an error he wasn't about to forget.

Seager hit two home runs, including a go-ahead, two-run shot in the seventh inning that was followed by a surprise celebration as the Los Angeles Dodgers rallied to beat the San Francisco Giants 6-4 on Friday night.

"Yeah, I don't really know. It kind of came out of nowhere," Seager said of his animated response after crossing home plate. "That normally doesn't happen but that was a fun one."

Seager capped a four-run seventh with a towering drive over the right field wall on an 0-1 pitch from reliever Josh Osich (3-2) to lift the Dodgers to their sixth straight victory and their 37th win in their last 43 games.

"It was a curveball, but they had been throwing those pretty much all game after the first AB so I was ready for it, I guess," Seager said.

Seager's second homer came just a half-inning after he committed an error on a ball he tried not to throw but lost it into right field in the midst of a

three-run inning that put the Giants in front.

"That one was hard to move on from," Seager said. "You can accept it if it was something you actually did and made a mistake, but when it slips out of your hand, that one hurts a little bit more. At the last moment I tried to not throw it and it came out of my hand."

Seager's first homer gave the Dodgers a 1-0 lead in the first. He hit the first pitch from Giants starter Matt Moore deep into the left-centerfield bleachers.

It was Seager's second multihomer game of the season, and his sixth in less than two major league seasons. He hit two home runs against the New York Mets on June 20, and has 18 on the season.

The Dodgers recorded their 30th comeback victory, and their second in two games.

Dodgers starter Alex Wood (12-1) got the win despite giving up four runs and eight hits over seven innings. He was coming off his worst start of the season, having given up a career-high nine runs in 4²/₃ innings against Atlanta last Saturday.

Roundup

Royals win season-high ninth straight

Associated Press

BOSTON — Salvador Perez and Mike Moustakas homered off emergency starter Rick Porcello, who took over when David Price went back on the disabled list because of inflammation in his left elbow, and the Kansas City Royals beat Boston 4-2 Friday night for their season-high ninth straight win.

The Red Sox have lost five of six and nine of 14, dropping out of the AL East lead for the first time since June 29 and falling a half-game behind the New York Yankees.

Cardinals 1, Diamondbacks 0: Arizona starter Robbie Ray was hit in the head by a line drive and driven off the field in a cart during the visiting Diamondbacks' loss to St. Louis.

Ray was struck in the second inning by a liner off the bat of rookie Luke Voit.

Astros 6, Tigers 5: Josh Reddick hit a three-run homer in the eighth inning, lifting Houston over host Detroit.

Reddick drove in five runs, and the Astros won despite get-

ting only three innings from starter Dallas Keuchel in the left-hander's return from a neck injury.

Yankees 6, Rays 1: Masahiro Tanaka took a perfect game into the sixth inning and struck out a career-high 14, pitching New York past visiting Tampa Bay for its fifth straight win.

Brewers 2, Cubs 1: Brent Suter tossed seven scoreless innings and host Milwaukee edged Chicago, moving within a half-game of the NL Central-leading Cubs.

Marlins 7, Reds 4: J.T. Realmuto had three hits, including a tiebreaking home run, to spark a four-run seventh inning and help Miami top visiting Cincinnati.

Phillies 10, Braves 3: Aaron Altherr homered twice and Jake Thompson pitched five scoreless innings in an emergency start to lead host Philly past Atlanta.

Angels 7, Blue Jays 2: Parker Bridwell pitched a career-high 7¹/₃ innings to win his third straight decision,

C.J. Cron hit a two-run homer and visiting Los Angeles beat Toronto.

Indians 9, White Sox 3: Jose Ramirez had four hits, including a homer, and Carlos Santana and Michael Brantley also went deep as Cleveland extended its winning streak to eight and sent host Chicago to its 13th loss in 14 games.

Twins 6, Athletics 3: At Oakland, Calif., Jaime Garcia (1-0) struck out seven over 6²/₃ innings in his debut for Minnesota, which acquired him Monday from Atlanta, and the Twins stopped a four-game losing streak.

Mets 7, Mariners 5: Michael Conforto returned to his hometown and hit a pair of solo home runs as visiting New York rallied after wasting a 4-0 lead.

Padres 3, Pirates 2: Travis Wood (1-0), making his San Diego debut after being acquired Monday from Kansas City, struck out seven over six innings and allowed two runs and two hits.

American makes history with 3 golds

Associated Press

BUDAPEST, Hungary — Caeleb Dressel has become the first swimmer to win three gold medals on a single night at the world championships.

America's newest star turned in a stunning performance, racing three times over the course of about two hours — and winning every time.

He started with a victory in the 50-meter freestyle, came back about a half-hour later to nearly break Michael Phelps' world record in the 100 butterfly and closed the night by leading off a world-record performance in the mixed 4x100 free relay.

Dressel combined with Nathan Adrian, Simone Manuel and Mallory Comerford to win his final gold of the night, setting a new world record by more than three seconds.

That gave Dressel six gold medals in the championships, putting him in position to tie Phelps' record of seven golds at the 2007 worlds in Melbourne,

Australia.

Dressel will close the meet Sunday night on the 4x100 medley relay team.

Katie Ledecky made it five gold medals in her final event of the world championships, cruising to victory in the 800-meter freestyle.

Ledecky wasn't seriously challenged but finished far off her world record with a time of 8 minutes, 12.68 seconds. She won gold at last year's Olympics in 8:04.79.

While Ledecky finished worlds with five golds and a silver, the meet will still be viewed as a bit of a disappointment. She was way off her best times and was edged in the 200 free by Federica Pellegrini.

Sweden's Sarah Sjöström bounced back with a gold medal and a world record.

Sjöström won the 50-meter butterfly in the first event Saturday. She then returned about an hour later in the semifinals of the 50 freestyle to break the world record. Her time of 23.67

seconds eclipsed the mark of 23.73 set by Germany's Britta Steffen in a rubber suit at the 2009 worlds in Rome.

Sjöström won the 50 fly in 24.60. Ranomi Kromowidjojo of the Netherlands captured the silver and Egypt's Farida Osman grabbed the bronze.

On Friday, Simone Manuel backed up her historic victory in Rio de Janeiro by rallying to beat Sjöström in the 100-meter freestyle.

"It's kind of been ingrained in me," said Manuel, who edged Sjöström on the final stroke. "I want to win, and I've been training to do that this whole time."

Last summer, Manuel became the first African-American woman to win an individual swimming gold at the Olympics when she tied Canada's Penny Oleksiak for the top spot on the podium.

"It was a lot of pressure knowing that I was the Olympic gold medalist in that event," Manuel said. "I had a lot of nerves."

Another U.S. Olympic champion came up short in his bid for an individual gold in Budapest.

Ryan Murphy settled for silver in the 200 backstroke behind Russia's Evgeny Rylov, while another American, Jacob Pebley, took the bronze.

Murphy swept the backstroke events last summer in Rio, but he hasn't been quite as sharp in Budapest. He took bronze in the 100 and simply couldn't catch Rylov in the longer event, the Russian finishing in 1 minute, 53.61 second to beat Murphy by a comfortable 0.60 seconds.

Yulia Efimova bested American rival Lilly King in the women's 200 breaststroke, easing a bit of the sting from two silvers in Rio and another loss to King in the 100 breast at Budapest.

In the men's 200 breast, Anton Chupkov held off a pair of Japanese swimmers to claim the world title. Yasuhiro Koseki and Ippei Watanabe snagged the silver and bronze.

Sports briefs

Broncos LB Ray expected to miss 6-8 weeks

Associated Press

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — Just two days into the Denver Broncos' training camp, rookie head coach Vance Joseph has lost two key players to wrist injuries.

Linebacker Shane Ray was to undergo surgery Saturday to repair a torn ligament in his left wrist a day after running back Devontae Booker underwent surgery to repair a hairline fracture in his left wrist that was misdiagnosed for a month as a sprain.

Ray, a first-round pick in 2015, will miss six to eight weeks. The Broncos are hoping to have him back by their third regular-season game, at Buffalo on Sept. 24.

Booker, who is expected to miss six weeks, learned he needed surgery after reporting for his camp physical Wednesday.

Just like Booker had, Ray figured his injury wasn't a big deal at first.

He hurt his wrist Thursday but played through it. On Friday he wore a brace but he fell on it during one of the final drills of

practice and was sent for X-rays.

"It's really weird because it's the same area as Booker," Joseph said. "Booker had the bone that was fractured. [Ray] has the ligament torn that's attached to the same bone that Booker fractured. ... I'm disappointed again for the player more than us. He's worked so hard also, and he's making strides to have a great year."

The Broncos were counting on Ray in a big way this year to take some focus off superstar Von Miller following the retirement of DeMarcus Ware and the offseason hip injury to Shaq Barrett.

Denver's defense features a 3-4 scheme, so having a multitude of pass rushers is essential, and the Broncos now are precariously thin at the position.

Barrett is expected to be back in September along with Ray and Booker.

Preds sign Johansen for \$64M

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — General manager

David Poile has made it clear he's been looking for a top center since first hired to build the Nashville Predators 20 years ago.

He believes he has just that in Ryan Johansen, and that's why the Predators rewarded the 24-year-old center Friday with an eight-year, \$64 million contract. It's the biggest deal the franchise has ever handed out.

"I think he is ready to take that next step to become an elite player in the National Hockey League," Poile said. "Your actions say volumes about what you and how you feel, how this is the longest contract that we've ever given out since I've been here. Eight years, the money is significant, but we feel we got the right man to be our No. 1 center for a lot of years."

The Predators now have Johansen under contract at an average of \$8 million a year through the 2024-25 season, and linemates Filip Forsberg and Viktor Arvidsson are signed for the next five years.