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Secretary: Army must modernize force

BY COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Increased training in recent months has boosted the Army's military readiness, but rising demand worldwide for its soldiers and a lack of budget stability threaten the service's traditional combat advantages over potential foes, top Army leaders said Monday.

The U.S. Army is currently "stretched thin" with about 187,000 soldiers deployed to more than 140 countries on missions that range from deterring potential military rivals in Europe and the Pacific to fighting terrorist groups including the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria, Army Secretary Eric Fanning said. But the service needs Congress to provide the necessary funds to continue those assignments and to prepare for a future that could include war with a near-peer

adversary.

"We have to dominate," the Army's top civilian said Monday morning during the Association of the United States Army's annual convention in Washington. "... We must make sure our Army is so fierce that nobody wants to fight us, and if they do — they lose."

That would require consistent funding from an oft-deadlocked Congress that last week passed an emergency continuing resolution to fund the federal government — including the Army — through Dec. 9. Budget constraints and the perpetual threat of automatic cuts due to sequestration have forced the Army to "mortgage future readiness" for the sake of preparing the current Army to respond to today's threats, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Milley said.

Only one year since then-Army Secretary John McHugh

declared that shrinking budgets and increased missions had left the Army at the "ragged edge of readiness," Milley said the service is in somewhat better shape today.

"We've made good progress over the last year in terms of readiness, but we are not there yet as an Army on where we need to be to deal with the multiple and varied challenges we anticipate in the near future," he said.

The Army has 7,000 more soldiers deployed this year than it did last year and accounts for 70 percent of American troops in Afghanistan and 60 percent in Iraq. During the same period, it has increased by 25 percent the number of units training at its top-echelon posts such as the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., and the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, La. Milley said 19 bri-

gade combat teams have trained on monthlong rotations at those installations in the last year and have conducted brigade- and battalion-level combined arms live-fire exercises, which "demonstrate power that gives our greatest adversaries pause."

The Army must do more to modernize its force to respond to challenges from military rivals like Russia, China and North Korea, who have committed to increasing their capabilities and have somewhat narrowed the military gap that the United States has long held, Milley said.

"We've made trade-offs and tough choices," Fanning said. "When our overmatch has diminished in a number of areas, we must modernize our force. ... And we must remain laser-focused on our Army's most solemn mission — fighting and winning our nation's wars."

Taliban launch attacks in Helmand, Kunduz

BY CHAD GARLAND
AND ZUBAIR BABAKARKHAIL

Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — The U.S. conducted airstrikes Monday in the northern city of Kunduz as local officials said the Taliban had entered the city a year after they briefly took control of the provincial capital.

Heavy fighting broke out in northern Kunduz province, where a year ago to the day a U.S. airstrike, the result of a series of errors, killed 42 people at a Doctors Without Borders hospital in the provincial capital. The Taliban also launched coordinated attacks Monday in embattled southern Helmand province, where the U.S. has conducted more than a dozen strikes since Thursday.

Pentagon spokesman Capt. Jeff Davis said U.S. forces had "multiple assets" in Kunduz, to include U.S. Special Forces "enablers" and air support. He said the U.S. conducted multiple airstrikes to support Afghan forces there.

"The situation remains fluid, we are continuing to watch it closely and work with our Afghan partners," Davis said. "They are responding to increased Taliban activity in the area."

Kunduz resident Rahimullah Shakir said that Taliban fighters started heavy attacks on the outskirts of the city Monday morning. Shops were closed and mortar shells and bullets were occasionally hitting the central parts of the city.

By the evening, he said the

Taliban had reached the central roundabout in Kunduz, where they raised their signature white flag one year ago.

Doctors Without Borders has not yet returned its operations to the city and canceled a planned memorial ceremony there because of the fighting, said Raphael Piret, a spokesman for the charity. International staff who had traveled to the city were being evacuated.

At the time of the 2015 hospital strike, Afghan forces were battling Taliban fighters who had overrun and briefly held the provincial capital — the group's first capture of a major urban center since the insurgents were ousted from power in 2001.

This year, the insurgents — seeking to seize a major population center — have re-

peatedly threatened the capitals of Kunduz and Helmand provinces since their summer campaign began in April. U.S. and Afghan officials have pledged that they will prevent any major urban center from falling to the insurgents.

At about 4 a.m. Monday, Taliban fighters had occupied homes in Kunduz city and were using residents as human shields, Brig. Gen. Dawlat Waziri, a spokesman for the Defense Ministry, said in a statement earlier Monday.

"Defense and security forces, with the support of air forces, have responded to their attacks, and right now the situation is totally under their control," he said.

Trump: Military too politically correct

BY NIKKI WENTLING

Stars and Stripes

HERNDON, Va. — Speaking to a group of retired military officers — including some who said they were disciplined because of their outspoken religious beliefs — Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump said Monday he would “get away” from political correctness in the U.S. military.

“We have a politically correct military, and it’s getting more and more politically correct every day,” Trump said. “Some of the things they’re asking you to do and be politically correct about are ridiculous.”

Trump made a stop in Herndon, Va., for a town hall event in front of about 150 members of Retired American Warriors, a political action committee recently created by retired military officers who support Trump. The group focused discussion and questions Monday on political correctness, which Trump has treated as a societal scourge.

In the military, political correctness is a “social experiment,” said retired U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Jerry Boykin, who was once a commander of the Army’s elite Delta Force and works with Family Research Council, a conservative policy and lobbying organization.

Boykin, whose comments on transgender bathrooms at Hampden-Sydney College caused blowback earlier this year, told the group Monday that military training on diversity, inclusion, sexual harassment and equal opportunity “eat up valuable time” that should be used to prepare servicemembers for combat.

Trump said he planned to leave decisions on the issue to “generals and people at the top.”

“We need to have discussions with top enlisted people who know it better than anybody,” Trump said. “We’ll get military people to make recommendations, and we’ll follow those recommendations.”

Tony Perkins, president of Family Research Council, moderated parts of the event. Perkins credited Trump with action taken Thursday by Reps. Steve Scalise, R-La., and Jody Hice, R-Ga., who introduced legislation to allow churches and other nonprofit organizations to endorse candidates for public office. The Johnson Amendment, a part of tax code enacted in 1954, prohibits certain tax-exempt organizations from doing so.

The Family Research Council has come out in support of the legislation. “They did that, I think in large part, due to the visibility you’ve given to the issue,” Perkins said about Trump.

The crowd stood to applaud Monday morning as Trump entered the conference room of the Westin near Washington’s Dulles Airport. They cheered throughout the event, as Trump reiterated some of his positions on national security and veterans’ issues, including adding an “element of surprise” to the United States’ actions against the Islamic State.

He also again called for a review of U.S. cyberdefenses, saying he would put together a team to investigate suspected hackers and “rogue employees.”

“We will put together a team of the best military, civilian and private-sector cybersecurity experts,” Trump said. “We don’t want people who are B-level, C-level, D-level. Our tech is not up to date, and we’re letting it slip by.”

Trump also talked about his plan to allow veterans to go to private doctors in lieu of receiving health care from the Department of Veterans Affairs and said he would create a “robust level of performance” regarding mental health programs.

Several veterans in attendance Monday voiced concern about the active-duty force size. Trump repeated his plan to increase the size of the armed forces and to boost the number of ships and aircraft. He wants to force NATO allies to contribute more for security, Trump said, and he would “cut costs from departments where money is pouring in.”

Trump’s appearance Monday was part of a larger event that included talks from leaders of conservative Christian groups.

Moderators recognized former Navy chaplain Lt. Cmdr. Wes Modder, who was removed from his post last year after allegedly being “intolerant” to those who didn’t share his religious views, according to a memo at the time from Capt. Jon Fahs, commander of the Naval Nuclear Power Training Command.

Retired Senior Master Sgt. Oscar Rodriguez also was in attendance. Rodriguez was removed from an Air Force retirement ceremony in April, over what advocates claim were remarks involving God and prayer.

During the program, Trump spoke directly to former Marine Joe Kennedy, a football coach from Bremerton, Wash., who refused to stop praying on the field. Kennedy lost his job and filed a lawsuit in August against the school district.

“So you’re not allowed to pray before a football game?” Trump said. “I thought that was horrible. I think that’s outrageous.”

Boykin said the three men represented “moral courage.”

Trump under fire for PTSD comments

BY ALEX HORTON

Stars and Stripes

Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump on Monday told an audience of veterans that “a lot of people can’t handle” post-traumatic stress, igniting controversy on the sticking points of discussing mental health among troops and veterans.

“People come back from war and combat, and they see things that maybe a lot of the folks in this room have seen many times over,” Trump said during a question-and-answer session with Retired American Warriors, a political action committee, in Herndon, Va.

“And you’re strong and you can handle it, but a lot of people can’t handle it,” he said.

The remarks touched off charged discussion on Twitter as commentators took at least two positions: Trump appearing to characterize veterans with PTSD as weak on one hand, and Trump indelicately describing the complexities of trauma that could lead to avoidance of help on the other.

“I mean, I guess by reinforcing stigma (strong soldiers don’t get PTSD!), he’s doing his part to keep those VA lines short!” tweeted Ana Marie Cox, a political and culture columnist at MTV News and New York Times Magazine. Cox, with 1.3 million followers on Twitter, drove commentary early on.

Eduardo Colon replied to Cox, saying “Vet with PTSD here — I can’t wait for this election to be over with — hopefully trump will disappear.” Other veterans offered restraint over the comments. “Trump isn’t even close to enlightened on mental health issues. But hard to watch that and think he was implying PTSD sufferers are weak,” tweeted Max Rosenthal, a reporter with Mother Jones and an Army veteran.

US strikes on Islamic State in Libya intensify

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTT GART, Germany — U.S. warplanes bombarded Islamic State targets Sunday in Libya, knocking out a command-and-control facility, nearly 70 enemy fighting positions and several other sites in what was the heaviest day of bombing since the 2-month-old operation began, according to U.S. Africa Command data.

In all, 20 airstrikes were launched Sunday as the Operation Odyssey Lightning campaign in Libya headed into its third month, bringing the total number of strikes to 201.

AFRICOM is targeting a small area in the coastal city of Sirte, which is the focus of the U.S. mission in Libya. The airstrikes are in support of an offensive by ground forces aligned with the internationally backed Libyan government.

A few months ago, Islamic State fighters were in control of large parts of the city, where several thousand fighters were holed up. Since the offensive, those numbers are estimated to be about 200, according to the U.S. military.

Last month, Defense Secretary Ash Carter said Islamic State fighters had been pushed

into a single neighborhood in Sirte.

AFRICOM began its mission in Libya on Aug. 1. It has involved airstrikes by jets operating from the USS Wasp, positioned off the Libyan coast, together with occasional assaults from Marine attack helicopters.

During August, 108 strikes were launched. The pace of operations slowed slightly in September, with a total of 80 strikes.

October, however, has started at a rapid pace, with one strike on Saturday followed by 20 on Sunday. Besides hit-

ting enemy fighting positions and the command-and-control facility, an operational facility and a site for making car bombs were eliminated, according to AFRICOM's strike report.

The Islamic State group has sought to exploit the chaos in Libya to build a sanctuary in the oil-rich country, which is awash in weaponry and only 300 miles across the Mediterranean from Europe.

The U.S. decision to conduct strikes in Libya came after months of deliberations and a formal request for support from the Libyan government.

Whistleblower in 'Zero Dark Thirty' case settles complaint

McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — A senior intelligence official settled with the federal government after he alleged that he was punished for disclosing that the Pentagon's watchdog had shielded former Defense Secretary Leon Panetta from allegations he'd leaked sensitive information.

Daniel Meyer, who oversaw the Defense Department's decisions on whistleblower cases, also accused the Pentagon inspector general's office of targeting him for being gay.

As part of the agreement, the DOD inspector general's office said it would give Meyer a monetary settlement, according to three people with knowledge of the negotiations. They asked to remain anonymous.

The IG's office also promised to give Meyer two awards in "recognition for his services," a Sept. 19 settlement document obtained by McClatchy says.

Meyer, who is now the top official overseeing whistleblower retaliation complaints for the intelligence community, agreed to drop the complaint he'd filed with an administrative panel that handles grievances by federal employees.

Meyer had accused his former Defense Department bosses of "manipulation of a final report

to curry favor" with Panetta.

A draft of the inspector general's report had concluded that Panetta had leaked classified information to the makers of the film "Zero Dark Thirty," Meyer said. That was removed from the report's final version.

Since then, the CIA has released documents that support Meyer's allegations.

Claims of anti-Semitism against Joseph Schmitz, one of Donald Trump's foreign policy advisers, also surfaced in Meyer's complaint. Meyer contended that Schmitz, then the Pentagon's inspector general, had told former Pentagon official John Crane, "I fired the Jews," while downplaying the extent of the Holocaust.

Crane described the allegations against Schmitz.

Meyer's settlement, however, comes as an investigation into a related case advances.

The Justice Department IG is looking into allegations officials with the Pentagon inspector general's office improperly destroyed documents.

Crane, who was mentioned in Meyer's complaint, alleged Pentagon officials had destroyed documents connected to the case of former National Security Agency whistleblower Thomas Drake.

DODEA outpaced US on SAT's reading, writing

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — Graduating seniors at military-run schools last year outscored the nation in critical reading and writing on the SAT and closed the gap in math, according to 2016 results released Friday by the Department of Defense Education Activity.

The strong showing by DODEA students in the verbal portions of the SAT pushed DODEA's average combined score above that of the nation, despite falling short of the national average in math by 2 points.

On a 1600-point scale, DODEA's combined SAT average was 1511. Students improved in all subject areas, pushing the military school system to its highest combined average score on the SAT in the past five years.

In critical reading, DODEA's average was 516 — 20 points above the nation's — and its 489 in writing was 7 points above the national average.

In math DODEA's average score of 506 continued to creep upward, gaining 5 points from 2015 but still below the national average of 508.

DODEA is rolling out new

standards modeled closely after the Common Core standards, a set of guidelines, adopted by a number of U.S. states, for what pre-kindergarten-through-12th-grade students should know. But DODEA students who took the SAT last year may not yet have been taught to those new standards.

This year's data include only results for students who took the test before March 2016. That's when the College Board released the new SAT and students began taking the test in the new format. Most of the students who graduated in 2016 took the old SAT, DODEA officials said.

Of note, DODEA's average scores for students who identified as black or African-American far exceeded the national average in all three portions of the test, by a combined 104 points. Hispanic students in DODEA also did well compared with their ethnic peers, scoring 95 points above the national average for Hispanic students, according to DODEA.

DODEA's female students, meanwhile, outpaced their female peers in the nation in math by 1 point, while DODEA male students fell 7 points below the national average in math.

Biologist in Japan wins Nobel Prize in medicine

Associated Press

STOCKHOLM — Japanese biologist Yoshinori Ohsumi won the Nobel Prize in medicine on Monday for discoveries on how cells break down and recycle content, a garbage disposal system that scientists hope to harness in the fight against cancer, Alzheimer's and other diseases.

The Karolinska Institute honored Ohsumi for "brilliant experiments" in the 1990s on autophagy, a phenomenon that literally means "self-eating" and describes how cells gobble up damaged content and provide building blocks for renewal.

Disrupted autophagy has been linked to several diseases including Parkinson's, diabetes and cancer, the prize committee said.

"Intense research is now ongoing to develop drugs that can target autophagy in various

diseases," it said in its citation.

Ohsumi, 71, from Fukuoka, Japan, is a professor at the Tokyo Institute of Technology. In 2012, he won the Kyoto Prize, Japan's highest private award for global achievement.

"As a scientist, I'm extremely honored," Ohsumi said in a live telephone interview with Japanese broadcaster NHK.

It was the 107th award in the medicine category since the first Nobel Prizes were handed out in 1905.

The announcements continue with physics on Tuesday, chemistry on Wednesday and the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday. The economics and literature awards will be announced next week.

Each prize is worth \$930,000. The awards will be handed out at prize ceremonies in Stockholm and Oslo on Dec. 10, the anniversary of prize founder Alfred Nobel's death in 1896.

UK official warns of tumult over Brexit

Associated Press

LONDON — Britain's treasury chief is warning of turbulence in the coming years as the country negotiates its exit from the European Union.

Philip Hammond told the BBC on Monday that Britain will face a couple of years — or longer — of uncertainty as Britain goes through the process of leaving the 28-nation trading bloc.

"I think we must go into this negotiating period with a realistic expectation of the turbulence that there could be during the negotiations. People will be speculating — one day it's going very well, one day it's not going so well," Hammond said. "We have to expect a period when confidence will go up and down — perhaps on a bit of a roller coaster — until we get

to a final agreement."

In comments made before he addressed the Conservative Party conference, Hammond said the country would continue its austerity program — even as it abandoned the goal of the previous government to put the country's books into surplus by the end of the decade. The policy would give the government the ability to borrow more to invest in the economy after the Brexit shock.

Hammond's remarks came a day after Prime Minister Theresa May set a timetable for Britain's exit.

The pound fell 0.5 percent on the news, to \$1.2859, as May's comments suggested the country was on track for a so-called "hard Brexit," in which Britain loses the possibility of continuing close ties to the bloc.

Colombia's outlook uncertain in wake of deal's defeat

Associated Press

BOGOTA, Colombia — After a stunning referendum defeat for a peace deal with leftist rebels, Colombians are asking what comes next for their war-torn country, which, like Britain following the Brexit vote, has no Plan B to save an accord that sought to bring an end to a half-century of hostilities.

The damage from Sunday's vote is still sinking in. Instead of winning by an almost 2-to-1 margin as pre-election polls had predicted, those favoring the accord with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, lost by a razor-thin margin — 49.8 percent of the votes to 50.2 percent for those against the deal.

Both President Juan Manuel Santos and leaders of the FARC, having come this far after four years of grueling negotiations, vowed to push ahead, giving no hint they want to resume a war that has already killed 220,000 people and displaced 8 million.

"I won't give up. I'll continue to search for peace until the last moment of my mandate," Santos said in a televised address appealing for calm.

But it's not clear how the already unpopular Santos can save the deal given the stun-

ning political defeat he suffered. For now, he has ordered his negotiators to return to Cuba on Monday to confer with FARC's top leaders, who watched the results come in with disbelief after earlier ordering drinks and cigars at Club Havana, once Cuba's most exclusive beach club.

"The FARC deeply regret that the destructive power of those who sow hatred and revenge have influenced the Colombian people's opinion," the FARC's top commander, a guerrilla known as Timochenko, told reporters later.

The loss for the government was even more shocking considering the huge support for the accord among foreign leaders, who have roundly heralded it as a model for a world beset by political violence and terrorism.

Many heads of state, as well as U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, were present when Santos and Timochenko signed the deal less than a week ago in an elaborate, emotion-filled ceremony.

With the outlook uncertain, all eyes are on Santos' former boss and chief rival, Alvaro Uribe, the powerful former president who led the grass-roots campaign against the accord. With none of the government's huge public relations machine, an angry

Uribe gave voice to millions of Colombians, many of them victims of the FARC like him, who bristled at provisions in the 297-page accord sparing rebels jail time if they confessed their crimes and, instead, reserving them 10 seats in Congress.

Uribe, in prepared remarks from his ranch outside Medellin after the results were in, called for a "big national pact" and insisted on "correctives" that guarantee respect for the constitution, respect for private enterprise and justice without impunity. But he didn't specify whether he would join Santos in trying to salvage the deal and took more swipes at the FARC, who he demanded put an end to drug trafficking and extortion.

"The entire accord was full of impunity," said Ricardo Bernal, 60, celebrating the victory for the "no" side in a Bogota neighborhood where opponents were gathered. "We all want peace, but there has to be adjustments made."

Across town, hundreds of supporters of the peace deal who had gathered in a hotel ballroom for what they expected would be a victory party with Santos wept in despair.

The FARC's 7,000 guerrilla fighters are unlikely to return to the battlefield any time soon. For now, a cease-fire remains in place.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Fast-food worker fired over slur on receipt

TX FORT WORTH — A fast-food worker in Fort Worth has been fired after including a racial slur on a bill to identify a customer who stopped for lunch Friday.

Tyrone Moseley told KDFW-TV that he and a co-worker were surprised when they received their receipts after eating at a Sonic restaurant.

The receipts show Moseley was identified using a racial slur for a black person, and his co-worker was referred to as "Mexican."

Sonic later issued a statement saying the owners of the Fort Worth franchise found the actions of the fast-food worker "completely unacceptable" and fired the person.

The statement said employees will be trained to ensure that behavior is not repeated.

Residents sue to oust jailed sheriff from office

TN MURFREESBORO — Twelve Rutherford County residents have filed a lawsuit to remove the sheriff from office while he is in jail awaiting trial on allegations he profited from the sale of electronic cigarettes to inmates.

The Daily News Journal, of Murfreesboro, reported that residents filed the lawsuit on Thursday. A federal magistrate sent Sheriff Robert Arnold to jail until he goes on trial in February because there was probable cause he committed domestic violence against his wife while free on bond.

Attorney Michelle Blaylock-Howser said Arnold is incapable of fulfilling his duties while in jail, where he is still receiving his annual salary of \$127,078. Elected as a Republican in August 2010, Arnold is in the middle of his second four-year term.

Teen gets 3 years over street corner attack

NJ PATERSON — A teenager who punched a man in an unprovoked street corner attack that was captured on video has been sentenced to three years in prison.

Kristian Gonzalez, 18, apologized to the victim during his sentencing Friday. He had pleaded guilty in August to aggravated assault.

Gonzalez, of Paterson, was 17 when the attack occurred. He initially was charged as a juvenile, but the case was moved to adult court.

Gonzalez punched the 37-year-old victim in December 2015 as the man walked to a Paterson bodega. The victim was seriously injured but has recovered.

Authorities launched an investigation after a video of the assault surfaced online.

FBI to show teens how to act in traffic stops

IL SPRINGFIELD — The Springfield FBI office is working with filmmakers to produce a video that agents hope will improve the interactions teens have with law enforcement officers when they're pulled over.

The State Journal-Register reported that the Central Illinois Film Commission is shooting the video, which is expected to be available in high schools across the state by the end of the year.

The video comes at a time of increased scrutiny of police-involved shootings and increased tension between black communities and law enforcement around the nation.

Special Agent Sean Cox said educating young people on traffic-stop procedures could prevent some incidents from

getting out of control.

Students in trouble for wearing KKK costumes

FL WESLEY CHAPEL — Three Florida high school students are facing suspension for wearing Ku Klux Klan costumes to school.

The Tampa Bay Times reported Saturday that three Wiregrass Ranch High boys wore the costumes Thursday for a homecoming week event in which students were supposed to dress up as characters. Other students dressed up as superheroes and TV characters.

Two of the boys are Hispanic and one is of Arab descent. Their names have not been released. Administrators said the boys said they were dressed as ghosts, but the costumes consisted of white sheets with pointy hats.

They were accused of harassment and could be suspended for one to 10 days.

Six more arrested as clown threats multiply

OH COLUMBUS — The growing rash of reported threats involving clowns has law enforcement agencies across Ohio working to identify legitimate threats while warning that hoaxes are no laughing matter.

The number of arrests in the Cincinnati area rose from two to seven, as Montgomery police charged an additional five students with inciting panic Friday for allegedly suggesting a "Clown Clan" descend on their schools.

Another arrest also was made in Fairborn. Police charged a 15-year-old boy with making terroristic threats, a felony, on suspicion of using a clown persona on social media

to threaten death to Fairborn High School students.

Suspect arrested in Wal-Mart fireworks fire

AZ PHOENIX — Authorities say a man has been arrested on suspicion of starting a fire at a fireworks display at a west Phoenix Wal-Mart four months ago.

Phoenix Fire Department officials said Tristen Demani Bailey, 20, has been booked on suspicion of one count of arson of an occupied structure.

City fire crews and police officers responded to the Wal-Mart on the night of June 15 and discovered someone had set fire to the display. The store was evacuated and nobody was injured.

Authorities said the store sustained several million dollars' worth of water and fire damage.

Fire officials investigated the case and identified Bailey as the suspect.

Youth snow-shoveling effort is relaunching

RI PAWTUCKET — Pawtucket is relaunching a program that matches youth volunteers with senior citizens who need help shoveling snow.

The city said it's now accepting requests from people who would like a young person to shovel their walk and stairs this winter.

The Pawtucket Youth to Senior Shoveling Program matches volunteers from the city's schools with people in their neighborhoods who need a hand.

City officials said the service is not guaranteed. People interested can call Pawtucket's senior liaison.

From wire reports

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Batting crowns go to LeMahieu, Altuve

Associated Press

Colorado's DJ LeMahieu won his first National League batting title Sunday, sitting out his second straight game to protect his lead over Washington's Daniel Murphy.

LeMahieu hit a major league-leading .348 and finished one point ahead of Murphy with the NL's highest average since Atlanta's Chipper Jones batted .364 in 2008. LeMahieu's season ended after three innings and two hitless at-bats Friday.

"It's a relief. It's pretty cool," LeMahieu said. "Hasn't quite sunk in yet."

Murphy pinch hit Sunday in his first appearance since Sept. 20 and flied out.

"It was unique in that the other guy he was battling with wasn't playing," Rockies manager Walt Weiss said. "If they're both playing and going at it, that's one thing. I didn't want him to lose it that way."

Murphy said he wasn't concerned about the batting title.

"We won the NL East and we're hosting a division series, as well. So no, the batting title is not something I gave a lot of thought," he said.

Playing half their games at Coors Field, Rockies players have won batting titles in nine of the last 19 seasons.

"It's a good place to hit, obviously," LeMahieu said.

Houston's Jose Altuve hit .338 and won his second AL batting title in three years. Boston's Dustin Pedroia was a distant second at .318.

"I have to thank all the guys on the team," Altuve said. "They went outside to the field and played hard, and that kind of encouraged me and pushed me to keep playing hard every day."

Mark Trumbo led the major leagues with 47 home runs, the fourth straight Baltimore

player to hit the most in the big leagues. That is the longest stretch for one team's players to top the AL since the Yankees from 1923-31 with Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig and Bob Meusel.

Colorado's Nolan Arenado and Milwaukee's Chris Carter tied for the NL lead with 41. Arenado led the NL with 133 RBIs, and Toronto's Edwin Encarnacion tied for the most in the AL at 127 with Boston's David Ortiz, who is retiring after this season.

Toronto's Aaron Sanchez won the AL ERA title at 3.00, allowing one run over seven innings Sunday to beat Boston and clinch the league's second wild-card berth. Sanchez's ERA is the highest for any league leader since the Los Angeles Angels' John Lackey at 3.01 in 2007.

Kyle Hendricks of the Chicago Cubs led the major leagues at 2.13.

Boston's Rick Porcello topped the major leagues in wins at 22-4, and Washington's Max Scherzer led the NL, beating Miami on Sunday to finish 20-7. Scherzer had the most strikeouts in the major leagues with 284, and Detroit's Justin Verlander had 254 to lead the AL for the fourth time and first since 2012.

Jeurys Familia led the major leagues in saves with 51 and Baltimore's Zach Britton topped the AL with a perfect record in 47 chances.

Milwaukee batters struck out a record 1,543 times, eight more than the 2013 Houston Astros.

Jonathan Villar of the Brewers led the major leagues with 62 steals and Cleveland's Rajai Davis' 43 were the most in the AL. Baltimore had just 19, the fewest since the 1972 Detroit Tigers swiped 17.

Giants, Jays, O's secure playoff spots on final day

Associated Press

So much for any Game No. 162 chaos in baseball: The San Francisco Giants, Toronto Blue Jays and Baltimore Orioles grabbed the last three playoff spots Sunday, and the October matchups are set.

Neat and clean, no need for all sorts of tiebreakers. Too bad — that kind of final-day scramble might've been fun for fans.

Instead, they could sit back, savor Vin Scully's farewell call and prepare for the postseason. It opens Tuesday night when the Orioles visit Toronto in the AL wild-card game.

"All we asked for is an opportunity, and right now, we have an opportunity," Baltimore center fielder Adam Jones said after a 5-2 win over the New York Yankees. "So, let's celebrate and enjoy this and get back to work."

No official word yet on the starting pitchers at Rogers Centre. Figures to be Chris Tillman for the O's against Marcus Stroman.

On Wednesday night, aces duel as Madison Bumgarner starts for the Giants vs. Noah Syndergaard and the New York Mets at Citi Field in the NL wild-card game.

"We found a way to get back to where we

need to be," Bumgarner said after his team's 7-1 win finished off a sweep of the Dodgers. "If we play like we have been the last three days, we'll be tough to beat."

On Thursday, the best-of-five AL Division Series begins: David Ortiz and Boston at Cleveland, and the wild-card winner at Texas.

"I guess I wish Ortiz would consider retiring early," said Indians manager Terry Francona, who previously guided Big Papi with the Red Sox, "but I don't see that happening."

On Friday night, Clayton Kershaw starts Game 1 for the Los Angeles Dodgers at Washington, and the NL wild-card winner plays the best-in-the-majors Chicago Cubs at Wrigley Field.

Going into Game 162, Detroit and St. Louis also had a chance to reach the postseason. That raised the possibility of multi-team, multi-city tiebreakers going into early next week.

The Tigers were in the middle of that mix. They hoped to win at Atlanta and have either the Orioles or Blue Jays lose — then, they would've needed to win a makeup game at home Monday against Detroit to force a tiebreaker for an AL wild-card spot.

"I would not have enjoyed the travel,"

Tigers manager Brad Ausmus said, "but I would have relished traveling."

That kind of drama never developed as the teams holding leads took care of business.

Manager Buck Showalter and Baltimore sealed their spot, winning at Yankee Stadium. When the Tigers later lost 1-0 at Atlanta in the last game at Turner Field, they were out and Toronto was back in for the second straight year.

Later, the Blue Jays' 2-1 victory at Fenway Park meant they would host Baltimore.

With All-Star catcher Buster Posey getting three hits and driving in three runs, San Francisco beat the Dodgers and eliminated the Cardinals.

The Giants have enjoyed a recent run of even-year success, winning the World Series in 2010, 2012 and 2014.

The last time they reached the postseason, Bumgarner pitched a shutout at Pittsburgh in the wild-card game and went on to become the World Series MVP. So another cross-country flight to begin the playoffs was fine by them.

"I don't think it bothers anybody that we go on the road to win these games. It's actually a lot of fun," first baseman Brandon Belt said. "With Bumgarner on the mound, we're going to have a good shot."

Steelers bounce back, rout Chiefs

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — The Pittsburgh Steelers spent a week letting their worst loss in 27 years fester. Catharsis came during a frenetic stretch in the first quarter Sunday night against the seemingly unprepared Kansas City Chiefs.

Six offensive snaps. Three Ben Roethlisberger touchdowns passes. Two to Antonio Brown. One very important reminder of just how good Pittsburgh's offense can look when all of its dynamic parts are moving in sync.

Seven days after a 31-point meltdown in Philadelphia, the Steelers overwhelmed the Chiefs 43-14 behind five touchdowns passes from Roethlisberger and 178 yards of total offense from running back Le'Veon Bell.

"I told the guys before the game, we're

driving a car and we don't have a rearview mirror right now," Roethlisberger said. "We're not looking back. We're looking forward. We're moving on. We did a pretty good job moving on."

Sure looked like it.

Roethlisberger hit Brown — wearing cleats featuring the profile of golf great and western Pennsylvania native Arnold Palmer — for a pair of scores. Roethlisberger also found Markus Wheaton, Darrius Heyward-Bey and Jesse James for touchdowns on his way to finishing 22 of 27 for 300 yards.

"When you've got a Hall of Fame quarterback, it looks good like that," center Maurkice Pouncey said the Steelers improved to 3-1.

It helps when the franchise running back is allowed to join in too. Bell returned from a torn MCL that cut short his 2015 season

and a three-game suspension for violating the NFL's substance abuse policy and looked every bit as dangerous as he did when he was an All-Pro in 2014, which also happened to be the last time Bell, Brown and Roethlisberger started and finished a game together.

"I didn't really feel like I was rusty," Bell said. "I was more anxious if anything."

There was no need, not on a night Pittsburgh's struggling defense repaid a pregame pep talk by Hall of Fame linebacker Kevin Greene by throttling the Chiefs (2-2). The Steelers forced a pair of first-quarter turnovers that Roethlisberger promptly turned into touchdowns during a franchise-record 22-point deluge. Pittsburgh, which came in with just one sack on the season — dead last in the league — but got to Kansas City's Alex Smith four times and never allowing the Chiefs to get into a rhythm.

Bills hand Pats first shutout loss at Gillette

Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — Buffalo took advantage of sloppy, Tom Brady-less New England to hand the Patriots their first home shutout at Gillette Stadium, winning 16-0 Sunday.

It was the first loss of the season for New England (3-1), which was playing its final game before Brady returns from his four-game "Deflategate" suspension. The Patriots, who moved into Gillette Stadium in 2002, were last blanked at home 6-0 by the New York Jets in 1993 at Foxboro Stadium.

Tyrod Taylor connected with LeSean McCoy for a 7-yard touchdown pass in the first quarter, Dan Carpenter added three field goals for Buffalo (2-2).

It was Buffalo's second win in its last 16 visits to Foxborough. Including his tenure with the New York Jets, it gave Bills coach Rex Ryan his first regular-season road victory over Bill Belichick in eight tries. The last Bills' shutout win away From Orchard Park was 23-0 over Washington in a Buffalo "home" game at Toronto on Oct. 30, 2011.

After struggling to maintain

drives and finding a run-pass balance, Taylor was spot-on Sunday. He finished 27-for-39 for 246 yards, and directed a unit that was 7 for 15 on third downs. The Bills had been 10 of 36 combined in the first three games.

Cowboys 24, 49ers 17: Ezekiel Elliott ran for 138 yards and a touchdown and Dak Prescott threw for two scores to help visiting Dallas overcome an early 14-point deficit to beat San Francisco.

Raiders 28, Ravens 27: Derek Carr threw four touchdown passes, the last to Michael Crabtree with 2:12 left.

After Baltimore rallied from a nine-point deficit in the fourth quarter to go ahead with 3½ minutes remaining, Carr directed a 66-yard drive that ended with a 23-yard strike to Crabtree in the back of the end zone.

Falcons 48, Panthers 33: Matt Ryan shredded Carolina's defense, passing for a team-record 503 yards and four touchdowns, Julio Jones had 12 receptions for an Atlanta-record 300 yards. The totals by Ryan and Jones are the most allowed by Carolina.

Carolina quarterback Cam Newton left in the fourth quar-

ter and was evaluated for concussion symptoms after taking a hit from Deion Jones on a successful 2-point run. There appeared to be helmet-to-helmet contact but there was no penalty on the hit.

Broncos 27, Buccaneers 7: Paxton Lynch made his NFL debut sooner than expected, stepping in for injured starter Trevor Siemian to help visiting Denver remain unbeaten with a victory over Tampa Bay.

Siemian left the game with two minutes remaining in the first half with what the defending Super Bowl champions described as an injury to his left (non-throwing) shoulder.

Saints 35, Chargers 34: Drew Brees led New Orleans to two touchdowns in the final 4 minutes, 50 seconds to rally the Saints to a stunning victory against Philip Rivers and host San Diego, who blew a 13-point lead by committing two crucial turnovers..

Rams 17, Cardinals 13: Tavon Austin returned a punt 47 yards to set up Case Keenum's 4-yard touchdown pass to Brian Quick with 2:41 to play, and visiting Los Angeles improved to 3-1 for the first time in a decade with a victory over Arizona (1-3).

Seahawks 27, Jets 17: Russell Wilson was sharp and efficient despite playing with a sprained knee, throwing three touchdown passes.

Wilson, who injured the medial collateral ligament in his left knee last week against San Francisco, finished 23 of 32 for 309 yards while wearing a brace on his leg as Seattle (3-1) won at MetLife Stadium for the first time since beating the Denver Broncos in the Super Bowl in 2014.

Redskins 31, Browns 20: Kirk Cousins threw three touchdown passes, including two to tight end Jordan Reed, and host Washington cashed in on several trips to the red zone.

Texans 27, Titans 20: Will Fuller had a tiebreaking 67-yard punt return for a touchdown. It was the first time host Houston (3-1) played without its star defensive end J.J. Watt since the 2010 season. Watt, out for the season after back surgery, had started 83 straight games since being drafted in 2011.

Bears 17, Lions 14: Brian Hoyer threw for 302 yards and two touchdowns, and host Chicago (1-3) got a win after starting 0-3 for the second time in as many seasons under coach John Fox.

Entire team contributes to US Ryder Cup rout

Associated Press

CHASKA, Minn. — Patrick Reed shook his fists with fury for every big putt he made. Phil Mickelson leaped higher than when he won his first Masters. Ryan Moore delivered the final point in this American masterpiece Sunday at the Ryder Cup.

The 17-11 victory over Europe was their biggest rout in 35 years.

Only this was more than just three days of exquisite golf at Hazeltine. This victory began two years ago in Scotland, when Phil Mickelson publicly criticized U.S. captain Tom Watson and a process that he felt put the Americans in position to fail far too often.

“When put in the right environment, the U.S. team brought out some amazing golf,” Mickelson said. “And we’re bringing back the Ryder Cup because of it.”

Sure enough, that 17-inch gold trophy was gleaming on a table, right next to a couple of champagne bottles on ice.

This wasn’t about being maybe the best team ever assembled.

The Americans were a team, and that was all that mattered. For the first time since 1975, every U.S. player won at least one match. And for the first time since 2008, the Ryder Cup is staying in America.

Four years after Davis Love III saw his team blow a 10-6 lead at Medinah, he watched them make more birdies and eagles than he could count as they filled the scoreboard with American red and took any suspense out of the outcome.

“There was a lot of pressure on these guys over the last couple years,” Love said. “We haven’t had a good run lately, and I’m thrilled for them that they got the win. ... This team has been questioned and beat up for a long time, and I’m proud of the way they came

together.”

Europe, going for its fourth straight victory, never really had a chance.

Reed outdueled and outshouted Rory McIlroy in a match so dynamic that they halved three straight holes with birdies. McIlroy holed a 60-foot putt up the slope on the par-3 eighth and cupped his hand to his ear to a loud and occasionally obnoxious crowd. Reed followed with a 35-foot birdie putt, wagging his finger at McIlroy. They bumped fists and patted each other on the back. McIlroy’s putter went cold, and Reed holed a 7-foot birdie putt on the 18th hole to secure the 1-up victory.

Mickelson and Sergio Garcia combined for 19 birdies, eight of them over the last five holes. Mickelson made an 18-foot birdie on the final hole, crouched and then leaped in the air, capping off a big week under more pressure than usual because of his strong voice in all these changes.

One of the changes from the Ryder Cup Task Force that Europe mocked was to spread out the captain’s picks until the very end. The last one went to Moore, who was added to the team only last Sunday. A week later, he was celebrating a 1-up victory over Lee Westwood that clinched the cup.

“You’re only as strong as your 12th man right there,” Brandt Snedeker said to him.

There wasn’t much Europe could do. Thomas Pieters had the best showing of any European rookie by going 4-1. That was a lone bright spot.

“They did everything I asked of them. They tried their heart out. They worked hard. They fought hard,” European captain Darren Clarke said. “The American Ryder Cup team deserved to win. And we’re all gutted and disappointed. And we will be back stronger to fight

in two years’ time in Paris.”

Mickelson already was looking ahead.

He had said the work of the task force — primarily for players and former captains to have more input in an event run by the PGA of America — was not about this year but the next 10 years of the Ryder Cup.

Even so, it was sweet to see that trophy just a few feet away.

“We need to build on this,” Mickelson said. “Otherwise, it’s all for naught. We created a very solid foundation this year. ... Yes, it’s great that we had success this week, but it’s not about one year or one Ryder Cup. It’s about a multitude, for decades to come.”

About that time, Love popped the cork off a bottle of champagne.

“That’s my cue to shut up,” Mickelson said.

He spoke volumes in Scotland, and on the golf course.

The Americans stood atop a bridge to the left of the 18th green and sprayed champagne on themselves and the crowd, an enormous gathering that sent endless cheers of “U-S-A” and “Red, white, blue” across Hazeltine for three straight days.

Every U.S. player contributed a point.

For Europe, Westwood was among four players who ended the week without a point.

The Ryder Cup Task Force was dismantled after Love was named captain for the second time, though Mickelson and Tiger Woods remain on a committee for the next Ryder Cup in 2018 in France. Europe has not lost consecutive Ryder Cups since 1993.

Truex dominant in second Chase win

Associated Press

DOVER, Del. — Martin Truex Jr. watched season after empty season as other drivers hoisted trophies and celebrated championships and wondered if he was running out of time to become a winner.

Bad cars, bad teams, bad luck.

Whatever the cause, Truex was a journeyman driver seemingly doomed to a mediocre career. Now, what quantifies as a downer in Truex’s career rebirth is that he failed to actually sweep the first round of the Chase — but two of three is pretty dominant.

Truex’s late-season surge extended Sunday at Dover International Speedway for his second victory in the first three Chase races. Truex won for the fourth time this season in the No. 78 Toyota and paired this Chase win with his opening victory at Chicagoland.

Tony Stewart finished 13th and the three-time NASCAR champion was knocked out of contention in the first elimination race of the Chase for the Sprint Cup championship.

Chris Buescher and Chip Ganassi Racing teammates Kyle Larson and Jamie McMurray also dropped out of the Chase. The field was sliced from 16 drivers to 12.

Austin Dillon finished eighth and moved from outside the points cutoff of the Chase to a transfer spot and advanced to the next round.

Kevin Harvick, Kyle Busch, Brad Keselowski, Matt Kenseth, Joey Logano, Chase Elliott, Jimmie Johnson, Denny Hamlin, Carl Edwards and Kurt Busch joined Truex and Dillon in the next round that opens at Charlotte Motor Speedway.

Kyle Busch was second, followed by Chase Elliott, Keselowski, Kenseth and Logano — the only five other cars that finished on the lead lap.