

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## Shanahan: DOD mulling Mideast buildup

By COREY DICKSTEIN

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Acting Defense Secretary Pat Shanahan said Thursday that the United States is considering a deployment of new troops to the Middle East to shore up force protection amid recent heightened tensions with Iran.

But he also denied news reports such orders could include 5,000 to 10,000 servicemembers.

Shanahan told reporters at the Pentagon that he and other top national security officials had not made any decisions about potential troop movements. However, he acknowledged for the first time that President Donald Trump's administration was considering sending more troops into the Middle East, after the Pentagon recently expedited a deployment of a carrier strike group and sent a bomber task force and Patriot missiles into the region.

"There is no 5,000 number. There is no 10,000 number," Shanahan said, denying the reporting of those figures by Reuters and The Associated Press, respectively. "What we're looking at is — are there things we can do to enhance force protection in the Middle East? It may involve sending additional troops."

The acting secretary declined multiple questions from reporters seeking specifics about the plan, saying he would provide details when he "was ready to share that."

According to AP, newly deployed troops could include more Patriot missile batteries, additional ships and troops charged with monitoring Iranian troop movements. Those deployments would be consistent with a force protection mission.

Shanahan and other top national security officials were expected to brief Trump on Thursday afternoon at the White House about the latest in-

telligence on threats to American forces that they have said are tied to the Iranian regime.

U.S. officials have said in recent weeks intelligence linking the Iranian regime to potential attacks on U.S. troops by Shiite militias in locations including Iraq and Syria and other actions was credible. However, officials have not provided specific evidence of those threats.

"The threat is real," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Thursday on Fox News. "It's been credible."

Shanahan said the United States was not seeking a war with Iran.

"This gets back to the risk of Iranian miscalculation," he said.

Earlier this week, Shanahan said the steps that the United States has taken might have discouraged Iran from encouraging Shiite militia groups that it controls from attacking Americans.

Nonetheless, the United States has said Iran was likely

involved in a series of attacks on oil tankers off the coast of the United Arab Emirates this month. Additionally, U.S. officials said an Iranian-backed group could be responsible for a rocket fired Sunday into the fortified Green Zone in Baghdad that caused injuries near the U.S. Embassy. U.S. officials have not said why they believe Iran or Iran-backed groups were possibly involved in those incidents.

Trump, like Shanahan, has said in recent days that he was not seeking war with Iran. Top Iranian officials, including Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, have said they do not want to fight the United States.

However, Khamenei on Wednesday told Iranian students that they would "witness the demise of the enemies of humanity, meaning the degenerate American civilization, and the demise of Israel," Reuters reported.

## Iranian leaders lash out amid continued US pressure

*The Washington Post*

Iran has made a dramatic shift in how it confronts the United States, abandoning a policy of restraint in recent weeks for a series of offensive actions aimed at pushing the White House to rethink its efforts at isolating Tehran, say diplomats and analysts.

With the Trump administration tightening economic sanctions and intensifying military pressure, Iran is now seeking to highlight the costs it could also impose on the United States — for instance, by disrupting the world's oil supply — without taking actions likely to trigger an all-out war.

When four ships were damaged in the Persian Gulf last week, including two Saudi tankers and an Emirati one, U.S. and Arab officials said they suspected Iran had ordered the sabotage. And after a Katyusha rocket landed within a mile of the vast U.S. Embassy complex in Baghdad on Sunday, suspicion immediately turned to Iranian-backed militias in Iraq. Senior Iraqi officials warned Iran against using their territory to target the U.S. and its interests.

Iranian leaders condemned those incidents and denied responsibility. But diplomats and analysts say they bear Iran's

signature and are part of an emerging strategy in response to the crippling sanctions the Trump administration placed on Iran after unilaterally withdrawing from the landmark nuclear deal a year ago.

To Tehran's chagrin, it has not seen the kind of economic dividend it expected when the nuclear deal was signed. Nor have European efforts to maintain business with Iran provided relief.

The escalating economic pressure — in particular the ending of U.S. waivers for importers of Iranian oil — has strengthened the argument of Iranian hard-liners who see

conflict with the United States as inevitable, analysts say.

While still a minority, these hard-liners say it would be best to provoke the United States into military action while Iran is still capable of delivering a robust response, according to Ellie Geranmayeh, an Iran expert with the European Council on Foreign Relations. They fear that sustained economic sanctions could eventually erode Iran's ability to defend itself and argue for accelerating a conflict with the United States while Iran still has "an economy that can manage any potential cost of military confrontation," Geranmayeh said.

# 2 Navy ships transit Taiwan Strait for 5th month in a row

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS  
*Stars and Stripes*

The Navy on Wednesday sent two ships through the Taiwan Strait, marking the fifth month in a row that U.S. vessels have passed through the contentious waterway.

Destroyer USS Preble and the oil tanker USNS Walter S. Diehl sailed the strait north to south, according to The Associated Press and the Pacific Fleet headquarters at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.

"The ships' transit through the Taiwan Strait demonstrates the U.S. commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific. The U.S. Navy will continue to fly, sail and operate anywhere international law allows," according to an email Thursday from Pacific Fleet spokesman Cmdr. Nathan J. Christensen.

China regularly protests foreign warships sailing the 100-mile-wide strait without first

**'The U.S. Navy will continue to fly, sail and operate anywhere international law allows.'**

Cmdr. Nathan J. Christensen  
Pacific Fleet spokesman

seeking its permission.

In early April, the French frigate Vendemiaire transited the strait, shadowed by the Chinese military, according to an April 25 report by the Reuters news agency. In response, China disinvited France from a naval parade April 22 marking the 70th anniversary of the founding of China's navy, according to Reuters.

The strait separates the island of Taiwan, which China regards as a breakaway province, from the Chinese mainland. Under the "One China" policy, the U.S. acknowledges that China asserts sovereignty over Taiwan, but considers Tai-

wan's status as unsettled.

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson, during a visit with Chinese military officials in January, re-affirmed the U.S. commitment to One China, he told reporters in Tokyo after the exchange.

Since then, U.S. vessels, including a Coast Guard cutter, have passed through the strait once a month. The transit Wednesday by the Preble and the Diehl marked the seventh such passage by a U.S. vessel in eight months. U.S. vessels reportedly sailed through there three times in all of 2018.

## Navy officer found dead aboard USS Arlington

*Stars and Stripes*

The Navy identified on Thursday the sailor found dead on the USS Arlington as Lt. Kaylie Ludwig.

Ludwig, a medical corps officer, was found unresponsive on Monday and pronounced dead aboard the San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ship USS Arlington, U.S. 6th Fleet spokesman Kyle Raines said in a statement. At the time, the ship was in Rota, Spain, for a regularly scheduled port visit.

Ludwig began her naval service in 2013 and was assigned to Arlington in July 2018, Raines said. The Naval Criminal Investigative Service is conducting an investigation.

Arlington is homeported in Norfolk, Va., and is conducting naval operations in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations in support of U.S. national security interests in Europe and Africa, Raines said.

## Navy SEAL's murder trial delayed over email controversy

*Associated Press*

SAN DIEGO — A judge delayed the murder case Wednesday of a decorated Navy SEAL to first make sure the government's monitoring of defense team emails did not compromise his right to a fair trial.

Lawyers defending Special Operations Chief Edward Gallagher want the judge in the case removed because he was aware prosecutors planted tracking software in emails sent to the defense team and a journalist in an effort to find the source of news leaks.

Defense attorney Tim Parlatore said prosecutors may have misled the judge about the unusual tactic and he plans to ask that they be disqualified from

the high-profile case.

"What we believed is that the judge authorized prosecutors to spy on the defense team," Parlatore said after the hearing. "Now looking at things it appears that prosecutors may have lied to the judge and that he didn't authorize it and he didn't know what they were really doing."

Gallagher, who was dressed in Navy whites at the hearing, was scheduled to face trial Tuesday on charges he killed a wounded Islamic State prisoner under his care in 2017. He is also charged with shooting two civilians in Iraq and opening fire on crowds.

Now that trial date is in doubt as the defense tries to learn more about the email tracking

and whether it violated attorney-client privilege and protections against illegal searches.

The hearing at Naval Base San Diego began with a tense exchange between Parlatore and the judge, Capt. Aaron Rugh.

Parlatore said the prosecution had downplayed what the software captured. He asked to let a defense expert examine the extent of the intrusion and determine if metadata extracted could be linked to identify specific people.

Parlatore asked who else knew about the email tracking and Rugh told the prosecution to provide a list of "anybody that put their hands on this."

Prosecutors were relatively quiet during the hearing that

lasted more than two hours.

Parlatore said the leak investigation targeted the defense team and civilian lawyers in the case.

The tracking software embedded in an unusual logo of an American flag with a bald eagle perched on the scales of justice beneath the signature of lead prosecutor Cmdr. Christopher Czaplak was discovered two weeks ago by defense lawyers. Two days later, the prosecutor acknowledged the scheme in a closed-door hearing, but refused to provide details.

Rugh said the monitoring ended May 10. He asked for a letter from senior Navy officials to clarify if anyone is still under investigation for the leaks, including prosecutors.



# Tornado strikes Mo. as storms sweep state

Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — A tornado tore apart buildings in Missouri's capital city as severe weather swept across the state overnight, killing at least three people and injuring nearly two dozen others.

The National Weather Service confirmed that the large and destructive tornado moved over Jefferson City shortly before midnight Wednesday.

"Across the state, Missouri's first responders once again responded quickly and with strong coordination as much of the state dealt with extremely dangerous conditions that left people injured, trapped in homes, and tragically led to the death of three people," Gov. Mike Parson said.

The three deaths occurred more than 150 miles away near Golden City in Missouri's southwest corner, Missouri Public Safety said.

Kenneth Harris, 86, and his 83-year-old wife, Opal, were found dead Wednesday night about 200 yards from their home outside Golden City, Missouri State Highway Patrol Sgt. John Lueckenhoff said. Betty Berg, 56, also was killed and her husband, Mark, was seriously injured when their mobile home was destroyed just west of the city, Lueckenhoff said.

The storm also ripped a roof off a fertilizer plant in the area, prompting a precautionary evacuation of a 1-mile radius because of a possible chemical leak.

The severe weather moved in from Oklahoma, where rescuers struggled to pull people from high water. This week has seen several days of tornadoes and torrential rains in parts of the Southern Plains and Midwest.

Jefferson City's damage spanned about a 3-mile area, said Police Lt. David Wil-

liams. About 20 people were rescued by emergency personnel, and although there were no reports of missing people, authorities planned door-to-door checks Thursday, he said.

The weather service reported that a "confirmed large and destructive tornado" was observed over Jefferson City at 11:43 p.m. Wednesday, moving northeast at 40 mph. The capital city has a population of about 40,000 and is located about 130 miles west of St. Louis.

"It's a chaotic situation right now," Williams said.

Williams spoke from the Cole County Sheriff's office, where debris including insulation, roofing shingles and metal pieces lay on the ground outside the front doors.

Missouri Public Safety tweeted that more tornadoes and flash flooding were possible.

## Flooding swamps Midwest after relentless rains

Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — Two barges broke loose and floated swiftly down the swollen Arkansas River in eastern Oklahoma on Wednesday, spreading alarm downstream as they threatened to hit a dam.

The emergency was the latest consequence of storms and torrential rains that have ravaged the Midwest, from Texas through Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri and Illinois.

Authorities urged residents of several small towns in Oklahoma and Kansas to leave their homes as rivers and streams rose.

The Arkansas River town of Webbers Falls, Okla., was one such town. Town officials ordered a mandatory evacuation Wednesday afternoon because of the river's rising level.

But Wednesday evening, a posting on the town's official Facebook page sounded the alarm about the runaway barges for its 600 residents: "Evacuate Webbers Falls immediately. The barges are loose and has the potential to hit the lock and dam 16. If the dam breaks, it will be catastrophic!! Leave now!!"

Authorities located the barges Thursday morning, stuck on rocks in the swollen river. The Oklahoma Highway Patrol

said the barges were still tied together, and crews were working to secure them.

Still, the Interstate 40 bridge and a state highway bridge remain closed over the Arkansas River at Webbers Falls as a precaution, according to the Oklahoma Department of Transportation.

For the third consecutive day, dangerous storms prompted numerous tornado warnings and reports of twisters touching down, most in Missouri and Oklahoma.

The National Weather Service said it had received 22 reports of tornadoes by late Wednesday evening, although some of those could be duplicate reporting of the same twister.

## Bolton: Coast Guard to help reassert Arctic leadership

Associated Press

NEW LONDON, Conn. — U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton told 240 new Coast Guard Academy graduates Wednesday that they will help lead the way in "reasserting American leadership in the Arctic."

"You will help the United States challenge growing Russian military influence in the Arctic, and push back against China's illegitimate claim to 'near-Arctic' status, as well as its use of debt diplomacy against Arctic nations," he said as he delivered the keynote speech at the 138th commencement of the academy in New

London, Conn.

"And you will provide the search and rescue and disaster response capabilities needed to facilitate greater commerce and scientific research across the High North," he said.

The Trump administration this month warned China and Russia that the U.S. won't stand for aggressive moves in the Arctic region, where warming weather and melting sea ice are rapidly opening the area to development and commerce.

"Soon, with the help of the new Polar Security Cutter," he said, "the Coast Guard will lead the way in reasserting American leadership in the Arctic, which has been

neglected for far too long."

The cutter is the first of many icebreakers President Donald Trump plans to introduce to an aging U.S. fleet to enable a year-round U.S. presence in polar regions.

"The United States is an Arctic nation with enduring national interests in that region," he said. "Like our Arctic allies and partners, we want the High North to be a region of low tension, where no country seeks to coerce others through military build-up or economic exploitation. While we encourage commercially driven economic development by the international community, we need to reserve Arctic governance for Arctic nations."

# Trump and Democrats continue war of words

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The rift between President Donald Trump and congressional Democrats appeared to be widening Thursday after a dramatic blow-up at the White House at a meeting on infrastructure.

A day after Trump stalked out of the Cabinet room demanding an end to congressional investigations, the Republican president and Democratic leaders dug in, while plans to fix the nation's roads and bridges fell into the chasm.

Each side insisted it wants to agree on a plan, but a path forward was difficult to see. Shadowing the whole drama are the ongoing congressional investigations of whether Trump obstructed justice or committed other crimes and the demands by some Democrats to begin impeachment proceedings against him.

White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders said Thursday on CNN that "it's insane"

to think infrastructure talks can continue as if Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi had not accused Trump of a "cover-up," as Pelosi did Wednesday shortly before the White House meeting. Sanders said, "It's real simple, you can't go down two tracks."

"It's very hard to have a meeting where you accuse the president of the United States of a crime and an hour later show up and act as if nothing has happened," Sanders told reporters outside the White House.

Trump tweeted that Democrats are a "do-nothing party!"

Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer said on MSNBC that the president is "an erratic, helter-skelter, get-nothing-done" leader.

The exchanges followed a day of particularly personal conflict between Trump and Pelosi, who reclaimed the post second in line to the presidency after the 2018 midterm elections.

On Wednesday, Pelosi told reporters that Trump is engaged in a "cover-up," even as she sought to tamp down talk among some liberal Democrats pushing her to formally launch impeachment proceedings. Pelosi then headed to the White House with Schumer and other Democrats. Trump made them wait for 15 minutes. Then he walked into the Cabinet Room, shook no one's hand and refused to take a seat. Trump declared he would not work with them on infrastructure after all until they shut down their "phony investigations" and strode out to fill the world in on the encounter at a Rose Garden press conference.

Pelosi, who has a rich history of sassing Trump, issued some shade.

"For some reason, maybe it was lack of confidence on his part ... he took a pass, and it just makes me wonder why he did that," she told reporters back on Capitol Hill. "In any event, I pray for the president of the United States."

## Democratic hopefuls hear calls for Pentagon cuts

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Nearly two dozen progressive groups are launching a new push to persuade Democratic presidential candidates to support dramatic spending cuts at the Pentagon.

The liberal groups are writing Thursday to all candidates in the crowded 2020 Democratic primary, urging the White House hopefuls to support slashing \$200 billion or more from an annual defense budget that topped \$700 billion for the current fiscal year.

Dubbed "Put People Over the Pentagon" and shared with The Associated Press be-

fore its release, the groups' effort aims to elevate defense spending in a presidential race where energized progressive activists are nudging candidates to embrace their agenda on a variety of high-profile issues.

"Hundreds of billions of dollars annually should be shifted away from the Pentagon and to pressing needs from education to averting catastrophic climate change," said Robert Weissman, president of the watchdog nonprofit Public Citizen. "America needs leaders who will speak plain truths about Pentagon excesses and waste."

Four senators vying for the Democratic nomination to take on President Donald Trump last year voted against the measure

that authorizes the current Pentagon budget: Bernie Sanders, of Vermont; Elizabeth Warren, of Massachusetts; Kamala Harris, of California; and Kirsten Gillibrand, of New York.

Sanders and Warren have criticized defense spending levels as excessive, with the Vermont senator vowing to challenge spending on the "military-industrial complex" during a March rally that launched his 2020 campaign.

Besides Public Citizen, the other progressive groups behind Thursday's push for defense spending cuts include MoveOn.org, Indivisible and Democracy for America.

## Former Missouri governor expecting to deploy in fall

The Kansas City (Mo.) Star

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — Former Missouri Gov. Eric Greitens has told friends and supporters in recent weeks that he plans to deploy with the Navy to the Middle East in the fall and hopes his fourth book will be published later this year.

Earlier this month Greitens attended a gathering in Franklin County organized by longtime GOP activist Robbie Brouk, where he shared his short-term plans regarding his return to active Navy service and forthcoming book.

Greitens has also shared his plans with

others in meetings across the state over the past month, multiple sources told The Kansas City Star.

In 2017, Greitens, 45, was put on inactive status with the Standby Reserve, which allowed him to retain his commission but not to accrue time served to apply toward retirement. The status comes with no pay and does not make him eligible for promotion.

He applied for a transfer to selected reserves in April 2019 and late Wednesday the Navy confirmed that he had been approved to return to active status as a general unrestricted line officer. That means he is authorized to return as a SEAL.

"His transfer was approved," said Lt. Cmdr. Jessica McNulty of Navy Recruiting Command Public Affairs. She said Greitens is now affiliated with the Navy Operational Support Center in St. Louis.

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, which published Greitens' previous three books, told the Star it does not have anything new from Greitens under contract.

Greitens, a Republican, resigned from office a year ago next week, succumbing to an avalanche of scandals and criminal charges — including accusations that he engaged in violent and coercive sexual misconduct during a 2015 affair.



# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Teen graduates from high school, Harvard

**KS** ULYSSES — A 17-year-old Kansas student will collect diplomas from high school and Harvard University this month.

Braxton Moral received his high school diploma from Ulysses High School last Sunday. He will graduate with a bachelor's degree from Harvard on May 30.

The teen majored in government and minored in English through Harvard's extension program. He took classes online during the school year and on the Harvard campus during summers. Some Harvard classes substituted for high school class credits.

Moral now plans to attend law school but he hasn't chosen a school.

## Knives found buried at sand volleyball court

**MO** CAPE GIRARDEAU — Sand volleyball courts at a park in Cape Girardeau were closed after knives were found buried in the sand.

Police said a teenager suffered a small cut on her foot while playing on the courts. Police Sgt. Joey Hann told the Southeast Missourian that the girl and a friend found two small, poorly made kitchen knives in the sand.

The city said parks department staff will check the courts with metal detectors and rakes.

## Flamingo hit by rock had to be euthanized

**IL** BLOOMINGTON — Officials at a zoo in Illinois had to euthanize a flamingo after it was struck by a rock

thrown by a child.

Director Jay Tetzloff told The Pantagraph in an email that a juvenile guest accidentally injured the bird by "skipping a rock into the habitat" at Miller Park Zoo in Bloomington.

Tetzloff said the rock broke the flamingo's leg, and the staff determined the best course of action was to euthanize the bird.

Tetzloff says the zoo is working with the child's family "to move forward."

## Soldier dons umpire gear to surprise son

**MI** CRYSTAL TOWNSHIP — A U.S. soldier who had just returned home from overseas surprised his 8-year-old son from behind home plate as the boy stepped up to bat at a youth baseball game in Michigan.

Army Staff Sgt. Joseph Abbott wore an umpire's mask and chest protector along with his military fatigues as his son Hunter stood in the batter's box. Abbott wished his son luck and the boy quickly recognized his father, who had been in Germany for about five months.

## Man stole crashed car, bashed 6 others

**AK** ANCHORAGE — A 20-year-old man suspected of stealing a crashed car and bashing at least six other vehicles has been charged with felony vehicle theft, theft, assault and eluding.

Anchorage police say a driver Friday morning got into a crash and got out of his car to exchange information.

Police said Tyler Phillips got into the sedan, backed into several other vehicles, drove over a median and left.

Police said he then rear-ended two cars and sideswiped

a third at three intersections.

Police found the stolen sedan in south Anchorage. A nearby homeowner reported a man on his porch and police arrested Phillips.

## Man accused of baiting cats with fishhooks

**PA** PLYMOUTH — A northeastern Pennsylvania man accused of baiting cats with food on fishhooks is facing animal cruelty charges.

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals said a stray cat was found April 8 in a vacant house with three fishhooks in its mouth. The cat was treated and survived. Two other cats were spotted with fishing line coming out of their mouths.

A day earlier, officials said, a woman reported a neighbor holding a fishing pole on his second-floor porch saying he was about to start "fishing for cats."

Kenny Rowles, 27, of Plymouth faces charges including aggravated cruelty to animals involving torture and serious bodily injury.

## City tries to stop store from flying big US flag

**NC** STATESVILLE — Officials in a North Carolina city have filed a lawsuit to force a recreational vehicle store to take down a U.S. flag that they say is too large.

News outlets reported the flag is 40 feet by 80 feet and flies above Gander RV in the city of Statesville, north of Charlotte.

City officials say the store was granted a permit to fly a U.S. flag, but it's nearly twice what city codes allow. Fines of \$50 a day have been levied retroactive to Oct. 15, amounting to approximately \$11,000.

Gander RV has rejected the city's requests to take down the flag.

## Stuck truck briefly closes mountain road

**VT** CAMBRIDGE — Police said that only six days after Vermont Route 108 through Smugglers' Notch between Stowe and Cambridge opened for the season, a tractor-trailer truck got stuck on the winding road, forcing its temporary closure.

The truck that got stuck tried to cross through the notch from the Stowe side. But the truck was freed relatively quickly.

Despite signs on both sides of the notch warning that the road is closed to big trucks, vehicles getting stuck there has been a challenge for years.

## Only 73 guns of 654 stolen in 2017 recovered

**MO** SPRINGFIELD — A federal prosecutor says authorities have recovered only 73 of the 654 guns stolen in Springfield in 2017.

Prosecutors said six men from Texas stole the guns by maneuvering several trailers into a United Parcel Service lot. The handguns and 12-gauge shotguns were being shipped from Beretta USA in Maryland to Bass Pro Shops in Springfield.

Two defendants, Frank McChriston, 35, and Quinton Haywood, were sentenced to 7½ years in prison. Derrick and Eric White were each sentenced to seven years and three months. They were also ordered to pay \$206,000 in restitution.

Two other men have pleaded guilty in the case.

From wire reports

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# Tradition remains bedrock of Indy 500

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Ryan Hunter-Reay has been around long enough to remember when the Indianapolis 500 was the true culmination of the “Month of May,” when fans would file through the old turnstiles each day during the multi-week buildup to the biggest one-day sporting event in the world.

“You had two different qualifying weekends,” the 2014 champion recalled, “and I really felt like that is what Indy deserved, to be spread out that way, and to have the story lines drawn out.

“You could take your time learning to get the speed out of the car. I enjoyed that,” Hunter-Reay added, almost wistfully. “Now it feels like a fire drill, a rush, all packed into a week.”

More than just about any other event, though, the Indy 500 is built upon tradition.

There’s the three-wide starting grid at the start the race, and the milk given to the win-

ner in victory lane at the end of it. The original yard of bricks still marks the start-finish line, and all the prerace pageantry still evokes the very essence of Americana — the singing of “God Bless America” and “Back Home Again in Indiana,” the balloon release and the ceremonial flyover.

Fans like it that way, too. They know what to expect every Memorial Day weekend in Indianapolis, whether it means sitting with the movers and shakers in the famed pagoda overlooking the front stretch, or moving and shaking with the common folk in the aptly name “Snake Pit.”

Yet the stunning failure of two-time world champion Fernando Alonso and his well-funded McLaren team to qualify for this year’s race has led some to push for guaranteed starting spots in the 33-car field, a move that would jeopardize another Indy 500 tradition: Bump day.

“Certainly the drama of that,

that’s a draw I would think,” said 1986 winner Bobby Rahal, now a team owner. “I think clearly the more qualifiers that make the attempts, the more drama there is, the more interest there is. Surely it’s got to attract more people, I would think.”

But as Hunter-Reay points out, there are plenty of traditions that have changed or disappeared in the lead-up to the 103rd running of “The Greatest Spectacle in Racing” this Sunday.

Some have been the simple result of changing times. Some have been mistakes, others have occurred for good reason. And in some cases, traditions that have disappeared and been resurrected.

Take the old Indianapolis Motor Speedway Motel, that green-and-white ode to the 1960s that once stood outside Turn 2. James Garner and Paul Newman would stay there when they arrived in town for the race, back in the days be-

fore luxury motorhomes and high-priced, high-rise hotel suites.

The building had begun to decay long before it was torn down a decade ago. And while the area around the speedway undergoes a vast redevelopment, the IMS Motel is now just a page in history.

So, too, are some of the iconic names and voices of the prerace ceremonies.

For so many years, Indiana native Florence Henderson — Mrs. Brady, to an entire generation — lent the vocals to the National Anthem, “God Bless America” or “America the Beautiful.” If baritone was more your flavor, there was Jim Nabors — ahem, Gomer Pyle — singing “Back Home Again in Indiana.”

Both of them are gone now, Henderson dying just months after her final appearance in 2016 and Nabors following her in 2017. But the echoes of their voices live on for many race fans to this day.

## Andretti saving golden anniversary of lone Brickyard win

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Mario Andretti sees the reminders of 1969 everywhere these days.

His face, his race car number, that familiar STP logo, they all appear on an endless array of shirts and jackets, clocks and flags, posters and coasters. Mario Andretti Drive has temporarily replaced the Washington Street sign in downtown Indianapolis. Fans driving through the main gate to Indianapolis Motor Speedway’s infield will pass large banners commemorating the 50th anniversary of Andretti’s first and only Indianapolis 500 win. Anyone who strolls through Gasoline Alley needs a metal badge with Andretti’s image to get inside.

When he’s not busy signing autographs, posing for photos or taking fans for a ride in IndyCar’s two-seater, there are

countless interview requests.

At age 79, one of the greatest drivers in racing history is revered as much today as he was all those years ago.

“I know it’s special to him,” said Michael Andretti, the oldest of Mario’s three children. “I think it’s so cool he appreciates it, to see him get honored like this. You know it was the most popular win he ever had.”

Super Mario celebrated many victories during a career that first began as a secret from the parents who moved the family from Italy to the United States in 1955.

But his career has largely been defined by what happened in his 29 Indy 500 starts — and that unlikely trip to victory lane.

“What this race brings to you career wise, it’s worth it,” the elder Andretti said.

He finished third as a rookie in 1965 then won Indy’s pole

each of the next two years. After a piston problem forced him out just two laps into the 1968 race, he returned to the Brickyard in 1969 as the favorite.

The expectations suddenly changed when a horrific crash in practice left Andretti with facial burns and forced him into a backup car without the Lotus engine he brought to the track. He started second alongside pole-sitter A.J. Foyt and next to another former race winner, Bobby Unser.

Somehow, through everything, Andretti was able to nurse the car across the bricks before anyone else. His finish time of 3:11:14.71 was the fastest in race history by nearly five minutes.

The family’s fortunes since have become an enduring part of the race. There has never been another Andretti victory.

Andretti made 24 more Indy

starts and never again reached victory lane.

Like pretty much every May since 1965, the Andretti family is gathering in Indianapolis and there is fresh attention for Mario’s win amid some tough times.

Mario’s wife, Dee Ann, died from a heart attack in July. They were married in 1961. His nephew, John Andretti, is going through a second battle with colon cancer.

Inside the Andretti Auto-sport hospitality tent and amid all the banter between crew members and drivers, Mario Andretti had a quiet moment to realize just how golden this anniversary is for himself and his family.

“I’m enjoying the heck out of everything for all the obvious reasons,” Mario Andretti said. “It’s fun. ... I’m still living the dream.”



# Bruins look to join Boston's title parade

Associated Press

BOSTON — It's been more than three months since the last championship parade in Boston, and the city is getting antsy.

Sure, the Red Sox won the World Series last October. And the New England Patriots earned their sixth Super Bowl victory in February.

But since then: Nothing.

And Boston's sports fans are counting on the Bruins to end the interminable title drought.

"It definitely lights a fire under you to see the other teams in the city bring home their championships," defenseman Brandon Carlo said as the team prepared to face the St. Louis Blues in the Stanley Cup Final. "We want to be a part of it."

It wasn't too long ago that Boston was a sad sack of a sports city, with the Patriots the joke of the NFL and the Red Sox mired in a dynasty of disappointment that stretched 86 years. The Celtics won far more than their share, but they endured the longest championship drought in franchise history from 1986-2008.

The Bruins went from Bobby Orr's two championships in the early 1970s until Zdeno Chara and Patrice Bergeron brought the Cup home in 2011.

If that doesn't seem like a long time ago, try telling that to the newly spoiled Boston fans who have grown up with the Belichick-and-Brady Patriots and a Red Sox franchise that has won as many championships in the past 15 seasons as it did in the previous 100.

"It feels like there's been a little bit of a gap in there," said Carlo, a Coloradan who is 22 years old, and has only been in the city for three years. "The way things have gone for Boston, we're looking to be like the other teams."

And now they have their chance.

The Bruins are at their strongest heading into the Cup Final, with a seven-game winning streak that includes a sweep of the Carolina Hurricanes in the Eastern Conference Finals.

Goalie Tuukka Rask has allowed more than two goals just twice in the past 13 games, and he won the last two playoff clinchers with shutouts. Brad Marchand is the leading scorer remaining in the playoffs.

And, with the Celtics done, the Patriots in the offseason and the Red Sox still recovering from their early season championship hangover, the Bruins have the city's attention.

"We want to be considered the best game

in town. Why wouldn't we?" coach Bruce Cassidy said. "We have some serious competition."

Cassidy said he has developed a relationship with the other coaches in town, and he reached out to the Patriots for advice on how to handle the long layoff between series. The Celtics' practice facility is next door to the Bruins' and on the morning of an NBA playoff game, Cassidy wore a Celtics shirt to his media availability.

When he took the podium for Wednesday's news conference, Cassidy looked at the unusually large crowd and said, "Red Sox off today?" (They're on the road.)

The Bruins have also noticed the difference when they're out and run into fans around town.

"You do see how the city rallies around you," Bruins forward Jake DeBrusk said. "I grew up in Edmonton, and we only have one sports team. To come in here, and there's four sports teams and they're usually pretty good, in the playoffs or in the hunt or winning."

"It's very lucky to be playing here," DeBrusk said. "Ever since I've gotten here, I've fallen in love with the city. To see the teams win around here, and how the people supported it, it's very special."

## Stewart leads Joe Gibbs trio named to NASCAR's Hall

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Tony Stewart and friends are heading to the NASCAR Hall of Fame.

The three-time Cup Series champion will be inducted alongside his former car owner Joe Gibbs and teammate Bobby Labonte. Driver Buddy Baker and mechanic Waddell Wilson rounded out the Class of 2020.

"It totally changed from watching my moment to enjoying seeing the guy who helped build my career with Joe and then following that up with Bobby," Stewart said about hearing his name called first. "It wasn't about me. It was about all of us and this whole group that was going in."

Stewart won Cup Series championships in 2002 and 2005 racing for Gibbs after Labonte won one in 2000.

"I guess this couldn't be any better for me to go in with those

two guys. I'm thrilled I can ride their coattails," Gibbs said.

Fox announcer and NASCAR Hall of Fame member Jeff Gordon knew Stewart was "a lock" to get into the hall, but added that it's only fitting that Gibbs and Labonte will join him in the same class.

"One wouldn't have happened without the other," Gordon said.

Labonte said he was still pinching himself after getting in on his third year on the ballot. He said it felt like it was all meant to be this year after Stewart and Gibbs were selected.

"What an awesome day and what an awesome feeling," Labonte said. "It is just such an honor."

Stewart received 88 percent of the Hall of Fame selection committee's votes.

He won 49 Cup Series races during his 17-year NASCAR career, and captured a third title

in 2011 after breaking away from Joe Gibbs Racing to become a co-owner. Stewart said the day he walked into Gibbs' office in 2009 and told him he was leaving to become a part owner was one of the toughest of his life.

Gibbs did not initially take the news well, upset about letting a talent like Stewart walk out the door. Then Stewart looked at him and said, "I want to be like you, coach."

With that, Gibbs understood.

Though he no longer races on the Cup Series, the 48-year-old Stewart's thirst for racing continues: The Indiana driver is scheduled to spend four days this week racing sprint cars in three states. Gordon called Stewart a "modern day A.J. Foyt" for his love of racing all different kinds of cars.

Stewart broke onto the NASCAR scene by winning three races during his rookie season.

He won on every style of track — from road course to ovals — and twice captured the Brickyard 400 at Indianapolis Motor Speedway in his home state.

The 78-year-old Gibbs was selected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1996 after leading the Washington Redskins to three Super Bowl titles. Labonte joins brother Terry Labonte in the Hall of Fame. He got his first break as a full-time Cup Series driver at 28 in 1993 and went on to win 21 races, including the 2000 title.

Baker, one of the most intimidating looking drivers at 6-foot-6, was known as the "gentle giant." He won 19 Cup races.

Wilson's engines helped some of the greatest drivers in history. He helped NASCAR Hall of Famers David Pearson, Edward "Fireball" Roberts, Bobby Allison, Cale Yarborough and Darrell Waltrip pile up 109 wins and 123 poles.

## MLB roundup

## Kiermaier boosts Rays over Dodgers

Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Avisail Garcia and Kevin Kiermaier each hit a three-run homer in the seventh inning to power the Tampa Bay Rays past the Los Angeles Dodgers 8-1 on Wednesday night.

Kiermaier also made a rocket throw from center field to cut down Cody Bellinger at home plate, keeping the score tied 1-1 in the sixth. Bellinger, who was aboard on a fielder's choice, failed to reach base safely for the first time in 46 starts this season. He went 0-for-4, dropping his major league-leading batting average to .394.

Tommy Pham hit his sixth homer for the Rays, and Brandon Lowe singled in the go-ahead run to spark a seven-run seventh. Emilio Pagan (1-0) got four outs in relief.

Garcia's eighth homer came off Dylan Floro, who entered with a 0.44 ERA — best among NL relievers. Floro (1-1) pitched to four batters and got none of them out.

Kiermaier capped the big inning with his fourth home run off left-hander Caleb Ferguson.

**Athletics 7, Indians 2:** Frankie Montas pitched six scoreless innings, Mark Canha homered and drove in three

runs and Oakland extended its winning streak to six games with a win at Cleveland.

Nick Hundley had three hits, including a solo homer and two RBIs. Robbie Grossman also drove in a pair of runs as the Athletics swept the three-game series and reached the .500 mark for the first time since April 26.

**Yankees 7, Orioles 5:** Gleyber Torres hit two of visiting New York's five home runs off Baltimore's beleaguered pitching staff, and survived a shaky outing from CC Sabathia.

Baltimore has lost five in a row to sink to 15-34, the worst record in the majors.

**Cubs 8, Phillies 4:** Cole Hamels struggled in his first start against his original team, Albert Almora Jr. hit his first career grand-slam and host Chicago rallied from an early three-run deficit with three homers in beating Philadelphia.

**Royals 8-3, Cardinals 2-10:** Marcell Ozuna and Matt Carpenter went deep as part of a four-homer barrage and host St. Louis split a doubleheader with Kansas City.

Brad Keller threw seven-plus innings of two-hit ball to snap a six-start winless streak and Jorge Soler hit a three-run

homer as the Royals won the opener.

Dexter Fowler and Kolten Wong also homered as St. Louis had as many home runs in the second game as it did hits in the opener.

**Brewers 11, Reds 9:** Yasmani Grandal homered during a big rally and started a bizarre double play on a pitch that got past him and bounced to the backstop, helping host Milwaukee outlast Cincinnati.

Grandal hit a two-run homer as the Brewers scored five times in the sixth for an 11-8 lead.

**Braves 9, Giants 2:** Dansby Swanson and Freddie Freeman hit back-to-back homers in the second inning and Atlanta scored six unearned runs in the inning after host San Francisco botched a double play.

Austin Riley also homered for the Braves. Max Fried allowed two runs in six innings for his third straight win and NL-leading seventh overall. Fried (7-2) also collected his first career RBI with a bases-loaded fielder's choice as part of Atlanta's big inning.

**Rangers 2, Mariners 1:** Hunter Pence homered, Adrian Sampson had another impressive long outing for a victory after not starting, and host

Texas beat slumping Seattle to complete a three-game sweep.

The Mariners have lost 27 of 37 games to fall to the bottom of the AL West standings since starting the season 13-2.

**Padres 5, Diamondbacks 2:** Left-hander Eric Lauer pitched seven strong innings for his first win in seven starts and Greg Garcia had three hits, scored twice and drove in a run as host San Diego completed a three-game sweep.

**Marlins 6, Tigers 3:** Garrett Cooper hit his first major league home run in the sixth inning, leading a comeback as visiting Miami won its fifth straight by beating Detroit.

**Mets 6, Nationals 1:** Juan Lagares hit a go-ahead, three-run double off Washington closer Sean Doolittle, Rajai Davis capped the six-run eighth inning with a three-run homer in his first at-bat, and host New York rallied for the victory.

**Rockies 9, Pirates 3:** Josh Bell reached the Allegheny River on the fly for the second time in two weeks, the only notable blemish for Colorado in its win at Pittsburgh.

**White Sox 9, Astros 4:** Eloy Jimenez homered twice and Chicago turned the first triple play in the majors this season in a win at Houston.

## Red Sox edge Blue Jays with homer in 13th

Associated Press

TORONTO — Michael Chavis got his team a win and his teammates some rest.

Rafael Devers joined an exclusive club of young Red Sox sluggers who have homered in three straight games, Chavis hit a tiebreaking homer in the 13th inning and Boston beat the Toronto Blue Jays 6-5 on Wednesday night.

The teams conclude their four-game series with an afternoon finale Thursday. It was scheduled to start 13 hours after Wednesday's game ended at 11:37 p.m.

No wonder Chavis was so happy about his tiebreaking homer.

"Thank goodness," he said of his reaction. "I knew it was getting late and I knew

we had an early bus tomorrow for this day game. I got a lot of thank yous."

Among those expressing gratitude was fellow slugger Mookie Betts.

"Super happy," Betts said. "Try and get back and get some rest. Definitely good to get the win tonight."

Boston improved to 10-3 in its past 13 road games. The Red Sox are 4-1 in extra innings.

"This is a big win for us," Red Sox right-hander Rick Porcello said. "We've got a chance to win the series tomorrow and that's what we need to do."

Devers led off the eighth with a blast to left off Derek Law, his sixth. It made Devers the sixth player in Red Sox his-

tory aged 22 or younger to homer in three straight games. The others are Ted Williams, Babe Ruth, Carl Yastrzemski, Rico Petrocelli and Jim Tabor.

But Marcus Walden couldn't hold a 4-3 lead for Boston in the ninth. Brandon Drury hit a one-out double and pinch-hitter Danny Jansen sent the game to extra innings with a two-out single.

Toronto used two singles and an intentional walk to load the bases against Walden with one out in the 10th. Red Sox manager Alex Cora brought Betts in to play as a fifth infielder before Walden fanned Freddy Galvis for the second out. After Betts returned to right field, Walden escaped the jam by getting Drury to fly out.