

STARS AND STRIPES®

Wednesday, June 5, 2019

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Marine charged in hazing death to plead guilty

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A Marine Raider charged in the 2017 hazing death of a Green Beret in Africa will plead guilty Thursday to negligent homicide and other charges for his role in a “stupid prank that went horribly wrong,” his defense attorney said.

Staff Sgt. Kevin Maxwell Jr. faces a felony-level general court-martial at Naval Station Norfolk in Virginia for his role in the June 4, 2017, death of Army Staff Sgt. Logan Melgar in the Malian capital city of Bamako where they were deployed. Maxwell is one of four special operators charged in Melgar’s death and will become the second to plead guilty to his involvement.

Brian Bouffard, Maxwell’s civilian lawyer, said Tuesday that the Marine had reached a pre-trial agreement with prosecutors and was prepared “to accept responsibility for his role” in Melgar’s death. In addition to pleading guilty to negligent homicide, which is the lowest level of criminal homicide that can be charged under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, Maxwell will plead guilty to other charges including burglary and obstruction of justice, Bouffard said.

“This is a tragedy on multiple levels,” Bouffard said. “... I don’t believe any of these four men ... had the intent or desire to kill Logan Melgar. This death was an accident.”

Nonetheless, Bouffard said Maxwell and the others involved must be held accountable for their actions during the incident and after Melgar’s death, when they attempted to mislead investigators.

Maxwell faces the possibility of multiple years in prison. Negligent homicide carries a maximum penalty that includes a dishonorable discharge, forfeiture of all pay and allowance and three years in prison, according to the UCMJ.

All four special operators charged in Melgar’s death initially faced multiple charges for their roles including felony murder, involuntary manslaughter, conspiracy, obstruction of justice, hazing and burglary.

Maxwell’s court-martial comes just weeks after Navy SEAL Chief Petty Officer Adam Matthews pleaded guilty to reduced charges that he conspired to commit an assault and battery, unlawful entry and obstructed justice. In a lower-level special court-martial May 16, Matthews was sentenced to one year in prison, a two-grade reduction in rank to petty officer 2nd class and a bad conduct discharge.

The others charged, Navy SEAL Chief Petty Officer Tony DeDolph and Marine Raider Gunnery Sgt. Mario Madera-Rodriguez, have yet to face a judge in their cases.

Matthews told the military judge overseeing the case that the group never intended to kill Melgar, but they wanted to “reme-

diate” him for perceived performance issues and a “slight” from the previous night, accusing him of abandoning Maxwell and Madera-Rodriguez in an area of Bamako with which they were unfamiliar.

The SEAL, who had been a member of the Naval Special Warfare Development Group or SEAL Team 6 since 2005, said the group used a sledgehammer to break into Melgar’s quarters where he was asleep. He said they had planned to duct-tape his hands and feet and videotape him “to embarrass him.”

But Melgar became unresponsive and eventually died as DeDolph held him in a headlock, Matthews said.

“Words cannot express how deeply I regret those events and how remorseful I am,” Matthews said during his court-martial before he was sentenced. “The Navy expected me to be a leader. I am tormented by my complacency at a time when my teammates required my guidance and the situation required bold, corrective action.”

Maxwell, who is from Indiana, enlisted in the Marine Corps in November 2007 and served in Afghanistan, according to service records.

He served with the 3rd Marine Air Wing at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point in North Carolina from 2009 to 2012. He graduated Marine Raider training in February 2013 and has since served with the elite 3rd Marine Special Operations Battalion.

AF general relieved; improper relationship cited

BY ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

The two-star general at the helm of the Air Force Warfare Center at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada was relieved of command Sunday because of an alleged unprofessional relationship.

Maj. Gen. Peter Gersten, who has led the center at the Air Force base since July 2017, is now part of an ongoing investigation, according to the

statement released Wednesday from Air Combat Command at Joint Base Langley-Eustis in Virginia.

Gen. Mike Holmes, commander of the Air Combat Command, made the decision to relieve Gersten due to a loss of confidence in Gersten’s ability to continue in a leadership position because of the alleged relationship, according to the statement.

“The Air Force holds leaders to high standards and expects

them to uphold the core values of the service at all times,” the statement reads.

Brig. Gen. David Snoddy, the center’s vice commander, will replace Gersten until Maj. Gen. Charles Corcoran, who was previously announced as the next Air Force Warfare Center commander, takes command in July.

Gersten is an F-16 Falcon pilot and a 1989 graduate of the Air Force Academy, according to his online biography. He has

more than 400 combat hours over Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and Bosnia.

He held command of the 4th Fighter Squadron at Hill Air Force Base in Utah, the 8th Operations Group at Kunsan Air Base in South Korea and the 432nd Wing and 432nd Air Expeditionary Wing at Creech Air Force Base in Nevada.

The warfare center is a training and testing program with units at Nellis and multiple other installations.

Navy cites Russian intercepts

By SCOTT WYLAND
Stars and Stripes

A Russian fighter intercepted a Navy P-8A Poseidon aircraft three times over the Mediterranean Sea on Tuesday, with two of the passes deemed unsafe, Navy officials said.

A Sukhoi Su-35 flew at high speed directly in front of the Poseidon on the second pass, which put the pilot and crew at risk, the Navy said in a statement.

“While the Russian aircraft was operating in international airspace, this interaction was

irresponsible,” the 6th Fleet statement said. “We expect them to behave within international standards set to ensure safety and to prevent incidents. Unsafe actions increase the risk of miscalculation and potential for midair collisions.”

The U.S. surveillance aircraft was operating consistent with international law and did not provoke the Russian pilot, who intercepted the Poseidon three times over about three hours, the Navy said.

It was not clear from the statement where exactly the in-

cident happened, but Su-35 air-superiority fighters have been operating out of the Russian air base of Khmeimim in western Syria since 2016.

It was the latest incident of its kind between Russian jets and U.S. planes or its allies over the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. American and NATO officials have said repeatedly that the Russians engage in unpredictable maneuvers that include flying without transponders turned on, which the Russians have denied.

Piece from Marine helo falls onto schoolyard

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Marine Corps officials said a half-ounce piece of rubber that fell onto a busy Okinawa middle school tennis court Tuesday came off a Marine CH-53E Super Stallion helicopter.

Children were practicing on the court at Uranishi Middle School in Urasoe City when the 6-by-8-inch black rubber object landed there around 3:35 p.m., according to a spokesman for the Okinawa Defense Bureau, which is a branch of the Japan Ministry of Defense. No injuries or damage were reported.

Witnesses reported seeing a helicopter flying overhead at the time the piece fell, the spokesman said. The piece was delivered first to the bureau and then to the Marine Corps for closer inspection.

The school is about 2½ miles southwest of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma in Ginowan.

“After investigating, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing concluded that the small piece of black rubber is blade tape,” III Marine Expeditionary Force spokesman 1st Lt. Jose Uriarte wrote in an emailed statement to Stars and Stripes on Wednesday afternoon.

Blade tape is used to protect the forward edge of helicopter blades, he said.

“Blade tape poses no threat to people or property; however, we remain committed to safe flight operations and to not causing anxiety within the community,” Uriarte wrote. “1st Marine Aircraft Wing is inspecting all aircraft that have blade tape and will remove or replace any blade tape that is found to be degraded.”

In addition to Super Stallions, blade tape is also used on the MV-22B Osprey, AH-1Z Viper and UH-1Y Venom, he said.

Union Jacks raised in battle tribute

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — The U.S. Navy officially switched to flying the Union Jack flag aboard its ships Tuesday, a move timed to coincide with the 77th anniversary of its role in the decisive Battle of Midway in World War II.

During a ceremony commemorating the battle aboard the destroyer USS Chung-Hoon at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, the 50-star Union Jack was hoisted for the first time since 2002, when it had been replaced by the First Navy Jack in response to the 9/11 attacks.

Adm. John Richardson, chief of naval operations, announced in February that the Navy would be returning to its long tradition of flying the Union Jack, a version of which was first flown in 1777.

Capt. Joseph Naman, chief of staff for Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific, told the ship’s crew: “Your role in the United States Navy is vital. The job you are doing right now will contribute to the overall success or failure in the challenges facing our generation. That’s the reminder of the Union Jack and the lesson that the Battle of

Midway teaches us.”

The Battle of Midway was relatively short, lasting June 3-7, 1942, but the American fleet inflicted devastating damage and losses to the Imperial Japanese Navy.

The Japanese had planned to seize Midway Atoll, which is roughly 1,500 miles northwest of Hawaii.

The American fleet, however, caught the Japanese armada by surprise and it lost almost 300 planes, a cruiser and four aircraft carriers, which had been among the six used in the attack on Pearl Harbor six months earlier. About 2,500 Japanese died.

The U.S. had far fewer losses, with 300 men dead and the carrier Yorktown and a destroyer sunk.

“With the decisive victory at Midway the United States would begin the long struggle to roll back a proud and determined foe,” Naman said in a Navy statement.

“It would be the unconquerable spirit of this great nation and the United States Navy that would turn the tables on the Axis powers.”

The Navy had switched over to flying the First Navy Jack in 2002 in a symbolic response to the attacks on the World Trade

Center and Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001, the statement said. The flag is adorned with a rattlesnake and the words, “Don’t Tread on Me.”

That flag also has a long history in the service, but by custom it had been reserved for the commissioned ship having the longest total period in active status, according to the Navy.

In a statement in February announcing the change, Richardson said, “Make no mistake: we have entered a new era of competition.

“We must recommit to the core attributes that made us successful at Midway: integrity, accountability, initiative, and toughness.

“For more than two hundred and forty years, the Union Jack, flying proudly from jackstaves aboard U.S. Navy warships, has symbolized these strengths.”

As of Tuesday, the only Navy warship authorized to fly the “rattlesnake” jack is the USS Blue Ridge, an amphibious command ship commissioned in 1970, the Navy said.

Home-ported at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, the Blue Ridge is the 7th Fleet command ship.

Rangers scale cliff to mark D-Day heroics

By JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

OMAHA BEACH, France — Maj. Ross Daly put on the World War II era uniform of his 75th Ranger Regiment forebears Tuesday to scale the cliff at Pointe du Hoc, where 75 years ago a small group of soldiers attempted one of the most daring missions of the war.

“For us in the 2nd Ranger Battalion, this was our baptism by fire,” Daly said. “This is where our battalion’s legacy was born. They gave everything that day and now it is on us.”

About 100 Rangers climbed the steep limestone cliffside at Pointe du Hoc to commemorate

the historic operation and the 75th Ranger Regiment’s role in the D-Day landings, which took a heavy toll on the unit. Only 90 of the roughly 225 Rangers who took part were still standing after two days of fighting.

The climb up the 100-foot cliffs included using rope ladders that were too short while facing gunfire and dropped grenades on the ascent. The aim was to seize German artillery pieces that could have been used against U.S. troops at Omaha and Utah beaches.

On Tuesday, John Raaen, 97, watched as the Rangers climbed up again. Raaen was a company commander in the 75th’s 5th Ranger Battalion,

which also was part of the D-Day invasion. Instead of climbing at Pointe du Hoc, Raaen landed at the “Dog White Sector” at Omaha Beach.

“There was little resistance there. The Germans, they more or less pulled out there,” Raaen said, sitting near the cliff’s edge at Pointe du Hoc. “But it was a bad situation here.”

Later that day, Raaen made it up to Pointe du Hoc to rally with other Rangers. They faced counterattacks for the next two days while defending the position. The scene was chaotic, Raaen said.

“At one point, five tanks burst over the hill and attacked us. Our own tanks. They killed

about eight Rangers. Friendly fire,” Raaen said. “They thought they heard the sound of German gunfire.”

For today’s Rangers, the climb at Pointe du Hoc was a chance to offer thanks, with many crouching down to trade stories with Raaen.

“We stand on your shoulders,” regiment commander Col. Brandon R. Tegtmeier told Raaen after climbing the cliff.

“They fought their way up. It’s amazing what they did,” said Sgt. Maj. Michael Albaush, 7th Ranger Regiment’s sergeant major. “For us to be a part of it and do this climb is to commemorate the history of the Rangers.”

Trump reads from prayer by FDR at UK D-Day event

Associated Press

PORTSMOUTH, England — President Donald Trump read from a prayer delivered by President Franklin D. Roosevelt as he joined other world leaders and veterans Wednesday in marking the 75th anniversary of D-Day.

Roosevelt went on national radio on June 6, 1944, to address the U.S. for the first time about the Normandy invasion. Trump, with images of an American flag and Roosevelt projected behind him, read to the crowd: “Almighty God, our sons, pride of our nation, this day, have set upon a mighty endeavor, a struggle to preserve our republic, our religion and our civilization and to set free a suffering humanity.”

Trump traveled to the southern coast of England on Wednesday to pay respects to American servicemembers and allies who helped rescue Europe from Nazi Germany. He sat in a VIP area between Queen Elizabeth II and the first lady during the program, which focused on a telling of events leading up to D-Day. Some 300 World War II veter-

ans also attended the seaside ceremony.

A chilly breeze blew off the English Channel as Trump arrived for the event, the first of two he is attending to mark the 75th anniversary of D-Day when the Allied soldiers, sailors and airmen conducted an invasion that helped liberate Europe from Nazi Germany.

Trump joined in giving a standing ovation to a group of World War II vets who appeared on stage as the commemoration began.

After the event, Trump visited with American World War II veterans who were among Allied troops on D-Day. He was to have lunch and meet briefly with German Chancellor Angela Merkel before departing for Ireland to meet with Prime Minister Leo Varadkar and stay at Trump’s golf course in the village of Doonbeg.

During a news conference Tuesday, Trump said he is grateful for the warm welcome he received from the British royal family and prime minister as “we remember the heroes who laid down their lives to rescue civilization itself.”

Okinawa Marines refine their combat driving skills

By CARLOS M. VAZQUEZ II

Stars and Stripes

CAMP SCHWAB, Okinawa — Motor transportation Marines took to the jungle recently to refine their combat driving abilities and get acquainted with their surroundings during an Advanced Motor Vehicle Operations Course.

Marines of Combat Logistics Battalion 4, 3rd Marine Logistics Group navigated several obstacles, including muddy water, vertical terrain and tight turns on May 23.

“It helps us prepare for anything that the battalion might be required to do to sustain our supported units, to work with partner nations, including the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force, and react to any crisis in the region,” said Lt. Col. Dana Demer, battalion commander.

“This is my third time on (the) island. I’m not from Okinawa, but Okinawa is my home, so we ensure our drivers who share the road with our families and our Okinawa friends operate in a safe manner,” he said.

The training took place after recent mishaps involving

military vehicles stateside and overseas.

A Marine deployed to Australia — Lance Cpl. Hans Sandoval-Pereyra, 21 — died from injuries he received in a tactical vehicle accident on May 25.

On May 9, Marine 1st Lt. Conor McDowell was killed when a light armored vehicle rolled over during training at Camp Pendleton, Calif. The accident was the fourth fatal rollover training accident for the military this year and the second at Pendleton, according to the Orange County Register.

Staff Sgt. Joshua Braica, of the 1st Marine Raider Battalion, was killed April 13 when his tactical vehicle rolled over on the base.

During the Advanced Motor Vehicle Operations Course, operators are trained to transport and supply troops in a jungle or city environment.

“We don’t know where the next battle is and what environment it might be in,” said Staff Sgt. Andre Stephens, motor transport operations chief. “This right here gives us a good, austere environment.”

Ark. officials: Flood won't sink city's hopes

Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — An economically struggling Arkansas city in the midst of a revitalization plan continued flooding Tuesday as the Arkansas River crested its banks, but local officials said even after the waters recede, the community's resilience will bolster recovery.

Pine Bluff Mayor Shirley Washington said federal and state aid will be crucial to help the town of about 42,000 clean up and rebuild after the record-breaking flooding.

The river wasn't expected to crest at its high of 51 feet until about 1 a.m. Thursday in the city, which is located about 40 miles southeast of Little Rock. The Arkansas

River has been flooding for almost two weeks after intense rainfall in Oklahoma and Kansas forced officials to release water from a strained dam northwest of Tulsa.

Last week, an evacuation order was issued for about 550 homes within the levee system, said Karen Blevins, the county's director of emergency management. Because many of the flooded homes are within the levee system, it's possible that homeowners have flood insurance, though it's unclear how many actually do.

Laurie Driver, spokeswoman for the Army Corps of Engineers, said there's concern throughout the state about the strength of the levees, which are being

strained with more water for longer periods of time than ever before.

If the levees do fail in Pine Bluff, that would be devastating for the city, which has its share of difficulties even in dry weather. According to government data, the unemployment rate in Pine Bluff peaked at almost 12% in January 2011 and hovered around 10% until mid-2014, though now it's around 5%. The median household income between 2013 and 2017 was about \$32,000, about \$11,000 below the state average.

But even with the threat of catastrophic flooding and the institutional economic disadvantages, city officials said Pine Bluff can still recover and rebuild.

Ex-White House aides told to defy subpoenas

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The White House on Tuesday again directed former employees not to cooperate with a congressional investigation, this time instructing former aides Hope Hicks and Annie Donaldson to defy subpoenas and refuse to provide documents to the House Judiciary Committee.

The letters from the White House to the Judiciary panel are the latest effort by the White House to thwart congressional investigations into President Donald Trump. Trump has said he will fight "all of the subpoenas" as Democrats have launched multiple probes into his administration and personal financial affairs.

House Judiciary Chairman Jerrold Nadler issued subpoenas for documents and testimony from Hicks, former White House communications director, and Don-

aldson, a former aide in the White House counsel's office, last month. Both are mentioned frequently in special counsel Robert Mueller's report, along with former White House Counsel Donald McGahn. The White House has also directed McGahn to refuse to provide documents or testify before the committee.

Mueller's investigation concluded that Russia interfered in the 2016 election in hopes of getting Trump elected, though his report said there was not enough evidence to establish a conspiracy between Russia and the Trump campaign. Last week Mueller emphasized he had not exonerated Trump on the question of whether he obstructed justice — in effect leaving it to Congress to decide what to do with his findings.

In a letter to Nadler, White House Counsel Pat Cipollone said that Hicks and Donald-

son "do not have the legal right" to disclose White House documents to the panel. Cipollone said requests for the records should be directed to the White House, adding that they remain "legally protected from disclosure under longstanding constitutional principles, because they implicate significant executive branch confidentiality interests and executive privilege."

In directing witnesses not to comply, the White House has frequently cited such executive privilege, or the power to keep information from the courts, Congress and the public to protect the confidentiality of the Oval Office decision-making process.

But that only extends so far. Nadler said in a statement that while the White House had instructed the former aides not to turn over materials, Hicks has agreed to turn over some documents related to her time on Trump's presidential campaign.

Family: Marine vet dad punched shark to save daughter

The Charlotte (N.C.) Observer

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — A shark attack that cost a teenager her leg ended when her father — a Marine veteran — "punched the shark in the face," according to Janet Winter, the girl's grandmother.

Paige Winter, 17, of Havelock was attacked by a shark while standing in waist-deep water off Fort Macon as her father stood nearby, according to a GoFundMe page that had raised nearly \$35,000 as of early Tuesday afternoon.

The father, Charlie Winter, is a firefighter and paramedic and had served in the Marines, according to the campaign.

Paige Winter lost part of one leg above the knee and some fingers, Janet Winter posted on her Facebook page.

"Thank God our son was with her," the woman wrote. "He said he punched the shark in the face five times before it let go."

Family friend Brandon Bersch confirmed the punches in a Monday interview with the "Today" show, saying Charlie Winter "began striking the shark on the nose."

"Charlie wouldn't stop until it released his little girl," Bersch told the show. "He lives for his children."

Marcy Goodrum Winter, the girl's moth-

er, posted on Facebook that her daughter was "groggy but cracking jokes" after her first surgery on Sunday. "She wants everyone to know that sharks are still good people," her mom was quoted saying on the GoFundMe page.

Charlie Winter's fearless attack on the shark has won him praise across the country, particularly from news outlets that cover the U.S. Marines. "Who needs a bigger boat when you have a Marine's fists?" wrote TaskandPurpose.com.

The "horrific shark attack" occurred about 12:20 p.m. Sunday off Fort Macon State Park at Atlantic Beach, according to the GoFundMe page.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Officials capture bear spotted on campus

CA DAVIS — Officials at the University of California, Davis said a bear spotted on campus has been captured and removed from the university.

UC Davis said in a tweet and a message to students that fish and game officials “safely detained and removed” the animal.

UC Davis spokesman Andy Fell told the Sacramento Bee the bear was first reported about 5:45 a.m. Tuesday near a parking lot by a park.

He said the bear climbed up a tree in a grassy area near the Hyatt Place hotel on campus.

Hungry gator crashes picnic date by lake

FL GAINESVILLE — A hungry alligator crashed a picnic date by a Florida lake and gobbled down an entire bowl of guacamole.

Taylor Forte had planned a picnic for her fiancé, Trevor Walters, at Lake Alice before Walters was to leave for the Marines.

Walters told WGFL they were shocked and ran when the animal sprinted onto the beach. First, it ate a block of cheese, then some salami, half a watermelon and a pound of grapes.

Walters said the “worst part” was watching the gator consume a big bowl of guacamole. He said the reptile devoured the bowl as well.

2 sets of twins are top graduates in class

MI GRASS LAKE — Four high school students in southeastern Michigan have more in common than graduating with the highest grade point

averages in their class.

They each also have a twin.

The Jackson Citizen Patriot reported that two sets of twins graduated from Grass Lake High School on Sunday.

Identical twins Kayla and Maria Bolton shared the honor of being valedictorians after earning the same 4.4 GPA. Fraternal twins Connor and Barrett Bagby held the next highest GPAs.

The sets of twins have known each other since elementary school.

Police: Man robbed as he slept on stoop

NY NEW YORK — Police are looking for a suspect after a man reported being robbed of jewelry and his wallet while he was sleeping on a building stoop.

The man reported to authorities that he had fallen asleep around 2 a.m. on May 25 on the stoop in front of the building on Coney Island Avenue in Brooklyn.

He told police that while he was sleeping, someone took a \$2,000 bracelet, a \$1,000 chain, clothing and a wallet with his identification and bank cards.

Museum welcomes 6-ton rock from China

TX SAN ANTONIO — A museum in South Texas has welcomed a big boulder.

A crane was used to maneuver the more than 6-ton rock donated to the San Antonio Museum of Art from a sister city in China.

The San Antonio Express-News reported the limestone rock is a gift from Wuxi in honor of San Antonio’s Tricentennial.

The donation joins the San Antonio Museum of Art’s collection of scholars’ rocks and

will be installed on campus in November.

Man who integrated school gets diploma

DE WILMINGTON — An 84-year-old man who was among the first five black students to enroll at a Delaware high school finally has his diploma.

The Delaware News Journal reported Salesianum High School in Wilmington gave a diploma to Fred Smith on Friday.

Smith and four other black students enrolled at Salesianum in 1950, four years before the Brown v. Board of Education case that dismantled school segregation.

The Army drafted Smith while the four other men graduated. After two years in the Army, Smith went straight to a job so he could support his mother and two younger siblings. He never graduated.

Officer charged with possessing child porn

LA ALEXANDRIA — A correctional officer in Louisiana was arrested on 50 counts of possessing child porn and two counts of sexually abusing animals.

News outlets reported Rapides Parish sheriff’s correctional Officer Johnny Ulrich Schalk was fired last week.

Sheriff William Earl Hilton said the charges stem from videos and pictures the 52-year-old man viewed online.

Hilton said Schalk had worked for the department for 13 years.

Goats recruited to eat unwanted plants

MI ANN ARBOR — Goats have been invited to a

feast at a popular Ann Arbor park.

The Ann Arbor News reported that 10 goats will start roaming two islands at Gallup Park to eat invasive plants, starting Thursday.

It’s being promoted as an efficient way to get rid of weeds and other undesirable vegetation.

The islands and pedestrian bridges will be closed through June 27, although there will be opportunities to see the goats in action on June 10, 19 and 24.

Authorities: Bison seriously hurts hiker

UT ANTELOPE ISLAND — Authorities said a hiker was seriously injured by a bison on Antelope Island.

The Standard-Examiner reported the 30-year-old Davis County man was struck at the state park where a 600-bison herd roams free.

Parks Lt. Eric Stucki said a medical helicopter flew the hiker to a hospital from Frary Peak Trail. He had few other details about the encounter.

Cemetery headstones damaged by vandals

MO VERONA — Lawrence County authorities are investigating vandalism at a cemetery that damaged or destroyed about 50 headstones, some dating to the 1800s.

The Monett Times reported the sheriff’s department said vandals hit the Lee Cemetery near Verona on Friday.

The Lee Cemetery Association is offering a \$1,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible.

The sheriff’s office is adding an additional \$1,000 reward.

From wire reports

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Equality in Cup spotlight

Associated Press

The world's best player won't be at the Women's World Cup but the world's best team will be, with both sides taking a stand for equality.

The U.S. national team, ranked No. 1 globally, will try to defend its title in soccer's premier tournament, which kicks off Friday in Paris. While the Americans make their way around France for the monthlong event, back at home they're all part of a lawsuit that accuses U.S. Soccer of gender discrimination.

Meanwhile, Ada Hegerberg, the first female Ballon d'Or winner for the world's top player, won't be accompanying Norway's national team. She stepped away in 2017 because of what she perceives to be a general disregard for women's soccer by the country's federation. The crux of her frustration is the uneven pace of progress and strategy in the women's game.

Hegerberg, 23, is at the top of her game. She had a hat trick for Lyon in its 4-1 win over Barcelona in the recent Women's Champions League final.

"We are happy for this debate to raise attention and respect for women's soccer in the world, and I do view it as a big change-maker," said Lise Klaveness, sporting director for the Norwegian Football Federation, "But I just wish she was in our team."

The U.S. team hopes to collectively be a difference-maker, too.

Twenty-eight members of the current player pool filed the lawsuit on March 8 in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles, alleging "institutionalized gender discrimination" that includes inequitable compensation when compared with their counterparts on the men's national team.

Because the lawsuit is still in the early stages, it's likely no significant movement will be made until the team returns home.

Megan Rapinoe was asked whether the pay issue puts more pressure on the team — which will already be facing a strong field looking to topple the three-time World Cup winners.

"I think that the huge media splash of the lawsuit is behind us and we're obviously focused on the World Cup," Rapinoe said. "But also it's like this is our life, and there are a lot of things that we have to grapple and deal with: Family, friends, partners, media, pressures, games, World Cup, travel. So it's just kind of just one more thing. This team always has a lot of media attention, and we've always had a lot of things on our plate so it's not like it's anything new, or all of a sudden we're getting all the more attention. It's sort of the same for us."

The 24-team tournament will be played at nine stadiums across France over the course of the next month, with the final set for July 7 in Lyon.

The last time

The United States won the last World Cup in 2015. Carli Lloyd scored three goals in the first 16 minutes to help give the Americans a 5-2 victory over Japan for their third overall World Cup title, most for any nation since the tournament was introduced in 1991. England was a surprising third-place finisher in Canada.

VAR

In March, FIFA approved the use of video review for the World Cup in France. The Video Assistant Referee system, or VAR, was used at the men's World Cup in Russia last year.

Prize money

The prize money for the World Cup will be \$30 million, of which \$4 million will go to the federation of the champion. While the total is double the prize money for the 2015 Women's World Cup, it is a fraction of the \$400 million in prize money for last year's men's World Cup, of which \$38 million went to champion France. FIFA, soccer's international governing body, says prize money for the 2022 men's World Cup will be \$440 million.

Ticket fiasco

Some fans who ordered tickets to World Cup matches were surprised last month when they discovered their seats were not together. The issue was especially problematic for families bringing young children. After an outcry on social media, FIFA said it would work with the local organizing committee to resolve the issues.

Some fans recently reported tickets that had been delivered electronically were no longer available, with the message: "FIFA and the LOC are currently working on improving the seating arrangements for certain orders for a limited number of matches. If your order is affected, please expect to receive a dedicated communication shortly."

Too many tournaments

FIFA has also been criticized for scheduling the World Cup final on the same day as the Copa America final in Rio and the CONCACAF Gold Cup final in Chicago. U.S. coach Jill Ellis pointedly said: "In my own personal opinion, playing three big matches in one day isn't supporting the women's game. So, there you go."

Song highest draft pick ever for Navy

The Washington Post

Navy senior pitcher Noah Song made a lot of history this season in Annapolis, Md. The 6-foot-4 right-hander from Claremont, Calif., set six program records, including for most career wins (32) and strikeouts (428), led the nation with 161 strikeouts this season and became the Naval Academy's first player to be named first-team All-American by Collegiate Baseball.

On Tuesday, Song added another highlight to his already sterling resume: The Boston Red Sox drafted him No. 137 overall, the final selection of the fourth round, making Song the highest first-year MLB Draft selection in the Naval Academy's history.

The previous highest pick out of Navy was Stephen Moore, whom the Atlanta Braves selected with the 300th overall pick in 2015.

"What [Song] has done here is unique," Navy coach Paul Kostacopoulos said Monday. "He's done some really incredible things. He's changing the trajectory for what a Navy baseball player can be."

Navy has had nine first-year player draft selections in program history, the last of which was Luke Gillingham, selected in the 37th round in 2016.

Song finished the year with an 11-1 record, a 1.44 ERA and is a finalist for the Golden Spikes award, given annually to the best amateur player in the country.

Song, who was at home in California when the call informing him he'd been selected came in, graduated last week and is somewhat uncertain about when his career in professional baseball could begin.

There is a longtime policy in place that allows service academy graduates to petition for early release from active duty and serve as reservists, which provides an easier path for pursuing a professional sports career, but those policies can change. Last month, President Donald Trump said he favored allowing service academy athletes to postpone their military obligations until after their sports careers are over.

Right now, all Song knows is that he is planning to report to Pensacola, Fla., on Nov. 1 to start training as a Naval flight officer. After two years, Song may petition to enter the reserves.

UCLA wins 13th softball national title

Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY—UCLA is back on top.

Kinsley Washington's RBI single in the bottom of the seventh inning lifted the Bruins past Oklahoma 5-4 on Tuesday night, and UCLA won the championship series 2-0.

It is the Bruins' 13th national title, 12th NCAA title and first championship since 2010.

"The history is as old as dirt," said UCLA coach Kelly Inouye-Perez, who has been with the program in some capacity for three decades. "I'm so proud to be a part of it, player, assistant, head coach. This is about the here and now. This is about UCLA softball in 2019. This team got on a mission."

Rachel Garcia was named the Most Outstanding Player

of the World Series. She threw 179 pitches and hit a walk-off homer in the semifinal win over Washington on Sunday, then got the victory in Game 1 against Oklahoma on Monday. She gave up four runs and eight hits to earn the win in the clincher on Tuesday.

Brianna Tautalafua had three hits, and Washington and Aaliyah Jordan each had two for UCLA (56-6).

The Bruins rolled past the Sooners 16-3 in Game 1 on Monday and tied the record for most runs scored in a World Series game.

Oklahoma provided much more resistance in Game 2.

"Yesterday was kind of a game where you just kind of got to flush it, got to let it go," Oklahoma's Sydney Romero said. "I feel like we came out today, we

bounced back, we gave it our all. I think that's all you could ever ask for. This team fought."

Shay Knighten hit a solo homer with two outs in the top of the seventh to tie the score in her final collegiate at bat.

Garcia laughed after Knighten's homer.

"It's just a little inside joke between all of us," Garcia said. "That was just like our thing this entire week, was that every run I gave up, I looked at my teammates and said, 'We're going to be OK, we'll punch back.'"

The Sooners (57-6) were trying to win their third title in four years, but they ran into Garcia, the USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Year.

UCLA's Bubba Nickles and Briana Perez hit solo homers

on Giselle "G" Juarez's first four pitches. The Bruins loaded the bases after that, but Juarez escaped with just a 2-0 deficit.

"For me, it was just about fighting back, giving us a shot to get back in there," Juarez said. "They kept telling me, 'We got you. Like, we're on it. We're going to get it.'"

Jordan's solo shot in the third made it 3-1, but the Bruins left the bases loaded again.

In the fourth, Oklahoma's Nicole Mendes singled and later scored on a single by Falepolima Aviu. Lynnsie Elam's double scored pinch runner Raegan Rogers to tie the score. With runners on second and third with one out, Garcia intentionally walked Romero to load the bases. Caleigh Clifton struck out, then Jocelyn Alo grounded out to end the threat.

MLB roundup

Strasburg struggles early but picks up 100th victory

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Stephen Strasburg didn't turn in a vintage performance. He still did enough — with plenty of help from the Washington Nationals' offense — to reach a career milestone.

Strasburg earned his 100th victory, Anthony Rendon homered and drove in five runs and Washington rallied past the Chicago White Sox 9-5 for its eighth victory in 10 games.

Strasburg (6-3) gave up four runs in a 39-pitch first inning and spotted Chicago a 5-0 lead. But he hung around long enough to complete five innings and become the first National to reach the 100-win plateau since the franchise moved from Montreal.

"I definitely got punched in the face in the first," Strasburg said. "There's only one thing you can do and I think that's what we preach as an organization (and) that's never give up and keep battling."

Strasburg threw 105 pitches

in his second-shortest stint of the season. But the White Sox couldn't manage anything else after Yoan Moncada homered in the second.

Dodgers 9, Diamondbacks 0: Hyun-Jin Ryu (9-1) allowed three hits in seven scoreless innings, Cody Bellinger hit a two-run triple after a rare day off and visiting Los Angeles stretched its winning streak to seven games with a rout of Arizona.

Astros 11, Mariners 5: Alex Bregman had two hits and three RBIs, and seven other teammates drove in at least one run as visiting Houston beat Seattle for its fifth straight win.

Giants 9, Mets 3 (10): Bruce Bochy joined John McGraw as the only franchise managers to win 1,000 regular-season games when visiting San Francisco beat New York behind Stephen Vogt's tiebreaking, two-run double in the 10th inning.

Blue Jays 4, Yankees 3: Freddy Galvis hit a two-run home run, Randal Grichuk

added a solo shot and host Toronto held off New York to end a season-worst six-game slide.

Tigers 9, Rays 6: Miguel Cabrera had a grand slam among his three hits as Detroit snapped a 10-game home losing streak with a victory over Tampa Bay.

Indians 5, Twins 2: Francisco Lindor hit two of host Cleveland's four home runs in a victory over Minnesota.

Braves 12, Pirates 5: Austin Riley and Josh Donaldson hit three-run home runs in consecutive innings, and visiting Atlanta rallied past Pittsburgh.

Marlins 16, Brewers 0: Garrett Cooper had two hits and scored twice during visiting Miami's franchise-record, 11-run fifth inning in a rout of Milwaukee.

Cubs 6, Rockies 3: Kyle Schwarber and Javier Baez homered, Kyle Hendricks was solid through seven innings and host Chicago ended Colorado's season-high eight-game winning streak.

Red Sox 8, Royals 3: Edu-

ardo Nunez belted a pinch-hit, three-run homer to break open a close game in the eighth inning, and visiting Boston went on to beat Kansas City.

Orioles 12, Rangers 11: Pedro Severino hit a career-high three home runs and thwarted host Texas' ninth-inning rally with a wild defensive play, lifting Baltimore.

Reds 4, Cardinals 1: Luis Castillo (6-1) pitched one-run ball over six innings, Yasiel Puig homered and visiting Cincinnati beat St. Louis following a rain delay of 1 hour, 20 minutes.

Athletics 4, Angels 2: Ramon Laureano had two hits, including a home run, Frankie Montas (7-2) threw six solid innings and visiting Oakland snapped a five-game losing streak by beating Los Angeles.

Phillies 9, Padres 6: Jay Bruce hit a grand slam and a two-run homer, and visiting Philadelphia beat San Diego to snap a five-game skid.

With Chara hurt, Bruins' 'D' needs help

Associated Press

BEDFORD, Mass. — The Boston Bruins reached the Stanley Cup Final despite a run of regular-season injuries that prevented anyone on the roster from playing all 82 games.

Now comes the real test.

The Bruins are preparing for Game 5 against the St. Louis Blues without captain and No. 1 defenseman Zdeno Chara, who did not return after he was hit in the face by a deflected puck on Monday night. The St. Louis Blues won 4-2 to even the series at two games apiece.

Bruins coach Bruce Cassidy offered no update on Chara's condition after arriving in Boston on Tuesday except to say the 2009 Norris Trophy winner was on his way to see a doctor. The fact that Chara returned for the third period wearing a full face shield — and never got back on the ice — suggests it is more than the lost tooth or busted lip that usually only keeps a hockey player out long

enough to get it stitched up.

"Right now, I've got nothing," Cassidy said. "But we don't play for two more days."

Although the 42-year-old Chara is the team's elder statesman and emotional leader, Cassidy said he is less worried about Chara's leadership than his 6-foot-9 presence on the ice.

"Taking great players out of the lineup, that's the part that hurts the most," Cassidy said. "I'm not worried about our mentality."

The Bruins have made it through the playoffs without defenseman Kevan Miller and also lost Matt Grzelcyk when he took an elbow to the head in Game 2 and needed to be helped off the ice. John Moore filled in for him in the third game, which the Bruins won.

But they were down to five men on the blue line again Monday night when Chara took a deflected shot from Brayden Schenn off the right side of the face. He crumpled to the

ice, face-first, and then skated off, with blood dripping from his mouth. He returned at the start of the third wearing the shield but never went back in the game.

"Very uncomfortable, was advised not to return to play," Cassidy said after the game. "Had some stitches, probably some dental work in the near future. He wanted to come out on the bench and be with his teammates."

His teammates knew how difficult it was for him to just sit there.

"He's our leader, and the biggest part of our leadership," forward David Pastrnak said. "Anything that comes out of his mouth ... everybody is listening to him."

Blues coach Craig Berube said he had a broken jaw when he was a player and was out six weeks. But if Chara has the same injury and misses the rest of the series, it won't change the Blues' approach.

"Nothing from our stand-

point," he said.

A six-time All-Star and the perennial team leader in minutes played, Chara played a career-low (not counting lockout years) 62 games this season because of an unspecified injury that kept him out six weeks in November and December.

Although it's too early to rule him out for Game 5 — or perhaps longer — Cassidy said the most likely replacements would be Steven Kampfer or rookies Urho Vaakanainen, Jeremy Lauzon, and Jakub Zboril. Only Kampfer, with two games of playoff experience, has appeared in a postseason game.

"If both guys (Chara and Grzelcyk) are out, it's not an easy decision," Cassidy said. "It's not one I want to make, but you have to do what you have to do."

But don't rule them out just yet.

"Both of those players, they're warriors," defenseman Charlie McAvoy said. "They'll do whatever it takes to play."

Raptors' Leonard maintains focus amid distractions

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Toronto star Kawhi Leonard has more than a few things on his mind these days.

He'll be a free agent in a few weeks and will decide where he wants to play next season. He's apparently headed to federal court to solve a disagreement with Nike. He's clearly dealing with something that isn't right in his lower body, though he and the team continue to insist that he's fine.

And, oh, there's the NBA Finals.

Game 3 of a tied series, Leonard and the Toronto Raptors taking on the two-time defending champion Golden State Warriors, the biggest game yet this season, happened Wednesday night.

All that would overload some people. Leonard, however, isn't like most people. He's unfazed.

"I think it just comes naturally," Leonard said. "All NBA players, there's so much distractions from you playing in high school to college to now becoming a pro, it's probably just pretty much second-nature at this point."

Leonard is famously, almost mythically, quiet. He tends to give short answers during news conferences. He's not a social-media guy. So it was an odd look on Monday when he — his attorneys, anyway — filed a federal lawsuit in Southern California against Nike over the rights to his distinctive "klaw" logo, one Leonard says he drew himself in either 2011 or 2012.

He rarely makes news. To make news like that, during an off day for the NBA Finals, with the series shifting to California, was eye-raising.

"It happened a long time ago," Leonard said of the disagreement between he and

Nike — and the lawsuit shows that the battle over the logo has indeed gone on for some time, then ramped up to get to this point. "You guys are just finding out. It's not a big worry of mine. ... I've known about it."

In other words, he's played through that particular portion of off-court drama throughout these playoffs.

The Raptors are here largely because of Leonard. Even though six bad minutes that became an 18-0 Golden State run to start the second half of Game 2 — "the quarter from hell," Raptors coach Nick Nurse called it — ultimately cost Toronto its chance at a 2-0 series lead and retaining home-court advantage, there's still no obvious sense of uneasiness from the Eastern Conference champions.

"It's going to be even harder on the road," Raptors guard Fred VanVleet said. "But we're

capable and we know what we bring to the table."

The Raptors have already rallied from 2-1 series deficits twice in these playoffs — against Philadelphia in the second round and against Milwaukee in the East finals. No team in the current 16-team postseason format, which the NBA went to in 1984, has overcome three of those in the same season.

"We want to be the first to four," Raptors guard Kyle Lowry said. "Every game is an urgent game."

Learning to deal with noise from the outside world is a skill that the Raptors have proudly gotten fairly adept at this season — amid the constant din surrounding the trade that brought Leonard to Toronto and whether the team could possibly find a way to entice him to sign and stick around past this season.