

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## DOD could win race to self-driving vehicles

*Bloomberg News*

WASHINGTON — Forget Uber, Waymo and Tesla: The next big name in self-driving vehicles could be the Pentagon.

“We’re going to have self-driving vehicles in theater for the Army before we’ll have self-driving cars on the streets,” Michael Griffin, the undersecretary of defense for research and engineering, told lawmakers at a hearing on Capitol Hill last month. “But the core technologies will be the same.”

The stakes for the military are high. According to Griffin, 52 percent of casualties in combat zones can be attributed to military personnel delivering food, fuel and other logistics. Removing people from that equation with systems run on artificial intelligence could reduce injuries and deaths significantly, he added.

“You’re in a very vulnerable position when you’re doing that kind of activity,” Griffin said. “If that can be done by an automated unmanned vehicle with a relatively simple AI driving algorithm where I don’t have to worry about pedestrians and road signs and all of that, why wouldn’t I do that?”

The Pentagon has a long history of support that helped to develop or refine key technologies that become widespread later, including spaceflight and the internet.

Griffin said the Pentagon “absolutely must leverage” what private companies are doing to develop self-driving cars, though he didn’t mention any by name and his office declined to comment when asked for more details about the Pentagon’s plans.

## Trump denies ordering US troop drawdown in S. Korea

BY KIM GAMEL  
AND COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

President Donald Trump said Friday that he will not consider withdrawing the 28,500 American troops stationed in South Korea as he prepares to negotiate the removal of North Korea’s nuclear weapons with its leader Kim Jong Un in the coming weeks.

“Troops are not on the table,” Trump said at Joint Base Andrews, Md., just before boarding a flight to Dallas. The president denied a New York Times report that he had ordered the Pentagon to draw up options for removing U.S. forces from South Korea.

Officials with the Pentagon and the National Security Council also denied the report.

The U.S. military presence in South Korea has been the cornerstone of the alliance between the two countries since the 1950-53 Korean War ended in an armistice instead of a peace treaty.

But the rapidly evolving peace process with the North has led to suggestions that U.S. troops might not be needed if a treaty is signed. Trump said Friday that the White House and Pyongyang had settled on a date and a location for the historic summit, but he did not reveal those details. The meeting has been expected to take place late this month or in early June.

Trump frequently has raised the possibility of removing troops from South Korea on the campaign trail and since taking office.

The president did not rule out the eventual removal of some troops from the peninsula in his brief comments Friday, telling reporters he’d “like to save the money” that it costs to house servicemembers there.

The New York Times on Thursday cited several people familiar with the deliberations as saying the president was seeking options ahead of his planned summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

The officials declined to say whether Trump was seeking options for a full or partial reduction but stressed that rethinking the size and configuration of the force was overdue.

They also said the request was not intended to be a bargaining chip in upcoming nuclear talks with the North, which has long demanded the withdrawal of America’s military from the South.

Marine Lt. Col. Christopher Logan, a spokesman for the Pentagon, called The New York Times report inaccurate, adding that the American force posture and mission have not changed in South Korea, and the Defense Department has no plans to adjust them.

“The president has not asked the Pentagon to provide options for reducing American forces stationed in South Korea,” Logan said. “The Department of Defense remains committed to supporting the maximum pressure campaign, developing and maintaining military options for the president and reinforcing our ironclad security commitment with our allies.”

National Security Advisor

John Bolton also denied the report on Friday.

“The president has not asked the Pentagon to provide options for reducing American forces stationed in South Korea,” he told reporters in Washington.

South Korea’s presidential office said Friday that a U.S. National Security Council official had told a senior South Korean official that the report was “not true at all.”

The NSC official gave the reassurance to South Korea’s visiting top security adviser, Chung Eui-yong, who is in Washington for talks on the upcoming U.S.-North Korean summit, according to a statement from the Blue House.

Trump has argued that South Korea should shoulder more of the burden for its own defense and that having U.S. troops on the peninsula has not stopped the North from developing nuclear weapons.

Under the current agreement, South Korea pays about \$900 million, about half of the cost for maintaining U.S. forces. It also funded nearly the entire \$10.7 billion in construction costs for the expansion of Camp Humphreys as part of the long-delayed relocation of the military headquarters from Seoul.

White House Chief of Staff John Kelly, a retired Marine general, talked the president out of ordering a total withdrawal from the peninsula in a “heated exchange” before the Feb. 9-25 Winter Olympics began in South Korea, NBC News reported earlier this week, citing two anonymous officials.

# Key GOP lawmaker pushes for parade, pay raise for military

BY CLAUDIA GRISALES  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — A key lawmaker on Friday unveiled his proposal for a massive defense policy plan that endorses the president's military parade in addition to boosting pay for servicemembers and increasing troops, weapons and equipment.

Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, proposed \$639.1 billion in a military base budget, in addition to another \$69 billion for a war chest called the Overseas Contingency Fund. It follows plans unveiled last week by several House panels that laid out the first wave of spending proposals for the next National

Defense Authorization Act, which will be considered before the full House Armed Services Committee next week.

It marks the earliest stages of a long process for Congress to reach a deal on the NDAA and sets the tone for a long debate ahead.

"America's military is facing challenges on multiple fronts, including the troubling increase in serious training accidents in all the military services," according to Thornberry's NDAA proposal, known as the "chairman's mark." In addition to rising threats from Russia, China, North Korea and Iran and the continuing fight against global terrorism, the plan "implements new reforms designed to speed decision making and improve military agility, while

simultaneously restoring readiness and increasing capability and capacity in a force that has been asked to do too much with too little for too long."

It also endorses President Donald Trump's demands for a military parade, but stops short of requiring military units and equipment be used in the parade if Defense Secretary Jim Mattis deems it will negatively impact readiness.

In recent weeks, the House Armed Services Committee, its subpanels and its Senate counterparts have held dozens of hearings to discuss the 2019 budget priorities for each of the branches, as well as a wide-ranging list of challenges facing the military.

## 5 in Navy indicted for insurance fraud scheme

*The San Diego Union-Tribune*

Five Navy servicemembers who were stationed in San Diego fraudulently claimed \$100,000 in insurance payouts for non-existent injuries, according to a federal indictment unsealed Wednesday.

The indictment filed in U.S. District Court in San Diego alleges that the four men and one woman fabricated their insurance claim applications with forged signatures and altered hospital records belonging to other, real patients.

The defendants pretended to have injured themselves in a variety of falls — including from a horse — or motorcycle crashes, the indictment says.

Four of them got their \$100,000 before the government discovered the scheme and froze final payments, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Those indicted were Richard Cote, 43, of Oceanside, Calif.; Earnest Thompson, 44, of Murrieta, Calif.; brothers Christopher Toups, 40, of Woodstock, Ga., and Jason Toups, 35, of Gulfport, Miss.; and Christopher Toups' ex-wife, Kelene McGrath, 41, of Jacksonville, Fla.

Among the charges are wire fraud and conspiracy to commit wire fraud, each of which carries a 20-year maximum prison sentence. They also are charged with making a fraudulent claim, which carries a maximum five-year prison term, prosecutors said.

Christopher Toups was expected to appear for arraignment in Georgia. The others were arraigned Wednesday before U.S. Magistrate Judge Ruben Brooks in San Diego.

They have pleaded not guilty. The indictment, San Diego U.S. Attorney Adam Braverman said in a statement, "sends a message to those who seek to defraud the government out of the dollars meant to care for our seriously injured military members that they will be held accountable."

## Puerto Rico wants answers after loss of 9 airman in Georgia plane crash

*Associated Press*

MANATI, Puerto Rico — The nine men came from across the island, joined by a mission to retire one of the oldest planes in the U.S. National Guard.

Together, they had nearly 170 years of service, including recent missions evacuating U.S. citizens left stranded in the Caribbean by major storms and ferrying food, water and generators to their own people after Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico last year.

They were the Buccaneers, members of the 198th Fighter Squadron, husbands and fathers who were supposed to return just days after what was expected to be a brief mission from Georgia to Arizona. Now, a U.S. territory struggling to recover from a Category 4 hurricane amid an economic crisis finds itself mourning nine Puerto Ri-

cans lost in the biggest disaster of its kind for the island's National Guard. Families and officials are demanding answers.

"An investigation is more than needed," said Puerto Rico Rep. Joel Franqui Atilas, who submitted a bill on Thursday to demand a report on the condition of all equipment used by Puerto Rico's National Guard and how much it receives in federal funds.

Meanwhile, mourners gathered at the homes of wives, parents and grandparents who lost someone in Wednesday's crash in Savannah, Ga.

The pilot, Maj. Jose Rafael Roman, leaves behind two sons, a stepson and a wife who is five months pregnant with a girl.

"The town is in mourning," Jose Sanchez, mayor of the north coastal town of Manati, told The Associated Press.

Carlos Narvaez, a newspa-

per sports editor and Roman's close childhood friend, told the AP that Roman was nicknamed "Rotor" because he loved all things with a motor that go fast. He said Roman, 43, was president of his high school class and worked at a company that manufactured aluminum windows before joining the National Guard after graduating as a pilot in Memphis, Tenn.

In December, Narvaez said, Roman raised concerns about the aging planes they were using.

"He told me, 'We're using the oldest planes of the entire United States of America,'" Narvaez recalled.

Jeremy Roman, the pilot's youngest son, said in a statement that he was extremely proud of his father. "You're a hero, and you're my hero, and I want everyone to know I'm very proud of you."

## Veto power on base closings mulled for communities

*The (Norfolk, Va.) Virginian-Pilot*

NORFOLK, Va. — After years of resisting, Congress could consider a proposal to allow military base closings — but under restrictive rules that give communities veto power, Rep. Rob Wittman, R-Va., said Thursday.

Wittman, a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee, said during a Navy League luncheon at The Main hotel that he would support a proposal that addresses the military's concern that it's wasting money by keeping unneeded facilities.

Hampton Roads, Va., federal lawmakers and community leaders have been skittish for years about any talk of closing military facilities — particularly in a region where 40 percent of the economy is tied to defense and other federal spending. In 2005, a Base Realignment and Closure Commission, or BRAC — appointed to select facilities to shut down — led to the closing of the Army's Fort Monroe in Hampton, Va., and consideration of a recommendation to close Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia Beach.

Wittman said the plan, which could be an amendment to the 2019 defense spending bill, would be limited to small bases or “tangential facilities” identified by the Pentagon.

“They would have to say that it's excess inventory and we don't need it,” Wittman said. “And the localities would have to say that it's OK to do that.”

“I'd be very amenable to that. It brings everybody to the table to discuss excess capacity,” added Wittman, who is chairman of the committee's Seapower and Force Projection Subcommittee.

“My concern is this: I do think we need to shed ourselves of facilities and do it the right way. Remember, if we get rid of facilities in strategically centered locations — that is, population centers — you will never get them back.”

# On Stormy, Giuliani must ‘get facts straight,’ president says

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump insisted Friday that “we're not changing any stories” about the 2016 hush payment to porn actress Stormy Daniels, even as he further muddied the explanation for the settlement by suggesting the new face of his legal team needs to “get his facts straight.”

Trump said that Rudy Giuliani, who upended the previous White House defense this week by saying the president knew about his personal lawyer Michael Cohen's payment to Daniels, was “a great guy but he just started a day ago” and said the former mayor of New York City was still “learning the subject matter.”

The president added that “virtually everything” reported about the payments was wrong. But he declined to elaborate.

Giuliani's surprise revela-

tion of the president's payment clashed with Trump's past statements, created new legal headaches and stunned many in the West Wing. White House aides were blindsided when Giuliani said Wednesday night that the president had repaid Cohen for \$130,000 that was given to Daniels to keep her quiet before the 2016 election about her allegations of an affair with Trump.

Trump called the continuing news stories about Daniels “crap” and said the White House would offer an accounting of the payments. But he offered no details.

While Giuliani said the payment to Daniels was “going to turn out to be perfectly legal,” legal experts said the new information raised a number of questions, including whether the money represented repayment of an undisclosed loan or could be seen as reimbursement for a campaign expen-

diture. Either could be legally problematic.

Giuliani insisted Trump didn't know the specifics of Cohen's arrangement with Daniels until recently. Giuliani told The New York Times that Trump had repaid Cohen \$35,000 a month “out of his personal family account” after the campaign was over. He said Cohen received \$460,000 or \$470,000 in all for expenses related to Trump.

But no debt to Cohen was listed on Trump's personal financial disclosure form, which was certified on June 16, 2017.

Giuliani had said the payment was not a campaign finance violation, but also acknowledged that Daniels' hushed-up allegations could have affected the campaign, saying, “Imagine if that came out on October 15, 2016, in the middle of the last debate with Hillary Clinton.”

## Unemployment rate lowest since late 2000

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — U.S. employers stepped up hiring modestly in April, and the unemployment rate fell to 3.9 percent, evidence of the economy's resilience amid the recent stock market chaos and anxieties about a possible trade war.

Job growth amounted to a decent 164,000 last month, up from an upwardly revised 135,000 in March, the Labor Department said Friday. The unemployment rate fell after having held at 4.1 percent for the prior six months largely because fewer people were searching for jobs.

The overall unemployment rate remained, as in recent months, the lowest since December 2000. The rate for blacks — 6.6 percent — is the lowest on record since 1972.

Many employers say it's difficult to find qualified workers.

Even so, they haven't significantly bumped up pay in most industries. Average hourly earnings rose 2.6 percent from a year ago.

An encouraging sign for the economy is that the pace of hiring has yet to be disrupted by dramatic global market swings, a recent pickup in inflation or the risk that the tariffs being pushed by President Donald Trump could provoke a trade war. During the past three months, monthly job growth has averaged 208,000.

Much of the economy's durability, in fact, is due to the healthy job market. The increase in people earning paychecks has bolstered demand for housing, even though fewer properties are being listed for sale. Consumer confidence has improved during the past year. And more people are shopping, with retail sales having picked up in March after three month-

ly declines.

Manufacturers added 24,000 workers last month. Restaurants and hotels hired a net 18,000. The health care-and-social assistance sector added 29,300 jobs and the construction industry 17,000.

The monthly jobs reports have yet to show a consistent surge in average annual wage growth. Even so, workers in the private sector during the first three months of 2018 enjoyed their sharpest average income growth in 11 years, the Labor Department said last week in a separate report on compensation.

That pay growth suggests that some of the momentum from the slow-but-steady recovery from the 2008 financial crisis is spreading to more people after it disproportionately had benefited the nation's wealthiest areas and highest earners.

# Mo. lawmakers might impeach governor

Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — Missouri lawmakers will convene in a historic special session later this month to consider impeaching Republican Gov. Eric Greitens following allegations of sexual misconduct and misuse of charity resources for his political campaign.

Republican House and Senate leaders said Thursday night that they had gathered more than the constitutionally required signatures of three-fourths of the members of each chamber to summon themselves into a special session that will start at 6:30 p.m. on May 18 — just 30 minutes after the end of work in their regular session.

It will mark the first time in Missouri history that lawmakers have called a special session. Extraordinary sessions typical-

ly are called by governors.

“This was not a decision made lightly and certainly not without great deliberation and effort,” said Missouri House Speaker Todd Richardson, emphasizing that a special investigatory committee has engaged in a “fair, thorough and timely investigation.”

“This is where the facts led,” he added. “We will not avoid doing what is right just because it is hard.”

The petition calls upon lawmakers to consider the upcoming recommendations of the House investigatory committee on potential “disciplinary actions” against the first-term Republican governor, which also could include lesser reprimands than impeachment.

Various spokespeople for Greitens did not immediately re-

spond to requests for comment.

The special session petition was signed by 138 of the current 161 House members and 29 of the current 33 senators, Richardson said.

Convening a special session will allow the investigatory committee to continue its work without worrying that it could be halted arbitrarily by the end of the regular session.

According to the Missouri Constitution, the special session can last no more than 30 days. If the House votes to impeach Greitens, which requires 82 votes, the Senate then would appoint a panel of seven judges to conduct a trial on whether to remove him from office.

Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard said he already has had conversations with retired judges about the process for

putting together a trial panel.

“We stand ready to do it if called upon,” he said.

All of Missouri’s top Republican and Democratic legislative leaders already had called on Greitens to resign, which he has declined to do.

“Pursuing impeachment against a Missouri governor is history none of us wants to make, but Eric Greitens’ actions have made it unavoidable,” said House Minority Leader Gail McCann Beatty.

A spokeswoman for Republican Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft confirmed the special session petition had been filed with the office Thursday night.

Only one other Missouri official — former Democratic Secretary of State Judi Moriarty in 1994 — has been removed from office following impeachment.

## Hawaii volcano’s lava drives 1,500 from homes

Associated Press

HONOLULU — Nearly 1,500 residents were ordered to evacuate from their volcano-side homes after Hawaii’s Kilauea Volcano erupted, sending molten lava to chew its way through forest land and to bubble up on paved streets.

Volcano officials couldn’t predict how long Thursday’s eruption could last, prompting Hawaii’s governor to activate the National Guard to help with evacuations and to provide security to about 770 structures left empty when residents sought shelter. There were no immediate reports of injuries.

Hawaii County officials said steam and lava poured out of a crack in Leilani Estates, which is near the town of Pahoa on the Big Island.

Footage shown on local television showed lava spurting into the sky from a crack in a road. Aerial drone footage showed a line of lava snaking through a forest.

Resident Jeremiah Osuna captured drone footage of the

lava burning through the trees, a scene he described as a “curtain of fire.”

“It sounded like if you were to put a bunch of rocks into a dryer and turn it on as high as you could. You could just smell sulfur and burning trees and underbrush and stuff,” he told Honolulu television station KHON.

Asta Miklius, a geophysicist with the USGS Hawaiian Volcano Observatory, told The Associated Press in a phone interview that there is no way to know exactly how long the eruption will continue.

“One of the parameters is going to be whether the summit magma reservoir starts to drain in response to this event, and that has not happened yet,” Miklius said. “There is quite a bit of magma in the system. ... It won’t be just an hours-long eruption, probably, but how long it will last will depend on whether the summit magma reservoir gets involved. And so we are watching that very, very closely.”

## Kan., Okla., OK religious veto on LGBT adoptions

Associated Press

TOPEKA, Kan. — State lawmakers in Kansas and Oklahoma have approved legislation to grant legal protections to faith-based adoption agencies that cite their religious beliefs for not placing children in LGBT homes.

Supporters of such measures argued that the core issue is protecting a group’s right to live out its religious faith, while critics saw them as attacks on LGBT rights. Both Kansas and Oklahoma have GOP-controlled legislatures and governors, but in Kansas, the proposal split Republicans.

The Kansas Senate approved a bill early Friday morning, 24-15, that would prevent faith-based agencies from being barred from providing foster care or adoption services for the state if they refuse to place children in homes violating their “sincerely held” religious beliefs. The House had approved it late Thursday, 63-58.

The action in Kansas came after the Oklahoma House voted

56-21 for a similar measure, sending it to Gov. Mary Fallin, who has not said whether she would sign it. Kansas Gov. Jeff Colyer supported his state’s legislation, with his administration arguing that it would encourage faith-based groups to place more abused and neglected children in state custody.

Backers of the Kansas bill acknowledged that faith-based agencies have been operating in Kansas for decades without issue. But they fear that lawsuits or turnover among state officials could result in an environment hostile to some religious groups’ views. A few saw vocal opposition from LGBT-rights advocates as evidence that a shift could be coming.

“There is no homosexual agenda — I was told that, when people were saying that there was one, and now we find out there is an agenda,” said Kansas state Sen. Steve Fitzgerald, a Republican. “What was once tolerated is now becoming dominant and is intolerant — totally intolerant.”

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Woman tossed off trail by Yellowstone bison

**WY** YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK — A 72-year-old Idaho woman was rammed by a bison and tossed off a trail as she was walking in Yellowstone National Park.

Park officials said Wednesday that Virginia Junk, of Boise, was treated for minor injuries and was transported to a hospital following the encounter in the Old Faithful area.

Junk reportedly came around a bend in the trail Tuesday and was unable to move out of the animal's way. It dropped its head, butted her in the thigh and pushed her off the trail.

## Officials: Man leaves prison, robs same bank

**OH** CLEVELAND — Authorities say a man sent to state prison for bank robbery has robbed the same Cleveland bank branch the day after his release.

Federal prosecutors in Cleveland said Markiko Sonnie Lewis, 40, was indicted Tuesday on a single count of bank robbery for robbing a Cleveland Key Bank branch April 12. Prosecutors say he took just over \$1,000.

Lewis, of Maple Heights, was sentenced to 30 months in prison in Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court in April 2016, including time already served, after pleading guilty to robbing the same bank branch in November 2015.

He was released April 11.

## Noisemakers used to try to rouse bear in tree

**NJ** PARAMUS — Animal control workers are using noisemakers to try to wake a sleeping black bear and

to chase it out of a tree near a New Jersey home.

Animal control officer Carol Tyler told NorthJersey.com the young bear likely was attracted by the smell of food in Paramus on Monday.

Tyler said the bear could be shot with a tranquilizer dart if it moves lower down and could be caught with a net to break its fall. She said the 200-pound bear likely will be taken to a remote area and freed.

Live video footage shows the bear dozing on a branch, waking up and then falling back to sleep again.

## Officials: Part of stolen gold bar recovered

**FL** KEY WEST — Federal prosecutors say part of a 17th-century gold bar stolen from a Florida maritime museum has been recovered.

Prosecutors wrote in a court filing Wednesday they have informed defense attorneys they recovered an unspecified portion of the 4.5-pound bar stolen in 2010.

Salvagers found it in 1980 aboard the wreck of a Spanish galleon that sank off the Florida Keys in 1622. The late salver Mel Fisher displayed the bar in an acrylic case at his Key West museum, where visitors could touch it.

Richard Steven Johnson of Rio Linda, Calif., pleaded guilty recently to conspiring to steal an object of cultural heritage and stealing a major artwork.

Suspected co-conspirator Jarred Alexander Goldman, of Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., is scheduled for trial this month.

## Boy rescued from claw machine never got prize

**PA** ALLENTOWN — A 2-year-old boy who climbed into a claw machine at a laundromat while trying

to retrieve a plush toy was rescued by emergency workers — but never got his prize.

Firefighters said the boy was unhurt when he was pulled out of the game machine in the play area of an Allentown laundromat on Thursday. Authorities said he crawled in through the prize chute, but was unable to get the door open from the inside.

The boy's mother was doing the laundry when she heard the boy crying. She called 911 and firefighters pried the prize door open to free the boy.

Allentown Fire Capt. John Christopher told LehighValleyLive.com that the boy got stuck before he could reach the toy he wanted.

## Mayor faces recall vote over mocking tweet

**ME** WATERVILLE — A Republican mayor of a Maine city now faces a vote that could remove him from office over his tweets mocking a survivor of the Parkland, Fla., school shooting.

Nick Isgro now must face a recall vote in Waterville, where he was elected to a second term last November. Isgro's tweet in early April was directed at David Hogg, who gained prominence as a gun control advocate after the shooting that left 17 people dead.

The recall effort is being led by former Waterville Mayor Karen Heck, a Democrat who endorsed Isgro during his first run for mayor.

Isgro has blamed the recall effort on "well-connected and wealthy political elites."

## Police shoot boa that fatally crushed puppy

**MA** AMHERST — Police in Massachusetts say they shot and killed a pet boa constrictor after it fatally

crushed a puppy.

Amherst Animal Welfare Officer Carol Hepburn said a pet sitter called police about 4:30 p.m. Wednesday to report that the snake, which she estimated was at least 6 feet long, had escaped from its tank and wrapped it itself around the 8-month-old puppy.

Police tried unsuccessfully to pull the snake off the dog and Hepburn said the dog was dead by the time she arrived. The pet sitter contacted the animals' owner, who was overseas, and she gave permission for police to humanely kill the snake.

It is not illegal to own boa constrictors in Massachusetts and no charges are expected.

## Famed bull dies after arriving at sanctuary

**NJ** WANTAGE TOWNSHIP — A bull that drew national attention when it roamed through the streets of Brooklyn last fall after escaping from a slaughterhouse died shortly after it was taken to a New Jersey farm.

Skylands Animal Sanctuary and Rescue owner Mike Stura told NJ.com that the 1-year-old bull named Shankar died of a respiratory disease a few weeks after he was taken to the Wantage Township center.

Stura said the bull's death wasn't a secret, but he didn't seek to bring attention to it.

Shankar made headlines last October when he escaped and ran through Brooklyn for several hours. He eventually was caught by police on a soccer field in Prospect Park.

Stura said the young bull was "happy" and "becoming more friendly" on his farm before he died.

The sanctuary is home to another bull named Freddie that escaped in Queens in 2016.

From wire reports

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# Trailblazing Ichiro smashed stereotypes

Associated Press

SEATTLE — Ichiro Suzuki's otherworldly talents made an early impression on Dave Niehaus, the Hall of Fame voice of the Seattle Mariners.

During Suzuki's first month in the majors in 2001, Niehaus narrated a throw by Suzuki from right field that nailed Terrence Long at third base. In a way, Niehaus was also describing what Suzuki was about to bring to the major leagues for 18 seasons.

"I'm here to tell you, Ichiro threw something out of Star Wars down there at third base," Niehaus said.

Suzuki was unlike anything the majors had seen when he left Japan for Seattle, and he's become one of the most important figures in baseball history — and not just because of his 3,089 hits, 10 Gold Gloves, numerous All-Star Games, single-season hit record and MVP award.

Suzuki carried the burden of an entire country in coming to America, and his success created opportunity for the countless others who have followed. Whether he wants to accept the label or not, Suzuki was a trailblazer.

Suzuki and the Mariners announced Thursday his 2018 season was over. He's shifting to a new role as special assistant to the chairman. He may never play another

game in the majors. Yet his influence and importance shouldn't be understated.

"When I met Ichiro in Peoria (Ariz.), which is the first time I'd met him face to face, he walked in and had more presence than any other baseball player I'd ever encountered," Seattle general manager Jerry Dipoto said. "And I've been doing this my entire adult life, been in the game close to 30 years and met and played with and against every great in my lifetime, really, and never met one quite like Ichiro."

Suzuki preceded Hideki Matsui, who had a stellar career with the New York Yankees, by two years. In the years since, players like Nori Aoki, Kosuke Fukudome and Kaz Matsui followed. Now, of course, there's two-way sensation Shohei Ohtani.

All of them got their chance after Suzuki smashed the stereotypes that surrounded Japanese hitters.

Could he handle 162 games?

Could he handle major league pitching?

Could he play every day in the outfield?

He swatted away those stigmas with an AL MVP Award, 242 hits and a Gold Glove Award in his rookie season. He was a catalyst for a team that won a record-tying 116 games, and he brought a new style to the majors while laying the foundation for others to follow.

"To come over here and pave the way

for a lot of Japanese players, what he and (Hideo) Nomo did, that's not an easy thing to do," said Oakland manager Bob Melvin, who managed Suzuki for two seasons in Seattle. "You just look at the talent and say it's easy to come over and play like that, but it's not. So that was a challenge."

By the time Melvin arrived in Seattle in 2003, Suzuki was already established as a star.

"He's the most committed player that I've ever had," Melvin recalled. "His whole day, his whole night, everything he thought about, was about the next day's game and being prepared for it, from the way he works out to the routine that he's on. It's all about being prepared to play."

Being prepared to play again is possibly the final challenge for Suzuki. Sitting on the horizon is Seattle's season-opening series in Tokyo next season, and the possibility for Suzuki to shine again in his home country.

And would anyone be surprised if he was on the field once more?

"I want to be like a researcher or a student of the game. Or maybe at this age what I can do is prepare myself, train and see what I can do and the work I put in, see what happens to my body and performance," Suzuki said. "Just see what happens. I want to continue to do that and be able to continue to work and see what I can do."

## MLB roundup

# Angels' Pujols gets 2,999th hit in win over O's

Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Albert Pujols had a two-run double for his 2,999th career hit, and Luis Valbuena and Andrelton Simmons drove in three runs apiece in the Los Angeles Angels' 12-3 victory over the Baltimore Orioles on Thursday night.

Pujols did not get a hit in his final three plate appearances after moving to the brink of the 3,000-hit club in the second inning.

Angels rookie right-hander Jaime Barria (2-1) took a no-hitter into the sixth inning of his third career start, finishing with six innings of four-hit ball.

Manny Machado drove in two runs for the last-place Orioles, who have lost 15 of 18. Chris Tillman (1-5) recorded just three outs and was charged with seven runs.

**Mariners 4, Athletics 1:** Dee Gordon had a big night on the bases, Nelson Cruz hit a two-run homer and host Seattle won its first game since Ichiro Suzuki was moved from the roster to the front office.

Hours after the Mariners announced Suzuki's new role for the rest of 2018, Gordon gave the longtime Japanese star a fitting tribute. With "Thanks 51" written on his cap, Gordon went 3-for-4, stole two bases and scored twice.

**Yankees 6, Astros 5:** Aroldis Chapman struck out AL MVP Jose Altuve on three straight 101 mph fastballs with two on to end the game, and the Yankees got a key hit from rookie Gleyber Torres during a three-run rally in the ninth inning.

**Nationals 3, Pirates 1:** Trea Turner and Ryan Zimmerman

homered in the sixth inning, helping visiting Washington complete a four-game series sweep.

Jeremy Hellickson and four relievers combined on a five-hitter for Washington, which has won a season-high five in a row.

**Braves 11, Mets 0:** Julio Teheran took a no-hit bid into the seventh inning, 20-year-old Ronald Acuna Jr. hit his second big league home run and visiting Atlanta finished a three-game sweep that vaulted it into the NL East lead.

**Dodgers 5, Diamondbacks 2:** At Phoenix, Arizona reliever Jorge De La Rosa threw a pair of run-scoring wild pitches during an eighth-inning rally that sent Los Angeles to the victory.

**Blue Jays 13-4, Indians 11-13 (Game 1, 11):** Jose

Ramirez hit a two-run homer and Adam Plutko won his first major league start as host Cleveland split an extra-long doubleheader with Toronto.

The victory in the second game was No. 1,500 for Terry Francona, who became the 24th manager to reach the milestone.

**Rangers 11, Red Sox 5:** Nomar Mazara drove in five runs while homering in his third straight game, and host Texas handed former AL Cy Young Award winner David Price his third loss in a row.

**White Sox 6, Twins 5:** Trayce Thompson homered with two out in the ninth, and host Chicago stopped a four-game slide.

**Royals 10, Tigers 6:** Lucas Duda had three hits and drove in four runs, leading host Kansas City to the victory.

# Penguins shut down Ovie, even series

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Mike Sullivan knows his team is “wired” for offense, as tends to happen when you have Sidney Crosby, Evgeni Malkin and — increasingly — Jake Guentzel on your roster.

Yet the Pittsburgh Penguins have proven during their two-year run atop the NHL they know what they’re doing at the other end of the ice, too, playing with a discipline that’s more grit than glamour.

Their hopes for a historic three-peat remain alive because of it.

Guentzel scored twice and the Penguins held Washington star Alex Ovechkin without a shot on goal for just the third time in 107 career playoff games to grind out a 3-1 victory in Game 4 on Thursday night and even their typically taut Eastern Conference semifinal series.

Pittsburgh held Washington to three shots total in the third

period.

“It’s like we played Game 7 tonight,” said Malkin, who scored from his belly late in the second period to put Pittsburgh in front to stay. “Unbelievable.” Well. Not exactly.

This is what tends to happen when the two longtime rivals meet in the postseason. Washington edges ahead and the Penguins respond immediately, one of the main reasons Pittsburgh is 9-1 all-time against the Capitals in the playoffs.

Plenty of work remains to be done for Washington to shrug off the weight of its ignominious history and for the Penguins to push their bid for a three-peat to the next round. Yet Pittsburgh laid down the blueprint over three periods that were decidedly tamer than the Game 3 chaos caused in large part by Washington forward Tom Wilson’s illegal high hit that left rookie Zach Aston-Reese with a broken jaw and led the league to suspend Wilson for three games.

While Sullivan downplayed the impact of Wilson’s absence, the pushing and shoving was largely kept to a minimum save for a scrap between Pittsburgh’s Kris Letang and Washington’s T.J. Oshie as Guentzel skated down the ice to flip in an empty-net goal with 58 seconds to go.

For the Penguins, the stakes — as they so often have during Sullivan’s tenure — far outweighed any search for retribution.

“We understood it’s a huge game for us,” Malkin said.

Instead the teams head to Washington for Game 5 on Saturday night all tied up, the ninth time in 11 postseason meetings the series will go at least six games. Same as it ever was.

Oshie scored Washington’s lone goal — a shot from the slot on the power play 12:55 into the second that knotted the score at 1 — and Braden Holtby finished with 21 saves but the Capitals couldn’t sneak anything else by Penguins goaltender Matt

Murray, who stopped 20 shots just two days after putting together an admittedly “shaky” performance in Game 3.

The guys in front of Murray made his job relatively easy. The Penguins blocked 13 shots and rarely let Washington put together any sustained pressure.

Devante Smith-Pelly replaced Wilson on the top line with Ovechkin and Evgeny Kuznetsov, but Pittsburgh kept the clamps on. Ovechkin failed to put a single puck on net, though Washington coach Barry Trotz downplayed Ovechkin’s ineffectiveness.

“Trust me, Ovie will get his shots,” Trotz said.

He’s going to have to if he wants to keep pace with Guentzel. A year after scoring a playoff-high 13 goals while helping the Penguins to a second consecutive Cup, the slender 23-year-old is once again thriving in May.

## Rinne, Predators bounce back, get crucial win in Game 4

Associated Press

WINNIPEG, Manitoba — P.K. Subban didn’t get heckled as long and as loud as he normally does from Winnipeg fans on Thursday.

He and the rest of Nashville’s defensemen did enough to finally quiet the Jets on the ice, too.

Pekka Rinne made 32 saves, Subban and Ryan Hartman scored and the Predators stifled Winnipeg’s high-powered offense to win 2-1 and even their second-round series through four games.

Patrik Laine scored off a faceoff in the final minute, but Nashville’s Nick Bonino won two key faceoffs after that to end it.

“That was an amazing team effort,” Rinne said. “We played a really solid game throughout.”

Game 5 will be Saturday in

Nashville, with Game 6 set for Winnipeg on Monday. Game 7, if necessary, would be in Nashville next Thursday.

Connor Hellebuyck stopped 27 shots, but Nashville snapped Winnipeg’s 13-game home winning streak, which dated to March 2.

Rinne allowed five goals amid a series of defensive miscues in a 7-4 Game 3 defeat after Winnipeg totaled eight goals over the first two games. Rinne rebounded impressively behind a Nashville team that was much sharper in its own end.

“I think last game, the details are kind of what cost us,” Subban said. “This game, we paid attention to all of them for a full 60 (minutes).”

The Predators led 1-0 after the first period and stretched their lead with 5:24 left in the second when Subban blasted a one-timer on Nashville’s first power play.

Booed by the thunderous white-clad crowd every time he’s touched the puck the last two games, Subban seemed to feed off the noise.

It was Subban’s third goal of the series after being held without one in the first round.

“The biggest thing is we had full commitment through our lineup to play defense,” Subban said. “In our zone when bounces didn’t go our way, we worked the puck out.”

The Jets found far less space in the neutral zone, but also saw a couple of golden opportunities bounce over their sticks.

Winnipeg had a couple of great chances to tie it earlier in the period. Kyle Connor missed on a pass from Bryan Little in the slot on a power play, and Mark Scheifele let the puck skip over his stick on a 2-on-1 with Blake Wheeler moments before Subban silenced the crowd with his goal.

Laine scored on a 6-on-4 with 50.2 seconds left in the third — his third of the playoffs and first of the series — but the Predators held on from there to wrestle back home-ice advantage.

“They had five guys behind the red line and we were a little stubborn — didn’t want to make them turn around and bring the puck out,” Wheeler said. “They pounced on a loose puck and we chased the game.”

Nikolaj Ehlers was back on the Jets’ top line alongside Scheifele and Wheeler after switching spots with Connor following Tuesday’s disastrous opening 20 minutes when Winnipeg fell behind 3-0. Connor once again skated with Laine and Paul Stastny.

Nashville opened the scoring with 2:40 left in the first when Hartman scored his second of the playoffs off a scramble in front.

# James scores 43 as Cavs take 2-0 lead

Associated Press

TORONTO — Watching LeBron James at shootaround, Kevin Love knew something special was in store.

Maybe not the fadeaway jumpers James kept making, each seemingly with a higher degree of difficulty than the last, but he was sure there would be something.

"This morning you could just sense it," Love said. "He knew what was at stake, he knew us getting another win here was going to be huge for us. He came out and he played that way from the jump. You could just sense that he was going to have a special night."

James had 43 points and 14 assists, Love added 31 points and 11 rebounds, and the Cleveland Cavaliers beat the Toronto Raptors 128-110 on Thursday to take a 2-0 lead in their second-round playoff series.

James delivered the first 40-point, 14-assist game in NBA playoff history, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

He added eight rebounds, narrowly missing his second straight triple-double, and con-

nected on 19 of 28 attempts in a performance so dominant that the beleaguered Raptors' city was being called "LeBronto" by the time the night was over.

"He got it going and he was feeling it," Cavs coach Tyrone Lue said.

James, meanwhile, gave credit to Love, who shot 11-for-21 and missed matching his career playoff high by one point.

"It was great to see that performance out of him," James said. "He's our All-Star power forward. That's a huge game for him."

J.R. Smith scored 15 points, Jeff Green had 14 and George Hill 13 as the Cavaliers posted their eighth consecutive post-season victory over the Raptors and halted Toronto's four-game winning streak in Game 2s. The Raptors entered 6-1 all-time when playing Game 2 at home.

"Love got going on us and that was a difficult matchup for us," Raptors coach Dwane Casey said. "We have some matchup issues all over the court."

DeMar DeRozan scored 24 points and Kyle Lowry had 21 for the Raptors. Toronto won a

team-record 59 games and finished as the top-seeded team in the Eastern Conference this season, but was easily shoved one step closer to a third straight postseason exit at the hands of James and the Cavs.

Jonas Valanciunas had 16 points and 12 rebounds and Fred VanVleet scored 14 points, but the Raptors lost back-to-back home games for the first time all season.

Toronto matched Houston by going 34-7 at home in the regular season, and went 3-0 at home against Washington in round one. The Raptors had not lost consecutive home games since dropping Games 3 and 4 of the second round to Cleveland last May.

The series shifts to Ohio for Game 3 on Saturday night. Toronto has gone 0-5 at Cleveland over the past two postseasons, losing by an average margin of 24.2 points per game.

"Sometimes when you're put in tough situations, that's what brings the best out of you," DeRozan said. "That's what point we're at now."

Unfortunately for the Raptors, James insisted the Cavs

aren't satisfied with their 2-0 lead.

"We will not let our guards down," James promised.

The Cavaliers, who tied a postseason low with three turnovers, are 21-3 at home against Eastern Conference opponents in the playoffs over the past four years.

The Raptors, who let a 10-point lead slip away in a 113-112 overtime loss in Game 1, were up 54-45 midway through the second quarter but saw their lead dwindle to 63-61 at halftime.

Cleveland took control as Smith scored six points in an 18-5 spurt to begin the third quarter. The Cavs outscored the Raptors 37-24 in the third to take an 11-point edge into the fourth, and Toronto didn't challenge again.

"That's kind of what won the game for us," Lue said of Cleveland's big third quarter.

James was on target in Cleveland's game-changing third quarter, connecting on seven of 10 attempts and scoring 15 points. Love added nine as the Cavs took a 98-87 lead to the fourth.

# Tatum shines, Brown returns as Celtics top 76ers

Associated Press

BOSTON — The youth movement is alive and thriving for the Boston Celtics.

And for the second straight game it was enough to upend a Philadelphia 76ers team that still has much to figure out as it heads home trailing 2-0 in the Eastern Conference semifinals.

Rookie Jayson Tatum scored 21 points and hit a pair of free throws in the closing seconds, helping the Celtics rally from a 22-point deficit to beat the 76ers 108-103 on Thursday night.

Terry Rozier added 20 points, nine assists and seven rebounds. Marcus Smart finished with 19 points and five rebounds as the Celtics improved to 6-0 at TD Garden this postseason. They have never blown a 2-0 lead.

"Coach was saying whoever is the tougher team is going to

win," Rozier said. "They definitely punched us in the mouth at the beginning of the game. We just had to bounce back and get things together."

Game 3 is Saturday in Philly.

J.J. Redick had 23 points for the 76ers, making five three-pointers. Robert Covington added 22 points and nine rebounds. Joel Embiid finished with 20 points, 14 rebounds and five assists, but rookie star Ben Simmons missed all four shots and had just one point.

"Mentally, just thinking too much," Simmons said of his tough night. "I'm going to have bad games. It happens. Obviously, it's bad timing."

Philadelphia recovered after squandering its big lead to nudge back in front 93-88 midway through the fourth quarter.

But an 11-4 run put Boston

back in the lead 99-95 with less than four minutes to play.

"Once we got on that run we never looked back," Rozier said.

Boston's Jaylen Brown, who returned to action after sitting out the series opener with a strained right hamstring, came off the bench and played 25 minutes, scoring 13 points and grabbing four rebounds. He entered the game for the first time at the 7:14 mark of the first quarter. It took less than a minute to make an impact. He missed his first shot attempt before chasing down a loose ball and sprinting ahead for a one-handed dunk.

Prior to Thursday, Brown had started every game he'd appeared in this season. It was his first time off the bench since Game 5 of last season's Eastern Conference finals.

"They won two games at home and we have to reciprocate," Sixers coach Brett Brown said. "There's not going to be a pity party."

**He said it:** "It's like a movie. You only see these type of comebacks in movies." — Celtics guard Marcus Smart.

**Celeb sightings:** Philadelphia-born rapper Meek Mill sat courtside for Game 2. Mill was released from jail last week after spending nearly five months behind bars on a probation violation. Rapper Gucci Mane sat across from the 76ers bench wearing a Brown jersey. The two met last year when Brown attended one of his concerts. Another Philly native, actor Kevin Hart, sat a few seats down from Gucci. Hart at times antagonized the TD Garden fans, drawing boos.