

STARS AND STRIPES®

Sunday, July 29, 2018

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Ceremony planned for repatriated remains

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — The U.S. military plans a ceremony Wednesday to honor the 55 cases of remains handed over by North Korea last week. But it's likely to be a long time before the identities of those inside can be verified.

North Korea's decision to allow the U.S. to send a cargo plane to collect the remains on Friday partially fulfilled a promise its leader made during his June 12 summit with President Donald Trump.

Trump hailed it as "a great moment for so many families" and thanked North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

The next step will be to send the remains to a military lab in Hawaii where they will undergo a lengthy forensics process.

U.S. officials also are eager to resume searches in North Korea for more remains, an effort that has been stalled for more than a decade due to rising nuclear

tensions.

More than 7,600 American servicemembers remain missing from the 1950-53 Korean War, which ended in an armistice instead of a peace treaty.

"Just over 1,000 men are unrecovered" from the so-called Demilitarized Zone and nearby buffer zones, according to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, or DPAA.

Gen. Vincent Brooks, commander of U.S. Forces Korea and United Nations Command, will host a full honors ceremony on Wednesday for the remains, which were flown to Osan Air Base.

"Immediately following that ceremony, the remains will be flown to Hawaii for further processing under the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency," the UNC said Friday.

Once the remains are in Hawaii, staff at the DPAA laboratory, which bills itself as the "largest and most diverse skeletal identification laboratory in the world," will use a variety of

methods to try to identify each set of remains.

Forensic anthropologists will try to develop a biological profile, including sex, race, height and age at death. They'll also look at the condition of bones for hints of trauma and medical conditions as well as other clues. Also valuable will be any bits of clothing, dog tags or other personal effects returned with the remains.

Scientists also test DNA, which can be compared with family reference samples that are kept on file. The DPAA has family reference samples for more than 90 percent of the missing servicemembers, said spokesman Lt. Col. Kenneth Hoffman.

Dental evidence and chest radiograph comparisons are other important indicators.

Hoffman said the military has a database of X-ray images of rib cages of thousands of American servicemembers.

"The clavicle is actually as unique as your fingerprint," he said in an email.

"No loss is resolved by one single piece of evidence," he added. "Identifications are made based upon multiple lines of evidence — both scientific and historical."

Meanwhile, the boxes holding the remains returned Friday were draped in blue U.N. flags, as 15 other nations fought under the banner alongside the U.S. during the war.

Some cases have taken decades to resolve. As recently as last month, a South Korean soldier whose remains were found by search teams in North Korea in 2001 finally was returned home.

The DPAA has received about 630 sets of remains from unilateral turnovers and field recovery missions, Hoffman said, adding that "not all were American remains."

So far, 339 identifications have been made, "approximately 80 percent of what we believe to be American from those sources," he said.

New Pacific Air Forces head takes over

BY WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — Gen. Charles Brown Jr. on Thursday became the 14th four-star general to lead Pacific Air Forces.

But Brown sounded more like a wide-eyed teenager than a battle-tested fighter pilot and leader during a ceremony at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, where he assumed command shortly after being pinned with that fourth star.

"It is totally awesome to be here today," he said to a large audience gathered under a cavernous hangar.

Recalling his first oath of office while an ROTC cadet, he said: "I never really believed I'd get this far. Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine that I'd be standing here on the platform today, wearing a fourth star and taking command of PACAF."

Brown replaces interim PACAF head Lt. Gen. Jerry Martinez, who is also commander of U.S. Forces Japan. Martinez put on the extra hat in April after PACAF Commander Gen. Terrence O'Shaughnessy became head of U.S. Northern Command.

Brown was commissioned in

1984 and received a master's degree in aeronautical science in 1994. He has commanded a fighter squadron, the U.S. Air Force Weapons School and two fighter wings, including the 8th Fighter Wing, dubbed the "Wolf Pack," at Kunsan Air Base, South Korea.

"In your new commander, PACAF has a joint airman who is recognized as one of the top team builders, warfighting experts, leaders, warriors — not only in the Air Force but in the entire U.S. military," Gen. Stephen Wilson, Air Force vice chief of staff, told the airmen assembled at the ceremony.

"That's why he's the right leader at the right time."

Brown commanded U.S. air forces in Southwest Asia from 2015 to 2016 and for the past two years has been deputy commander of U.S. Central Command. In those roles, Wilson said, Brown "was the architect of the air war that decimated the Islamic State" in Iraq.

Brown now commands about 46,000 airmen and civilian personnel based primarily in Hawaii, Alaska, Japan, Guam and South Korea. Roughly 320 fighter and attack aircraft are assigned to Pacific Air Forces, with another 100 aircraft rotating on deployments to Guam.

Army Garrison Stuttgart ex-provost marshal gets prison for choking wife

BY WILL MORRIS
Stars and Stripes

KLEBER KASERNE, Germany — The former Director of Emergency Services for U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart was sentenced to 18 months in prison Friday and was ordered to be dismissed from the Army for choking his wife during a fight in their home a year ago.

Former Provost Marshal Maj. Jay Guerrero, a 14-year veteran of the Army who served as head of Stuttgart's military police and firefighters, pleaded guilty Friday to aggravated assault.

According to court testimony, on the morning of July 27, 2017, Guerrero and his wife got into an argument, one of many, that quickly became violent. During the fight, Guerrero grabbed Daisy Guerrero by the throat with his hands and choked her briefly.

Later, he came up behind her, put her into a chokehold in the bend of his elbow and applied pressure on her neck until she blacked out and lost control of bodily functions.

In a statement to the presiding judge, Col. Christopher Fredrikson, Daisy Guerrero

said that during the attack, she could feel her life slipping away as she started to black out. Her son was in an adjoining room as she was being choked.

The harder she fought, the worse things got until she was convinced she wouldn't "make it out" of the assault. She testified that as she blacked out, she thought, "My God, what is going to happen to Jaden?"

She came to, coughing for air, struggling to stand.

Jenifer Markowitz, a forensic nurse, testified that when someone loses control of bodily functions such as bladder control when they are being choked, it is a sign "the brain is essentially shutting down" and death is near.

Jay Guerrero, who on his first deployment as an officer was awarded the Bronze Star with valor device for combat actions in Iraq, testified that he let his emotions go the day of the attack.

Jay Guerrero faced a possible confinement of three years, total forfeiture of all pay and allowances and dismissal from the service.

US, Egyptian navies train jointly at Eagle Response 18

BY SCOTT WYLAND
Stars and Stripes

The U.S. and Egyptian navies are practicing how to detect and neutralize underwater explosives using dive teams and drones in an exercise in the Red Sea.

Sailors from 5th Fleet's underwater ordnance and disposal units are training with the Egyptian navy to improve teamwork and to strengthen military diving skills.

The exercise, Eagle Response

18, which began Tuesday at the Red Sea Naval Base, includes underwater detonation drills, underwater drone operations and anti-terrorism and force-protection dives.

"Diving is one of the most hazardous evolutions a human can do, and it's important we share our experiences and learn from each other to improve safety across the board," said Chief Petty Officer Eli Hernandez, the decompression training instructor.

Okinawa governor vows push to halt base move

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Okinawa's anti-base governor once again has unveiled plans to revoke permitting for a new coastal runway that will facilitate the relocation and closure of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma.

Gov. Takeshi Onaga announced Friday that he will revoke approval permitting for a landfill into Oura Bay at the remote northern Marine Corps base Camp Schwab after the central government allegedly violated environmental regulations regarding an endangered species of coral, deviated from construction plans and withheld vital information, according to a statement provided to Stars and Stripes.

Onaga also said surveys indicate the sea wall protecting the construction area could be compromised, there is an active

fault in the area, and some of the base's nearby buildings are in violation of U.S. Department of Defense safety guidelines.

Before canceling the permits, Onaga plans to convene a hearing with Okinawa Defense Bureau officials. He cited his executive authority in putting a halt to the project.

"With that many environmental and disaster prevention violations, and factoring in all the disadvantages for locals, the prefectural government has concluded that the Okinawa Defense Bureau has not met the guidelines and also failed to meet the National Land Use Planning Act," he said in the statement.

"The Okinawa prefectural government is going to start the process of withdrawing the approval," he added.

Construction will continue, at least for the time being, said Masashi Katsuren, of the Okinawa Defense Bureau.

Soldiers display video fighting skills in tourney

BY MARTIN EGNASH
Stars and Stripes

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — The Army hosted Street Fighter V tournaments at eight bases around the world Saturday in an effort to jump in on the electronic sports craze.

Street Fighter V is a 2-D fighting game in which two fighters use a variety of attacks and special abilities to knock out their opponents.

Soldiers who won the games at each base were awarded round-trip airfare and lodging to compete live, onstage, at the PAX West Gaming Convention in Seattle from Aug. 31 to Sept. 3. Competitions were held in the states at Fort Wainwright,

Alaska, Fort Bliss, Texas, Fort Gordon, Ga., Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Fort Knox, Ky., and Fort Riley, Kan., and overseas at USAG Humphreys, South Korea, and U.S. Army Garrison Bavaria.

Kalyntae Williams, a fire control specialist with the Army's 2nd Cavalry Regiment, won the tournament at Grafenwoehr, using a variety of characters and techniques, including the classic Street Fighter alum, Blanka, to defeat each opponent in the competition.

Williams went undefeated in the tournament.

"I play the game a lot; it just comes second nature to me," Williams said.

California wildfire rages into fourth day

Associated Press

REDDING, Calif. — Thousands of dazed evacuees struggled to keep their emotions in check while trying to take care of themselves and their pets as a deadly wildfire in Northern California raged into its fourth day.

Anna Noland, 49, was evacuated twice in three days before learning through video footage that the house she last saw under dark and windy skies had burned.

She expected to spend Saturday night at a shelter at Simpson College in Redding while she

searches for another place to live.

"I think I'm still in shock," Noland said. "It's just unbelievable knowing you don't have a house to go back to."

Noland is among the 38,000 people evacuated after the Carr Fire roared into the outskirts of Redding in Shasta County, leaving five people dead, including two firefighters, a woman and her two great-grandchildren, ages 4 and 5.

A vehicle problem ignited the fire Monday, but it wasn't until Thursday that the fire exploded and raced into communities west of Redding before entering

city limits.

On Saturday, it pushed southwest of Redding, the largest city in the region, toward the tiny communities of Ono, Igo and Gas Point, where scorching heat, winds and bone-dry conditions complicated firefighting efforts.

The firefighters killed in the blaze included Don Ray Smith, 81, of Pollock Pines, a bulldozer operator who was helping clear vegetation in the path of the wildfire. Redding fire Inspector Jeremy Stoke was also killed, but details of his death were not released.

Sherry Bledsoe's two chil-

dren, James Roberts, 5, and Emily Roberts, 4, were stranded with their great-grandmother Melody Bledsoe, 70, when walls of flames swept through the family's rural property Thursday on the outskirts of Redding.

Throughout the state, Cal Fire officials said more than 10,000 firefighters were on the line, making progress on 14 large wildfires.

Big fires also continued to burn outside Yosemite National Park and in the San Jacinto Mountains east of Los Angeles near Palm Springs. Those fires had burned nearly 100 square miles.

Trump willing to shut down government over border issues

Associated Press

BRIDGEWATER, N.J. — President Donald Trump said Sunday that he would consider shutting down the government if Democrats refuse to vote for his immigration proposals, including a U.S.-Mexico border wall.

Republicans, trying to protect their majority in Congress, are playing down the chance of a shut-down as the November election nears. Trump, however, isn't backing away from the idea.

"I would be willing to 'shut down' government if the Democrats do not give us the votes for Border Security, which includes the Wall!" Trump tweeted. "Must get rid of Lottery, Catch & Release etc. and finally go to system of Immigration based on MERIT!"

"We need great people coming into our Country!" Trump tweeted.

Trump returned to the idea of shutting down the government over the border wall after meeting at the White House last week with House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., and Senate Majority Leader

Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., to discuss the fall legislative agenda.

Trump campaigned on the promise of building a border wall to deter illegal immigration and making Mexico pay for it. Mexico has refused.

Congress has given the president some wall funding but far from the \$25 billion he has requested. Trump wants changes to legal immigration, including scrapping a visa lottery program. In addition, he wants to end the practice of releasing immigrants caught entering the country illegally on the condition that they show up for court hearings.

The federal budget year ends Sept. 30, and lawmakers will spend much of August in their states campaigning for re-election. The House is now in recess, returning after Labor Day. The Senate remains in session and is set to go on break the week of Aug. 6 before returning for the rest of the month.

Both chambers will have a short window to approve a spending bill before government funding expires.

Gunmen fire into La. crowd, kill 3

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — Two armed individuals walked up to a crowd gathered Saturday evening outside a strip mall in New Orleans and opened fire, killing three people and wounding seven more, the police chief said.

The shooting happened on a thoroughfare about 3 miles from the French Quarter, police said.

Police chief Michael Harrison, speaking to reporters late Saturday, said the two suspects believed to be wearing hoodies had a rifle and a handgun. He said they appeared to have fired indiscriminately into the crowd, striking 10 people. Before fleeing, they took time to stand over one person.

"We believe that they actually stood over one of the individuals and fired multiple rounds and then after that fled," he said.

Police responding to the shooting found three victims — two men and one woman — who were pronounced dead at the scene. Seven other victims — five men and two women — were taken to two separate hospitals.

Harrison said police do not know whether it was gang-related.

Prankster puts Putin's portrait in Trump's place

Associated Press

DENVER — The Colorado Capitol's wall of presidential portraits is missing one — President Donald Trump.

KUSA-TV reported the group that collects private donations for the portraits hasn't received a single dollar needed to hang Trump's picture.

But on Thursday, a prankster placed a portrait

of Russian President Vladimir Putin on an easel below the blank space on the wall where Trump's portrait would go.

Putin's portrait was removed by a tour guide, but not before state Sen. Steve Fenberg, D-Boulder, tweeted a picture.

The presidential portraits cost about \$10,000 and are paid for through donations.

Strong Indonesia quake leaves at least 14 dead

Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia — A strong, shallow earthquake early Sunday killed at least 14 people and injured more than 160 on Indonesia's Lombok island, a popular tourist destination next to Bali, officials said.

The magnitude-6.4 quake damaged more than 1,000 houses and was felt in a wider area, including on Bali, where no damage or casualties were reported.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the quake struck at a depth of only 4.4 miles. Shallow earthquakes tend to do more damage than deeper ones.

East Lombok district was the hardest hit, with 10 deaths including a Malaysian tourist, said Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, a spokesman for Indonesia's Disaster Mitigation Agency. The number of casualties could increase as data were still being collected from other locations on the island, he said.

At least 162 people were injured, including 67 hospitalized with serious injuries, Nugroho said.

The quake caused blackouts in East Lombok and North Lombok districts and triggered a large landslide from Mount Rinjani, an active volcano. Rescuers were evacuating more than 800 tourists from the mountain.

In East Lombok and the provincial capital of Mataram, the quake lasted about 10 seconds, causing residents to flee their homes onto streets and fields, Nugroho said. He said most of the fatalities and injuries were caused by falling slabs of concrete.

Photos released by the disaster agency showed damaged houses and the entrance to the popular Mount Rinjani National Park, which was immediately closed for fear of landslides.

Eka Fathurrahman, the police chief in East Lombok, said the Malaysian woman who died was part of a group of 18 Malaysian tourists who had just visited Mount Rinjani when the quake jolted their guesthouse and toppled a concrete wall. Six other people were injured at the guesthouse.

Like Bali, Lombok is known for pristine beaches and mountains. Hotels and other buildings in both locations are not allowed to exceed the height of coconut trees.

Indonesia is prone to earthquakes due to its location on the Pacific "Ring of Fire," an arc of volcanoes and fault lines in the Pacific Basin. In December 2004, a massive magnitude 9.1 earthquake off Sumatra triggered a tsunami that killed 230,000 people in a dozen countries.

Flood-ravaged Japan is hit by powerful typhoon

dpa

TOKYO — More than 20 people were injured and tens of thousands ordered to evacuate their homes on Sunday as Typhoon Jongdari hit flood-battered western Japan, local media reported.

The season's 12th typhoon caused damage to homes and buildings in central and western Japan, broadcaster NHK reported.

The storm also led to the cancellation of 168 flights and some train services were canceled, according to NHK.

The typhoon had weakened after making landfall at the city of Ise, 198 miles southwest of Tokyo, about 1 a.m., according to the Meteorological Agency.

The agency warned of mudslides, flooding, swollen rivers and high waves.

Rainfall of up to 7.8 inches was forecast for the islands of Shikoku and Kyushu and up to 5.9 inches for the Tokai region by Monday noon, according to the agency.

Earlier this month, heavy rains triggered floods and landslides in western Japan, killing about 220 people. About 4,000 remain in emergency shelters.

The storm has cooled Japan, which had been sweltering under an intense heat wave for nearly two weeks.

About 100 people died from heatstroke this month as temperatures reached record highs.

Tears, grief mark service for Greek fire victims

Associated Press

MATI, Greece — Hundreds of mourners attended a memorial service in a seaside Greek village Sunday for the dozens of people who perished when a fast-moving wildfire swept through a coastal area east of Athens.

The senior local Greek Orthodox Church official, Bishop Kyrillos, presided over the service at Dormition of the Virgin Mary Church in Mati, a popular resort spot that was the place hit hardest by the blaze that killed at least 86 people.

The fire that sped flames through the village without warning July 23 was the deadliest wildfire in Europe since 1900, according to the International Disaster Database run by the Centre for the Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters in Brussels.

Kyrillos said the community is mourning the loss of family, neighbors and friends.

"There's fewer of us now than usually.

It is the victims of the recent fire that are missing — friends, relatives and acquaintances, next-door people that we saw every day in town and on the beach," the bishop said during the memorial service.

The vast majority of victims died in the flames, though a number drowned in the sea while fleeing the fire.

Dozens of volunteer divers kept searching the sea off Mati on Sunday looking for the bodies of more possible victims. Greek officials have not made public how many people remain missing since the fire.

Local resident Angeliki Galiatsatou said she narrowly managed to escape the fire that killed others in their cars and homes.

"I came to pray for the people who were lost and I pray that God blesses us all," she said.

Greek authorities have said they have reason to believe the fire resulted from arson and turned so deadly because winds

of up to 62 mph buffeted the pine-forested seaside resorts at the time.

The Greek government also has come under criticism for how buildings and roads were laid out in the area and a perceived lack of adequate preparation for fire season. More than 2,000 homes were damaged in the fire and roughly a quarter will have to be demolished, Greek officials said Friday.

The Holy Synod made up of all Greek bishops said in a letter read out loud at Sunday's memorial service that everyone bears responsibility for protecting the environment from haphazard development.

"What words of comfort can you offer the person who has lost their father, their mother, the grandparents in whose arms their grandchildren were found?" Kyrillos said. "What words of solace can you offer a mother who has lost her baby and left a few flowers on the beach?"

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

State offers free gear, sites to new campers

VT MONTPELIER — Vermont is offering first-time campers free equipment and campsites this summer at state parks to try to get more people to visit.

More than 600 people have signed up to be picked for 30 individual slots for the happy camper weekends offered in July and August.

The state parks loan the winning campers a tent, a stove, a lantern and some sleeping pads. Staff will help the campers set up their campsite and will give them a tour of the park.

Store clerk trying to stop beer theft killed

AL TUSCALOOSA — Tuscaloosa police filed murder charges in the death of a store clerk who authorities say was killed while trying to stop the theft of beer.

Authorities said Dewan Latrell Hampton, 32, and Michael Wayne Burrell, 52, are charged in the death of Shelia Corley Britton, 56.

Police said two men stole three 12 packs of beer worth \$45 from a convenience store where Britton was working late on July 22. Britton suffered severe head injuries while attempting to stop the alleged getaway car.

Britton was taken off life support late Thursday, and the two men were arrested on Friday.

Abandoned tiger cub gets a new home

TX WYLIE — A live tiger cub that was abandoned in a duffel bag at the U.S. border is settling into his new home in Texas.

Kenobi arrived Thursday

night at In-Sync Exotics, an animal sanctuary in Wylie, 30 miles northeast of Dallas.

U.S. Border Patrol agents discovered the cub April 30 while patrolling the Rio Grande near Brownsville. They said three people apparently trying to enter the U.S. illegally dumped the bag containing the tiger and fled back to Mexico.

Kenobi was initially given a temporary home at the Gladys Porter Zoo in Brownsville, but his move to In-Sync Exotics is permanent.

Couple: Realtor kept cats at their house

FL VALRICO — A Florida couple is suing their real estate agent, alleging she never told them she'd been keeping abandoned cats at the house they bought.

Daniel McKay and Katherine Pulker said they pulled out air fresheners and turned on the air conditioner shortly after buying the house and immediately noticed the overpowering stench of cat urine. They still haven't moved in.

The Tampa Bay Times reported they're suing Realtor Deborah Clark and Link Realty for negligence, breach of contract and failure to disclose hidden defects that left the house "uninhabitable."

Sentence of man who insulted judge upheld

SD PIERRE — South Dakota's Supreme Court has rejected an appeal from a man who got a harsher prison sentence after he flipped the bird at the judge in his case.

The high court on Wednesday upheld the sentence of Shawn Ross, 39, who had agreed to plead guilty to burglary for trying to pry a change machine off a Chamberlain car wash wall in

2017.

The circuit judge sentenced Ross to five years in prison with 3½ years suspended. But after the judge saw Ross flip him off as he left the courtroom, he reimposed the suspended time.

When Ross filed for resentencing, the judge relented and reduced the suspended portion by two months. The high court upheld that sentence.

2 praised for return of wallet with \$700

CO AURORA — A sister and brother in Colorado are being praised for returning a wallet that contained about \$700 in cash.

Haylie Wenke, 13, and Reagan Wenke, 6, are seen on home surveillance video approaching the front door of an Aurora home, where a robotic voice told them to leave a message. Haylie said they had found a wallet outside a car and were returning it so no one would take the money.

Haylie told KDVR-TV they were riding their bikes to a water park when they spotted the wallet.

Woman arrested after climbing cell tower

OH WOOSTER — Authorities said a woman who climbed to the top of a 285-foot-high cell tower and then taunted police and safety personnel on her way down was arrested.

The Wooster Daily Record reported a passer-by spotted the woman at the top of the tower in Wayne Township about 6:30 p.m. Thursday and called 911. She descended on her own about 9:15 p.m. as hundreds of onlookers watched from below.

Wayne County Sheriff's Capt. Doug Hunter said the woman, wearing jeans, a T-shirt and

flip-flops, appeared to be high on drugs because she showed no fear on the tower.

Tourist gets locked in historic fortress

NY NEW YORK — A woman visiting New York City said she got locked inside a historic fortress and prison and was stuck for about an hour because a guard didn't have a key.

Shakira Stover, 35, told the New York Post she was walking around Castle Williams on Governors Island on Wednesday when the doors were closed and padlocked.

An American who lives in Spain, Stover said she screamed for help and got the attention of a pair of British tourists, who summoned a guard. Stover said the guard didn't have a key and had to get a park ranger to punch in the padlock code.

Veteran gets 4 years for 7 bank robberies

NH CONCORD — A New Hampshire man was sentenced to four years in federal prison for robbing seven banks in 2017.

WMUR-TV reported Chaka Meredith, of Laconia, 43, said he was deeply ashamed of his actions. He was arrested in February 2017 in Lawrence, Mass.

Prosecutors said Meredith didn't show a weapon during any of the robberies, but he passed notes described as threatening.

Before the robberies, Meredith had no criminal record and served honorably in the Marines. Meredith said he was in a car accident, became addicted to pain pills, and turned to robbery to feed his habit.

From wire reports

Your objective source for military news
updated 24/7 from bases
around the world.
Now online at www.stripes.com.

STARS AND STRIPES®

Brady: Edelman question 'ridiculous'

Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — Tom Brady calls it “ridiculous” to suggest the suspension of Patriots receiver Julian Edelman is tied to the quarterback’s personal health coach.

The questions about Alex Guerrero on Saturday prompted Brady to abruptly end his first media availability of training camp.

“I have no comments, just ridiculous. I’m out,” Brady said before walking away.

Edelman brushed aside a similar question in his first comments since receiving his four-game ban for a drug-policy violation.

“What’s in the past is in the past. I love Alex and ultimately I’m worried about just going out here and playing football,” Edelman said. “I’m not here to talk about or make a headline or something.”

Edelman, tight end Rob Gronkowski and

former Patriots receiver Danny Amendola are among several Patriots who have also worked or consulted with Guerrero.

Edelman will begin serving his suspension at the start of the regular season. He can practice with the team and play in pre-season games.

Brady provided another short response when asked if there was tension between him and coach Bill Belichick this summer.

“I have no thoughts,” Brady said.

Brady has relied on a fitness and nutrition program developed by Guerrero since 2004. The pair also partnered in opening Brady’s TB12 Sports Therapy Center, which is adjacent to the Patriots’ Gillette Stadium facility.

In January, Patriots CEO Robert Kraft, Belichick and Brady released a statement calling an ESPN report “flat-out inaccurate” that said there had been disputes between team officials and Guerrero re-

garding player-medical affairs.

Brady will turn 41 next week and has credited Guerrero’s program with helping to extend his NFL career, which is entering its 19th season. As part of the strict regimen devised by Guerrero, Brady eats a mostly plant-based diet during the season.

Despite skipping the voluntary portion of spring workouts, Brady said his focus and commitment to football remain high.

“Football is very, very important to me. It always has been, and I love being out here with my teammates. So, it’s great,” Brady said. “As you get older you have different responsibilities, and I think that’s just part of life. Everyone’s got to deal with those responsibilities differently and what works for them.

“Football is a huge part of my life. I love being here with my teammates and playing, and hopefully we can have a great season.”

LB Foster says he’s learned from legal woes

Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — San Francisco 49ers linebacker Reuben Foster said he is using his legal problems that he feared could cost him his football career this offseason as a learning tool going forward now that he has been cleared of the most serious charges.

Foster spoke to the media on Saturday for the first time since he was charged in April for felony domestic assault and later exonerated when the accuser recanted her story and a judge found no other credible evidence.

“I learned every day I have to go harder at everything I do now to better myself even more,” Foster said. “It’s like or die. Just don’t mess up. ... It’s like how I’m trying to craft my career, I have to craft my life.”

Foster spent much of his offseason dealing with legal issues rather than preparing for his second season in the NFL. He was charged in January in Alabama with second-degree marijuana possession. That charge was eventually dismissed after he completed a first-time offender diversion course.

Foster then faced more se-

rious charges for an incident in California in February. He was initially charged in April with felonies for domestic violence, making criminal threats and weapons possession after being accused of beating up his ex-girlfriend.

A judge ruled there was no probable cause on the first two charges after the ex-girlfriend recanted the allegations and the judge found no other evidence to support the charges. The weapons charge was reduced to a misdemeanor and Foster pleaded no-contest to that in June.

He was sentenced to two years’ probation, 232 hours of community service, and \$235 in fines.

Foster declined to discuss specifics of the case on Saturday and is just thankful to be back with his teammates on the field.

“It made me appreciate football a lot better,” he said. “It was crazy knowing that football could be gone. Just being back on this field with my brothers and these coaches is a blessing.”

Foster missed about a month of the offseason program while dealing with the legal issues and will also be suspended

without pay for the first two games of the regular season for violating the NFL’s conduct and substance-abuse policy.

He is able to take part in training camp and play the exhibition games, but must sit out San Francisco’s games against Minnesota and Detroit before being allowed to return on Sept. 17 before the Niners play Kansas City.

“It was painful,” Foster said of the punishment. “It’s football, something I do, something I love. It is what it is. Accept the consequences, you take it and you move on. You learn from it, too, and you grow from it.”

The 49ers stood behind Foster even as he was not allowed at the facility. But coach Kyle Shanahan and general manager John Lynch have made clear that Foster must get his life in order and avoid further legal trouble if he wants to remain part of the organization.

“I think Reuben’s done a great job just handling it,” Shanahan said. “What they originally charged him with is as bad of a thing as you can imagine. It’s a very embarrassing thing because of how bad it was. To have all that scrutiny on you and to have to go through that,

I think would be a challenge for any human being. That would mess a lot of people up.

“I’ve been really, very impressed with Reuben in how he handled it, the process he went through while it was going on and after it got dropped, how he’s handled himself since. I know he learned a lot through it. We talked about it a lot at the beginning, that some things seem so bad but if you get through it, it can be a good thing in the long run. If you handle it right, it can enlighten you in some things and help you grow. I really think it has for Reuben and I think it’s benefited him in the long run.”

Foster said he appreciated the support, especially from teammates who came to court in a public show of support. One of those teammates was Richard Sherman, who barely knew Foster after signing with the team in March.

Sherman and Foster now have lockers next to each other.

“That’s real. He’s a man for that,” Foster said of Sherman coming to court in April. “I respect Richard Sherman for that, coming to court and supporting me. Just being there for me at the hard times.”

Welshman Thomas wins Tour de France

Associated Press

PARIS — Five years ago, when riding the Tour de France in support of Chris Froome, Geraint Thomas fell off his bike on a Corsican road in the opening stage and broke his pelvis.

Against all odds, Thomas soldiered on for 3,000 kilometers and three weeks to the finish line in Paris, where he celebrated the first of Froome's four victories with the rest of their Team Sky teammates.

On Sunday, it was now Thomas' turn to add a first Grand Tour triumph to an already glorious career with victory in the Tour de France.

"He is a true fighter," said Sky principal Dave Brailsford, the man who masterminded Britain's successes at the Olympics and Tour de France wins for Bradley Wiggins and Froome.

"When he fractured his hip five years ago, he could not even stand up his bike in the team time trial that followed. He still carried on and finished the race. It speaks volumes about his personality. Since his junior years, he has always wanted to win."

At 32, the new Tour de France champion is everything but an overnight success.

Growing up on the outskirts of Cardiff, Wales, Thomas started bike racing at 10, and his exceptional qualities did not remain unnoticed for long.

"I first saw him when he was about 13 or 14 and he joined me at 17," says Rod Ellingworth, the performance director at Team Sky, who also trained Thomas as a British team coach. "You could see straightaway he was just flying round the track, he was pretty good. As he joined the junior program, you just knew he was going to be pretty talented."

Thomas's first successes came on the track. In 2006, he was the youngest member of the British pursuit team that competed at the world championships. In 2008, he won the Olympic gold medal alongside Wiggins. Four years later in London, with a second gold medal secured in the same event, Thomas left track cycling to focus on road racing.

Described by his coaches as a dedicated professional with a healthy and a balanced lifestyle, Thomas had already showed immense skills on the road from winning the Paris-Roubaix junior race in 2004.

"Geraint's ambition was classics first," Ellingworth says. "Then he rode the Tour in 2007 and three years later he wore the white jersey (for the best young rider). He had this ambition to win the Tour in the back of his mind."

As in previous years, Thomas started the Tour to help Froome try and win for a record-equaling fifth time. But Froome crashed in the first stage and lost time, then cracked in the Pyrenees while Thom-

as' tremendous form was rewarded with impressive wins in the Alps.

Sky, and particularly Froome, were subject to abuse during this tour after Froome was cleared of a doping case only days before the start. But Thomas looked immune to the boos and jeers that accompanied them through this 3,350-kilometer odyssey. He won back-to-back mountain stages and became the first British rider to win at the Alpe d'Huez. He sealed his victory with a third-place finish on Saturday in the challenging time trial.

"He is really laid back, but not like he does not care," Ellingworth says. "He is really detailed about what he does. He is really confident in himself and uses his people very well. You don't mind going the extra mile for him."

Thomas lives and trains in Monaco with his wife but often returns to Cardiff to socialize with friends and family. For a long time, he had a reputation as a party boy, always up for a few pints of beer while watching a rugby match.

"Like much young British guys, he likes a drink or two, but he is not wild," Ellingworth says. "When he was with me full-time, we lived in Manchester or in Italy. I encouraged him to get out and get it out of his system, in a way. He just enjoys life. He also got older, he got married, and things have settled down."

Now he's Tour champion.

Olympian Biles shines in competitive return

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The jitters were obvious and unmistakable. A step out of bounds on floor exercise. A hop back on vault. An uncharacteristic slip off the uneven bars.

Simone Biles needed them. Maybe deep down, the Olympic gymnastics champion wanted them too, if only to help her figure out whether she was truly mentally ready to return to the sport she's dominated for a half-decade.

The answer came before her balance beam set during the U.S. Classic on Saturday night when Biles found herself in second place heading into the final rotation after a sloppy uneven bars set.

Needing to score at least a

14.0 to avoid losing a meet for the first time in five years, Biles wasn't focused on the pressure of living up to her own remarkable legacy. She was too busy being mad. And here's the thing: she kind of liked it.

"I guess in that moment, I enjoyed being [ticked] off, yeah," Biles said with a laugh.

It showed. Displaying the form that helped her make history at the 2016 Summer Games, the 21-year-old drilled a 15.2 to post an all-around score of 58.700, more than a point ahead of Riley McCusker and more than two points clear of reigning world champion Morgan Hurd.

The unbeaten streak is still alive. So is the gap between Biles and the rest of the world. Even after a 711-day layoff.

Even after switching coaches. Even after growing up a bit. In the sport she's come to define, there remains Biles and everyone else.

The proof came over the course of two hours when she posted the highest scores on vault (15.4), floor exercise (14.75), beam (15.2) and all-around in the world in 2018.

"There's still a lot to work on — work on the nerves, work on the consistency, work on the landings — but for this point, at this time in the year, I think we're in a pretty good place," Biles said.

Or at the very least, a place no one else on the planet can get to at the moment. The scary part may be how many points Biles left out there. She won by 1.2 points even with major de-

ductions on three events.

"It's great to see that she still has it inside of her," said Laurent Landi, who serves as Biles' co-coach along with his wife Cecile. "Now she needs to build on this and to take all the positives out of it."

Biles admitted even she was curious how she'd respond in her return to competition following a two-year break following her staggering haul in Rio de Janeiro, when she tied an Olympic record by collecting five medals — four of them gold — that cemented her status as one of the best gymnasts ever. All before her 20th birthday.

There was never any really set timetable on when she might return, but things got serious when she hired the Landis as her new coaches last fall.

Puig, Wood power Dodgers past Braves

Associated Press

ATLANTA — It didn't take Yasiel Puig too long to get his home run swing back.

"I'm so happy to be back with the team and help the team win today and do something with the bat," he said. "Today I helped do something in the game and I feel good."

Puig homered and drove in three runs following his return from the disabled list, Alex Wood pitched 5²/₃ scoreless innings to win his sixth straight decision and the Los Angeles Dodgers beat the struggling Atlanta Braves 5-1 on Saturday night.

Reinstated after missing 15 games with a right oblique

strain, Puig made it 1-0 with a sacrifice fly in the second off Max Fried and pushed the lead to 3-0 in the sixth with his 12th homer, a towering shot off Luke Jackson that bounced off the third-level scoreboard facade in left field.

Wood (7-5) allowed one hit and four walks with five strikeouts. His performance followed Rich Hill's seven scoreless innings Thursday and Clayton Kershaw's one run allowed in 7²/₃ innings Friday against an Atlanta offense that led the NL for most of the first half of the season.

The Braves, second in the NL East, have lost four straight and 13 of 18 mostly because

their bats have been quieted. They've averaged 2.2 runs over their last 13 defeats and have dropped to fifth in NL runs scored.

"We're having a hard time kind of getting anything flowing at all, any rhythm in the at-bats, anything moving, the whole thing," Braves manager Brian Snitker said. "I wish I had the magic answer to make it happen, but you don't. That's why you have to keep playing and grinding. One day it will." Puig hit the Dodgers' 143rd homer, tops in the NL for the West Division leaders.

"He fouled some balls off, spoiled some good pitches on a couple that he should've han-

dled but kept going," Los Angeles manager Dave Roberts said. "He got a breaking ball out over, and that was a big hit. That was good for him and to get back in the swing of things and get a big lift for us."

Wood stranded a runner in scoring position in the first and second as he improved to 6-0 with a 2.61 ERA in his last seven starts since he lost at home to the Braves on June 9.

"I really feel like it's almost come together as a whole for our staff all at the right time," Wood said. "We're starting to head down the stretch and hopefully we can continue to have outings like that."

Roundup

Martinez hits 32nd homer as Red Sox top Twins

Associated Press

BOSTON — J.D. Martinez hit his major league-leading 32nd homer, Mookie Betts had two RBI doubles and the Boston Red Sox beat the Minnesota Twins 10-4 on Saturday night for their 17th win in 21 games.

Betts raised his MLB-leading average to .346 and Jackie Bradley Jr. hit a two-run triple for the Red Sox. They have a 5¹/₂-game lead over the New York Yankees atop the AL East and own the majors' best record at 73-33.

Logan Morrison hit a solo homer for the Twins, a night after they appeared to throw in the towel a bit in pursuit of a playoff spot following a pair of trades that sent away infielder Eduardo Escobar and reliever Ryan Pressly.

Angels 11, Mariners 5: Rookie Francisco Arcia had a homer and six RBIs, giving him a major league-record 10 RBIs in two career games, and Los Angeles rolled past visiting Seattle.

Arcia made his major league debut Thursday against the White Sox and hit his first ca-

reer home run while driving in four runs. After not playing Friday, he topped that Saturday with a third-inning homer and run-scoring doubles in the second and fifth innings.

The previous record for RBIs in two career games was nine by Joe Cunningham of the St. Louis Cardinals in 1954. Cunningham was also the only player to have at least four RBIs in each of his first two career games until Arcia did it as well. Arcia is the first Angels rookie with at least six RBIs in a game since Adam Kennedy had eight in 2000.

Royals 10, 4; Yankees 5, 5: Greg Bird homered to begin a two-run rally in the eighth inning and host New York survived a rough outing by newly acquired reliever Zach Britton and a tumble by CC Sabathia, beating Kansas City for a split of their day-night doubleheader.

In the opener, the Royals tagged All-Star ace Luis Severino for six runs in 4¹/₃ innings. The doubleheader was caused by a rainout Friday.

Cardinals 6, Cubs 2: Marcell Ozuna hit a grand slam in a six-

run first inning, Miles Mikolas pitched six strong innings and St. Louis beat Chicago in front of a season-high 47,514 fans at Busch Stadium.

The Cardinals improved to 9-6 this season against the NL Central-leading Cubs.

Rangers 7, Astros 3: Rougned Odor hit an inside-the-park homer and a regular over-the-fence shot, going 5-for-5 to help visiting Texas beat Justin Verlander and Houston.

Diamondbacks 9, Padres 4: Jon Jay hit a go-ahead, two-run double in the eighth inning and finished with three hits and three RBIs to lead Arizona past host San Diego.

Rockies 4, Athletics 1: Nolan Arenado homered for the second time in two games, Carlos Gonzalez doubled three times and Colorado beat visiting Oakland for its 10th win in 12 games.

Orioles 11, Rays 2: Trey Mancini and Joey Rickard combined for seven hits, including back-to-back home runs in the second inning, and host Baltimore breezed past Tampa Bay.

Pirates 5, Mets 0: Trevor

Williams outdueled Jacob deGrom in Pittsburgh's victory over visiting New York.

Reds 6, Phillies 2: Joey Votto drove in the go-ahead run with a sharp single that glanced off second baseman Cesar Hernandez's glove, leading host Cincinnati past Philadelphia.

Tigers 2, Indians 1: JaCoby Jones hit a go-ahead, two-run homer in the third inning to help Detroit beat visiting Cleveland.

White Sox 9, Blue Jays 5: Pinch-hitter Daniel Palka gave host Chicago the lead with a two-run single and Leury Garcia added a three-run triple in a six-run eighth, lifting the White Sox over Toronto.

Marlins 2, Nationals 1 (10): J.T. Realmuto singled with the bases loaded and none out in the 10th inning, and Miami snapped a streak of eight consecutive home losses to Washington.

Brewers 7, Giants 1: Jhoulys Chacin pitched three-hit ball over seven innings, Christian Yelich homered for the second time in three days and Milwaukee beat host San Francisco.