

STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Troops report hike in mental illness over time

By NANCY MONTGOMERY
Stars and Stripes

They got colds in boot camp. In midcareer they were beset by muscle strains, tears and back problems. But at the end, just before separating from the armed forces, servicemembers' most common medical diagnosis was mental health disorders, a new Pentagon study has found.

Mental disorders — almost never diagnosed at the beginning of military service — became the top diagnostic category at the end, according to the study by the Defense Health Agency, which surveyed 45,000 troops who served four to 15 years beginning in 2000 and separated in 2014 and 2015.

The study, published in the June edition of the Monthly Surveillance Military Report, speculated that the increase in mental health diagnoses over time could be attributed partly to the military's "many unique stressors," including combat deployments, frequent moves, long hours and time away from family. The fact that the diagnoses of mental disorders surged around the time of separation might also be due to the negative impact such diagnosis is likely to have on a servicemember's career.

So is serving in the military detrimental to mental health?

"That's one possible conclusion but probably not the best one," said Dr. Harold Kudler, a psychiatrist and Duke University professor who recently retired as chief consultant for the Department of Veteran Affairs' mental health services. "I think the best conclusion is that we're selecting healthy young people and then we're exposing them to significant stressors over time, to the normal wear and tear of being human beings facing the real challenges of military service."

Kudler told Stars and Stripes that the data reflected a number of phenomena, including a growing acceptance in recent years that mental health ailments are common and that reporting and seeking care for them is no disgrace.

"If you go back not that long ago there was a strong sense that [post-traumatic stress disorder] was something that happened to weak people. That really has changed over the years, from being viewed with strong social stigma to something closer to an occupational hazard, which may affect a sizable proportion of servicemembers," said Kudler, who was not involved in the study.

Another likely factor is timing and motivation. Troops in early or midcareer face "disincentives for reporting medical conditions or seeking care," said study authors Capt. Colby Uptegraft, an Air Force physician, and Shauna Stahlman, an epidemiologist at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Those included the possibility of adverse personnel actions such as medical evaluation boards and subsequent medical separation, duty location or deployment limitations, and career field denial or termination, particularly in occupations such as aviation and special forces.

But when servicemembers are about to separate, getting medical diagnoses on their records, including for mental health problems, makes them eligible for VA and disability benefits.

The study appears to be one of the first to analyze medical diagnoses over time of people who separated from the services before retirement.

Kudler said the study reflected "an evolving understanding that mental health problems are very widespread across the general population," particularly among people under stress.

PTSD gains acceptance but not results as criminal defense

(Sioux Falls, S.D.) *Argus Leader*

SIoux FALLS, S.D. — Melissa Solorzano was terrified when her son told her he wanted to go into the military. But it was his dream, so she and her husband supported him.

"There was no dissuading him," she said in a Minnehaha County courtroom last month. "That was what he wanted to do. He was more determined than ever."

When she spoke those words, her son, Garrett Michael Solorzano, was about to be sentenced to prison on a charge of first-degree manslaughter in the stabbing death of his wife, Jennie Lee Smith-Solorzano.

Solorzano in March pleaded guilty but mentally ill to the charge, with his attorneys

claiming that post-traumatic stress disorder from his military service played a role in his actions.

Still, Judge Robin Houwman sentenced him to 150 years in prison, with 70 of those years suspended, adding there was no way to know for certain if it was PTSD, substance abuse or other factors that led Solorzano to stab his wife six times in the neck and head as she slept in February 2016.

State and federal courts have more recently accepted PTSD as a method of criminal defense or claim of insanity, but that doesn't mean judges or juries are swayed, the *Argus Leader* reported. A case study by the *Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law*

found that defendants did not have more success in the court system with PTSD than with other mental disorders in insanity pleas.

"This is a failure of the system," Solorzano's public defender, Betsy Doyle, said at his sentencing.

Solorzano served in the military from February 2000 until his general discharge in 2012. He was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder in 2010. Three medical professionals who evaluated Solorzano said he had PTSD at the time of the 2016 stabbing and during evaluations throughout the case.

The defense rooted its argument in PTSD's power to affect almost every aspect of veterans' lives. Doyle argued that

lack of intervention and oversight by medical providers and loved ones triggered a "perfect storm" that pushed him into abusing controlled substances. Solorzano tested positive for methamphetamine and other drugs hours after the stabbing was thought to have occurred.

Prosecutor Randy Sample countered that the brutal stabbing was too heinous to be justified by "wrapping him (Solorzano) in a flag" and blaming a stress disorder. He called such a defense an insult to other veterans who suffer from post-combat trauma.

"PTSD is not an excuse to slaughter your spouse," he said.

Medical experts say PTSD is not an indicator of violence, and help is available.

Manafort appears in federal court

The Washington Post

Paul Manafort, President Donald Trump's onetime campaign chairman, appeared in federal court in Virginia on Monday for a flurry of motions in advance of his bank- and tax-fraud trial, which is set to begin Wednesday.

The trial will be the first prosecuted by the special counsel investigating Russian interference in the 2016 election, and on Monday morning both sides had their last chance to shape the course of the trial. It was the first time Manafort appeared in court in person since he was jailed by a judge in Washington, where he faces related charges.

The latest filing from the longtime lobbyist and strategist asks Judge T.S. Ellis III to keep from jurors details of the work he did for Ukrainian politician Viktor Yanukovich, who was forced out of power by protests against corruption and fraud.

Manafort is accused of using offshore bank accounts to hide millions of dollars he made working for Yanukovich and his political party.

White House blames Iran for its war of words with Trump

Associated Press

WASHINGTON—The White House on Monday blamed Iranian President Hassan Rouhani for inciting a war of words with President Donald Trump, who warned that verbal threats could escalate into military conflict with the U.S.

Trump, who campaigned on a promise to bring a more hawkish approach to Iran, sent an all-caps tweet late Sunday warning of dire consequences for the longtime foe. "NEVER EVER THREATEN THE UNITED STATES AGAIN OR YOU WILL SUFFER CONSEQUENCES THE LIKES OF WHICH FEW THROUGHOUT HISTORY HAVE EVER SUFFERED BEFORE," he wrote.

Trump was responding to Rouhani, who had remarked earlier in the day that "America must understand well that peace with Iran is the mother of all peace and war with Iran is the mother of all wars."

Within hours, Iran's state-owned news agency IRNA dismissed the tweet, describing it

as a "passive reaction" to Rouhani's remarks.

On Monday, the White House said Trump's tweet shows he is not going to tolerate critical rhetoric from Iran and insisted the U.S. leader isn't escalating tensions between the two countries.

"If anybody's inciting anything, look no further than to Iran," press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said, adding that Trump has been "very clear about what he's not going to allow to take place."

In Tehran, a headline on a local newspaper quoted Rouhani as saying, "Mr. Trump, do not play with the lion's tail."

Prominent Iranian analyst Seed Leilaz downplayed the war of words, saying he thinks it was "the storm before the calm." Leilaz told The Associated Press he was not "worried about the remarks and tweets" and that "neither Iran nor any other country is interested in escalating tensions in the region."

Citing the harsh words the

U.S. and North Korea exchanged before the high-profile summit between Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, Leilaz said Trump and Kim got "closer" despite the warring words.

Trump's eruption on Twitter came after a week of heavy controversy about Russian meddling in the U.S. 2016 election, following the Helsinki summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The tweet was reverberating across the Mideast. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised the U.S. president's "strong stance" after years in which the Iranian "regime was pampered by world powers."

Trump earlier this year pulled the U.S. out of the international deal meant to prevent Tehran from developing a nuclear weapon and ordered increased American sanctions. He also threatened penalties for companies from other countries that continue to do business with Iran.

Congress considers changing oversight of nuclear weapons

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The agency that supervises the nation's nuclear weapons stockpile essentially would lose direct Cabinet oversight under legislation that Congress is negotiating.

The little-noticed provision in a defense policy bill is opposed by the Trump administration and senior lawmakers from both parties, but efforts to scrap it have not overcome resistance from staffers on the Senate Armed Services Committee.

At issue in the Senate-approved bill is whether the National Nuclear Security Administration, or NNSA, remains under the direct control of the

Energy Department, where it's been since its creation in 2000.

The bill would empower that agency to act nearly on its own, freed from what a report by the Senate committee calls a "flawed DOE organizational process" that has led to "weak accountability ... insufficient program and budget expertise and poor contract management."

That report cites a series of delays and cost overruns at the agency, including a contentious project to reprocess weapons-grade plutonium and uranium into fuel for commercial reactors. The cost of the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility in South Carolina has bal-

looned from \$1.4 billion in 2004 to more than \$17 billion and completion is decades away. The Energy Department has moved to cancel the project, but it remains open — at a cost of \$1.2 million per day — amid a legal challenge by the state of South Carolina.

The White House and Energy Secretary Rick Perry strongly oppose the reorganization, saying it would usurp Perry's authority to set policy in crucial areas and would make the nuclear agency's general counsel independent of the Energy Department's legal division.

The White House said in a statement that the bill would block the energy secretary from

directing civil and national security functions at the agency and "degrade" the secretary's ability to protect the health, safety and security of employees and the public.

The NNSA said in a statement that while intended to improve efficiencies, "the changes put forward by the Senate committee would significantly limit the secretary's ability to fulfill his nuclear security missions and ... lead to unnecessary duplication of effort at NNSA for work already being carried out by DOE."

The leaders of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee said the plan was "a major step backward."

Record-breaking heat for US Forces Japan

BY SETH ROBSON

Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Record temperatures are baking the home of U.S. Forces Japan in western Tokyo during a heat wave that has killed more than 30 people over the past week.

The mercury topped 102 degrees Fahrenheit on Monday at Yokota, said Senior Airman Darion DuVerney, 23, a forecaster with the 374th Operational Support Squadron.

“It was the hottest-ever July temperature,” she said, noting that the Air Force has kept heat records at the Pacific airlift hub since 1948.

In the nearby city of Ome,

the temperature hit 105 degrees Monday, making it the second-hottest spot in the country after Kumagaya in neighboring Saitama prefecture, where the mercury soared to nearly 106 degrees — a new Japanese record — according to the Japan Meteorological Agency.

The sizzling conditions have hospitalized thousands, caused dozens of deaths and hindered relief efforts in western Japan, where recent floods killed more than 200 people. The heat wave is caused by a ridge of high pressure that’s parked over Japan and drawing hot air from the south, DuVerney said. “It looks like it will continue,” she added.

The heat wave is expected to

last into August, the Japan Meteorological Agency said Monday afternoon.

The hottest temperature on record at Yokota was 104 degrees on Sept. 3, 1984.

Authorities at the base are warning airmen about heat stress in temperatures above 90 degrees. Heat-warning signs on base read: “The risk of heat-related injury or illness is severe. For heavy work in hot environments, only emergency and mission critical tasks should be conducted outdoors, implement work and rest cycles as appropriate.”

Personnel should rest 10 minutes for every 50 minutes of light work, 40 minutes for every 20

minutes of moderate work and 50 minutes for every 10 minutes of heavy work, according to the heat warning.

Military operations have continued, although some personnel were spotted carrying sun umbrellas Monday as they worked on the wing of a C-130J Hercules cargo plane.

Maj. Christopher Stover, of Jersey City, N.J., said he brought a warm jersey when he arrived at Yokota last week on temporary duty with the Maryland Air National Guard.

“It’s my first time in Japan, and I didn’t know if I’d need warm or cold weather clothes,” he said.

Duterte’s annual address delayed by turmoil

Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — A leadership row erupted in the Philippine House of Representatives on live TV on Monday, delaying President Rodrigo Duterte’s delivery of his annual state of the nation address and passage of a crucial Muslim rebel autonomy deal.

As Duterte arrived on a helicopter in the heavily secured congressional complex, Rep. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, backed by dozens of allied legislators, took the main seat in the center stage of the House’s ple-

nary hall in a sign that she was taking over the post of House Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez.

Arroyo, a former president, tried to speak from the stage during the dramatic standoff but her microphone was turned off. She tried to yell, apparently to explain what was happening, but later stepped away from the stage, waving at the crowd.

Alvarez, along with Senate President Vicente Sotto III, fetched Duterte and led the visibly confused leader to a holding room as the dispute over House leadership unfolded in

the chamber, which was packed with diplomats, legislators and other dignitaries for Duterte’s speech. Alvarez and Arroyo are both Duterte allies.

The leadership row earlier prevented the House from ratifying a Muslim autonomy deal that many hope will settle one of Asia’s longest-raging Muslim separatist rebellions.

Earlier Monday, the Senate unanimously ratified the bill, which aims to establish a new Bangsamoro autonomous region in the country’s south, but House members adjourned

early due to the leadership row. The government negotiated the pact for more than two decades with the country’s largest Muslim rebel group.

Duterte had been expected to sign the autonomy bill into law as early as Monday and highlight it in his state of the nation speech as an early legacy of his presidency, which has come under heavy criticism over his human rights record and deadly anti-drug crackdown.

Thousands of protesters rallied outside the House, where Duterte was to speak.

Young Marines gain appreciation for fight to free Guam

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE

Stars and Stripes

PITI, Guam — First Lt. Joshua Hays squinted as a relentless morning sun bore down upon him. He looked at his watch and pointed across Guam’s Asan Beach, which stretched before him and a group of junior Marines from the 3rd Marine Division.

“In 5-4-3-2-1 — so 0829 — the first wave had just hit

the shore!” Hays shouted. The Marines peered into the “devil’s horns,” an area between two natural rock formations where their predecessors landed under heavy fire to retake Guam from the Imperial Japanese on July 21, 1944.

“They are heavily in contact,” Hays told the group late last week during a tour of Guam battle sites ahead of Saturday’s 74th Liberation Day anniversary. “In approximately 15 to 30

minutes from now, 3rd Marine Regiment would already have 375 casualties ... dead.”

Approximately 55,000 American servicemembers from the 3rd Marine Division, the 1st Provisional Brigade and the Army’s 77th Infantry Division fought a fierce battle with an entrenched Japanese force of about 20,000 to liberate Guam.

The U.S. lost 1,880 troops on the tiny U.S. territory in the western Pacific, with nearly

6,000 wounded. All but 1,250 Japanese were killed, according to the Marine Corps.

Though organized resistance was declared over on Aug. 10, 1944, thousands of Japanese took to the jungles and had to be hunted down and killed over the next year.

The people of Guam — all U.S. citizens — suffered 1,170 deaths during the occupation, with another 14,721 surviving various atrocities.

UK is silent over US death penalty for accused jihadis

Associated Press

LONDON — A furor has erupted over leaked documents showing that British officials are not requiring their U.S. counterparts to provide assurances that two suspected British jihadis loyal to Islamic State will not be executed if they eventually are put on trial in the U.S.

The Daily Telegraph said Monday it had seen a letter from Home Secretary Sajid Javid to U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions concerning two individuals who have been in custody since their capture in eastern Syria in January. The two men, Alexandra Kotey and El Shafee Elsheikh, are accused of being part of a notorious cell of British jihadis known for their barbaric treatment of hostages. They got the nickname “the Beatles” because of their British accents. The most prominent member of the group, known as “Jihadi John,” was killed in a 2015 drone strike.

In 2014 and 2015, the group held more than 20 Western hostages in Syria and tortured many of them. It beheaded seven American, British and Japanese journalists and aid workers and a group of Syrian soldiers, boasting of the butchery in grisly videos.

The newspaper said Javid told Sessions that Britain would not seek “assurances” that the two would not be executed, which has caused controversy because Britain is a long-standing opponent of the death penalty. Britain typically does not send prisoners to other countries if they face possible execution.

Amnesty International UK spokesman Allan Hogarth said Britain should not abandon its opposition to the death penalty despite the appalling crimes that Kotey and Elsheikh are accused of.

“This is a deeply worrying development,” he said. “The Home Secretary must unequivocally insist that Britain’s long-standing position on the death penalty has not changed and seek cast-iron assurances from the U.S. that it will not be used.”

The discussion between the countries involves Britain providing information that might be used against the two in a future prosecution in the U.S.

A spokeswoman for British Prime Minister Theresa May said she is aware of the letter. The spokeswoman said Britain remains opposed to the death penalty in all circumstances but views it as a “priority” to make sure these two men face criminal prosecution.

Official: 4 civilians slain in Afghan mosque attack

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Gunmen opened fire on worshippers inside a mosque in eastern Nangarhar province, killing four people, according to a provincial official.

Attahullah Khogyani, the provincial governor’s spokesman, said three other people, including the mosque’s religious leader, were wounded in the attack, which took place Sunday evening in the district of Surkh Rod.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack,

but both the Taliban and Islamic State militants are active in eastern Afghanistan, especially in Nangarhar province.

Earlier Sunday, an ISIS suicide bomber struck near Kabul’s airport, killing 20 people and narrowly missing Afghanistan’s vice president, who was returning home after living in Turkey for more than a year.

Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum, a former Uzbek warlord, and his entourage were unharmed, but more than 70 other people were wounded, according to Hashmat Stanekzai, spokesman for the Kabul’s police chief.

Man shooting into Toronto cafes hits 13 people, kills 2

Associated Press

TORONTO — A man walked along a Toronto street firing a handgun into restaurants and cafes, shooting 13 people and killing two before dying after an exchange of gunfire with police.

Police Chief Mark Saunders did not rule out terrorism as a motive, though officials did not immediately identify the attacker, other than to say he was 29 years old.

Sunday night’s mass shooting, just three months after the driver of a van plowed into pedestrians on a Toronto sidewalk, killing 10 people, shook the confidence of many in this normally safe city.

The dead included a 10-year-old girl and an 18-year-old woman, Saunders told a news conference on Monday. The 13 wounded ranged in age from 10 to 59 and suffered injuries ranging from serious to minor, he said. He did not name the victims.

Dr. Najma Ahmed of St. Michael’s hospital said her hospital has five patients who are in serious or critical condition and said that three of the five underwent immediate lifesaving operations. The condition of the other victims at other hospitals was not immediately known. A video from one witness shows a man dressed in black clothes and a black hat walking quickly and firing three shots from the sidewalk into at least one shop or restaurant in Greektown, a lively residential area with Greek restaurants and cafes.

Witnesses heard many shots and described the suspect walking past restaurants and cafes and patios on both sides of the street and firing into them.

John Tulloch said he and his brother had just gotten out of their car when he heard about

20 to 30 gunshots.

“We just ran. We saw people starting to run so we just ran,” he said.

Tanya Wilson was closing her tattoo shop when a mother and a son ran into her store with gunshot wounds to their legs.

“They said they were walking and a man told them to get the hell out his way and he just shot them,” Wilson said.

Wilson said she tied and elevated their wounds and tried to keep them calm while they waited for paramedics. She locked the door and shut off the lights, not knowing what was happening outside.

Jody Steinhauer was celebrating her birthday with family at Christina’s restaurant on Danforth Avenue when they heard 10 to 15 shots. They ran to the back and hid under a table.

“We heard a woman yell help. My partner went outside the restaurant and the woman was right there. She had been shot,” she said.

Her boyfriend and a doctor who was in the restaurant attended to the woman, who was shot in the thigh. “She was screaming and yelling and in shock. Nobody was with her. That was the scary part,” she said.

An army of police, paramedics and other first responders descended on the scene while people, some in their pajamas, emerged from their homes to see what was happening.

Toronto Councilor Paula Fletcher said during a council meeting that the attack was “not gang-related” and said the gunman was shooting “indiscriminately” into restaurants and into a park.

“I know we always say that can’t happen here when we see those gunmen in the states doing the same thing and it has happened here now,” she said.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Fire destroys vehicles at town's auction lot

NJ BORDENTOWN — Authorities said fire destroyed about 40 vehicles at a lot in New Jersey but no injuries were reported.

Emergency officials in Burlington County said the blaze at Manheim Auto Auction in Mansfield Township was reported at 5:46 a.m. Sunday.

The blaze spread to about 40 vehicles before the fire was declared under control.

Man who fed wildlife at home bitten by bear

NM ALAMOGORDO — Officials said a 70-year-old southern New Mexico man who regularly fed wildlife at his home suffered multiple injuries when he was bitten by a bear as he stepped outside.

The state Game and Fish Department said conservation officers went to the man's Cloudcroft home Friday after his wife drove him to an Alamogordo hospital for treatment of injuries that included arm puncture wounds and leg scratches.

According to the department, the man acknowledged feeding wildlife and said multiple bears routinely entered the residence.

Suspect in 9 bank robberies kills self

CA GOLETA — A California man suspected in at least nine bank robberies throughout the state killed himself just hours after holding up one last bank, authorities said.

A male suspect flashed a gun and presented a note demanding cash from a teller at a bank in Goleta on Friday, according to the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office. After getting away with an undisclosed amount of money, the suspect drove to a

nearby nail salon and locked himself inside a bathroom, officials said.

Police evacuated about 15 people and surrounded the small business. They later entered the building with a dog team and found Keith David Goodwin, 41, of Fresno dead in the bathroom from a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head, a sheriff's statement said.

Police: Off-duty cop shot himself in leg

NY NEW YORK — Police said an off-duty police officer from Long Island accidentally shot himself in the leg while firing at men who assaulted him in the Bronx.

The NYPD said the Hempstead officer shot two men who were attacking him Saturday morning and then shot his own leg.

Police said the incident started when a car rear-ended the officer's vehicle. When the officer tried to inspect the damage, the two men in the other car and two men from a third car confronted the officer and assaulted him.

Police said the officer shot one man in the abdomen and another in the back. The officer and the two men he shot were treated for injuries that weren't life-threatening.

Sunscreen is free in 11 state parks

VT MORRISTOWN — New England Cable News reported that 11 Vermont state parks have free sunscreen dispensers.

NECN reported that Vermont health officials said Vermont ranks behind only Utah in the nation when it comes to per-capita rate of new melanoma cases, most caused by UV exposure.

The Vermont Health Department and Vermont Department

of Forests, Parks and Recreation teamed with the nonprofit IMPACT Melanoma to scatter the dispensers around the state.

3 drown along state's coast in just 1 day

NC WILMINGTON — The deadly season along North Carolina's coast continues as three people died in waters along the southeastern coast.

Media outlets reported the drownings occurred Saturday off Wrightsville Beach, Holden Beach and Sunset Beach.

Coastline Rescue Chief David Robinson said a surfer pulled a 20-year-old drowned man from the waters off Holden Beach. Robinson said officials believe the man got caught in a rip current.

He said another person drowned at Sunset Beach while trying to help someone else. Robinson said the person being rescued is believed to have survived.

At Wrightsville Beach, fire Chief Glen Rogers said a lifeguard pulled a middle-aged man from the water. He died at the scene.

5 people charged in sewer grate thefts

MA NEWBURYPORT — Police in Massachusetts said several men are being charged in a streak of sewer grate thefts.

A Newburyport police officer was dispatched to an area of the city near Franklin Street after reports of young men stealing a sewer grate. The investigation led the officer to a residence where five 21-year-old males were accused of being responsible for the vandalism. They're each charged with nine counts of vandalism of property.

Police determined nine sewer grates were taken in the city.

One of the men was from Newburyport, two others from Salisbury and one was from Kingston, N.H.

State bans smoking at beaches, parks

NJ LONG BRANCH — New Jersey's governor has signed a bill banning smoking at public beaches and parks unless local communities explicitly opt out and set aside a small smoking section.

Democratic Gov. Phil Murphy was in Long Branch on Friday morning to sign a measure that was passed by the state Legislature last month.

Like previous versions of the bill that failed, the bill doesn't specify who would be responsible for enforcing it.

Murphy said it shouldn't be lifeguards but left it to towns to decide enforcement. The bill takes effect in six months and allows for designated smoking areas on 15 percent of a beach. Smokers also would be allowed to light up in parking lots.

Alligator surprises woman in backyard

PA PROSPECT PARK — A Pennsylvania woman who was admiring a turtle in her backyard said she was surprised to find an alligator just a few feet away.

Tracie Hoffecker said she found the 2- to 3-foot-long alligator near her home in Prospect Park on Sunday morning.

Hoffecker called her cousin, who is a Philadelphia firefighter, and he safely removed the alligator using a net.

Slimy, Scaly, Taily Reptile Rescue was called to the scene and recovered the animal. Rescue group representative Matt Snider said the alligator will go to an aquarium.

From wire reports

STARS AND STRIPES

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Italy's Molinari triumphs at British Open

Associated Press

CARNOUSTIE, Scotland — There is nothing flashy about Francesco Molinari except for the players he keeps beating.

He was a forgotten figure when he teed off in the final round of the British Open, mainly because he was playing with Tiger Woods, and because of the star power around him. Jordan Spieth was tied for the lead. Rory McIlroy was one shot behind Molinari.

"If someone was expecting a charge, they probably weren't expecting it from me," he said. "But it's been the same the whole of my career."

His name etched into the silver claret jug should help with that.

Now that's flashy.

And it wasn't an accident. The 35-year-old Italian was the hottest player in golf in the two months leading up to the British Open with two victories and two runner-up finishes. All he did at the BMW PGA Championship was go head-to-head with McIlroy in the final round and beat him by two. A month later, he shot 62 in the final round to win the Quicken Loans National, with Woods as the tournament host — he tied for fourth that day — presenting him the trophy.

Carnoustie tempered some of that confidence.

Reputed to be the toughest links in golf, especially in the 20-mph gusts that finally arrived Sunday, Molinari stopped playing the Dunhill Links Championship because that one stop on the three-course rotation ate him up.

"I got beaten up around here a few times already in the past," Molinari said. "I didn't

particularly enjoy that feeling."

And yet there he was in the final round, with major champions in front of him and behind him and the biggest one of them all — Woods — next to him in a final round so wild that seven players had a share of the lead at various times, and six players were tied on the back nine.

McIlroy and former U.S. Open champion Justin Rose made a charge. Woods and Spieth were among five contenders to make double bogeys.

In the midst of such great theater, Molinari made his biggest move by not going anywhere at all. He opened with 13 pars, including the 12th and 13th holes as Woods lost the lead with a double bogey and a bogey.

Molinari took the lead for the first time with a two-putt birdie on the par-5 14th. He made one more birdie on the final hole by hitting a drive that narrowly avoided a pot bunker, leaving him a lob wedge to 5 feet for a birdie that secured his place in history as Italy's first major champion.

"That putt on the last, I'll never forget," he said.

Molinari closed with a 69, significant for two reasons. He was the only player from the final two groups to break par, and he didn't make a bogey over the last 37 holes.

"He's been playing unbelievable golf. He's been working his butt off," Spieth said. "I see him in the gym all the time, going through his routine, grinding on the range, doing his own stuff. It truly is hard work that paid off for Francesco. I'm certainly happy for him. I've watched this through the PGA Tour this year day in and day out, seeing him work as hard as anyone else."

Solid off the tee, suspect at times on the green, Molinari first showed his potential in a World Golf Championship in Shanghai in 2010 when Lee Westwood made his debut at No. 1 in the world. Westwood beat everyone else by nine shots in the HSBC Champions and lost by one to Molinari.

That was the second win of his career for Molinari, and remained his biggest win against a strong field until he arrived at Carnoustie.

Molinari, whose older brother Edoardo won the 2005 U.S. Amateur and played with him in the 2010 Ryder Cup, comes from a country known more for soccer and skiing than golf. They had their chance at glory two decades ago. Molinari was 12 and watching on TV when Costantino Rocca rolled in that putt across the Valley of Sin on the 18th at St. Andrews to force a playoff with John Daly in the 1995 British Open.

Daly wound up winning the four-hole playoff. Rocca was paired in the final round with Woods two years later at the 1997 Masters, but that wasn't much of a contest.

Now, Italy has the champion golfer of the year.

"The last round already was big news in Italy," Molinari said. "Obviously, to achieve something like this is on another level. Hopefully, there were a lot of young kids watching on TV today, like I was watching Costantino in '95 coming so close. Hopefully, they will get as inspired as I was at the time, watching him vie for the claret jug."

The victory was the seventh of his career, and it moved him to No. 6 in the world, right in front of McIlroy and Spieth.

He's in good company.

Spieth's title defense fizzles out in final round

Associated Press

CARNOUSTIE, Scotland — Defending champion Jordan Spieth wasn't the only one struggling to gain traction on the wind-swept final day at Carnoustie.

But he was one of just two in the 79-player field who failed to make birdie, shooting 76 and sliding from a three-way tie atop the leaderboard at 9 under at the start into a tie for ninth by the end. A bogey, double-bogey run at Nos. 5 and 6 let a handful of contenders squeeze past Spieth, who owns three major championships, and bogeys at two of the last four holes killed

his chance of catching up.

"When you put yourself in position enough times, it goes your way sometimes, it doesn't go your way sometimes," said Spieth, who wound up at 4-under 280.

"I didn't play the wind the right way on those two holes," he added. "I was trying to fight it instead of accepting that the wind is going to win out here."

Sung Kang shared the dubious honor of carding a birdie-free round.

Spieth, who turns 25 next week, knew fighting the wind would take patience. The Texan felt he passed that test.

"You knew you'd have three, four good looks at birdies, and the rest of the holes, you were just going to try to position it to make par. I knew that going in," he said. "I played patiently. Never got down on myself. Never got angry."

More importantly, Spieth's putting stroke restored his confidence, which should extend through the rest of the bag.

"My game is back," he said. "So I'm actually very pleased coming out of this week."

'It's a funny game': Eddie Pepperell shot the low round on the final day and held the clubhouse lead until fellow English-

man Justin Rose swiped it.

Not one to look back, Pepperell didn't waste time wondering what might have been.

"I was a little hung over. I won't lie. I had too much to drink last night," he said after shooting 67 and finishing in a three-way tie for sixth. "I was so frustrated yesterday (after shooting 71) that today was really, I wouldn't say a write-off, but I didn't feel I was in the golf tournament.

"Whether I shot 69 or 73 today, it wouldn't have been heartbreaking. But as it happens, I shot 67. So you know," he added, "It's a funny game."

Harvick bumps Busch for win

Associated Press

LOUDON, N.H. — Kevin Harvick warned he was charging for the lead with taps on Kyle Busch's rear bumper during the waning laps. Harvick had failed to methodically work his way around the race leader with a clean pass, so he set aim with his Ford on Busch for the knockout shot.

Harvick nudged the right side of the Toyota and jostled Busch out of his groove and three lanes up the track. He zipped to the front with a textbook bump-and-run that led to a beer-soaked celebration and left Busch fuming — the move of the race in another stellar showcase for the leader of the Big Three.

Harvick outdueled Busch during the final 10 laps to win a thrilling battle of two of NASCAR's dominant drivers Sunday at New Hampshire Motor Speedway.

"I felt like it was my best opportunity to do what I had to do to win," Harvick said. "I didn't want to wreck him. But I didn't want to waste a bunch of time behind him."

Busch, the temperamental 2015 series champion, had a different view.

"I think he could have made the move work cleaner than that," Busch said.

Busch said he expected for Harvick to keep trying for the decisive pass until there were about two or three laps left.

"I figured that's exactly what he was thinking," Harvick said, smiling. "I knew I needed to take the opportunity as soon as I could get it. We needed to do it when he wasn't expecting it."

Harvick crew chief Rodney Childers had exhorted Harvick over the radio to do what he needed to do to snag that checkered flag.

"He was in the lane that I needed to be in and as you get to the end," Harvick said, "you've got to be aggressive."

Harvick raced to his sixth victory of the season for Stewart-Haas Racing and finished in the top two in some order

with Busch for the fourth time this year.

Harvick, Busch and Martin Truex Jr. — NASCAR's Big Three — have won a combined 15 times in the 20 Cup races. Busch has five wins and Truex, who was fourth Sunday, has four.

There was nearly an outlier in a race delayed more than three hours by rain.

Aric Almirola, who replaced retired Danica Patrick this season in the No. 10 Ford, threatened to crash the party and win his second career Cup race. He led for more than 40 laps late until he was derailed by a poor pit stop and then spun his tires on a restart that likely cost him his first win since July 2014.

"You think I'd be happy," he said.

Not in this race.

But it was a banner weekend for SHR: Kurt Busch won the pole and finished eighth; and Harvick and Almirola placed in the top five.

Almirola, though, was the latest also-ran to realize drivers have to be flawless to catch any of the Big Three.

Harvick, who won his 43rd career race, made the perfect pass in New Hampshire.

Harvick reeled off three straight victories at Atlanta, Las Vegas and Phoenix and went back-to-back in May at Dover and Kansas. It had been seven races since he reached Victory Lane.

He found the way again in the No. 4 Ford to celebrate again for Stewart-Haas Racing. His six wins are a career-best, topping the five he reached in his 2014 championship season and 2006.

One and done: New Hampshire hosted its only Cup weekend of the season because track owner Speedway Motorsports Inc. transferred the fall play-off race to Las Vegas Motor Speedway. New Hampshire ran its first Cup race in 1993 and got a second date in 1997.

The track will fill the open date in September with the NASCAR Modified Tour. New Hampshire also plans to hold a

country music festival in 2019.

Track general manager Dave McGrath said there was a modest ticket bump from Sunday's race compared to last July. He did not reveal attendance numbers.

"There's no significant drop year over year. We're holding our own," McGrath said. "I wish that everybody that was here in September was here in July but I think that's going to take a few years for that to truly take hold. The good news is, that level, steady [crowd] is a big win in my book. That clearly shows we're keeping those that we had and it's our job now to find that next group to come and be part of the weekend."

Working for the weekend: Loverboy played the pre-race concert in the rain.

Loverboy's song "Heaven in Your Eyes" was on the "Top Gun" soundtrack in 1986 and Tom Cruise recently started filming the sequel "Top Gun: Maverick."

Lead singer Mike Reno said he recorded a song he hoped would be used in the movie.

"We recorded it and I sent it out. I don't know if they're going to take it," Reno said. "I'm hoping they pick some nice retro music, rather than go with the new stuff. When you listen to the song we recorded for the new 'Top Gun,' you can almost hear the jets flying by."

Safety first: New England Patriots safety Patrick Chung had been scheduled to drive the pace car for the race until rain hit.

Chung declined to discuss the NFL's national anthem debate that was reignited this week.

"Can't worry about things you can't control. It is what it is," Chung said.

Chung said he was ready for the Patriots to start training camp and put the Super Bowl loss to the Philadelphia Eagles behind them.

"That game sucked," he said.

Browns WR Gordon to miss camp

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Days before training camp opens, the Cleveland Browns learned Josh Gordon will be missing again.

The troubled wide receiver said on Twitter he will be continuing his recovery from addictions that have derailed his career and have threatened his life.

There is no timetable for his return. He is a major part of Cleveland's plans for 2018, but those now could be on hold.

Gordon, 27, has been suspended numerous times by the NFL for drug violations. He missed two full years after he was suspended indefinitely and he hasn't played a full season since 2013, when he led the league in yards receiving and scored nine touchdowns.

While Gordon's posting on social media was vague, NFL spokesman Brian McCarthy said the player has not been suspended.

"We will address the matter at the appropriate time," McCarthy said in an email to The Associated Press.

In recent weeks, speculation that Gordon failed a drug test circulated on social media. But it wasn't until Monday's message that it became known he could be sidelined again.

"I am reaching out to you all personally and letting you know that I am not only doing great physically but mentally as well," Gordon wrote in a statement directed to "my Cleveland Browns and NFL Family."

"You will notice that I will not be in Cleveland for the start of training camp. Rest assured, this, too, is a part of my overall health and treatment plan. I appreciate the awesome support I have received from teammates, friends, fans, and the Browns organization. Just like you, I am excited to start the season and I have every intention of being ready and available to join my teammates soon to help bring winning football to our fans."

Gordon missed the entire 2015 and 2016 seasons before returning for the final five games last season.

New-look Dodgers blow out slumping Brewers

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — The Los Angeles Dodgers are a hit at the plate with new shortstop Manny Machado.

Matt Kemp could be the biggest beneficiary in what was already a potent lineup.

Kemp hit two solo homers and Machado drove in his first run since joining the Dodgers, who pounded out 15 hits in an 11-2 win over the Milwaukee Brewers on Sunday.

Chris Taylor had three RBIs for the NL West leaders, who scored five runs in the second and fifth innings. They took two of three against the Brewers in their first series since acquiring Machado in a trade with Baltimore during the All-Star break.

“You throw a guy like that in our lineup that is already dangerous, and it makes it even worse for the other team,” Kemp said.

Machado went 2-for-5, doubling home a run in the second. He extended his on-base streak to a career high-tying 22 games going back to his time with the Orioles.

“We can have a huge inning against anyone at any time, so just keeping the guys in it and keeping the game close,” said

left-hander Alex Wood, who won his fifth straight decision. “I just want those guys to go to work.”

Milwaukee has dropped eight of nine to fall to 3½ games behind the first-place Chicago Cubs in the NL Central.

“We got our butts kicked today but it’s one game. We’ll come back tomorrow,” manager Craig Counsell said.

Both of Kemp’s shots came off lefty Brent Suter (8-7), including a long blast to left-center to open the second. Kemp went deep to right-center in the third for a 6-2 lead, giving him 17 homers for the season.

Wood (6-5) allowed five hits and walked three in six innings. He settled down after yielding a two-run single to Travis Shaw in the first.

“I thought today wasn’t his sharpest day but he just willed himself to get through six innings,” Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said.

Glove work: Questionable defense by the Brewers contributed to both of the Dodgers’ big innings.

In the second, backpedaling first baseman Ryan Braun couldn’t get to a high pop

in short right with Keon Broxton charging in behind him, allowing Kike Hernandez to reach with nobody on. Hernandez scored three batters later on a two-out, two-run single by Taylor.

Cody Bellinger led off the fifth with a triple after his hit caromed off the wall in right before bouncing past Broxton. Bellinger scored after the next batter, Max Muncy, hit a hard bouncer that Braun couldn’t handle cleanly going to his right at first. Braun, who is primarily an outfielder, was charged with an error.

Regular first baseman Jesus Aguilar had the day off because of sore hamstrings. The team’s other primary first baseman, Eric Thames, is on the disabled list with a sore right hamstring.

Braun made his 11th start this season at first, though he hasn’t played the position much lately in part because of a recent DL stint for a strained back.

“It caught up with us today a little bit,” Counsell said.

Braun’s tough day extended to the plate, where he went 0-for-4 and stranded seven runners.

Roundup

Sale wins 5th straight, leads Red Sox over Tigers

Associated Press

DETROIT — Chris Sale is drawing comparisons from his manager to another dominant left-hander.

“He’s reminding me a lot of Randy — Randy Johnson,” Boston manager Alex Cora said. “The thing with Randy, it looked like he was always grinding. With [Sale] it looks effortless right now.”

Sale struck out nine in six scoreless innings, and Jackie Bradley Jr. hit a three-run homer to lift the Red Sox to a 9-1 victory over the Detroit Tigers on Sunday. Sale allowed two hits, lowered his ERA to an American League-best 2.13 and won his sixth straight decision.

The Red Sox are 19-4 in their last 23 games, and the AL East leaders cruised through the finale of this series after scoring just one run in the previous two nights at Detroit.

Blaine Hardy (3-3) allowed four runs and five hits in three-plus innings. Jeimer Candelar-

io homered for the Tigers in the seventh.

Sale (11-4) has won each of his last five starts, allowing one run in 33 innings in that span. He had gone five straight starts with at least 11 strikeouts — and only one walk in each — but that streak came to an end when he was lifted Sunday after 99 pitches.

Cubs 7, Cardinals 2: At Chicago, Matt Carpenter’s streak of consecutive games with home runs ended at six as Jose Quintana (9-6) allowed two runs and six hits in seven innings.

Athletics 6, Giants 5: Jeurys Familia got the win in his debut for host Oakland when Marcus Semien scored from second base on Matt Chapman’s infield chopper in the 10th inning.

Angels 14, Astros 5: Mike Trout drove in a teammate for the first time in more than a month for host Los Angeles, homering to cap a seven-run burst in seventh inning.

Blue Jays 5, Orioles 4:

Yangervis Solarte hit a go-ahead, two-run homer in the eighth inning off Tanner Scott (1-2), and Toronto rallied from a 4-1 deficit to complete a three-game home sweep.

Padres 10, 0; Phillies 2, 5: Vince Velasquez (6-8) allowed two hits over seven innings, struck out seven and walked one to gain the split; Philadelphia widened its NL East lead to one game over visiting Atlanta.

Pirates 9, Reds 2: Corey Dickerson homered for the fourth time in three days, and visiting Pittsburgh extended a winning streak to nine for the first time since June 2013.

Nationals 6, Braves 2: At Washington, Bryce Harper homered and Max Scherzer (13-5) won his third straight start, striking out seven in six innings while allowing two runs and eight hits.

Rays 6, Marlins 4: At St. Petersburg, Fla., pinch-hitter Daniel Robertson connected for a game-ending grand slam

off Kyle Barraclough (0-4).

Royals 5, Twins 3: Slow-footed catcher Drew Butera broke a 2-2 tie with a three-run, inside-the-park home run off visiting Minnesota’s Zach Duke (3-4) when center fielder Jake Cave failed in his attempt to make a diving catch in the seventh inning.

Rangers 5, Indians 0: Rougned Odor drove in three runs, Ryan Rua hit a two-run homer and host Texas withstood the heat on a 108-degree afternoon to stop a four-game losing streak.

Diamondbacks 6, Rockies 1: Zack Greinke (11-5) allowed two hits and struck out a season-high 13 in eight innings to stop visiting Colorado’s seven-game winning streak and move Arizona back into second in the NL West, 1½ games behind the Dodgers.

Mariners 8, White Sox 2: At Seattle, Ryon Healy hit a pair of three-run homers for a career-best six RBIs.