

Russia, Ukraine trade blame for attack

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Russia and Ukraine accused each other Friday of shelling a prison in a separatist region of eastern Ukraine, an attack that reportedly killed dozens of Ukrainian prisoners of war captured after the fall of Mariupol, the city where troops famously held out against a monthslong Russian siege.

Both sides said the assault was premeditated with the aim of covering up atrocities.

Russia claimed that Ukraine's military used U.S.-supplied rocket launchers to strike the prison in Olenivka, a settlement controlled by the Moscow-backed Donetsk People's Republic. Separatist authorities and Russian officials said the attack killed 53 Ukrainian POWs and wounded another 75.

Moscow opened a probe into the attack, sending a team to the site from Russia's Investigative Committee, the country's main criminal investigation agency. The state RIA Novosti agency reported that fragments of U.S.-supplied precision High Mobility Artillery Rocket System rockets were

found at the site.

The Ukrainian military denied making any rocket or artillery strikes in Olenivka, and it accused the Russians of shelling the prison to cover up the alleged torture and execution of Ukrainians there. An adviser to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy described the shelling as "a deliberate, cynical, calculated mass murder of Ukrainian prisoners."

Neither claim could be independently verified.

Video shot by The Associated Press showed charred, twisted bed frames in the wrecked barracks, as well as burned bodies and metal sheets hanging from the destroyed roof. The footage also included bodies lined up on the ground next to a barbed-wire fence and an array of what was claimed to be metal rocket fragments on a wooden bench.

Denis Pushilin, the leader of the internationally unrecognized Donetsk republic, said the prison held 193 inmates. He did not specify how many were Ukrainian POWs.

The deputy commander of the Donetsk

separatist forces, Eduard Basurin, suggested that Ukraine decided to strike the prison to prevent captives from revealing key military information.

Ukraine "knew exactly where they were being held and in what place," he said. "After the Ukrainian prisoners of war began to talk about the crimes they committed, and orders they received from Kyiv, a decision was made by the political leadership of Ukraine: carry out a strike here."

Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak called for a "strict investigation" into the attack and urged the United Nations and other international organizations to condemn it. He said the Russians had transferred some Ukrainian prisoners to the barracks just a few days before the strike, suggesting that it was planned.

"The purpose — to discredit Ukraine in front of our partners and disrupt weapons supply," he tweeted.

Ukraine's security agency, the SBU, said it had intercepted phone calls "in which the occupiers confirm that Russian troops are to blame for this tragedy."

Deadly floods in Appalachia spark search for missing

Associated Press

JACKSON, Ky. — Search and rescue teams backed by the National Guard searched Friday for people missing in record floods that wiped out entire communities in some of the poorest places in America. Kentucky's governor said 16 people have died, a toll he expected to grow.

"The tough news is 16 confirmed fatalities now, and folks that's going to get a lot higher," the governor said in a briefing. He said the deaths were in four eastern Kentucky counties.

Powerful floodwaters swallowed towns that hug creeks and streams in Appalachian valleys and hollows, swamping homes and businesses, trashing vehicles and crunching runaway equipment and debris against bridges. Mudslides marooned people on steep slopes and at least 33,000 customers were without power.

"We've still got a lot of searching to do," said Jerry Stacy, the emergency management di-

rector in Kentucky's hard-hit Perry County. "We still have missing people."

Emergency crews made close to 50 air rescues and hundreds of water rescues on Thursday, and more people still needed help, Beshear said. "This is not only an ongoing disaster but an ongoing search and rescue. The water is not going to crest in some areas until tomorrow."

Rachel Patton said floodwaters filled her Floyd County home so quickly that her mother, who is on oxygen, had to be evacuated on a door that was floated across the high water. Patton's voice faltered as she described their harrowing escape.

"We had to swim out and it was cold. It was over my head so it was, it was scary," she told WCHS TV.

The water was so swift that some people trapped in their homes couldn't be reached on Thursday, said Floyd County Judge-Executive Robbie Williams.

Just to the west in Perry County, some peo-

ple remained unaccounted for and almost everyone in the area had suffered some sort of damage, firefighter Glenn Caudil said.

Determining the number of people unaccounted for is tough with cell service and electricity out across the disaster area, he said. "This is so widespread, it's a challenge on even local officials to put that number together."

More than 290 people have sought shelter, Beshear said. He deployed National Guard soldiers to the hardest-hit areas. Three parks set up shelters, and with property damage so extensive, the governor opened an online portal for donations to the victims.

President Joe Biden called to express his support for what will be a lengthy recovery effort, Beshear said, predicting it will take more than a year to fully rebuild.

Biden also declared a federal disaster to direct relief money to more than a dozen Kentucky counties, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency appointed an officer to coordinate the recovery.

China rebukes Del Toro for interview

Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — China blasted a top U.S. Navy official Friday after he criticized Beijing's increasingly aggressive actions in the South China Sea, saying it's America's military deployments in the disputed waters — which it called “navigation bullying” — that could spark confrontations.

The Chinese Embassy in Manila said it strongly deplored U.S. Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro's remarks, which were “unfounded accusations against and maliciously smeared China” and inflated the “China threat.”

In an interview Tuesday with The Associated Press while on a visit to Manila, Del Toro underscored how Beijing has encroached in sovereign waters of its Asian neighbors in violation of international law.

China's move to transform seven disputed reefs into missile-protected island bases in the Spratlys, the most hotly contested section of the South China Sea, prompted the U.S. and other Western nations to press on with freedom of navigation patrols around the Chinese-claimed territories.

But the Chinese Embassy said the U.S. military deployments “from half a globe

away” aimed to “to flex muscles, make military provocations and create maritime and air tensions,” conducting “navigation bullying” in the name of freedom of navigation.

“In an attempt to preserve its hegemony, the U.S. keeps intensifying power projection in this region, and deliberately seeks to widen differences and provoke tensions,” it said.

China and other rival claimants “have exercised restraint, kept their differences and disputes in a proper place, and got them on the track of consultation and management,” the embassy said.

DC mayor seeks Guard aid with migrants

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser has asked the Pentagon to activate the D.C. National Guard to help address a swelling number of migrants arriving in buses at the city's Union Station, she told reporters Thursday.

“We need the federal government to be involved, so I've asked for the deployment of the Guard [for] as long as we need the Guard to deal with the humanitarian crisis that we expect to escalate,” Bowser said.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott in April began chartering buses to send asylum-seeking migrants from his state to Washington, D.C.

Since then, 6,100 migrants riding on 155 buses have traveled to Washington, according to his office. Most of the migrants are from countries in Central and South America.

To board a bus to D.C., migrants must volunteer for the trip and must have been processed and released from federal custody, according to Abbott's office. He has blamed this and other measures he's taken at the Texas border with Mexico on President Joe Biden.

“Washington, D.C., finally understands what Texans have been dealing with every single day, as our communities are overrun and overwhelmed by thousands of illegal immigrants thanks to President Biden's

open border policies,” said Renae Eze, a spokeswoman for Abbott. “If the mayor wants a solution to this crisis, she should call on President Biden to take immediate action to secure the border — something he has failed to do.”

Bowser said she previously secured a \$1 million grant to help set up “a respite center in a neighboring jurisdiction” and is now asking for the Defense Department to step up, as well.

“The number of people crossing the border seeking asylum we expect to only go up, and we need to ensure that there is a national response — not an ad hoc city-by-city, state-by-state response,” she said.

\$792B Senate spending plan for DOD released

BY SVETLANA SHKOLNIKOVA

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Senate Democrats released a \$792 billion spending plan for the Pentagon on Thursday as lawmakers work to boost the White House's request for the fiscal 2023 military budget to account for inflation and threats from adversaries such as China and Russia.

The Senate appropriations bill is \$31 billion more than a \$761 billion defense funding measure that House appropriators adopted last month and nearly \$20 billion more than the \$773 billion that the White House requested for the Pentagon.

The House last month passed a \$839 billion National Defense Authorization Act, which authorizes defense spending levels and sets policy. The Senate's version of the bill, which has yet to be voted on by the full chamber, authorizes \$847 billion for military and national security programs at the departments of Defense and Energy.

Democrats on the Senate Appropriations Committee are proposing \$850 billion in total defense discretionary spending, a nearly 9% increase over the current fiscal year's level. Republicans have advocated for an even larger increase.

The Senate panel's funding bill for the Pentagon allots \$53 billion to address record inflation and increase troops' purchasing power, including \$7 billion more for fuel, utilities and supplies for deployed forces as well as an additional \$921 billion for basic housing allowances, \$300 million for special pay and \$228 million for subsistence allowances.

“Inflation ... has impacted government programs at every level — both defense and non-defense,” Senate Appropriations Chairman Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., said in a statement. “This is a strong bill for our national security.”

Evidence adds to mystery of ID theft case

Associated Press

HONOLULU — Bobby Edward Fort was 27 when he enlisted in the Coast Guard in 1994 and retired 22 years later with a secret security clearance that allowed him to land a job in Honolulu as a defense contractor.

But in reality, Bobby Fort was long dead. He was just short of 3 months old when he choked and died in a Texas hospital in 1967.

The Bobby Fort who enlisted in the Coast Guard had stolen the dead baby's identity 35 years ago. A false birth certificate helped him get five passports, drivers' licenses and Department of Defense credentials.

The fraud was uncovered last week. On Thursday, the man authorities said had posed as Fort was before a judge, who asked him to state his name: "Walter Glenn Primrose," the 66-year-old said.

Primrose was ordered held without bail by a U.S. District Court judge after a prosecutor provided new details about how he and his wife had been fraudulently living for decades under the stolen identities of two dead Texas infants.

While the hearing further deepened the mystery of why the couple shed their past, it

provided little clarity about whether the case against them goes beyond stolen identity, though a prosecutor suggested it could have ties overseas.

"We think the defendant is obviously quite adept at impersonating other people, obtaining government ID documents, fraud, avoiding detection," Assistant U.S. Attorney Wayne Myers said. "He may — we're not saying for sure — but he may have some troubling foreign connections. And if he does, he might be able to use those to enlist help."

A search of the couple's Hawaii home turned up faded Polaroids of the two wearing jackets that appear to be authentic Russian KGB uniforms, Myers said. An expert determined the snapshots were taken in the 1980s.

The search also yielded an invisible ink kit, documents with coded language and maps showing military bases, Myers said.

When the couple were left in a room together, they were recorded saying "things consistent with espionage," Myers said.

Federal defender Craig Jerome said the government only provided "speculation and innuendo" that the couple was involved in something more ne-

farious than "purely white-collar nonviolent offenses."

Prosecutors feared Primrose would flee if freed. They noted in court papers that he was an avionics electrical technician in the Coast Guard and was highly skilled to communicate secretly if released.

Gwynn Darle Morrison faces a bail hearing Tuesday.

Her lawyer said the couple — regardless of the names they used — had lived law-abiding lives. Attorney Megan Kau told The Associated Press the couple posed for photos in the purported KGB jacket for fun.

"She wants everyone to know she's not a spy," Kau said. "This has all been blown way out of proportion. It's government overreaching."

The couple's story begins in Texas, where Primrose and Morrison went to high school and college together and married in 1980, according to court documents.

In the early 1980s, they told family they were going into the witness protection program before abruptly abandoning their house and leaving Texas, Myers said. They handed over the keys to their Nacogdoches home and told family members to take anything they wanted. The

house was later foreclosed on.

When they reemerged they had new names and different explanations of what happened.

In 1987, Primrose took on the identity of Fort, an infant who died in 1967 in Burnet, Texas. Morrison took the identity of Julie Lyn Montague, who died in 1968 at the same hospital as Fort. Primrose and Morrison, both born in 1955, were more than a decade older than the birth dates listed on their new IDs.

At some point, Primrose told someone he was a government agent and couldn't share photos of himself.

The couple remarried under their assumed names in 1988, according to court records.

Primrose had a longstanding interest in espionage, Myers said. His wife had anti-government and anti-military sentiments and was said by an associate to live in Romania when it was part of the communist bloc.

The couple, who were arrested Friday at their Kapolei home, are charged with conspiracy to commit an offense against the U.S., false statement in passport application and aggravated identity theft. They face up to 17 years in prison if convicted of all charges.

NY, San Francisco declared monkeypox emergencies

The Washington Post

San Francisco and the state of New York declared public health emergencies Thursday amid the growing monkeypox outbreak, the latest in a series of escalating measures responding to the rapidly spreading virus.

The action by two of the hardest-hit areas comes after the World Health Organization declared a global emergency last weekend and as the Joe Biden administration weighs a national emergency declaration.

More than 40% of the nation's

confirmed 4,907 monkeypox cases have been reported in California and New York.

San Francisco Mayor London Breed, D, announced a local public health emergency Thursday, noting cases of monkeypox had nearly doubled, to 261, in a week.

She said the move would mobilize resources, accelerate emergency planning and allow for future spending to be reimbursed by the state and federal governments.

California state Sen. Scott Wiener, D, who had called for

the emergency declaration, said the decision would make it easier to expand testing and vaccines and pressure the federal government to take the outbreak more seriously.

After the state of New York recorded more than 1,200 cases, State Health Commissioner Mary T. Bassett declared an imminent threat to public health, retroactive to June 1.

Monkeypox infections result in an illness that lasts several weeks with symptoms including fever, swollen lymph nodes and a rash that can spread through-

out the body.

No U.S. deaths have been recorded, but some patients have reported intense pain from lesions.

The outbreak has overwhelmingly been concentrated in men who have sex with men.

Gay leaders such as Wiener and longtime HIV activists have urged health officials to act decisively to contain monkeypox and avoid repeating mistakes from the AIDS crisis when the suffering of gay men was minimized and the world failed to act quickly.

Key inflation gauge jumps 6.8%

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — An inflation gauge that is closely tracked by the Federal Reserve jumped 6.8% in June from that of a year ago, the biggest increase in four decades, and leaving Americans with no relief from surging costs.

Friday's government figures underscored the persistence of the inflation that is eroding Americans' purchasing power, dimming their confidence in the economy and threatening Democrats in Congress in the run-up to the November midterm elections.

On a month-to-month basis, prices rose 1% from May to June, faster than the 0.6% rise from April to May and the biggest such jump since 2005.

A separate government report Friday reinforced the fact that the economy remains gripped by inflation pressures. A measure of employees' wages, excluding government workers, jumped 1.6% in the April-June quarter, matching a record high reached last fall. Higher wages can fuel inflation if companies pass their higher labor costs on to their customers, as they typically do.

The Fed closely watches this report, known as the employment cost index, and takes account of it in its interest rate decisions. Last fall's sharp increase in the index contributed to the Fed's policy shift toward tightening credit.

The government also reported Friday that consumer spending managed to just outpace inflation last month, rising 0.1%

from May to June after adjusting for price changes. Consumer spending, the main driver of the economy, has weakened in the face of high inflation. But for now, it's still helping fuel inflation, with demand still strong for services, ranging from airline tickets and hotel rooms to restaurant meals and autos.

Many retail and consumer goods chains, though, say inflation is squeezing shoppers and limiting how far their money goes — a sign that consumer spending could further weaken.

For example, this week, Walmart said its profits would fall because its customers are spending more on pricier food and gas, leaving them less able to buy clothes and other discretionary items.

Lavrov open to talks on US prisoner swap

Associated Press

MOSCOW — Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Friday that he's open to a call with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken to discuss a possible prisoner swap involving American basketball star Brittney Griner.

Blinken said Wednesday that Washington had offered Russia a deal that would bring home Griner and another jailed American, Paul Whelan. A person familiar with the matter said the U.S. government proposed trading convicted Russian arms dealer Vik-

tor Bout for Whelan and Griner.

Speaking on a visit to Uzbekistan, Lavrov said his ministry had received an official U.S. request for a call after Blinken made the statement. Russia's top diplomat said he would be ready once he returns to Moscow and that the timing of the call was being worked out.

Lavrov said he was open to discussing the prisoner exchange, even though the Foreign Ministry hasn't been involved in previous discussions on the issue.

"I will listen to what he has to say," Lavrov added.

Asked Thursday about the U.S. offer, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov replied that prisoner swaps were typically negotiated discreetly behind the scenes.

"We know that such issues are discussed without any such release of information," Peskov told reporters during a conference call. "Normally, the public learns about it when the agreements are already implemented."

Blinken's comments marked the first time the U.S. government publicly revealed any concrete action it has taken to secure

Griner's release. The two-time Olympic gold medalist and player for the WNBA's Phoenix Mercury was arrested at a Moscow airport in mid-February when inspectors found vape cartridges containing cannabis oil in her luggage.

Griner's arrest came at a time of heightened tensions between Moscow and Washington ahead of Russia sending troops into Ukraine on Feb. 24. Griner's five months of detention have raised strong criticism among teammates and supporters in the United States.

St. Louis area hit by another round of flooding

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Heavy rains brought another round of flooding to the St. Louis region that was already recovering from record rains earlier this week, prompting firefighters to help dozens of people escape the floodwaters.

No injuries were reported from Thursday's flooding, but the St. Louis Fire Department said on Twitter that it responded to 75 flooding-related emergencies and 60 people were rescued or helped to safety.

Among the rescues, the department said firefighters carried six children to safety from a day care at Cornerstone Institutional Baptist Church, where 15 children and three adults were trapped.

The storms that began Thursday lasted for a few hours and dropped about 2 to 4 inches of rain, according to early National Weather Service estimates.

Debbie Boshans, her husband and their cat had been rescued Tuesday from their home due to flooding, and they were working to load belongings onto a trailer

Thursday when rain began falling again, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported. Their street flooded a second time.

"I can't believe this happened again," Boshans' son-in-law, Kyle Mathes, told the newspaper. "It's a double whammy."

Earlier in the week, a storm system dropped more than a foot on St. Charles County and up to 10 inches in other areas on Tuesday and Wednesday.

That prompted widespread flooding. Parts of southern Illinois also saw flooding after heavy rains.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Coyote gets more room, not new home

IL NORTHBROOK — A coyote on public display in suburban Chicago will get a larger den but not a transfer to a wild animal sanctuary in Colorado.

A report for the Cook County Forest Preserve District said the coyote, named Rocky, is “happy and healthy” in his 266-square-foot home but will get more room. Critics, however, said his constant pacing is proof that he’s bored.

“You put an animal in a cage they’re not happy,” said Jodie Wiederkehr, director of the Chicago Alliance for Animals.

Rocky has been at the River Trail Nature Center in Northbrook since 2018, the Chicago Sun-Times reported. He was found as a pup in Tennessee.

An expanded habitat is in the works at the nature center.

A petition to relocate the coyote to a wild animal sanctuary in Keenesburg, Colo., has more than 6,000 signatures.

Police find 2 bodies after blast at home

MN HOPKINS — Two people were killed when an explosion and fire demolished a suburban Minneapolis home, police said.

Hopkins Fire Chief Dale Specken said it was a “pretty violent explosion” that reportedly shook many other homes in the neighborhood. The cause of the blast has not been determined. Specken said crews found no gas leaks on

the exterior of the home.

Two bodies were recovered from the debris, a Hopkins police spokeswoman said. They have not been identified. Police said two elderly people lived in the home.

Society chapter to drop ‘Audubon’

WA SEATTLE — The Seattle chapter of the Audubon Society says it is dropping “Audubon” from its name because the man the organization is named after was a slave owner and opposed abolition.

KNKX reported that Seattle Audubon is one of the largest chapters of the National Audubon Society, the nonprofit dedicated to protecting birds and their habitats. No deadlines or candidates for a replacement name have been established.

Earlier this month, the board voted to change the chapter’s name because the man the organization is named after — illustrator, painter and bird lover John James Audubon, author of the seminal work “The Birds of America” — owned enslaved people.

Man arrested after flight diverted to Utah

UT SALT LAKE CITY — A British man aboard a flight from London to Los Angeles grabbed a passenger seated in front of him by the throat and tried to hit and bite him, prompting the diversion of the flight to Utah, authorities said.

William Stephen Hayes, 39, was arrested after the Virgin

Atlantic flight landed in Salt Lake City, police said in a statement. He was charged with assault and interfering with the flight crew, the U.S. Attorney’s Office in Utah said in charging documents.

Witnesses told authorities that after passengers and crew members restrained and handcuffed Hayes following the alleged assault, he still tried to fight with people nearby and kick the plane’s windows, the charging documents said.

Local police took Hayes into custody after the plane landed and referred the case to the U.S. Attorney’s office, which typically has authority over international flights. The plane then resumed its flight to Los Angeles.

2 dead, 10 hurt in rollover near border

NM SUNLAND PARK — Two people died and 10 were injured when the SUV they were in rolled over in southeastern New Mexico about eight miles from the U.S.-Mexico border, officials said.

A 13th person also was in the Chevrolet Tahoe but it was unclear whether that person was injured, said Sunland Park Fire Chief Daniel Medrano. His agency responded to the crash, which occurred around 4:45 a.m. about 13 miles northwest of El Paso, Texas.

New Mexico State Police confirmed the two fatalities but did not respond to repeated requests for comment on whether law enforcement officers were pursuing the SUV

when the rollover happened. Medrano said two of the people who were hurt suffered critical injuries and that all of the injured were taken to hospitals.

Federal officials in a statement said U.S. Border Patrol agents provided assistance at the crash scene, but declined to specify what type of help or whether agents were involved in a pursuit.

Firm to pay nearly \$1M in oil spill

CA HUNTINGTON BEACH — The owner of an underwater oil pipeline that spilled some 25,000 gallons of crude into the ocean off Southern California last year will pay nearly \$1 million in cleanup costs.

The Orange County Board of Supervisors agreed to accept a proposed claim settlement with Amplify Energy Corp. over the costs of dealing with last October’s spill off of Huntington Beach.

The ruptured pipeline spilled the oil about 4 miles offshore. While less severe than initially feared, the spill shuttered beaches for a week and fisheries for more than a month, oiled birds and threatened wetlands that Orange County communities have been striving to restore.

Investigators believe the San Pedro Bay Pipeline that ferried crude from offshore oil platforms to the coast was weakened when a cargo ship’s anchor snagged it in high winds in January 2021, months before it ultimately ruptured Oct. 1.

— From Associated Press

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Bills QB Allen stays true to himself

Associated Press

PITTSFORD, N.Y. — A young Josh Allen couldn't wait to clamber into the front seat of his father's Chevy Silverado for the 20-minute ride to school each morning, knowing he'd have an opportunity to regale an imaginary TV audience with his latest sports exploit.

With his left hand on the wheel and his right pretending to hold out a microphone, Joel Allen would pepper his two sons with questions about buzzer-beating baskets, walk-off home runs and game-deciding touchdown drives.

"I tried to make sure I thanked the O-line first, trying to model my answers after some of the guys that were in the league at the time," Josh Allen recalled, noting his father would critique his sons if their answers bordered on being self-centered. "It was just one of those things that he knew from a young age that sports were my passion. And it was something fun for him to do on the drive, too."

The future Buffalo Bills quarterback was 5, never realizing that one day his weekly routine would involve conducting news conferences where he discussed an array of topics from dramatic wins to frustrating losses and even real-life issues. In May, he consoled the families of victims of a racist rampage at a Buffalo supermarket.

Allen drew on the memory of those morning drives, passing the fruit farms in Firebaugh, Calif., by crediting his father for instilling in him the confidence to address most any situation.

"A lot of good people in my life have shown me the ropes on how to be yourself and be true to you," Allen said. "If you don't know who you are, I don't think you can lead

a group of men. So it's knowing who you are first, and then the guys will follow."

The Bills are, indeed, following Allen.

Entering his fifth season, he is the team's unquestioned leader. He has catapulted himself among the NFL's elite young stars by rewriting many of the franchise's season passing and scoring records while leading Buffalo to two consecutive AFC East titles and three consecutive playoff berths.

Allen, 26, became the Bills' highest-paid player after he signed a six-year, \$258 million contract last summer and boosted his celebrity status around town and beyond.

Allen attracted a small gallery following his foursome during the Bills' media golf tournament in June.

Outside of Buffalo, he's hobnobbed with Formula One drivers at the Miami Grand Prix and drew interest from the paparazzi, who snapped pictures of him and his long-time girlfriend entering a LA restaurant.

For all that's changed since the Bills were second-guessed for trading up five spots to select the raw, erratic and relatively unproven player out of Wyoming in the first round of the 2018 draft, what's notable is how much Allen has stayed true to himself amid the distractions.

At training camp, Allen can be found playing the board game Catan, binge-watching "Breaking Bad" and amusing teammates with daily rounds of groan-inducing teenage bathroom humor.

"They say money doesn't change you, money makes you more of the person you already are. So he's that same person," receiver Stefon Diggs said. "It wasn't the money. He's a good guy. He's a goofball."

Tight end Dawson Knox became the victim of Allen's latest prank while the two

were signing autographs at camp. Allen snuck up behind Knox and signed the back of his neck.

"He's just the same old guy cracking jokes and quoting movies that no one's ever heard of," Knox said. "Yeah, the dude's hilarious, and he's one of the greatest competitors I've ever played with."

It's not all fun and games with Allen, whose offseason non-football commitments included participating alongside Tom Brady, Aaron Rodgers and Patrick Mahomes in the made-for-TV golf event called "The Match" in Las Vegas in June. Rather than stay overnight, Allen took the earliest flight to Buffalo and was back on the field for voluntary practice the next day.

Allen joked that it was because he played golf poorly and needed to get back to what he does best, football. Coach Sean McDermott saw it differently.

"The way he handled that as a professional and in particular as a leader of this football team just added to the stack of things that he's done," McDermott said. "He's authentic and genuine in his approach."

General manager Brandon Beane saw Allen grow as a leader while pulling the Bills out of a troubling funk last season.

With their record at 7-6, the Bills trailed Tampa Bay 24-3 when Allen addressed the team at halftime. With Allen playing on a sprained left foot, Buffalo rallied before losing 33-27 in overtime and closed the season winning its final four.

"We needed somebody to grab everybody by their shirt tails and say, 'Let's go,' and I thought Josh did that down the stretch," Beane said. "The light came on for him. He knew those guys are wanting that out of him. And he's led ever since."

Ravens QB Jackson: There could be 'cutoff' for talks

Associated Press

BALTIMORE — Lamar Jackson's contract negotiations are lingering into training camp, and the Baltimore quarterback says at a certain point, it could be time to put those talks aside.

"There's probably going to be a cutoff at some point, yes," Jackson said Thursday.

The latest update from the Ravens' star quarterback wasn't exactly earth shattering: Yes, negotiations are ongoing. No, he wasn't going to publicize details about topics such as guaranteed money. Yes, he thinks a deal will eventually get done, and

yes, he hopes that will be before the season.

The most significant takeaway was probably the fact that Jackson seems willing to put a deadline on negotiations. That's not a huge shock — contract talks during the season can be a distraction — but it suggests that if the Ravens don't reach a long-term deal with him soon, this saga could stretch into next offseason.

This season is Jackson's fifth-year option, and it's surprising that his contract status remains so uncertain. Josh Allen, another star quarterback drafted the same year as Jackson, signed his big extension last off-

season. Kyler Murray, drafted a year after Jackson, received one this month.

The franchise tag means the Ravens don't have to worry too much about losing Jackson after this season, and neither side has shown any significant acrimony publicly. Jackson missed voluntary OTAs but attended mandatory minicamp, and he was on the field for the start of training camp this week.

"I want to win, at the end of the day. I just want to be great," he said. "I just want to work with my brothers, at the end of the day. I don't want to leave them out there hanging. That's not me. That's never been me."

House committee hears Snyder testimony

Associated Press

Washington Commanders owner Dan Snyder testified before a congressional committee investigating the NFL team's history of workplace misconduct Thursday, speaking for more than 10 hours in a deposition conducted virtually and in private.

A spokesperson for the U.S. House Committee on Oversight and a spokesperson for Snyder independently verified his testimony wrapped up after 6:30 p.m. EDT. It was scheduled to begin at 8 a.m., with Snyder appearing via Zoom from Israel.

"Washington Commanders co-owner Dan Snyder today voluntarily testified under oath for nearly 11 hours, on top of the previous cooperation provided to the committee," a spokesper-

son for Snyder said in a statement. "Mr. Snyder fully addressed all questions about workplace misconduct, described the Commanders' dramatic two-year transformation and expressed hope for the organization's bright future."

A committee spokesperson said it had no comment Thursday night.

Snyder agreed to testify voluntarily after committee members worked out some issues with his legal team on the terms of his deposition. The committee had previously agreed to have Snyder testify under the terms of a subpoena it had initially issued.

The committee has the discretion to decide what, if any, information it releases from Snyder's deposition. The hear-

ing was not recorded, though a transcript is expected to be produced.

Snyder testified a month after NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell appeared before the committee via Zoom to discuss Washington's workplace culture and the league's investigation into it. Snyder was invited to testify at the same hearing and, through a lawyer, declined.

The committee launched this investigation last year after the league fined Washington \$10 million following its review of workplace misconduct but did not release a written report of attorney Beth Wilkinson's findings.

Snyder's testimony came on the second day of practice of Washington's training camp in preparation for the 2022 season,

which begins in September. While players and coaches are trying to focus on football, the congressional investigation was just one of a few off-field story lines around the team that made headlines in recent months, including an assistant's comments about the Jan. 6 insurrection and a deal for a new stadium falling through.

Earlier Thursday, a committee spokesperson said Snyder had "committed to providing full and complete testimony, and to answer the committee's questions about his knowledge of and contributions to the Commanders' toxic work environment, as well as his efforts to interfere with the NFL's internal investigation, without hiding behind nondisclosure or other confidentiality agreements."

Mets get Naquin, reliever in trade with Cincinnati

Associated Press

NEW YORK — With the trade deadline drawing closer, the first-place New York Mets have been busy getting better from the left side of the plate.

New York acquired left-handed-hitting outfielder Tyler Naquin and lefty reliever Philip Diehl from the Cincinnati Reds on Thursday night in a deal for two teenage minor leaguers.

Cincinnati received outfielder Hector Rodríguez and right-hander Jose Acuña.

It was the second time in seven days the Mets traded for a left-handed hitter with some pop. New York upgraded at DH last week, acquiring Daniel Vogelbach from the Pittsburgh Pirates for rookie reliever Colin Holderman.

Naquin, a first-round draft pick 10 years ago, was batting .246 with seven homers and 33 RBIs in 56 games for the Reds, who are last in the NL Central. He homered and drove in two runs Thursday afternoon in a

7-6 loss to the Miami Marlins.

As the NL East leaders look to add offense before Tuesday's trade deadline, Naquin provides depth for an outfield that already includes All-Star right fielder Starling Marte, center fielder Brandon Nimmo and left fielder Mark Canha.

Sources: Metcalf to get extension from Seattle

RENTON, Wash. — The Seattle Seahawks are expected to sign wide receiver DK Metcalf to a three-year contract extension that will be worth up to \$72 million, according to two people with knowledge of the deal.

The people spoke to The Associated Press on Thursday on the condition of anonymity because the team had not announced the signing. ESPN first reported the deal, which includes \$58 million guaranteed. The deal runs through the 2025 season, when he'll have another shot at free agency.

Metcalf is the latest in a string

of top pass catchers to get locked up with new deals this offseason. He is entering the final year of his rookie contract after being a second-round pick by Seattle in 2019 and getting him signed was a priority for the Seahawks this offseason.

In other NFL news:

■ Chase Young will not be ready to play Week 1 for the Washington Commanders, coach Ron Rivera confirmed Friday in ruling out the standout pass-rusher for at least the season opener.

Young could miss more than just Washington's first game, Sept. 11 against Jacksonville, if he goes on injured reserve or remains on the physically unable to perform list. The 2020 Defensive Rookie of the Year is working back from surgery to repair a torn ACL in his right knee.

IndyCar's Newgarden cleared for qualifying

INDIANAPOLIS — Josef Newgarden has been cleared to

qualify for Saturday's IndyCar race at Indianapolis Motor Speedway after being re-evaluated by doctors following Friday morning's practice session.

The two-time series champ collapsed in his motorhome, striking the back of his head after crashing during last weekend's race at Iowa and was airlifted to a hospital. Newgarden was leading the race and in position to sweep the two Iowa races when his suspension apparently broke, sending him spinning hard into the wall.

He was initially cleared at the infield care center.

Series officials gave Newgarden the OK to practice Thursday — with the stipulation he would be rechecked between practice and qualifying.

The popular 31-year-old driver from Tennessee posted the second-fastest lap in practice, completing Indianapolis' road course in 1 minute, 10.1121 seconds. He had Team Penske's quickest car.

Walk-off HR lifts Yankees over Royals

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Aaron Judge hit his third walk-off homer this year, his major league-leading 39th home run, to lift the New York Yankees over the Kansas City Royals 1-0 Thursday night.

New York was held to one hit before Judge drove a first-pitch fastball from Scott Barlow (4-3) into the Kansas City bullpen with one out in the ninth, giving the Yankees their 12th walk-off win this season.

Judge joined Mickey Mantle as the only Yankees with three walk-off home runs in one season. Judge had been 0-for-2 with a pair of strikeouts and a walk before the homer.

Andrew Benintendi went 0-for-4 with one strikeout in his Yankees debut, facing Kansas City one day after the Royals dealt him to New York for three minor league pitchers.

Clay Holmes (5-1) worked around two walks in a hitless ninth, combining on a four-hitter with Jameson Taillon and Ron Marinaccio.

Marlins 7, Reds 6: Miami pitcher Daniel Castano was hit on the forehead by a 104 mph line drive off the bat of Donovan Solano in the first inning of his team's road win over Cincinnati.

Miami said Castano showed mild concussion symptoms and was bruised, and a CT scan was normal.

Miami earned a four-game split by overcoming a 5-4, ninth-inning deficit. Pinch-hitter Jesús Sánchez homered off Hunter Strickland (2-3), Joey Wendle hit a go-ahead double against Buck Farmer and Jesús Aguilar followed with a sacrifice fly for his fourth RBI.

Zach Pop (2-0) threw a perfect eighth. Tanner Scott allowed Tommy Pham's RBI single and struck out Joey Votto with two on for his 14th save.

Dodgers 13, Rockies 0: Tyler Anderson and two relievers — including infielder Hanser

Alberto — combined on a seven-hitter, and visiting Los Angeles routed sloppy Colorado for its seventh shutout of the season.

Trea Turner had three hits for Los Angeles, including a three-run double. Gavin Lux also had three hits, and Will Smith finished with two hits and three RBIs.

The MLB-leading Dodgers scored two runs in the first and four in the second against José Ureña (1-3). LA's 10th win in 12 games extended its NL West lead to a season-high 12 games over San Diego.

Anderson (11-1) allowed four hits and struck out four against his former team, the only club he has lost to this season.

Blue Jays 5, Tigers 3: Matt Chapman hit two home runs, Yusei Kikuchi came off the injured list to pitch five solid innings and host Toronto beat Detroit for its 10th victory in 12 games.

Chapman hit a two-run homer off left-hander Tyler Alexander in the fourth and a solo shot off Angel De Jesus in the sixth, the ninth multi-homer game of his career and first this season. He has 18 homers this season.

Jonathan Schoop and Willi Castro each hit a solo homer for the Tigers, who have lost five of eight since the All-Star break.

Kikuchi (4-5) walked one and struck out five to win for the first time since beating Tampa Bay on June 30. Jordan Romano wrapped it up for his 22nd save in 25 chances.

Red Sox 4, Guardians 2: Xander Bogaerts hit a three-run homer in the sixth inning, and host Boston beat Cleveland for its fifth win in 20 games.

Guardians starter Triston McKenzie took a one-hit shutout into the sixth before putting two on with one out for Bogaerts, who hit an 0-2 slider out to turn a one-run deficit into a 3-1 lead.

Boston scored another when Bobby Dalbec's drive off the

Green Monster plated Franchy Cordero, who led off the seventh with a double.

McKenzie (7-7) allowed six hits and walked one in seven innings in his first loss since June 27.

Rangers 2, Angels 0: Nathaniel Lowe homered and tripled, and Corey Seager had an RBI double among his three hits off Shohei Ohtani in visiting Texas' win over Los Angeles.

Ohtani (9-6) racked up 11 strikeouts in his sixth consecutive start with double-digit whiffs, but he also yielded eight hits and two runs over six innings. The AL MVP lost his second straight start and the Angels were shut out for the 10th time this season.

Seager left with a bruise on his lower right leg during the sixth inning. He fouled a ball off his leg in the fifth, but delivered his run-scoring double moments later.

Astros 4, Mariners 2: Alex Bregman hit a two-run homer early, and his tiebreaking RBI double in the eighth inning led host Houston past Seattle, snapping a three-game losing streak.

Bregman was shaken up in a collision while scoring the Astros' final run in the eighth, but remained in the game.

The game was tied at 2 when Andrés Muñoz (1-4) hit Yuli Gurriel to start Houston's eighth. Gurriel stole second with one out, and Bregman, who homered in the first, doubled off the wall in left-center field for a 3-2 lead. Bregman scored on a two-out wild pitch, colliding with a diving Muñoz as the reliever tried to make the tag.

Rafael Montero (4-1) got four outs without allowing a hit for the win and Ryan Pressly earned his 21st save in 24 chances.

Giants 4, Cubs 2: Alex Wood took a no-hitter into the seventh inning and host San Francisco stopped a seven-game skid with a win over Chicago.

Yermín Mercedes hit an early two-run single, and four Giants pitchers combined on a three-hitter to snap Chicago's six-game winning streak.

Wood (7-8) allowed two hits in 6⅓ innings, striking out two and walking two. He got help from his defense as first baseman Darin Ruf scooped a short-hop throw to retire Patrick Wisdom in the fifth, and right fielder Mike Yastrzemski ran hard to catch Christopher Morel's sixth-inning line drive.

Wood's no-hit bid ended in the seventh on Ian Happ's leadoff single. Two outs later, Wisdom belted his 18th homer of the season.

Orioles 3, Rays 0: Trey Mancini hit an eighth-inning, inside-the-park home run in what may have been his final home plate appearance with Baltimore in a win over visiting Tampa Bay.

Jordan Lyles (7-8) allowed three hits in 5⅓ innings. Lyles and Mancini both could be dealt by Tuesday's trade deadline.

Anthony Santander doubled home a run in the third off Ryan Yarbrough (0-6). Félix Bautista retired four batters for his third save.

Phillies 8, Pirates 7: Kyle Schwarber hit his NL-leading 32nd homer and Zack Wheeler pitched seven strong innings as visiting Philadelphia built a large lead and held on to edge Pittsburgh.

Schwarber's three-run shot off Zach Thompson (3-8) in the sixth inning gave the Phillies a 7-0 lead. In the seventh, rookie Cal Mitchell ended Wheeler's shutout bid with a two-run homer.

The Pirates scored five times in the ninth inning. Tyler Heineman doubled in two runs and Kevin Newman hit a two-run triple off Jeurys Familia. Seranthony Dominguez replaced Familia and earned his sixth save in seven chances.

Nick Castellanos had three of the Phillies' 15 hits.