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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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East Coast bases prep for storm

BY COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Some 1,600 National Guard troops were activated Wednesday and thousands more were on standby as the East Coast of the United States braces for the impact of Hurricane Matthew, already responsible for at least 11 deaths.

The powerful storm was downgraded Wednesday morning after it battered parts of Haiti and Cuba overnight, but the National Hurricane Center warned the hurricane could create devastating conditions along eastern Florida's coast Thursday, as it moves north. The Miami-based Hurricane Center predicted the storm would retain hurricane strength as it proceeds along the coast toward North Carolina by Sunday.

More than a dozen U.S. military installations stand in the hurricane's current path up Florida into coastal Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina.

Officials at military installations at several Florida and South Carolina coastal posts ordered evacuations of non-essential personnel and family members. Installations in coastal Georgia and North Carolina — including Fort Stewart, about 30 miles inland from the Atlantic Ocean, and Camp Lejeune along North Carolina's coast — were taking a wait-and-see approach.

Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal on Tuesday declared a state of emergency in 13 counties, including those surrounding Fort Stewart, headquarters of the Army's 3rd Infantry Division. But the installation's soldiers remained on normal training status as of Wednesday morning, a post official said.

"We're proceeding as normal for the time being," Fort Stewart spokesman Kevin Larson said. "But we're urging our families and employees to prepare now for the storm."

Commanders at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island and Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort ordered non-

essential personnel to evacuate Tuesday. As of Wednesday morning, Parris Island officials had made initial preparations to evacuate its 6,000 recruits from the island if necessary, but they did not expect to do so, said Capt. Greg Carroll, a Marine spokesman at Parris Island.

"We ordered buses and sent an advance party of Marines to Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany (in Georgia) in case we do need to evacuate," he said, adding the Albany base is the backup location for recruit activities.

Meanwhile, Florida Gov. Rick Scott activated about 500 National Guardsmen to respond to potentially the worst storm devastation along eastern Florida since 2007.

In South Carolina, Gov. Nikki Haley issued an evacuation order for Beaufort and Charleston counties and activated about 1,100 Army National Guardsmen to assist with the evacuation process, according to a Defense Department statement.

National Guard officials in Georgia and North Carolina said their troops had not yet been activated but thousands had been placed on notice to prepare in case they are needed.

In the Caribbean Sea, the military pre-staged several ships and helicopters to provide relief if necessary, but those assets remained in a holding pattern Wednesday.

The Navy deployed the USS George Washington, an aircraft carrier, the USS Mesa Verde, an amphibious transport dock ship, and USNS Comfort, a hospital ship, to assist with the response. About 100 troops and nine helicopters were deployed Tuesday to Grand Cayman Island to respond if tasked to do so by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The Navy also deployed the USS Anzio, the USS Montgomery and the USS Iwo Jima from Naval Station Mayport near Jacksonville, Fla., to avoid the storm. Warships weather such storms better at sea than at port, a Navy official said.

Hurricane rips through Caribbean; at least 11 die

Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — Rescue workers in Haiti struggled to reach cutoff towns and learn the full extent of the death and destruction caused by Hurricane Matthew as the storm began battering the Bahamas Wednesday.

At least 11 deaths had been blamed on the powerful storm during its weeklong march across the Caribbean, five of them in Haiti. But with a key bridge washed out, roads impassable and phone commu-

nications down, the western tip of Haiti was isolated and there was no word on dead and injured.

Forecasters said the high winds, pounding rains and storm surge were already beginning to have an impact in the southern Bahamas from the storm, with top sustained winds of 125 mph.

A day earlier, Matthew swept across a remote area of Haiti with 145 mph winds, and government leaders said they weren't close to fully gauging the impact in the vulnerable,

flood-prone country where less powerful storms have killed thousands living in flimsy shacks.

"What we know is that many, many houses have been damaged. Some lost rooftops and they'll have to be replaced while others were totally destroyed," Interior Minister Francois Anick Joseph said.

The hurricane also rolled across the sparsely populated tip of Cuba overnight, destroying dozens of homes in Cuba's easternmost city, Baracoa, and leaving hundreds of others

damaged.

There were no immediate reports of deaths or large-scale devastation, though the waves had picked up a large shipping container and dropped it three blocks inland from the shore.

By Wednesday morning Matthew was passing east of the Bahamian island of Inagua, moving over open water on a forecast path expected to take it very near the Bahamas capital of Nassau and then Florida's Atlantic coast by Thursday evening.

Iraqis in 'final rehearsal' before Mosul fight starts

By TARA COPP
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The final Iraqi brigade needed to retake Mosul from the Islamic State group will complete training in about two weeks, the coalition general in charge of their preparation said Wednesday.

Canadian Brig. Gen. Dave Anderson, the coalition's director of training for Operation Inherent Resolve, said 12 Iraqi brigades — each made of 800 to 1,600 troops — will be used in the upcoming battle for Mosul.

Each brigade will have completed U.S.- and coalition-provided training at one of five sites across Iraq.

"It's the final rehearsal, if you will, before going on stage," Anderson said of the last Iraqi brigade going through training, noting the last unit is not new to battle.

"This is just a tune-up for some specific skills and to top off their equipment before they go."

The Pentagon has previously said Iraq is planning to launch an operation to retake Mosul, Iraq's second largest city and the de facto capital of the Islamic State group in the country, later this month.

An estimated 3,000 to 5,000 Islamic State group fighters

remain in Mosul to defend it, Anderson said.

In addition to the training, which has focused on counter-explosives training and conducting building searches and other skills, the Iraqi forces have received 380 Humvees and 60 bulldozers, with upgraded armor. In previous fights against the Islamic State group, the Iraqi army has used the bulldozers to build berms and dispose of bombs.

The Iraqi forces have also received uniforms, body armor, helmets and tens of thousands of weapons and munitions.

Anderson said the U.S.-funded train and equip program has spent almost \$1.6 billion since 2015 rebuilding Iraq's military.

Iraqi brigade leaders have also worked with U.S. or coalition special forces advisers who will stay with them as they move out, Anderson said.

"Once a team is linked with the brigade, it stays with the brigade," he said.

Anderson said he is confident enough in the fall of Mosul that his training teams and the Iraq Minister of the Interior have shifted their training priority to developing the police force that will be needed to hold Mosul once the Islamic State group is driven out of the city.

US helos backing Afghan troops in fight over Kunduz

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — With American helicopters providing air support, Afghan forces battled the Taliban in the northern city of Kunduz for the third straight day Wednesday, following the multipronged attack launched by insurgents earlier this week.

The fighting in Kunduz, which fell briefly to the Taliban a year ago, came as Afghanistan's leaders and officials from over 70 nations gathered in Brussels, seeking to drum up billions of dollars for the cash-strapped Kabul government as it battles the Taliban insurgency and rampant corruption.

Afghan Gen. Qasim Jungalbagh, the provincial police chief, said Taliban gunmen launched fresh attacks in Kunduz from the south and east early Wednesday.

He said "clearance operations" had begun inside the city but that heavy clashes con-

tinued on the outskirts, "to the south and east of the city."

Also Wednesday, the Taliban began forcing people from their homes in an effort to start an exodus from Kunduz, similar to what happened a year ago when half the population of around 300,000 fled the city.

"People are leaving everything behind and fleeing to the nearest place they feel safe" said Mohammad Yousuf Ayubi, head of the provincial council.

Since pushing into Kunduz on Monday and briefly hoisting their flag at a main intersection, the Taliban were pushed back but their fighters remain hunkered down in homes, slowing the Afghan counteroffensive.

The Taliban said in a statement emailed to media that they have taken the Kunduz office of the national intelligence agency but the claim could not be immediately confirmed and the insurgents regularly exaggerate battlefield successes.

Harrier flights on Okinawa to resume after crash review

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The Marine Corps will resume AV-8B Harrier flights from Okinawa, two weeks after one of the jets inexplicably crashed off the island prefecture's eastern seaboard.

An initial review of the crash and safety inspections determined the aircraft pose no threat to the local population, Lt. Gen. Lawrence Nicholson, III Marine Expeditionary Force commander, announced Wednesday. He declined to pro-

vide further details on the cause of the Sept. 22 crash because it is still under investigation.

The Harrier flights will resume Friday.

"Preliminary reports from ongoing investigations do not identify the incident's cause as systemic in the aircraft, aircrew or maintenance," Nicholson said. "A thorough review of command culture, aircrew, maintenance, and material readiness have determined that VMA-542 (Marine Attack Squadron 542) is ready and prepared to resume flight operations."

Nicholson added that Harrier jets have continued to operate safely around the globe since the mishap, and that he would make the same decision at any other Marine base that hosts the aircraft.

Nicholson said the Marine Corps is confident it knows the issue that led to the crash; however, it cannot release the findings until the investigation is finished.

Crash reports can take months to upward of a year to complete, Marine spokesman Lt. Joseph Butterfield said. The decision has not yet been

made on whether to attempt to salvage the crashed aircraft, which lies in the sea, approximately 115 nautical miles east of Okinawa.

The Harrier, assigned to the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, had left Kadena Air Base on air combat maneuver training. The pilot experienced trouble and ejected safely prior to impact and was rescued by the Air Force's 33rd Rescue Squadron, aided by the Japan Coast Guard.

The pilot suffered only minor injuries and has returned to his unit, Nicholson said.

LAPD hastens video release to stem tensions

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Los Angeles Police Chief Charlie Beck has become the latest to hasten the release of video of a deadly confrontation between police and a black man in order to break public tension.

The video Beck released Tuesday shows that Carnell Snell, 18, was armed just before he was shot dead but the footage failed to capture the scene where officers say he twice turned toward them holding the loaded semi-automatic handgun.

The LAPD typically releases video of police shootings only when ordered to do so by courts. Beck told reporters the Snell video was released in the interest of public safety and to correct misinformation.

"This is not done in any way to denigrate Mr. Snell," he said.

In doing so, Beck echoed the actions last week of authorities in El Cajon, Calif., who released video of the shooting of Alfred Olango with a similar intention of quelling public unrest. Olango was fatally shot after

he swiftly drew an electronic cigarette device from his front pocket and pointed at the officer in a "shooting stance," police said.

When asked whether he thought the video would ease anger among protesters, the Los Angeles chief answered that "there are folks that will not believe any narrative" presented by police.

"I think that this video is not for them, the folks that are going to find holes in whatever I present to them," he said. "Unless they were physically present they are not going to believe the police's point of view on this."

The events began when officers tried to pull over a car with temporary paper license plates that didn't match the year of the vehicle. Snell, seated in the car's back seat, looked at officers, ducked down and then jumped out of the car and ran, Beck said.

Police released footage found on a surveillance camera that shows Snell crouching behind an SUV parked at a strip mall

and pulling a handgun from the waistband of his sweatpants.

Snell then tucks the gun back into his waistband and runs around the corner of a strip mall as officers chase him. All then disappear from view because they were no longer within the range of the surveillance camera.

Beck said the video showed Snell had an opportunity to get rid of the gun but decided to keep it when he ran around a corner of the strip mall, disappearing from the footage that showed two officers running after him. After Snell ran around the mall's corner and out of range of the camera, he sprinted between two houses and turned toward officers while holding the gun, Beck said.

Officers fired three shots that missed Snell, who then climbed a fence and turned again toward the officers while holding the gun, Beck said. Police fired three more times, hitting Snell in the torso and knee. The officers were not wearing body cameras.

Superhero funeral for SC boy, 6, who was killed at school

TOWNVILLE, S.C. — A 6-year-old boy who died after a teen gunman opened fire at his South Carolina elementary school was dressed as Batman in his small blue casket on Wednesday. Jacob Hall's family encouraged mourners at his funeral to dress as superheroes as well.

"We want to honor Jacob, celebrate Jacob, in a way he would love," his great-aunt, Rebecca Hunnicutt, told the Anderson Independent-Mail.

Jacob died from a bullet that struck the main artery in his thigh after a 14-year-old boy opened fire at Townville Elementary School. Authorities say the boy killed his own father and then drove a pickup truck to the school, crashing into a playground fence. A classmate and a first-grade teacher also were struck by bullets, and were treated and released from a hospital.

Jacob had told his family he wanted to be a preacher one day, the Rev. Tim Marcengill told a crowd that packed the pews at the family's Oakdale Baptist Church. "He's preaching today," Marcengill said.

Lily Gunby, 6, wore a pink and black Superman shirt and said Jacob "was really sweet," and "knew a lot about Jesus."

John Buckland drove his Batmobile from West Virginia to attend the funeral.

"We're here to celebrate," Buckland said while wearing full Batman garb. "Take what we've learned from Jacob; let it make you a better husband, better father ... better everything."

From The Associated Press

Athletes talk about Olympic experiences

BY NIKKI WENTLING

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — When Army Sgt. Nathan Schrimsher crossed the finish line of the pentathlon at the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, his brother tossed him a U.S. flag.

Schrimsher said the flag had hung in his father's Roswell, N.M., office since Sept. 11, 2001. When his brother Lucas gave him the flag after the competition, their father, Keith, had been dead just slightly more than a year.

Nathan Schrimsher, 24, grabbed the flag and carried it around the stadium — the setting of the pentathlon, a three-day competition of fencing, swimming, jumping, shooting and a long-distance run.

"He loved the sport, and he loved what we were doing, so it was really hard going to the games and not being able to have him there," Schrimsher said of his father. "I had that flag and carried it, so I'm like carrying my dad and our country. It was just an incredible experience. It was an amazing, overwhelming feeling."

At the Pentagon on Monday, Defense Secretary Ash Carter hosted active-duty servicemembers who participated in the 2016 Olympics and Paralympics. Sixteen servicemembers competed in this year's Olympics, and four competed in the Paralympics. They brought home four medals.

Four of them, including Schrimsher, told stories of their experiences Tuesday at the annual meeting of the Association of the U.S. Army in Washington.

Schrimsher, Spc. Paul Chelimo and Staff Sgt. Michael Lukow are all part of the U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program, a military detachment in which the Army trains soldiers full time for the Pan American Games, World Championships and Olympics and Paralympics. Sgt. 1st Class Glenn Eller went to the Olympics as part of the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit. The stories included Eller celebrating a bronze medal in shooting and the moment Chelimo was briefly stripped of his silver medal.

Chelimo, an Army water treatment specialist, was born in Iten, Kenya. He discovered his talent for running when he was young, he said, and his brothers could never catch him during games of "tag."

"They used to say, 'There's something extraordinary here, you know?'" he said.

Chelimo, 26, came to the U.S. in 2010 and enlisted in the Army in 2014. In Rio, his first Olympics, he finished the men's 5,000-meter run with a personal best time of 13.03.90, six microseconds behind first-place finisher Mo Farah of Britain.

On Tuesday, Chelimo wore the silver medal that was taken from him for about an hour after a replay showed Chelimo take a step out of bounds. With further review, judges determined the step had no effect on the race. He got the medal back. Now, Chelimo is preparing to win the gold in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

Lukow and Eller said they also hope to return to the Olympics in 2020 — Lukow to the Paralympics to earn his first medal and Eller to his sixth Olympic Games.

Pence calm, Kaine challenges in debate

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Republican Mike Pence was calm and steady in the face of Democrat Tim Kaine's fiery and frequent challenges. But when it came to defending Donald Trump, Pence dodged, sidestepped or was silent about some of his running mate's most provocative words.

Kaine aggressively pressured Pence to vouch for Trump throughout the 90-minute debate, often citing the brash businessman's own words. Pence defended Trump's tax history, but maneuvered around criticism of Trump's demeaning comments about women, his public doubting of President Barack Obama's citizenship and broader questions about temperament.

"I can't imagine how Governor Pence can defend the insult-driven, me-first style of Donald Trump," said Kaine, the Virginia senator and Hillary Clinton's No. 2. The usually easygoing Kaine went on the attack from the start and seemed determined to make the debate a referendum on whether Trump has the disposition for the Oval Office.

He slammed Trump for having called women pigs and slobs, and condemned the GOP nominee's praise of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Pence frequently avoided taking the bait

— a shrewd move for a conservative darling who could have eyes on the Oval Office if Trump loses in November. But for voters seeking assurances from Pence about Trump's temperament, there was little to cling to.

Five weeks from Election Day, the White House race appears to be tipping in Clinton's favor. She was widely viewed as the winner of last week's first presidential debate. New public opinion polls have shown her improving her standing in nearly all battleground states.

Pence was markedly more prepared and more detailed in his answers than Trump was on the debate stage. He was also more consistent in painting the Democratic ticket as career politicians unwilling to shake up Washington.

"Hillary Clinton and Tim Kaine want more of the same," Pence said. He repeatedly accused the Democrats of running an insult-filled campaign — an ironic attack line given that Trump has leveled repeated insults against Clinton and his former rivals in the Republican primaries.

Republicans hope Pence's performance will help steady Trump's campaign. But that boost could be short-lived if Trump has another weak performance when he and Clinton meet Sunday in their second of

three debates.

Asked about reports that the businessman might not have paid any federal taxes for years, Pence said his running mate "used the tax code just the way it's supposed to be used, and he did it brilliantly."

Records obtained by The New York Times showed Trump suffered more than \$900 million in losses in 1995 that could have allowed him to avoid paying federal income taxes for as many as 18 years.

Kaine, too, defended his running mate's weaknesses, chiefly the public's questions about her honesty and trustworthiness. He said that while Trump was "selfish," Clinton had devoted her career to helping children and families.

On criminal justice, Kaine argued that Trump's embrace of "stop-and-frisk" style policing was a mistake. Pence argued that Clinton has used police shootings to argue that there is "implicit bias" in police departments, and he said the Democrats should "stop seizing on these moments of tragedy."

Kaine quickly shot back, "I can't believe you are defending the position that there's no bias."

The vice presidential debate was held at Virginia's Longwood University, which Pence called Norwood University.

3 win Nobel prize for world's tiniest machines

Associated Press

STOCKHOLM — Three scientists won the Nobel Prize in chemistry on Wednesday for developing the world's smallest machines, work that could revolutionize computer technology and lead to a new type of battery.

Frenchman Jean-Pierre Sauvage, British-born Fraser Stoddart and Dutch scientist Bernard "Ben" Feringa share the 8 million kronor (\$930,000) prize for the "design and synthesis of molecular machines," the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said. Machines at the molecular level are 1,000th the width of a human hair and have taken chemistry to a new dimension, the academy said. Molecular machines "will most likely be used in the development of things such as new materials, sensors and energy

storage systems."

Stoddart has already developed a molecule-based computer chip. Researchers believe chips so small may revolutionize computer technology the way silicon-based transistors once did, the academy said.

Feringa's research group in 2011 built a "nanocar," a minuscule vehicle with four molecular motors as wheels. The academy said the laureates' work has also inspired other researchers to build increasingly advanced molecular machinery.

Sauvage, 71, is professor emeritus at the University of Strasbourg and director of research emeritus at France's National Center for Scientific Research. Stoddart, 74, is a chemistry professor at Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill. Feringa, 65, is a professor of organic chemistry at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands.

Aussies being accused of premeditated underwear display at Malaysian race

Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia — Malaysian authorities who have detained nine Australian men for three nights would regard their actions in stripping down to their briefs and drinking beer from shoes as premeditated, Australia's foreign minister said Wednesday.

The nine have been in police custody since Sunday when they stripped down to Budgy Smuggler-brand swimsuits decorated with the Malaysian flag in full view of thousands of spectators at the Sepang race track Sunday after Australian driver Daniel Ricciardo won the Malaysian Formula One Grand Prix.

Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said their families had flown from Australia to be with the

men. She dismissed reports by some in the Australian media that the men's exuberant display was just a lapse of judgment.

Police say the men were being investigated for "intentional insult with intent to provoke a breach of peace" and public indecency. Police said the men could face up to two years in jail, a fine or both.

Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce said Tuesday that the men's decision to strip down was inappropriate and ill-advised.

"But I'm sure — well, I'm hoping — the Malaysians will understand that I don't think there's any real malice in it. Stupidity? Obviously. Malice? No," Joyce told reporters in Canberra

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Woman who opted for trip over treatment dies

WA FRIDAY HARBOR — A Michigan woman who decided to take a cross-country RV trip instead of undergoing cancer treatment has died at the age of 91.

More than 400,000 people have followed Norma Jean Bauerschmidt's journey with her son and daughter-in-law on her "Driving Miss Norma" Facebook page. Her final stop was San Juan Island, Wash., located in the northwest corner of the United States.

San Juan County Coroner Randall Gaylord said Bauerschmidt died Friday morning.

Bauerschmidt's daughter-in-law wrote on the page that she decided to take the trip last year after being told that surgery, radiation and chemotherapy was the likely treatment for her tumor.

She began hospice care after arriving in the San Juan Island town of Friday Harbor in August.

A memorial service is scheduled for Bauerschmidt in Friday Harbor on Friday.

Hundreds of students march in 'clown hunt'

PA STATE COLLEGE — Hundreds of Penn State students marched around searching for a clown that campus police say existed only in their minds.

Pennsylvania has been plagued by bizarre clown sightings — most of them hoaxes — and Monday night's incident at Penn State seemed to be more of the same, if on a larger scale.

Penn State police Sgt. Mike Nelson conservatively estimated at least 500 students marched and chanted during a

"clown hunt" that was prompted by Twitter and other social media posts.

Nelson said there was "no property damage, no injury and no violence." There were also no clowns sighted, except for one image projected onto the side of an apartment building.

Man charged in case of camera in porta-potty

MI YPSILANTI TOWNSHIP — A southeastern Michigan man has been charged after a hidden camera was discovered in a portable toilet outside an Ypsilanti Township business.

The Ann Arbor News reported Tuesday that James Mazor, 45, was arraigned Saturday in Washtenaw County District Court on charges of installing or using a device for eavesdropping and surveilling an unclothed person.

Authorities found an image on the camera of the person who they believe placed it in the toilet. The camera was found nearly a year ago. No one else was photographed.

A probable-cause conference is scheduled on Oct. 11, followed by an Oct. 18 preliminary examination.

Woman allegedly tosses twin sons out window

RI PROVIDENCE — Police have upgraded charges against a Rhode Island mother who allegedly threw her 2-year-old twin boys out of a first-floor window.

The Providence Journal reported that Benita Barbour, 37, is now charged with child neglect.

The Providence woman was originally charged with disorderly conduct after a neighbor reported on Sept. 20 that she witnessed Barbour toss the

boys out of a window onto the front porch.

The boys were in pajamas and crying outside when police arrived. Police said Barbour appeared drunk and was belligerent. Her boyfriend was reportedly also at the scene but had left by the time police arrived. A warrant has been issued for his arrest.

Barbour remains jailed, and the boys are in state custody.

Bear, cougar sightings reported in same city

UT SPANISH FORK — Utah authorities are looking for a cougar and a black bear cub spotted separately over two days in the same city.

The Daily Herald newspaper, in Provo, reported that the bear cub was at a golf course in Spanish Fork on Monday, and the cougar was seen near an elementary school on Tuesday.

Students at Canyon Elementary School were kept indoors as authorities searched for the cougar.

Meanwhile, police Lt. Matt Johnson said wildlife officials have also set a live trap for the approximately year-old bear cub and plan to return it to its natural habitat. He said officials believe it is alone and was also spotted at the Spanish Oaks Golf Course about two weeks ago.

Employee posts Trump tweets, loses job

AK JUNEAU — An Alaska health department employee who posted political comments aimed at Donald Trump on the agency's Twitter feed last week is no longer with the department.

In a statement, the department said the employee was at home and not at work when the comments were posted and so

made "inadvertent use of state resources to send partisan political messages."

The department previously apologized for the incident. The tweets, posted during a presidential debate, were deleted.

The department has not publicly identified the employee, saying this is a personnel matter, and did not provide details surrounding the person's departure. The department says it will review its social media policies and that only the public information office manager will now have the ability to post to the department's Twitter feed.

Schools banning clown costumes amid probe

CT NEW HAVEN — A Connecticut school district is banning clown costumes and any "symbols of terror" during this year's Halloween season as authorities investigate the authenticity of a number of clown-related social media posts.

New Haven Public School officials said Monday that principals have been requested to ban the costumes until additional information is available.

This comes amid an investigation involving police into an account on the photo-sharing social media site Instagram. The account uploaded four photos showing menacing-looking clowns with captions telling several area schools to "watch out" and "wait and see" whether the alleged threats are fake.

School officials say there's no indication the incident poses any real threat to students at this time.

From wire reports

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Blue Jays win AL wild-card game in 11

Associated Press

TORONTO — Edwin Encarnacion advanced Toronto to Major League Baseball's Division Series in the Blue Jays' familiar manner — with a big home run.

Encarnacion hit a three-run drive in the 11th inning off Ubaldo Jimenez as Toronto beat the Baltimore Orioles 5-2 in Tuesday night's American League wild-card game to advance to a Division Series matchup against old foe Texas.

"It was a very special moment and a very special opportunity," Encarnacion said through a translator.

Jose Bautista also homered for the Blue Jays, who open on Thursday at Texas. Encarnacion's homer brought back memories of the tiebreaking, three-run shot that Bautista hit in the seventh inning of Game 5 of last year's AL Division Series win over the Rangers, a shot punctuated by a memorable bat flip.

And the Blue Jays won their last World Series title in 1993 on Joe Carter's walkoff home run.

"I was looking for a fastball and I was trying to put the barrel on it, get a little bit in front because the infield was playing in, and I actually got it," Encarnacion said.

Jimenez relieved Brian Duensing with one out in the 11th and Devon Travis singled on a 1-1 pitch. Reigning AL MVP Josh Donaldson singled on the next pitch and Travis went all the way to third as left fielder Nolan Reimold bobbled the ball.

Encarnacion sent the following pitch, a 91 mph offering, soaring into the second deck in left. Encarnacion immediately knew it was gone and raised both arms in triumph, index fingers pointed skyward.

The crowd of 49,934 chanted "Eddie, Eddie!" as Encarnacion circled the bases before being mobbed by his teammates. Encarnacion matched his career-best with 42 home runs in the regular season.

Jimenez said he was trying to throw a low slider and induce a double play.

"It didn't do anything," Jimenez said. "It stayed up."

Orioles closer Zach Britton, who was perfect in 47 save

chances during the regular season, never got in the game.

"Nobody has been pitching better for us than Ubaldo," Baltimore manager Buck Showalter said. "It didn't work out."

Britton warmed up three times but didn't leave the bullpen.

"It's frustrating but it's not my call," Britton said. "It was just frustrating to have to sit there and watch."

Francisco Liriano retired five straight batters on four groundouts and a strikeout for the win after closer Roberto Osuna left with a sore shoulder.

"The doctor told me that I was going to be fine, I just need a couple of days," Osuna said. "I've been pitching a lot lately. They think it's just fatigue from the last couple of weeks."

Toronto beat Texas last year, sparked by Bautista's memorable homer. The teams brawled in May this year when Bautista was punched in the face by Rangers infielder Rougned Odor following a play at second base.

"It's going to be a very interesting series and we're looking forward to it," Encarnacion said.

Bautista led off the second against Chris Tillman with his fifth postseason homer. Mark Trumbo, who led the major leagues with 47 home runs, gave Baltimore a 2-1 lead in the fourth with a two-run homer off Marcus Stroman.

Ezequiel Carrera's RBI single chased Tillman in the fifth.

When Toronto pinch-hitter Melvin Upton Jr. flied out to the warning track in left field to end the seventh, Orioles outfielder Hyun Soo Kim was nearly struck by a can that was thrown from the stands. Center fielder Adam Jones angrily gestured toward the seats and Showalter came out to register his displeasure with the umpires.

"It's tough when you have that many people in the ballpark and one person does something that reflects poorly on all of them," Showalter said. "It can happen in any ballpark. I don't like anything that puts our guys in harm's way."

Jones wasn't as diplomatic as his manager.

"That is about as pathetic as it gets," he said. "I hope they find the guy and press charges."

Rangers' Andrus won't let ALDS errors define him

Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — Elvis Andrus refuses to be defined by what happened last October, and those two errors the Texas Rangers shortstop made on routine plays.

There was the misplayed grounder in that disastrous seventh inning of the ALDS-deciding fifth game at Toronto. Later came a dropped throw on what would have been a sure force out in the inning punctuated by Jose Bautista's go-ahead homer and emphatic bat flip.

Tears flowed from Andrus' eyes after that loss, a gut-punch finish likely just short of the feeling the Rangers had in 2011 after twice coming within a strike of winning their first

World Series.

But out of that also came a fresh determination and drive for Andrus, who at 28 and in his eighth season is the team's longest-tenured position player.

"I put it on my shoulder, and I'm built for that. I knew it was going to be a challenging year for me," Andrus said. "But at the same time I was excited, I was excited to actually see what I was made of, and the regular season is the first step. I think that I'm way more ready for the postseason this year."

The AL West champion Rangers, in the playoffs for the fifth time in seven years, clinched home-field advantage for the entire postseason. They host Game 1 of the AL Division

Series on Thursday against the Blue Jays, who beat Baltimore 5-2 in an 11-inning AL wild-card game Tuesday night.

With a career-best .302 batting average in the regular season, Andrus had his first .300 season. He also had career highs with eight home runs, 69 RBIs and 46 extra-base hits, and his 70 strikeouts were the fewest in his career.

Andrus views and treats third baseman Adrian Beltre like a big brother — "I'm the one being annoying," Andrus said with a smile, a reference to some of their often entertaining interactions on the field and in the dugout.

Beltre knows what happened to Andrus in Toronto

last year could have happened to anybody.

"We talked about it after that happened, and that kind of pushed him to learn from that mistake and have more motivation to come this year and do what he did," Beltre said.

"This year has been really good for him, and it was nice to see that instead of breaking him, it kind of made him stronger. Elvis has a really good mentality."

Andrus has seen the replays of those ALDS errors and that seventh inning a few times, and said it doesn't affect him. Those clips are sure to be shown quite a few times this postseason, as long as the Rangers are still playing.

Teams keeping close eye on hurricane

Associated Press

CORAL GABLES, Fla. — Football games were postponed, other events canceled and countless contingency plans were being made Tuesday because of Hurricane Matthew, which could deliver a major blow to Florida later this week before likely spinning up the East Coast.

Storm shutters were being drawn shut across windows at the University of Miami, where the 10th-ranked Hurricanes were preparing for their annual rivalry game with No. 23 Florida State on Saturday. Hurricane warnings were issued Tuesday night for parts of Florida, with forecasters saying hurricane conditions — winds of 74 mph or more — were likely to hit the state Thursday.

“I don’t know what we’ll do, to be honest with you,” Miami coach Mark Richt said. “Just keep everybody safe, first. We’ll do the best we can.”

The schedule of Saturday games in the Atlantic Coast and Southeastern conferences could be affected by the storm, and Tennessee Titans coach Mike Mularkey said Tuesday night that there have been preliminary discussions about his team playing Sunday’s game against the Miami Dolphins in

Nashville — if the storm necessitates a change.

“It’s just now kind of a wait-and-see for us,” Dolphins coach Adam Gase said.

Schools in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina were already reacting, with some soccer, volleyball and other collegiate contests scheduled for the next few days either canceled or postponed. South Carolina was still hoping to play host to Georgia in their SEC football game Saturday night, though even the state’s governor suggested that was unlikely.

“As of now I can’t imagine that happening,” said South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, who planned to issue an evacuation order Wednesday affecting coastal areas in her state. “But certainly we’re going to continue to watch this.”

A pair of FCS games originally set for Saturday in South Carolina — Albany State at Charleston Southern and Bethune-Cookman at South Carolina State — have already been postponed. In North Carolina, Elon moved its football game with New Hampshire up a day to Friday due to the storm. And dozens of this week’s high school football games in Florida have already been postponed.

NBA and NHL teams also

were making plans. The Miami Heat were flying home after their preseason opener in Washington on Tuesday night, and weren’t scheduled to leave South Florida again until Friday for a game this weekend in Kansas City, Mo. Instead, the team was considering flying out again on Wednesday, just in case.

The Tampa Bay at Florida NHL preseason game scheduled for Thursday remains scheduled, for now — though the arena the Panthers call home was in the area under a hurricane watch. The Panthers were scheduled to fly to West Point, New York, on Friday, but if winds close airports in the Miami area those plans would obviously be affected.

Cancellations included the decision by Gulfstream Park West to scrap its live thoroughbred racing cards for Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Wednesday was to be first day of racing this season at the track in Miami Gardens, Fla.

“Because weather conditions the next few days remain uncertain, we thought it was best to call off the next few days,” Gulfstream Park general manager P.J. Campo said.

Richt said the Hurricanes were preparing for several contingencies, including poten-

tially using the bubble at the Dolphins’ facility if inclement weather keeps his team off its own practice fields later this week.

The Atlantic Coast Conference — which could have at least five Saturday football games directly affected by the storm — said it was monitoring Matthew closely and hoped that games will be played as scheduled.

Florida State is scheduled to fly in Thursday night for the Miami game, though forecasters say Thursday could be the day when the Miami area gets the worst of Matthew’s wind.

“We’ve looked through every scenario known to man and we’ll figure it out here when it gets there and we’ll fly down when they tell us to fly down and play when they tell us to play,” Florida State coach Jimbo Fisher said.

Other Saturday ACC games that figure to be potentially affected include Army at Duke, Virginia Tech at North Carolina, Syracuse at Wake Forest and Notre Dame at N.C. State.

Notre Dame coach Brian Kelly said pushing his team’s game back to Sunday was possible, if events warrant.

“Everything is on the table right now,” Kelly said.

US men’s team awaits tuneups for Mexico

Associated Press

MIAMI SHORES, Fla. — For U.S. coach Jurgen Klinsmann, it’s all about one thing: Mexico.

His team is training at Barry University, with two tuneup games coming up. The first is against Cuba in Havana on Friday, the first game for the U.S. on the island since 1947. The next is against New Zealand on Tuesday in Washington.

“The bigger picture behind these 10 days is clear — it’s preparing for Mexico on Nov. 11,” Klinsmann said.

That game — in Columbus, Ohio — is the first match for both teams of the final round of CONCACAF qualifying for the 2018 World Cup in Russia. The U.S. plays Costa Rica four days later.

A number of young players will get their chance in the two tuneup games.

“We want to see them taking the initiative,” Klinsmann said. “We want them to come in here and make a very strong impression. I think a good example is Sacha Kljestan. In the last two World Cup qualifying games we told Sasha, ‘Listen this is your opportunity, but you’ve got to take it.’ You’ve got to come in and make an impression and he did that in both games. A similar message to Danny Williams and other players. The door is always open.”

Veteran goalkeepers Tim Howard and Brad Guzan are not on the 23-man roster, giving David Bingham, Ethan Horvath and William Yarbrough a chance to show what they can do.

“It’s our job to bring along the next wave of goalkeepers and try to give them opportunities,” Klinsmann said. “The only way they can go grow is if you let them play.”

Christian Pulisic, a promising 18-year-old midfielder, has been playing well with the U.S. and German club Borussia Dortmund.

“He’s a good young player,” captain Michael Bradley said. “He’s smart in terms of making the right decisions and being a guy who knows the game and understands when he can maybe try a little bit more and when he needs to be more simple. I think he continues to show he’s going in the right direction.”

Defenders Geoff Cameron and Fabian Johnson and forward Jordan Morris worked out but did not practice.

Resilient Vols finding ways to win

Associated Press

ATHENS, Ga. — Tennessee might be the most resilient team in college football.

Hard to imagine the Volunteers getting rattled by their next two games, no matter how daunting they might seem.

Tennessee is on quite a high after one of the most improbable wins in school history Saturday. After rallying from a 17-0 deficit, and then giving up what looked to be the winning touchdown with 10 seconds remaining, Tennessee pulled off a 43-yard Hail Mary on the final play to beat Georgia 34-31.

Bring on Texas A&M and Alabama.

"Just finding ways to win football games," said coach Butch Jones, who collapsed to his knees in tears after the latest comeback. "What can I say?"

The Volunteers (5-0, 2-0 Southeastern Conference) moved up two spots in The Associated Press rankings to No. 9, having matched their best start since the 1998 national championship team.

It will be quite a challenge to

keep that going.

Tennessee heads to College Station to face the Aggies on Saturday, before returning home to meet the top-ranked Crimson Tide on Oct. 15.

It's clear that Jones has turned things around on Rocky Top after nearly a decade of misery.

The Vols have won 11 straight over the last two years, which is the second-longest active streak in the NCAA's top division, surpassed only by Alabama's 17-game run.

"We have the most competitive team in the nation, I feel like," said quarterback Joshua Dobbs, who launched the winning pass to Jauan Jennings. "We find ways to win, fight it out. ... There's no quit in this team. Everyone is hungry and that's the type of attitude you have to have to be successful."

Tennessee has trailed by double digits in four of its five games, and come back to win all of them. The Vols snapped an 11-game losing streak against Florida, rallying from a 21-3 deficit with five touchdowns in the second half. They pulled off a miracle between the hedges,

completing a sweep of the teams that figured to be their biggest challengers in the SEC East.

This is quite a change from a year ago, when Tennessee squandered leads in all four of its losses.

These Vols aren't interested in harping on the past.

This was a finish that will live on as long as football is played at Tennessee.

A day later, the twists and turns that occurred over the final 3 minutes were still hard to fathom:

■ Tennessee went ahead for the first time all game when Derek Barnett jarred the ball loose from Georgia's freshman quarterback, Jacob Eason, as he dropped back to pass in the end zone. Corey Vereen recovered the fumble for a touchdown.

■ The Vols appeared to seal the victory when Mailk Foreman picked off Eason's pass just three plays later. But Georgia called a couple timeouts, forced a three-and-out and got the ball back at its own 19 with just 1:07 remaining.

■ Eason completed three straight passes to get his team to the Tennessee 42, before the

Bulldogs called their final timeout to avoid a 10-second run-off after a false start penalty. Eason spotted another freshman, Riley Ridley, streaking down the left sideline and threw a pass that hit him in stride behind two defenders for what everyone assumed was the winning score.

■ Tennessee caught a break when Georgia was penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct during the raucous celebration, forcing the Bulldogs to kick off from their own 20. Evan Berry returned it 20 yards to the Georgia 43, giving Dobbs a chance to throw a desperation pass. The 6-foot-3 Jennings leaped above everyone else in the scrum and rather easily brought the ball down as he fell to his back.

The Vols never doubted that they'd somehow find a way to win, right to the very end.

"They punched us left and right, but no one said it was over," defensive back Todd Kelly Jr. said.

Sounds like a trait that will come in handy over the next two weeks.

Texas, OU need wins to calm unhappy fans

Associated Press

NORMAN, Okla. — There will be more at stake than usual for Texas coach Charlie Strong and Oklahoma coach Bob Stoops at this year's showdown game Saturday in Dallas.

Both schools have traditionally ranked among college football's top programs, but they are off to disappointing starts by their standards and their fans are not happy.

"The bottom line is we're both 2-2 going into this game," Stoops said. "So both of us, it's critical for both of us in how we move forward. Other than that, I don't pay attention to any of that."

Texas athletic director Mike Perrin told a reporter after Saturday's 49-31 loss to Oklahoma State: "We need to evaluate what happened here." A Longhorns spokesman, John Bianco, later said Perrin's comments were about the coaching staff needing to evaluate the game and the issues the team had on the field.

Strong said Monday that he has taken over as defensive coordinator, and now-former defensive coordinator Vance Bedford will help with the secondary.

"We have a lot of talent on defense," Strong said. "It's unacceptable, the way we played. What I've decided to do is run the defense and call the defense."

Stoops said the change will have some effect on No. 20 Oklahoma's preparation for the game.

"It will be something to consider, what they might do differently," he said. "Sometimes you can only change so much, but I really believe overall, with all we see through the year, our guys are used to seeing a lot."

Strong has been under intense scrutiny since taking over at Texas. The Longhorns showed promise at times last season with wins over Oklahoma and Baylor, but they also lost to Iowa State, Texas Tech and West Virginia. Texas opened this season with a promising win over Notre Dame, but

the heat is on Strong after losses to California and Oklahoma State during which the Longhorns allowed 50 and 49 points, respectively.

Strong has a 13-16 record at Texas and a 9-10 mark in Big 12 play.

Texas defensive tackle Chris Nelson said the players should be taking the heat instead of Strong.

"We can't put this on the coaches; we're the ones on the field playing," he said. "We are very aware of that (pressure). He's a great coach. We are going to play hard regardless."

Some fans and boosters were disappointed after early losses to Houston and Ohio State knocked the Sooners out of the national title picture, but Oklahoma bounced back and beat No. 21 TCU 52-46 last Saturday and has since returned to the Top 25. That took a little heat off for now, but a loss to Texas, Oklahoma's biggest rival, would get things stirred up again.