

STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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ICC: US war crimes possible

Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — U.S. troops and CIA agents could face investigation and possible charges by the International Criminal Court after its chief prosecutor said in a report that they may have committed war crimes by torturing detainees in Afghanistan.

“Members of US armed forces appear to have subjected at least 61 detained persons to torture, cruel treatment, outrages upon personal dignity on the territory of Afghanistan between 1 May 2003 and 31 December 2014,” according to the report issued late Monday by Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda’s office. Bensouda didn’t immediately give any further comment Tuesday.

The report added that CIA operatives may have subjected at least 27 detainees in Afghanistan, Poland, Roma-

nia and Lithuania to “torture, cruel treatment, outrages upon personal dignity and/or rape” between December 2002 and March 2008.

Most of the alleged abuse happened in 2003-04, the report said, adding that Afghan government forces and the Taliban were also responsible for atrocities.

Prosecutors said they will decide “imminently” whether to seek authorization to open a full-scale investigation in Afghanistan that could lead to war crimes charges.

Param-Preet Singh, associate international justice director at Human Rights Watch, welcomed the publication Tuesday.

“The ICC prosecutor’s report highlights some of the worst abuses committed by government forces and the Taliban in Afghanistan, where impunity remains the norm,” she said. “The link to possible war crimes

by the Central Intelligence Agency and the U.S. military shows that the ICC is prepared to investigate cases involving those who may otherwise seem beyond the reach of justice.”

State Department spokeswoman Elizabeth Trudeau said the U.S. doesn’t believe an ICC investigation is “warranted or appropriate.”

“The United States is deeply committed to complying with the law of war, and we have a robust national system of investigation and accountability that more than meets international standards,” Trudeau said.

The ICC is a court of last resort that takes on cases only when other countries are unable or unwilling to prosecute.

A Pentagon spokesman, Navy Capt. Jeff Davis, said officials were awaiting more details about the ICC findings before commenting.

Report: Pacific Pathways too costly

By WYATT OLSON

Stars and Stripes

U.S. Army Pacific is struggling to increase and maintain financing for its 3-year-old Pacific Pathways initiative, according to a federal report that called current funding sources “unsustainable.”

Pathways has roughly doubled the Army’s costs of individual exercises that constitute the initiative which deploys battalion-size task forces into the region for 90-day stints, said the Government Accountability Office report released Monday.

Pathways strings together existing bilateral exercises held in countries such as South Korea, Japan, Thailand, Philippines and Malaysia.

U.S. Army Pacific officials told the GAO that beginning in 2014, Pathways has built readiness at multiple command echelons, increased complexity of exercises for partner nations, supported the rebalance to the Pacific and allowed the Army to experiment with its capabilities.

The original pitch for Pathways included an element of cost savings in that soldiers and equipment would not need to be returned stateside after completing individual exercises. Instead, most soldiers and materiel would move on to the next exercise.

But the effort to keep 400 to 900 soldiers forward deployed for three months at a time was primarily about increasing the Army’s presence in the Pacific — and that costs money.

Current funding for Pathways has fallen short, the report said.

Navy helping New Zealand after quakes

By SETH ROBSON

Stars and Stripes

The Navy is helping New Zealand emergency services respond to a series of earthquakes, including sending the first U.S. warship to visit New Zealand in more than 30 years.

The Navy said in a statement that a P-3C Orion maritime patrol aircraft will survey damage near Kaikoura — a South Island town near the epicenter of the largest quake, Sunday’s magnitude-7.8 temblor that killed two people and caused widespread damage.

“The USS Sampson ... is now on its way to Kaikoura, where it will deploy two MH60 helicopters to help as required. The U.S. has also offered a P-3 Orion for

surveillance flights,” Defense Minister Gerry Brownlee said, according to the New Zealand Herald.

New Zealand air force helicopters were evacuating scores of people from the town, which remains cut off by landslides as hundreds of aftershocks rock the area. Kaikoura, home to about 2,000 people, is a popular destination for tourists on whale-watching expeditions or mountain excursions.

Strong aftershocks continued to shake New Zealand, rattling the nerves of exhausted residents.

The Sampson, an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, will be the first Navy ship to visit New Zealand in three decades.

U.S. warships haven’t been

there since the mid-1980s, when Wellington refused a port call by the USS Buchanan on grounds that the U.S. would neither confirm nor deny that the ship was nuclear-armed. New Zealand Prime Minister John Key last month approved the visit by the conventionally powered Sampson.

The Orion, assigned to Hawaii-based Patrol Squadron 47 and provided at the request of New Zealand’s Defense Ministry, is operating from Royal New Zealand Air Force Base Auckland, the Navy statement said.

The U.S. and New Zealand navies have trained and operated together regularly in recent years, including at the recent Rim of the Pacific exercise.

Manning petitions for pardon

The Washington Post

Chelsea Manning, an Army private convicted in 2013 of taking troves of secret diplomatic and military documents and disclosing them to WikiLeaks, has formally asked President Barack Obama to commute her 35-year prison sentence to allow an immediate release and “a first chance at life.”

Manning, 29, has served 6½ years in federal custody — longer than any other person convicted of leaking classified information in U.S. history.

In an impassioned statement accompanying her petition for clemency, she accepted “full and complete responsibility” for her decision to disclose the material. She said she pleaded guilty without the benefit of a plea agreement because she believed the military justice system would understand her motivation for the leak and sentence her fairly.

“I was wrong,” wrote Manning, who is imprisoned at Fort Leavenworth in Kansas.

She said the 35-year penalty was “far more” than she imagined possible — “unreasonable, outrageous and out of line with what I had done.”

Her reason for passing the documents to WikiLeaks was to raise public awareness about issues she found concerning, including the impact of war on innocent civilians, her attorney, Vincent J. Ward, said in a letter accompanying Manning’s petition. Ward said Manning’s sentence exceeds even international legal norms. Obama, whom he said has taken “admirable steps” to provide criminal offenders a second chance through clemency, “has the opportunity to right this wrong” by commuting Manning’s sentence. That, he said, would give her “a first chance to live a real, meaningful life.”

This is Manning’s second clemency request. In 2013, a few weeks after her sentencing, she sought a pardon from Obama.

President reassures on NATO

Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece — President Barack Obama opened his final foreign trip as president Tuesday with reassuring words in Greece about the U.S. commitment to NATO even as he prepares to hand off to a Donald Trump administration, saying Democratic and Republican administrations alike recognize the importance of the alliance to the trans-Atlantic relationship.

Without mentioning Trump by name, Obama told Greek President Prokopis Pavlopoulos that a strong NATO is of “utmost importance” and would provide “significant continuity even as we see a transition in government in the United States.”

Pavlopoulos, for his part, thanked Obama for U.S. support of the Greek people in a time of social and economic crisis, and said he was confident that Trump “will continue on the

same path.”

Trump’s election has generated significant unease in Europe because of his campaign talk suggesting the U.S. might pull out of the NATO alliance if other countries don’t pay more.

Obama’s reassurances reflect an attempt to ease the deep concerns about Trump and the future of America’s treaty alliances. Yet they may be greeted with skepticism: For months throughout the campaign, Obama repeatedly assured world leaders in public and private that Trump would not be elected, only to see him emerge victorious last week.

Obama also met Tuesday with Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras and offered a welcome message of support for the Greeks as they struggle with both economic woes and a huge influx of refugees. Obama pledged to keep pressing his view that “austerity alone can-

not deliver prosperity.”

Obama is making the first visit to Greece by a sitting U.S. president since Bill Clinton in 1999.

The U.S. has praised Greek efforts to overhaul its economy but has repeatedly stressed the country must continue with painful reforms. The country’s bailout funds are disbursed following reviews by international debt inspectors of mandated reforms.

The government also will be looking for recognition of the country’s role in Europe’s refugee crisis, which saw hundreds of thousands of refugees pass through Greece from Turkey on their way to the more prosperous countries of the European north, and for U.S. pressure on the rest of Europe to help shoulder the burden.

Lawyer cites Trump comments in seeking dismissal of Bergdahl case

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY

Stars and Stripes

A year ago, Donald Trump revved up rallies across the U.S. by calling Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl a “traitor, a no-good traitor, who should have been executed.”

Now that Trump will become commander in chief, Bergdahl’s lead lawyer, Eugene Fidell, is planning to file a motion to dismiss the case, arguing that the president-elect had compromised Bergdahl’s due-process rights to a fair trial and an impartial jury.

Bergdahl spent five years held by the Taliban after he left his outpost in Afghanistan in 2009 and was captured hours later. He is charged with misbehavior before the enemy and desertion.

“I don’t see how Sgt. Bergdahl could get a fair trial with Mr. Trump sitting in the White House,” Fidell said in a phone

interview on Monday. He said he would file the motion to dismiss the charges shortly after Trump’s inauguration.

“There will never have been a case like this — where a successful candidate for the nation’s highest office ran in part on the personal vilification of a particular individual,” he said.

Bergdahl’s lawyers have previously sought to have the case dismissed because of public comments by Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. McCain said Bergdahl was “clearly a deserter” and vowed to hold a committee hearing on the case if Bergdahl was not punished.

A military judge, Col. John Nance, rejected that argument. Last week, Fidell filed a brief asking the Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces to overrule Nance’s decision.

Coming from a commander in chief, Trump’s comments about Bergdahl take on a “much graver” significance than before, said Rachel VanLandingham, a former Air Force judge advocate who is now a professor at Southwestern Law School in Los Angeles. “They get at the primary vulnerability of the military justice system.

“Before (Trump was elected), it was a matter of inflammatory pretrial publicity by a public speaker,” she said. “Now, the issue really is unlawful command influence.”

Bergdahl, 30, an Idaho native, remains on active duty in a desk job at Joint Base San Antonio.

The desertion charge against him carries a maximum five-year prison sentence. The misbehavior charge, accusing Bergdahl of endangering troops who had to search for him, carries a potential life sentence.

Heart failure cited in 2015 Christmas Drop death

Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Heart failure caused a Yokota airman's death during a training mission last December, Air Force investigators said.

Senior Airman Jeremy M. Jutba-Hake, 22, a Hawaii native assigned to the 36th Airlift Squadron, died Dec. 13, 2015, while participating in Operation Christmas Drop, an annual training mission in which the Air Force parachutes supplies to isolated island communities in Micronesia.

Jutba-Hake, a loadmaster on a C-130 Hercules, became ill after his crew aborted a Christmas Drop mission.

The young airman collapsed aboard the aircraft during post-flight duties.

PACOM chief: US-Philippines relationship has not changed

BY TARA COPP
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — There are no plans for major changes in the U.S. military's dealings with the Philippines military, despite President Rodrigo Duterte's statements that American forces are no longer welcome there, Pacific Commander Adm. Harry Harris said Tuesday.

Since Duterte became the Philippines president in June, he has frequently voiced his distrust of the U.S. presence in his country and decreed an end to U.S.-Philippines military exercises. In addition, he ordered U.S. troops to leave the southern portion of the Philippines, where they have been training with local forces who are fight-

ing Abu Sayyaf, an organization affiliated with the Islamic State group.

Yet Duterte's directives have not been reflected in any action or requests by the Philippines military, Harris said.

"Despite what he has said, here's been no change in anything with the Philippines," Harris said Tuesday at the breakfast speech in Washington, D.C.

The one exception, he said, was rescheduling a meeting in the Philippines from October to next week.

The Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, a plan to modernize five Philippines bases where rotational U.S. forces would operate, "remains on track," Harris said.

"We haven't been asked to remove U.S. forces from the Philippines, including special operations forces operating in Mindanao," he said. "We haven't been asked to not put our P-3s and P-8s [surveillance aircraft] at Clark [Air Base] to do surveillance there. And the rotational air component ... we just finished the third iteration of that. So these are all encouraging things."

Harris said it is likely some of the 2017 major military exercises between the United States and Philippines might be revised. That will be the primary topic during his meetings in the Philippines next week.

The meetings will also establish the guidelines for 2018 exercises, Harris said.

VA drops proposal to offer sex-change surgeries

BY NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Sex-reassignment surgeries for transgender veterans won't be covered or performed by the Department of Veterans Affairs any time soon.

In a statement Tuesday, the VA cited budget constraints as the reason for dropping its plan to lift a ban prohibiting the surgeries. The agency pulled the proposal from the fall 2016 Unified Agenda, a list published twice each year of potential government regulation changes.

The decision comes as President Barack Obama and political appointees in the VA are preparing to vacate their offices, creating uncertainty about what will happen with the proposal when Donald Trump becomes president.

Earlier this year, Obama ordered public schools to permit transgender students to use bathrooms consistent with their gender identity, and under his administration the Defense Department announced in June that it would allow transgender troops to serve openly.

Trump hasn't commented on the VA issue. But at a campaign stop in October, he told a political action committee comprised of retired military officers that he wanted to "get away" from a military that was "getting more and more politically correct

every day."

One organization — the American Military Partner Association — is calling on Trump to move forward with lifting the ban when he becomes president.

"This is a deeply disappointing setback," the AMPA's president, Ashley Broadway-Mack, wrote in a statement Tuesday. "Moreover, as we face a new incoming administration, we implore fair-minded Americans to stand united in holding our new administration officials accountable by insisting this be fixed."

The VA proposed in June to lift the 17-year ban on the surgeries and provide medical procedures to treat gender dysphoria.

"VA has been and will continue to explore a regulatory change that would allow VA to perform gender-alteration surgery and a change in the medical benefits package, when appropriated funding is available," a VA spokesman wrote.

Federal agencies propose rule changes by submitting them to the Office of Management and Budget. But in this case, OMB sent back the proposal because the VA had not included a plan to pay for the change, according to a news report by Military.com.

Cost estimates of covering and performing the surgeries have not been made publicly available.

Letters from the VA about the reversal

were distributed Tuesday morning to six members of Congress who asked in September that the department move forward with lifting the ban. The congressmen are: Rep. Mike Quigley, D-Ill.; Rep. Michael Honda, D-Calif.; Rep. Jackie Speier, D-Calif.; Rep. Raul Grijalva, D-Ariz.; Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman, D-N.J., and Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton, D-D.C.

"This regulation will be withdrawn from the Fall 2016 Unified Agenda," VA Under Secretary of Health David Shulkin wrote to the lawmakers. "While the VA has begun considering factors impacting this rulemaking process, it is not imminent."

The six lawmakers are members of the transgender equality task force, part of the Congressional LGBT Equality Caucus launched one year ago in response to a "national crisis" of violence and discrimination against the transgender community, according to the group's website.

The department provides other services, such as hormone therapy and the long-term care following sex reassignment surgery, but not the actual surgeries.

The VA concluded removing the ban would allow the agency to make decisions case-by-case about what procedures were medically necessary.

Giuliani favorite for secretary of state

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Sequestered in his Manhattan high-rise, President-elect Donald Trump is preparing to fill key foreign policy posts. Former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani has emerged as the favorite to serve as secretary of state, a senior Trump official said.

Although Giuliani has little foreign policy experience, the official said there was no real competition for the job as the nation's top diplomat. However, a second official cautioned that John Bolton, a former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, remained in contention for the key post. Both officials requested anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the process by name.

The New York billionaire also was considering tapping Richard Grenell as U.S. ambassador

to the United Nations, a move that would bring some experience and diversity to his nascent administration. Grenell, who served as U.S. spokesman at the U.N. under President George W. Bush, would be the first openly gay person to fill a Cabinet-level foreign policy post.

The personnel moves under consideration were confirmed by people with direct knowledge of Trump's thinking who were not authorized to publicly disclose private discussions.

Giuliani, 72, would be an out-of-box choice to lead the State Department. A former mayor, federal prosecutor and top Trump adviser, Giuliani is known for his hard-line law-and-order views. Bolton has years of federal government experience, but he has also raised eyebrows with some of his hawkish stances, including

a 2015 New York Times op-ed in which he advocated bombing Iran to halt the country's development of nuclear weapons.

A spokeswoman for Giuliani did not immediately respond to a request for comment about his interest in the job. But during an appearance in Washington late Monday, Giuliani said that Bolton would be a "very good choice" to serve as Trump's secretary of state. Asked if there was anyone better, Giuliani replied, "Maybe me, I don't know."

Vice President-elect Mike Pence was expected to join the incoming president at Trump Tower on Tuesday to review "a number of names" for the incoming administration, according to spokesman Jason Miller.

"If the vice president-elect is getting together with the president elect to discuss names, I

would say it's getting serious," Miller said.

The transition planning comes amid an intense and extended backlash from Trump's decision on Sunday to appoint Steve Bannon, a man celebrated by the white nationalist movement, to serve as his chief strategist and senior adviser.

"After winning the presidency but losing the popular vote, President-elect Trump must try to bring Americans together — not continue to fan the flames of division and bigotry," said House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi. Echoing concerns from officials in both parties, she called Bannon's appointment "an alarming signal" that Trump "remains committed to the hateful and divisive vision that defined his campaign."

Bannon's new position leaves some infuriated

Tribune Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Steve Bannon was one of Donald Trump's closest confidants and most determined field lieutenants throughout the presidential campaign; now he has become President-elect Trump's first major political problem.

The angry backlash against Trump's announcement that the Breitbart News executive would serve as his chief White House strategist gave dispirited Democrats and other critics of the president-elect a rallying point Monday. Mainstream Jewish and Muslim groups warned that Trump was elevating an enthusiastic promoter of white nationalism to a desk steps from the Oval Office.

Republican lawmakers, many of whom have their own reasons for disliking Bannon, were not inclined to defend him.

The fight over his appointment underscored the continued tension between the party

leadership and Trump. The president-elect clearly values Bannon's strategic advice and relied heavily on him to pilot his campaign in its closing months. But whether Trump can navigate the conflict within the party — and what role Bannon plays in doing so — could be central to whether the new administration can succeed.

For many, Bannon personifies the so-called alt-right, which the Anti-Defamation League in a statement Sunday denounced as "a loose-knit group of white nationalists and unabashed anti-Semites and racists."

Bannon's allies, however, call talk of racism outrageous. On Monday, as the denunciations of Bannon mounted, Breitbart employees quickly signed onto what had all the appearances of a traditional crisis-communications exercise, releasing statements painting Bannon as a sensitive and sympathetic employer — even someone who prizes diversity.

Trump, Putin talk about improving ties

The Washington Post

President-elect Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed in a telephone conversation Monday that relations between their countries were "unsatisfactory" and vowed to work together to improve them, the Kremlin said in a statement.

The president-elect spoke admiringly of Putin during the campaign, praising him as a stronger leader than President Barack Obama and saying the two countries should join together to fight terrorists, particularly the Islamic State group in Syria. Those views put Trump at odds with many GOP defense hawks, who have praised his promise to increase military spending but are uniformly suspicious of Moscow and have denounced Russian actions in Eastern Europe, Ukraine and Syria. The offer of cooperation could also immerse Trump in a deep controversy with the Pentagon,

where military and civilian leaders have strongly opposed collaboration with Russia, particularly in Syria.

Since his victory last week, Trump has received congratulatory calls from a number of foreign leaders, including some he sharply criticized during the presidential race, such as German Chancellor Angela Merkel. Sunday night, after he spoke with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Trump's office said that he "believes the two leaders will have one of the strongest relationships for both countries moving forward."

Trump's relationship with Russia may be one of his trickiest to navigate.

Although the statement released by his office contained few details, it said Trump told Putin "that he is very much looking forward to having a strong and enduring relationship with Russia and the People of Russia."

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Park offers free Christmas trees

KY GOLDEN POND — Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area is offering free cedar Christmas tree permits starting later this month.

The park said the permits will be available online from Nov. 25 to Dec. 24 at landbetweenthelakes.us/reservations.

A permit entitles a family to cut one cedar tree through Dec. 24 anywhere in the park except areas within sight of U.S. 68-Kentucky 80, Woodlands Trace National Scenic Byway, cemeteries, nature watch areas, campgrounds and other mowed areas.

Rules and regulations are available online.

Land Between the Lakes manages more than 170,000 acres in western Kentucky and Tennessee as part of the U.S. Forest Service and Department of Agriculture's public lands program.

Sister accused in death of twin jailed

NY ALBANY — A woman accused of killing her twin sister by driving their vehicle off a Hawaii cliff in May is being held in a New York jail after being charged with murder for the second time in the case, authorities said.

New York State Police said Alexandria Duval, 38, was arrested Friday after she was tracked down at an Albany home.

Police say Duval tried to flee when they spotted her outside the residence, but she was soon caught.

The arrest came after a warrant was issued for Duval's arrest when a grand jury in Hawaii indicted her on a sec-

ond-degree murder charge last month in the death of her sister, Anastasia.

Man is hospitalized after shooting himself

UT MENDON — A Cache County man was hospitalized after accidentally shooting himself in the stomach while performing gun maintenance.

The Deseret News reported that the 64-year-old man was cleaning a Glock .45-caliber handgun in his home when he fired a round into his lower abdomen.

The man was able to call 911 and he remained conscious before being taken to Logan Regional Hospital.

Cache County Sheriff's Lt. Mike Peterson called the shooting "an unfortunate accident" and said police don't expect to pursue any charges.

Police: Mom let exotic animals roam home

TX HOUSTON — A former Nevada woman has been accused of endangering her 14-year-old daughter by letting exotic animals roam in the family's Houston-area home.

Records show Trisha Meyer, who this year moved to Texas, was being held in Nye County, Nev., awaiting extradition on a child endangerment charge.

Houston police in September began a theft investigation after Meyer allegedly sold an exotic kitten for \$3,000 but never delivered the cat.

Officers saw tigers, a skunk, a cougar and a fox at Meyer's home and her daughter petting some animals. Meyer also had monkeys.

Officials said Meyer, formerly of Pahrump, Nev., had tiger permits. The other animals

were taken to a shelter.

USS Arizona memorial being built on campus

AZ TUCSON — Construction of a privately funded memorial honoring the U.S. servicemembers who died aboard the USS Arizona during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor is underway on the University of Arizona campus in Tucson.

KGUN-TV reported that officials say the project should be completed in time for a Dec. 4 ceremony, three days before the anniversary of the Dec. 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor attack in which more than 2,400 sailors, Marines and soldiers were killed.

The memorial honors the 1,177 servicemembers who died on the battleship.

K-9 wears body armor in memory of other dog

SC ORANGEBURG — The only K-9 working with the Orangeburg Department of Public Safety now has body armor to protect him from stabbings and bullets. And he's wearing it in memory of another K-9 killed in the line of duty in Las Vegas.

The Times and Democrat of Orangeburg reported a non-profit donated the body armor for 6-year-old Badger, a Belgian Malinois. Vested Interest in K9s Inc., of East Taunton, Mass., donated the vest, which has a value of about \$2,000.

The underside of Badger's vest has the words "In memory of K-9 Nicky, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police, NV." K-9 Nicky was shot March 31 when a LVMP officer opened fire on a suspect.

Nicky had returned to duty after being stabbed during a standoff in February.

Number of 'ghost gun' kit makers increases

FL DAYTONA BEACH — At least six companies who make kits that allow buyers to assemble military-style, semi-automatic rifles at home have sprung up in recent years in at least one central Florida county.

The Daytona Beach News-Journal reported that the kits have become popular with gun rights activists because the parts have no serial number or other markings, making them untraceable.

These so-called "ghost guns" can be purchased without a background check, which is legal because of the way the federal Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco Firearms and Explosives defines a firearm. Under the law, no manufacturer-stamped serial number is needed if you make a gun for personal use.

The rise of these gun-kit makers in Volusia County has worried law enforcement.

Man gives a shelter partitions for privacy

WI MADISON — A former middle school Teacher of the Year in Wisconsin has come to the aid of a homeless shelter for women where privacy was an issue.

The now-retired Ray Blum said he was pained to learn that the dozens of single women who sleep each night at The Salvation Army shelter have no privacy, according to the Wisconsin State Journal.

Blum and some of his friends came up with a solution of movable partitions with fabric privacy screens. The shelter now has 60 of them that women staying at the shelter can place next to their beds.

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Manning, Giants win fourth straight

Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — That four-year playoff drought could soon be nearing an end for the New York Giants.

Riding the play of their big-bucks defense and the gutsy play-calling of rookie coach Ben McAdoo, the Giants (6-3) posted their first four-game winning streak since 2013 by beating the Cincinnati Bengals 21-20 on Monday night.

Eli Manning threw three touchdown passes, with the biggest being a 3-yard toss to rookie Sterling Shepard on a fourth-and-goal early in the fourth quarter with New York trailing 20-14.

The six wins match the Giants' total in each of the past two seasons under Tom Coughlin, and they give New York the best record among NFC teams not leading a division. Dallas tops the NFC East at 8-1, putting the Giants two games back.

What helps the Giants is their upcoming schedule. They have

a home game against Chicago (2-7) on Sunday and a visit to winless Cleveland the following week.

"The team is playing as one," said safety Landon Collins, who had his fourth interception in the past three games. "We're playing as a unit and playing sound. We're playing every week as a whole. We're taking it week-by-week and getting better."

The Bengals (3-5-1) trail the first-place Ravens (5-4) in the AFC North but can still make the playoffs for a sixth straight year. Cincinnati has two games left with Baltimore and one with the Steelers, so it can make up ground.

"It's a long season, but obviously, it's getting shorter," said tight end Tyler Eifert, whose 71-yard catch-and-run set up A.J. Green's touchdown reception. "We're not too far back to where we can't find a way to get into the playoffs. So we just have to keep our heads down, keep playing hard and control what we can control. We have to work on winning games, and

when we do that, we'll put ourselves in a winning position."

Here are other things to watch:

Finishing: On a night when the Giants inducted Coughlin into their Ring of Honor, the team played the way their former coach always exhorted them: They finished the game.

New York played the fourth quarter like a top-tier team. The Giants defended a one-point lead, holding Cincinnati to 37 yards in the last period. On offense, they controlled the clock at the end, never giving the ball back to the Bengals.

"We had a lot of pressure on Andy Dalton and got a couple of sacks, and for us to get the ball and run out the clock, that's big-time football right there," Manning said.

Bengals' sluggish offense: Cincinnati was held to 264 total yards and was only 2-for-11 on third down.

"We were in too many 3rd-and-longs and that hurt us. We've got to be in 3rd-and-manageable situations," Dalton said.

The Bengals twice had to settle for field goals when they got to the red zone. The first came when they started a drive at the 7 after Dre Kirkpatrick's interception in the second quarter. The Bengals didn't gain any yards and got a short field goal. And rookie Tyler Boyd dropped a possible touchdown catch in the third, forcing Mike Nugent's 38-yard field goal.

"We have opportunities on offense to put more points on the board and we end up having to kick field goals and that ended up probably being the difference in the football game," coach Marvin Lewis said.

The Giants can run the ball: New York's anemic ground game finally got going against the Bengals and sealed the victory with several clutch runs in the final minutes.

The Giants had a season-high 122 yards rushing, the first time in six games they cracked the 100-yard barrier.

Rashad Jennings led the way with 87 yards on 15 carries.

Cowboys sticking with Prescott over healthy Romo

Associated Press

FRISCO, Texas — The issue is no longer whether Dak Prescott will start ahead of a healthy Tony Romo for Dallas.

Now the question is how far the Cowboys can go with a rookie quarterback after they tied a franchise record with their eighth straight win and a few hours later ended up with the NFL's best record when New England lost to Seattle.

Prescott's performance in the fourth quarter of a wild 35-30 win at Pittsburgh stole any of the surprise there might have been with owner and general manager Jerry Jones declaring afterward that Romo would be the backup Sunday at home against Baltimore (5-4).

It will be a few days shy of a year since the last time the 36-year-old Romo was active for a

game. And it has been 10 years since Romo, who broke a bone in his back in a preseason game, wasn't the Dallas starter.

The team's longest same-season winning streak since Roger Staubach took Dallas to the Super Bowl 39 years ago makes the decision easy.

"It's just going with the obvious," Jones said. "I get asked about it every time I open my mouth. It's not hard. It's not hard at all. Tony would make the same decision."

Prescott directed two 75-yard touchdown drives in the fourth quarter with the Cowboys (8-1) trailing the Steelers by a point each time. While fellow standout rookie Ezekiel Elliott finished both with touchdown runs, Prescott made several big throws.

On the winning drive that

started with 42 seconds left after the Steelers went ahead, Prescott completed a 13-yarder to Jason Witten one play before another completion to the tight end ended with a facemask penalty that put the Cowboys in field-goal range before Elliott's winning run with 9 seconds remaining.

Dallas trailed most of the game in part because of a lost fumble by Prescott early.

"That's one of the most important parts of that position is to be able to handle the adversity of it," coach Jason Garrett said. "From series to series, from quarter to quarter, half to half and throughout the ballgame, you've just got to keep banging away."

Elliott's numbers are getting more attention because he's the NFL rushing leader

(1,005 yards) and has a shot at Eric Dickerson's rookie record (1,808 yards in 1983). But Prescott is completing 67 percent of his passes with 14 touchdowns and two interceptions.

The 23-year-old from Mississippi State — a fourth-round pick after the Cowboys couldn't pull off a trade for Paxton Lynch, who went to Denver in the first round — has road wins over a pair of Super Bowl champions in Green Bay's Aaron Rodgers and the Steelers' Ben Roethlisberger.

And Prescott essentially outdueled Roethlisberger, who threw for 408 yards and executed a fake-spike touchdown pass to put the Steelers ahead in the final minute.

A month ago, the Cowboys figured to have a touchy subject looming. Not now, says Jones.

Seager, Fulmer MLB's Rookies of Year

Associated Press

Corey Seager won the NL Rookie of the Year award unanimously.

Michael Fulmer took the AL honor — and that vote wasn't all that close, either.

Seager and Fulmer were announced as the winners Monday night, when votes from the Baseball Writers' Association of America were made public. Seager's victory was almost a foregone conclusion after he hit .308 with 26 home runs and 72 RBIs this year for the Los Angeles Dodgers. Fulmer, on the other hand, had to hold off a late challenge from New York Yankees catcher Gary Sanchez, who hit 20 home runs in only 53 games.

Fulmer's season-long contributions for Detroit won out. The right-hander went 11-7 with a 3.06 ERA in 26 starts for the Tigers. He ended up receiving 26 of 30 first-place votes from the BBWAA, outdistancing San-

chez by a total of 142 points to 91.

"I'm really happy and blessed to receive this award," Fulmer said on a conference call. "I knew that both Gary and Tyler (Naquin) had outstanding years, and I hope to play against them for a long time."

Naquin, a Cleveland outfielder, finished third in the AL race.

Seager received the maximum 150 points in the NL vote. The Los Angeles shortstop finished well ahead of Washington outfielder Trea Turner (42) and Dodgers pitcher Kenta Maeda (37).

Seager is the 17th Dodgers player to earn Rookie of the Year honors — easily the most of any team — but the franchise hadn't had a winner since Todd Hollandsworth in 1996.

"It's obviously awesome to win it in general, but to bring it back to L.A. — it hasn't been there for a while, and they're known

as an organization for winning all those Rookie of the Years with Tommy Lasorda and all them," Seager said. "So it's pretty cool to be able to be connected to all the guys that came before you."

The Dodgers, of course, had the first Rookie of the Year when Jackie Robinson won in 1947. They also had four winners in a row from 1979-82 and five in a row from 1992-96.

Fulmer is the fifth Tigers player to win Rookie of the Year, joining Justin Verlander (2006), Lou Whitaker (1978), Mark Fidrych (1976) and Harvey Kuenn (1953). Verlander is now a mentor to Fulmer in the Detroit rotation.

"I remember back in spring training where I was kind of nervous to come up to him," Fulmer said. "I watched him — ever since he was a rookie, he was one of my favorite pitchers in the game."

Hart helps Villanova stop No. 15 Purdue

Associated Press

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. — No. 15 Purdue kept making No. 3 Villanova hold its breath Monday night.

Josh Hart made sure the Wildcats followed the same old beat.

The preseason All-America guard scored 24 points, made big shot after big shot and calmly sank the final four free throws of the game to help the defending national champions hang on for a 79-76 victory.

"Josh just said to me at the beginning of the second half that 'we got this,'" Wildcats coach Jay Wright said. "That's the real strength of this team — the leadership. I think that's what you saw the start of the second half."

Villanova (2-0) has won eight straight games, including the six NCAA Tournament wins that led to last season's national championship. And as far as early-season victories go, this was about as big as they come.

Purdue had won nine straight on its home court and had only lost one previous November

game since Matt Painter took over as coach in 2006-07.

The difference was Villanova had Hart, who finished three points short of his career high, and the Boilermakers didn't have an answer.

"We had to do a better job on Josh Hart," Painter said. "Their overall toughness is among the best in the country."

Purdue sure didn't make it easy on the Wildcats, who made their first seven shots of the second half and charged to a 56-45 lead.

The Boilermakers rallied behind Isaac Haas and Caleb Swanigan, who combined for five straight baskets during a flurry that pulled Purdue to 61-60. Haas scored 18 of his 22 points in the second half, and Swanigan had 20 points, eight rebounds and four assists.

But with Hart's shooting and the Wildcats' stout defense, the Boilermakers never took the lead, never tied the score and couldn't make either three-pointer that could have forced overtime in the waning seconds.

Louisville takes control

Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Louisville is looking to develop some take-charge guys early this season, and several candidates are emerging.

Freshman forward V.J. King scored 17 points and Deng Adel added 16, including eight during Louisville's 10-0 run to close the first half, to help the 12th-ranked Cardinals pull away from William & Mary for a 91-58 victory Monday night.

Louisville (2-0) initially struggled against the Tribe's up-tempo style, going scoreless for 3:06 and allowing William & Mary to pull to 34-31 with 2:13 remaining in the first half. Adel took charge over the final 1:31 with five free throws and a three-pointer that gave the Cardinals some space.

"Coach (Rick Pitino) kept telling me to keep shooting it because once you get out of the slump, the shots are going to fall," said Adel, who went 4-for-9 from the field and made all seven free throws after scoring just six points in the opener.

No. 11 Xavier 86, Buffalo 53: At Cincinnati, J.P. Macura scored 18 points and Xavier took advantage of 38 personal fouls by Buffalo.

No. 14 Gonzaga 69, San Diego State 48: Jordan Mathews scored 17 points and Gonzaga held visiting San Diego State to 28 percent shooting.

No. 19 West Virginia 107, Mississippi Valley State 66: Nathan Adrian had 15 points and 14 rebounds for his first career double-double, helping the Mountaineers cruise at home.

No. 20 Iowa State 73, Mount St. Mary's 55: Monte Morris scored 18 points and Matt Thomas added 13 as host Iowa State beat Mount St. Mary's.

No. 21 Rhode Island 107, Marist 65: E.C. Matthews scored 22 points and Hassan Martin had 15 points and 10 rebounds for the host Rams in the Hall of Fame Tipoff Tournament.

No. 23 Texas 80, Louisiana-Monroe 59: Tevin Mack returned from a one-game suspension with 14 points as host Texas used a big second half to roll over Louisiana-Monroe.

No. 24 Cincinnati 74, Albany 51: Jacob Evans III had nine points during a run that put host Cincinnati in control midway through the second half, and the Bearcats overcame cold shooting.

Clippers rip Nets for 7th straight win

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Even as their leads expand to 30 and sometimes 40 points, the Clippers swear they're not paying attention to the spread.

For the NBA's best team, it's all about consistency.

Chris Paul had 21 points and nine assists and Blake Griffin added 20 points in a 127-95 rout of the Brooklyn Nets on Monday night that improved the Clippers to 10-1 with their seventh straight victory.

"We have a singular focus," Paul said. "No excuses, we said we're going to come out the same way every night. It's all about playing the right way. We got to keep building."

Los Angeles came in having outscored opponents by an average of 15.1 points, largest in the league. Brooklyn quickly found itself relegated to the Clippers' growing scrap heap.

"It's actually good for our guys to see a team like this," new Nets coach Kenny Atkinson said. "They can see how well they are playing and their cohesiveness. They've been together for a while and they're executing well. They turned us over and got us out of our game."

Bojan Bogdanovic led the Nets with 18 points and Sean Kilpatrick added 14. Brooklyn's

season-high 22 turnovers led to 35 points by the Clippers.

J.J. Redick added 18 points, Luc Mbah a Moute scored 11 points and DeAndre Jordan had 14 rebounds for the Clippers, who shot 53 percent from the floor while extending the best start in franchise history. Their 127 points were a season high.

"The defense is so good right now our offense is allowed easy baskets," Clippers coach Doc Rivers said. "They're angry when the other team scores."

Los Angeles raced to a 35-7 lead to start the game, highlighted by Jordan's reverse dunk off Griffin's alley-oop pass. The Nets didn't score the rest of their 14 first-quarter points until the last two minutes of the period and finished with their lowest point total in a quarter this season.

Spurs 94, Heat 90: Kawhi Leonard had 24 points and 12 rebounds and LaMarcus Aldridge added 18 points, leading host San Antonio to the victory.

San Antonio's projected starting five of Leonard, Aldridge, Pau Gasol, Tony Parker and Danny Green made its home debut after injuries to the starting backcourt led to five different starting lineups in the team's first nine games.

Gasol had 12 points, Parker added 11 points and six assists

and Green was limited to three points in 15 minutes.

Pelicans 106, Celtics 105: Anthony Davis had 25 points, 16 rebounds, four steals and two blocks as host New Orleans won for only the second time in their first 11 games.

Langston Galloway scored a season-high 21 points, while Terrence Jones added 15 points and a season-high 10 rebounds for New Orleans, which has won two of three after an 0-8 start.

Pacers 88, Magic 69: C.J. Miles made four three-pointers and scored 16 points as the Pacers spoiled Frank Vogel's return to Indiana.

Vogel coached the Pacers for more than five seasons before he was let go in May. He was quickly scooped up by Orlando.

Paul George had 13 points, six rebounds and five assists for the Pacers, who pulled away in the second half.

Rockets 115, 76ers 88: James Harden scored 23 of his 33 points in the first quarter, helping host Houston to the easy win.

Harden, who posted a triple-double in his previous two games, added nine assists and seven rebounds.

Knicks 93, Mavericks 77: Carmelo Anthony and Kristaps Porzingis each scored 24 points

as host New York rolled after a halftime lineup change.

The Knicks benched Joakim Noah, their \$72 million free-agent signing, starting guard Justin Holiday and moved Porzingis to center in a small lineup. They responded by scoring 31 points in the third quarter after managing just 36 in an ugly first half.

Pistons 104, Thunder 88: Tobias Harris scored 22 points and Aron Baynes added 20 points and eight rebounds to help short-handed Detroit beat Oklahoma City.

The Pistons (6-5) improved to 5-0 at home despite being without their two best players. Reggie Jackson hasn't played this season due to knee tendinitis, and Andre Drummond was sidelined with a sprained ankle.

Russell Westbrook had 33 points, 15 rebounds and eight assists for Oklahoma City (6-5), which has dropped four in a row.

Grizzlies 102, Jazz 96: Marc Gasol scored a season-high 22 points, powering Memphis to the road win.

The Grizzlies used a 9-2 run sparked by Mike Conley's three-pointer and a three-point play by Gasol to take a 94-88 lead with 1:25 remaining.

Vasilevskiy, Lightning shut out Islanders

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Andrei Vasilevskiy faced 20 shots in the third period Monday night, so there wasn't much time for him to worry about the status of his shutout.

The Tampa Bay Lightning goalie was more worried about a victory, anyway.

Vasilevskiy made 34 saves for his third career shutout, J.T. Brown and Ryan Callahan scored 42 seconds apart in the first period and the Lightning beat the New York Islanders 4-0 on Monday night.

"We get two points, that's most important," Vasilevskiy said, "and the shutout is a little bounce."

The goalie said he expected the Island-

ers to press in the third after being outshot 17-4 in the second.

"Usually when a team plays not that good (in the second period), they make a push in the third," Vasilevskiy said. "We did a good job on the (penalty kill) and the game overall, blocked shots and good play. I just want to say thank you to our guys for the shutout."

Nikita Kucherov and Vladislav Namestnikov scored as the Lightning won for the fourth time in seven games (4-2-1).

Steven Stamkos had two assists to help Tampa Bay complete a sweep of the three-game season series with the Islanders — all within the last 14 days — by a combined

14-2 margin.

"We sat back probably a little too much in the third and put Vasy in a tough position to make some big saves," Stamkos said. "He earned the shutout for sure."

Jaroslav Halak had 27 saves for New York.

"Obviously we don't want to be in the spot we are in," Islanders captain John Tavares said. "We just have to play positive and get better. You get up tomorrow and try to get better."

Travis Hamonic returned to the Islanders just nine days after suffering a hand injury that was expected to keep him out four to six weeks.