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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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General's government credit card charges eyed

By TARA COPP
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The former top military adviser to Defense Secretary Ash Carter used his government credit card for almost \$2,900 at two strip clubs and behaved inappropriately with Defense Department female staff while on official travel, according to a DOD inspector general's report released Thursday.

Maj. Gen. Ron Lewis, once considered a fast-rising star and a longtime aide to Carter, was stripped of his position last fall just days after the delegation returned from an international trip that included stops in Malaysia, South Korea and Hawaii.

The strip club charges stem from two previous trips: One in November 2015, when the delegation spent the night in Rome as part of a visit to NATO allies, and one earlier in the spring to South Korea.

During the investigation, Lewis disputed the findings.

Upon further investigation the inspector general held their conclusions and recommended that the Secretary of the Army "take appropriate action" against Lewis, which could include a court-martial for false statements and conduct unbecoming of an officer, along with administrative action for misuse of his government credit card.

In Rome, the inspector general found that Lewis spent the late hours of the evening at a strip club just a few blocks away from the delegation's hotel, the Westin Excelsior. At 1:40 a.m., Lewis returned to the hotel with one of the club's employees.

"In his interview with us, [Maj. Gen.] Lewis told us that after dancing with local women and drinking to 'more than moderation' for three hours, he unsuccessfully attempted to use his personal debit card to pay for \$1,755.98 in personal expenses he had incurred in the club," the inspector general reported. A female employee of the club escorted Lewis back to the hotel to collect the club's money.

As Carter's top military aide, Lewis' room was on the same hallway as the Secretary of Defense. His government credit card was held by a staff member, the inspector general's report said, and Lewis woke up the aide at 2:00 a.m. to get the card as "the female club escort waited for Lewis in that hallway."

The second government charge occurred in spring 2015, in Seoul at the "Candy Bar" club, "an establishment in an area of Itaewon, Seoul, commonly referred to locally as 'Hooker Hill,'" according to the report. Many of the clubs in the area are off-limits to U.S. servicemembers due to the illegal activities.

Lewis charged \$1,121.25 on his government credit card at the Candy Bar and later told investigators he didn't know why he had used that card there.

When defense staff processing his expenses noticed the charge, Lewis claimed that it must be fraudulent and had it disputed.

The last trip Lewis took with

Carter before he was removed from his position included a South China Sea sail aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt as Carter addressed China's militarization of manmade islands in the region. According to the report, in the second-to-last destination, Hawaii, Lewis consumed 11 drinks during the evening, drank with a female enlisted member in his hotel room and made several inappropriate advances toward her and other women during the trip.

Carter would not comment on the case, saying that the inspector general has referred it to the Army for appropriate action. In a statement, Carter said, "As I said when I first learned about allegations of misconduct against Maj. Gen. Lewis and removed him as my Senior Military Assistant, I expect the highest possible standards of conduct from the men and women in this department particularly from those serving in the most senior positions. There is no exception."

Pentagon IDs soldier killed by IED in Afghanistan

By CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — The Pentagon has identified the Special Forces soldier who died from wounds sustained from an improvised explosive device in eastern Afghanistan as Staff Sgt. Adam S. Thomas, 31.

Thomas, assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) out of Fort Carson, Colo., was on a foot patrol supporting Afghan security forces in Nangarhar province.

He was the first U.S. combat fatality in the fight against the Islamic State group in the country, said Brig. Gen. Charles

Cleveland, a spokesman for the U.S. mission in Afghanistan.

The incident occurred in a "combat situation," said Pentagon press secretary Peter Cook, but he said there was no indication Thomas had been specifically targeted.

The Islamic State group controls some territory in Nangarhar and neighboring Kunar province, with a stronghold in Achin district where Thomas was killed.

In Nangarhar's provincial capital, Jalalabad, Attaullah Khogyani, a spokesman for the governor's office, said Afghan forces had managed to hold the

Islamic State group to a few districts. But he said those efforts were threatened by a leadership vacuum caused by the assassination on Sept. 11 of the provincial police chief and the governor's resignation on Sunday.

A native of Tacoma Park, Md., Thomas joined the Army in April 2008. He was assigned to Fort Carson in February, The Gazette in Colorado Springs, Colo., reported.

This was his third deployment. He served in Iraq in 2008-09 and in Afghanistan in 2011-12, The Gazette reported. He was a recipient of several awards, including a Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

"Staff Sgt. Thomas epitomized what it is to be a professional Green Beret and soldier," Col. Isaac Peltier, commander of the 10th Special Forces Group, said in a statement.

Thomas was the third U.S. servicemember to die in combat in Afghanistan this year. The others were also U.S. special operators, but they were killed in operations against the Taliban in the restive southern Helmand province, the site of some of the deadliest fighting in the 15-year war.

More than 2,200 U.S. servicemembers have died in Afghanistan since 2001, according to a Defense Department tally.

Military assists states with evacuations

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Military installations along the southeastern coast of the United States evacuated nonessential personnel and equipment as troops were mobilized to respond to Hurricane Matthew as the deadly storm neared Florida on Thursday morning.

Some 4,500 National Guardsmen in Florida, Georgia and South Carolina were assisting evacuation orders in coastal counties ahead of the storm that National Hurricane Center officials feared could strengthen Thursday before it impacted eastern Florida.

On Thursday afternoon, Matthew was a Category 4 storm, which means it has sustained winds of more than 131 mph, and could be the most powerful hurricane to hit eastern Florida in decades.

Matthew had already proved deadly in the Caribbean. The death toll in Haiti had risen to at least 108 by Thursday afternoon, The Associated Press reported.

The Miami-based National Hurricane Center issued hurricane warnings for northeast Florida and southeastern Georgia on Thursday, where military officials announced nonessential personnel had been dismissed and training activities were halted.

The storm's expected path would bring hurricane conditions into Georgia and the eastern parts of the Carolinas on

Friday into Saturday.

In Georgia, Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay evacuated nonessential personnel and the Army's Fort Stewart, about 30 miles inland near Savannah, suspended all training activities, officials said.

Those announcements came a day after bases in South Carolina dismissed their nonessential personnel, including Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort and Joint Base Charleston.

Among personnel evacuated were the 6,000 recruits training at Parris Island, said Capt. Greg Carroll, a Marine spokesman at the island basic training post.

Aircraft and warships were also moved from the storm's projected path.

Aircraft at South Carolina Air Force bases — including the Charleston post and farther inland bases Seymour Johnson Air Force Base and Shaw Air Force Base — were evacuated Wednesday and Thursday, said Erika Yepsen, an Air Force spokeswoman.

The Navy moved aircraft Thursday morning from Naval Station Jacksonville in northeast Florida, according to a statement.

Guard activated

Florida Gov. Rick Scott has activated 2,500 Army and Air Force Guardsmen to assist with evacuations and respond once the storm has hit, he announced Thursday morning. Another

4,000 National Guard troops remained on alert in Florida.

In South Carolina, Gov. Nikki Haley has active about 1,900 National Guardsmen, according to a National Guard Bureau statement.

In Georgia, 65 Army National Guard military police officers were activated Thursday to assist with ordered evacuations of the coastal counties Chatham and Glynn, said Desiree Bamba, a Georgia Guard spokeswoman.

Haiti response

Meanwhile, as many as 200 servicemembers were deployed to Haiti to assist relief operations after Hurricane Matthew battered that Caribbean nation.

Adm. Kurt W. Tidd, the chief of U.S. Southern Command, said a group of 100 soldiers and Marines and nine helicopters were expected to arrive Thursday in Port-au-Prince, where they would conduct surveillance flights. A small group of Southern Command personnel arrived Wednesday in the Haitian capital to prepare for operations to support the U.S. Agency for International Development at Haiti's request.

Tidd said late Wednesday only Haiti had requested U.S. military help, and Southern Command had prepared a task force to respond, which included the nine heavy- and medium-lift helicopters and several Coast Guard cutters.

Additionally, a 34-member Air Force team deployed Thurs-

day morning to Port-Au-Prince International Airport to provide command and control, airfield assessment, and aircraft maintenance for the operations, Yepsen said.

The storm has killed at least 108 people in Haiti so far, according to CNN, a total that could grow as rescue workers reached isolated areas of the island. Tidd said Hurricane Matthew downed trees and power lines and left bridges and roads impassable. He hoped the task force would begin surveillance operations as soon as Thursday.

In the Caribbean, the Navy pre-staged several ships and helicopters to provide relief if necessary, but those assets remained in a holding pattern Wednesday. Tidd said their use had not been requested as of Wednesday evening.

Guantanamo

Airfield operations were expected to begin Thursday at U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo in Cuba, according to a Navy statement. The only American base in the Caribbean, which houses a law-of-war prison that contains 61 detainees, was largely spared the devastation Matthew unleashed in other areas the storm hit. No injuries or major damage were reported, Tidd said. The roughly 700 nonessential personnel and family members who were evacuated ahead of the storm were expected to return to Guantanamo early next week, he added.

Tribal leader: Strike killed pro-Iraq Sunni fighters

Associated Press

BAGHDAD — A tribal leader said Wednesday that an airstrike killed 19 pro-government tribal Sunni fighters south of the Iraqi town of Mosul, which is held by the Islamic State group.

Sheikh Nazhan al-Lihaibi said the airstrike took place at 2 a.m. Wednesday, following

hours of clashes between his troops and Islamic State militants in the Haj Ali area to the east of the town of Qayara.

The U.S.-led coalition said it had carried out strikes in the area at the request of Iraqi security forces, adding that it had destroyed a building and killed eight enemy fighters.

"We are aware of the reports that Sunni tribal fighters were

in the building that was struck, and we are taking those reports seriously," a spokesman for the U.S.-led coalition said. He said the coalition and Iraqi security forces were carrying out a joint investigation into the incident.

Mahmoud Ali, an officer with al-Lihaibi's militia, said U.S. special forces troops arrived in the area warning them of a future airstrike and telling

them to keep away. It was unclear if the tribal fighters acted on this advice. Ali said that the airstrike killed fighters, some of whom were inside a house.

Al-Lihaibi said his fighters had repelled an attack by the Islamic State group late Wednesday, and another two of his fighters had been killed in the clashes.

Most Navy duplicate charges refunded

BY ERIK SLAVIN
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — Most of the \$5.3 million mistakenly charged to thousands of customers at Navy bases in the Pacific has now been refunded, though some are still waiting to recoup overdraft fees associated with the errors.

Customers began receiving a total of 133,000 duplicate charges for goods and services purchased through Navy child care programs and at Morale, Welfare and Recreation facilities, after a computer systems update Sept. 24.

Navy officials said on Sept. 28 that refunds would be issued

within two days, but most families in Japan and many in other regions hadn't received their refunds by Tuesday.

Bank of America Merchant Services, which processes Navy Installations Command's transactions, finished processing the refunds Sept. 29, spokeswoman Capt. Wendy Snyder wrote in an email Thursday.

However, the interchange service that routes transactions to banks and credit-card issuers can take up to four business days in some cases, she said.

Bank rules on reversals and multiple transactions from the same vendor can create further delays, officials said.

Of \$2.45 million in duplicate

charges to customers in Japan, about \$52,000 remains unrecovered; out of another \$2.45 million on Guam, \$48,000 hasn't been returned, Snyder said.

Out of \$17,765 worth of duplicate charges in South Korea, \$16 is still waiting to be returned.

All \$10,348 from Singapore has been refunded, with a small amount remaining from duplicate charges at the Naval Postgraduate School in California.

The duplicate charges covered purchases between Jan. 22 and June 23.

While some customers were left waiting for a locker room tab at the gym, others who spoke with Stars and Stripes had negative checking account

balances after thousands of dollars in day care expenses were duplicated.

Some Navy customers have struggled with banks and credit unions after trying to recoup the fees, though Navy Federal Credit Union and others have said that they will issue fee refunds.

The Navy will reimburse any overdraft fees not covered by banks. Those affected can submit documentation to local MWR departments, or via email at mwr_creditcard_FAQ.fct@navy.mil.

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Marine accused of stealing car, crashing it into fence

BY ERIK SLAVIN
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — A Marine has been accused of stealing a car and crashing into a homeowner's fence near Camp Fuji.

The Marine, who was not identified, is suspected of taking the automobile from a Gotemba home around 2 a.m. on Sept. 17, city officials said Thursday.

The Marine drove the car until striking a reinforced fence in front of another home, then fled to Camp Fuji, the officials said.

The homeowner notified police soon afterward but told the city only this week, prompting a special news conference by Gotemba Mayor Yohei Wakabayashi.

"As I am in a position to think about the safety of citizens, I urge the officials at the police station and prefectural police to make every effort in conducting the investigation and aim for early settlement of the case," Wakabayashi said, according to city officials Thursday.

The suspect was in Marine custody and cooperating with a local police investigation, the officials said.

The Marine was alone and on his way back to Camp Fuji from Gotemba Station, the Mainichi Shimbun reported. The last trains arrive at Gotemba around midnight, so it remains unclear what the Marine had been doing during the hours prior to the incident.

The officials could not confirm whether alcohol was involved, and Gotemba police declined to discuss the case.

Depending on his rank, the Marine may also face action from the military for violating the U.S. Forces Japan liberty order, which requires servicemembers in pay grades E1 to E5 to be accompanied off base after 10 p.m., and maintains a 1 a.m.-5 a.m. curfew for those ranks.

Marine officials did not immediately respond to questions Thursday.

Crimes involving Marines and other servicemembers are a major political issue on Okinawa, a southern island that hosts about half of all U.S. forces in Japan.

A protest earlier this year on Okinawa drew tens of thousands of people following the arrest of a base civilian on murder-related charges, and a sailor's arrest for driving under the influence of alcohol.

However, servicemember crime is exceedingly rare near Camp Fuji, a rural area in the shadow of Mount Fuji, adjacent to a large Japan Self-Defense Forces training ground.

The last significant crime near Camp Fuji happened four years ago, Gotemba officials said. In the past 20 years, the city cited four felonies attributed to servicemembers.

Most Camp Fuji Marines serve short, unaccompanied tours. However, Marines sometimes arrive from elsewhere for training.

City officials were not sure Thursday where the Marine under suspicion is stationed.

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Bin Laden shooter will not face DUI charge

Associated Press

BUTTE, Mont. — Prosecutors in Montana said Wednesday they have dropped a driving under the influence charge against a former Navy SEAL who said he shot and killed Osama bin Laden.

Both sides in the case agreed that medication prescribed to treat symptoms related to Rob O'Neill's military service formed the basis for the DUI charge, The Montana Standard reported.

Butte-Silver Bow County prosecutors charged O'Neill with negligent endangerment and deferred prosecution for up to a year while he undergoes treatment through the Veterans Affairs Department.

If O'Neill successfully follows the terms of the agreement, the endangerment charge will be dropped.

O'Neill was found asleep behind the wheel of a running car at a Butte convenience store at 2:30 a.m. on April 8. He has said he took a prescription sleep aid to treat severe insomnia.

NSA contractor took classified documents

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A contractor for the National Security Agency has been arrested on charges that he illegally removed highly classified information and stored the material in his home and car, federal prosecutors said Wednesday.

Harold Thomas Martin III, 51, of Glen Burnie, Md., was arrested by the FBI in August after he admitted to having taken government secrets, authorities said. A defense attorney said Martin did not intend to betray his country.

The arrest was not made public until Wednesday, when the Justice Department unsealed a criminal complaint that accused Martin of having been in possession of top-secret information that could cause “exceptionally grave danger” to national security if disclosed.

Among the classified documents found with Martin, the FBI said, were six that contain sensitive intelligence — meaning they were produced through sensitive government sources or methods that are critical to national security — and date back to 2014. All the documents were clearly marked as classified information, according to a

FBI affidavit accompanying the complaint.

The complaint does not specify what documents Martin is alleged to have taken. He was arrested around the same time U.S. officials acknowledged an investigation into a cyber leak of purported hacking tools used by the NSA. That tool kit consists of malicious software intended to tamper with firewalls, the electronic defenses protecting computer networks. Those documents were leaked by a group calling itself the “Shadow Brokers.” The complaint does not reference that group or allege a link to Martin.

The arrest could turn into another embarrassment for the U.S. intelligence community. It would be the second known case since 2013 of a government contractor being publicly accused of removing secret data from the NSA, which monitors and collects sensitive information and data, mostly from overseas.

At the White House, spokesman Josh Earnest said President Barack Obama takes the situation “quite seriously. And it is a good reminder for all of us with security clearances about how important it is for us to protect sensitive national security information.”

The New York Times first reported the arrest of an NSA contractor who worked for Booz Allen Hamilton. The complaint does not identify the agency Martin worked for as a contractor, but Adm. Mike Rogers, who heads the NSA, confirmed that Martin worked as a contractor for the NSA.

“We do acknowledge that we arrested a contractor who had been employed at the NSA,” Rogers said at an event at Harvard University. He declined to offer any details about the case because it was still being investigated.

Booz Allen said in a statement that after learning of the arrest of one of its employees, it reached out to law enforcement authorities to offer its cooperation and fired the worker.

At Martin’s home, investigators found stolen property valued at “well in excess of \$1,000,” the complaint said. He voluntarily agreed to an interview.

“Martin at first denied, and later when confronted with specific documents, admitted he took documents and digital files from his work assignment to his residence and vehicle that he knew were classified,” the affidavit says. “Martin stated that he knew what he had done was

wrong and that he should not have done it because he knew it was unauthorized.”

He was arrested Aug. 27 and remains in custody.

“There is no evidence that Hal Martin intended to betray his country,” his public defenders, James Wyda and Deborah Boardman, said in a statement. “What we do know is that Hal Martin loves his family and his country. He served honorably as a lieutenant in the United States Navy, and he has devoted his entire career to serving his country. We look forward to defending Hal Martin in court.”

The complaint charges Martin with unauthorized removal and retention of classified materials and theft of government property.

In 2013, NSA contractor Edward Snowden, who also worked for Booz Allen, stole classified records from the NSA that he leaked to journalists, revealing the agency’s bulk collection of millions of Americans’ phone records.

After news broke of Martin’s arrest, Snowden tweeted: “Am I correct in reading they didn’t charge him under the Espionage Act? Under this administration, that’s a noteworthy absence.”

Clown rumors create hysteria on college campuses

The Washington Post

It was just after midnight Tuesday at James Madison University when the clown calls started pouring in. Phones beeped and buzzed. There was no official alert at the Harrisonburg, Va., school, but on Yik Yak, Twitter and GroupMe, students learned of a possible intruder on campus.

A grainy Snapchat video purported to show a menacing clown outside of one of the residence halls. Freakout ensued.

Some students panicked; others were just wary. No one really thought it was funny. In minutes, undergrads carrying flashlights and pepper spray roamed the Quad, seeking to capture the clown or at

least chase it off.

The JMU clown fright was just one of hundreds that have erupted this week at colleges, high schools and grade schools across the country, forcing learning institutions to respond seriously to a growing national hysteria that many had previously regarded as a laughing matter.

Many of the clown posts on social media have included threatening language that specifically targets individual schools.

Administrators may say the clown threats are hoaxes, but they feel compelled to address them. Student safety is paramount for school districts and universities after a seemingly unending string of fatal school shootings and threats during

the past two decades.

Police departments across the region have sought to reassure parents and students that they are monitoring the threats but said they are hoaxes.

Frank McAndrew, a professor at Knox College in Illinois, has been following this year’s clown scare, which began online in midsummer with unsubstantiated reports of menacing clowns luring children into the woods and other unconfirmed sightings. Some experts say the character of Twisty, a psychotic clown in the popular FX television show “American Horror Story,” has helped fuel the phenomenon.

Schools in New Haven, Conn., have banned clown costumes and “symbols of terror” dur-

ing the Halloween season. And in other cities, hoping to soothe frayed nerves, police and city leaders are requesting people not wear clown costumes at all.

The World Clown Association’s president issued a statement on YouTube recently urging the clown community to counter “scary clowns” with a positive response.

Marsha Gallagher, who has been working as a clown since 1976, said rising paranoia about clowns has led to fewer jobs.

“It’s getting to the point where we’re uncomfortable going out with your whole clown persona on,” Gallagher said. “It’s less about losing income than losing the opportunity to spread the joy and to see people’s faces light up when you walk into the room.”

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Teen accidentally shot brother, 10, police say

PA INDIANA — Pennsylvania State Police say a 10-year-old boy was hospitalized over the weekend after he was accidentally shot by his teenage brother in Indiana County.

The 15-year-old boy was playing with the hammer and trigger on the weapon when it fired on Sunday. Police say the teen believed he had unloaded the .22-caliber pistol after using it for target practice earlier.

The two boys were sitting across from one another in the living room of their Cherry Hill Township home when the gun went off.

Police say the bullet traveled along the 10-year-old boy's skull just underneath his skin. He was taken to Indiana Regional Medical Condition in stable condition before he was later transferred to Children's Hospital in Pittsburgh as a precaution.

Yale to name classroom after 1st black student

CT NEW HAVEN — Yale University is honoring its first black student by naming a classroom for him.

The New Haven Register reports that the school will name a divinity school classroom after James W.C. Pennington and hang his portrait in the room.

Divinity school graduate Lecia Allman led the effort to honor Pennington, who escaped slavery in Maryland in 1837. Allman says it was illegal in Connecticut then to educate blacks from other states, but Pennington was allowed to attend classes. He just wasn't allowed to speak, use the library or earn a degree.

Pennington later became an abolitionist and formed an or-

ganization to provide former Amistad captives an education.

Divinity School Dean Gregory Sterling says honoring Pennington "recovers part of our past that has been neglected."

On planned test drive, restored 'Vette crashes

IA MASON CITY — After a 15-year restoration, a mechanic was taking a classic 1961 Chevrolet Corvette for a final test drive in Mason City before shipping the car to its owner in Florida.

Then came the crash.

Ray Shimak told the Globe Gazette he was checking on a shifter adjustment when another car swerved into the Corvette. No one was hurt, but the crash damaged the Corvette's right rear and front.

Shimak had been restoring the Corvette since 2006 for retired Mason City businessman Lee Snell, who bought the car in the 1970s and had worked on it for years.

Shimak says the latest repairs should be done by Jan. 1.

He says Snell accepted the news of the crash well, noting "He's a patient man."

WWII ship LST 325 heading for Vicksburg

MS VICKSBURG — A restored World War II amphibious warship will make Vicksburg one of its stops on a cruise down the Mississippi River — the second visit to the city for the historic vessel.

The LST 325 is expected to arrive Friday after leaving Missouri on Monday. The ship last visited the city in 2003, The Vicksburg Post reported.

While in Vicksburg, visitors to the ship will be allowed to go on board and tour the vessel and look at its artifacts from other LSTs that participated in World War II, Korea and

Vietnam.

LST stands for landing ship tank; a class of 328-foot long, 50-foot wide flat-bottomed ships, capable of running aground and discharging 600 troops or military vehicles like trucks, jeeps and tanks to roll directly out on a beach.

According to The Post, the LST 325 was commissioned Feb. 1, 1943, as part of the Northern Attack Force in support of the invasion at Salerno, Italy, carrying elements of the 40th Royal Tank Regiment. It later was part of Force "B," the backup force for the troops going ashore at Omaha Beach on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

The ship was transferred to Greece in May 1964 and was renamed Syros. It served in the Greek Navy until December 1999 when it was decommissioned.

In 2000, LST 325 was acquired by The USS LST Ship Memorial Inc., the group that worked to restore it.

16 teens suspended for liquor at sleepover

MA WEST NEWBURY — Sixteen members of a Massachusetts high school girls' soccer team have been suspended after social media posts showed them with a bottle of vodka at the home of a local police chief.

Administrators at Pentucket Regional High School in West Newbury investigated after getting an anonymous tip. The superintendent says the girls have been suspended for four games for an alleged violation of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association's chemical health policy.

The girls gathered at the Groveland home of Boxford police Chief James Riter Saturday night.

Riter told WBZ-TV he has daughters on the team and he thought he and his wife

were properly monitoring the sleepover. He says he takes ownership of the incident and the girls must accept the consequences.

Moose wanders through state Capitol grounds

ND BISMARCK — A wayward moose turned heads in North Dakota's capital city.

The young bull moose sauntered through a mall parking lot, backyards and the state Capitol grounds on Tuesday.

The animal drew a crowd wherever it went, but police urged people to stay away from the stressed wild animal.

City Animal Warden Ed Woodcock says it's the time of year when moose mothers are kicking out their young. He said the moose likely wandered into the city from the Baldwin or McKenzie areas.

Police: Doughnut heist leads to wanted man

NM HOBBS — Authorities say a fugitive's sweet tooth helped police capture a wanted New Mexico man after he tried to take a doughnut without paying for it.

The Hobbs News-Sun reported that Gregory Mendoza, 35, was arrested Monday outside of a Hobbs bakery after police received a report he stole a doughnut. Police then discovered that Mendoza was wanted on a number of charges, including cruelty to animals and traffic violations.

New Mexico court records show Mendoza has 10 pending charges out of Carlsbad Magistrate Court from July. Mendoza also has charges pending in Las Vegas Magistrate Court, including aggravated fleeing a law enforcement officer.

From wire reports

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Bum rush: Giants oust Mets

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Nobody takes to October like Madison Bumgarner and the San Francisco Giants.

Bumgarner pitched a four-hitter for his latest postseason gem, outlasting Noah Syndergaard in a classic duel between aces, and injury substitute Conor Gillaspie hit a three-run homer in the ninth inning that sent San Francisco to a 3-0 victory over the New York Mets in the NL wild-card game Wednesday night.

"This game was everything we thought. Two really outstanding pitchers going at it," Giants manager Bruce Bochy said. "One of the best postseason games I've been a part of."

Gillaspie connected off All-Star closer Jeurys Familia, who led the majors this year with a club-record 51 saves while allowing only one home run.

With their ninth consecutive victory when facing postseason elimination, Bochy and the Giants advanced to play the NL Central champion Cubs in a best-of-five Division Series. Game 1 is Friday night at venerable Wrigley Field in Chicago.

"I like our chances," Bumgarner said.

The good news for the Cubs as they attempt to end a championship drought that dates to 1908 is this: Bumgarner probably won't start until Game 3 — and would only be available once on full rest.

The big left-hander has been untouchable under pressure.

"It's unbelievable what he's done," Gillaspie said.

The last time Bumgarner was on the mound in the postseason, he saved Game 7 of the 2014 World Series in Kansas City with five scoreless innings on two days' rest to cap one of the greatest playoff performances in baseball history.

Including his four-hit shutout at Pittsburgh in the 2014 wild-card game, he has tossed 23 straight scoreless innings in winner-take-all games — all on the road.

Sandy Koufax. Bob Gibson. Whitey Ford — Bumgarner ranks right up there with any of 'em when it comes to October clutch.

"He's one of the game's great big-game pitchers," Mets manager Terry Collins said.

Asked how he wants to be remembered, Bumgarner said: "I'm a winner. That's all anybody wants to be."

After having the best record in the majors at the All-Star break, San Francisco was 26-42 in the second half before finishing with a four-game winning streak to hold off St. Louis by one game for the final NL playoff spot.

Now, the Giants have a chance to extend their pattern of even-year titles after winning World Series crowns in 2010, '12 and '14.

In a matchup between the past two NL champions, Syndergaard struck out 10 in seven innings of two-hit ball. Familia entered in the ninth and Brandon Crawford lined a leadoff double. Angel

Pagan struck out after failing to get a bunt down, and Joe Panik walked.

Gillaspie, starting at third base for injured All-Star Eduardo Nunez and playing his first post-season game, drove a 96 mph pitch to right field and pumped his arm as he rounded first.

"I don't know what I was thinking. Normally I'm not a fired-up guy. I let some frustration out from the first six innings with that swing," said Gillaspie, who was 7 for 14 with five RBIs in his final five games of the regular season.

Before he connected, the Giants had a pinch-hitter on deck to bat for Bumgarner.

When the ball cleared the fence, it stunned a revved-up, orange towel-waving crowd of 44,747 that sank into its Citi Field seats with a collective groan.

"I missed the location," Familia said simply.

With the Giants finally ahead, Bochy sent Bumgarner back out. He closed with a 1-2-3 ninth against the 3-4-5 hitters and smacked his glove in triumph when rookie T.J. Rivera flied out to end it.

San Francisco players hugged each other behind the mound and headed for the clubhouse to celebrate with bubbly, cheered by a happy contingent of Giants fans behind their dugout.

"Bum just did his thing," Bochy said. "We won the game because of him."

With his sizzling fastball clocking 99 mph and long, blond locks dangling down his neck, Syndergaard held San Francisco hitless until Denard Span's two-out single in the sixth.

Mets center fielder Curtis Granderson kept the game scoreless with a courageous grab of Brandon Belt's deep drive, crashing hard with his left shoulder into the padded fence 408 feet from home plate and tumbling to the warning track.

Syndergaard simply overpowered the Giants at times, but Bumgarner kept the Mets off balance by mixing pinpoint pitches and changing speeds from around 93 mph down to 77 mph.

New York came out swinging after Collins said before the game his hitters had seen enough video of Bumgarner over the past two days to know he would challenge them. But the aggressive approach played right into the hands of Bumgarner and the Giants, who never had to use a shaky bullpen that struggled badly down the stretch.

The big lefty was able to get quick outs early and went the distance on 119 pitches, striking out six and walking two — one intentional. He needed only seven pitches to get through each of the first three innings, with the help of a double play.

"I really thought, 'Hey look, if we can get to him early,'" Collins said. "We probably need to do a little better job of working the count."

Cubs keep focused

Associated Press

CHICAGO — The Chicago Cubs embraced the target and ran away with the best record in baseball.

Now that the playoffs are starting, the final mark is in sight. And if there is a little added pressure to nail it, well, manager Joe Maddon says bring it on.

"Those words, 'pressure' and 'expectations,' are positive words," he said Tuesday. "You never want to be involved or associated with a situation that doesn't have the certain level of expectations. ... I think it's great. Those are the two words that should bring out the best in your performance."

The Cubs are seeking the biggest prize of all after leading the majors with 103 wins and giving their long-suffering fans hope this might be the year to end a World Series title drought dating to 1908. They will face the San Francisco Giants in an NL Division Series that begins Friday at Wrigley Field — what they hope will be the next step toward the ultimate prize.

A century-old championship hex could be a burden, but if one thing has defined this team as much as its sheer dominance, that would be its poise.

Nothing seems to rattle this bunch. Not tight games, not a season-ending injury to emerging star Kyle Schwarber, not a 1-9 stretch in June, and not infielder Tommy La Stella leaving the team and pondering retirement at midseason.

"We certainly, like most organizations, spend a lot of time trying to assess guys' makeup and what makes them tick, and the characteristics, how they might respond to adversity certainly and how they respond to pressure," president of baseball operations Theo Epstein said. "But I think there's something to be said for the culture in an organization and a clubhouse, the tone set by the manager and coaching staff, the veteran players that allows guys to be themselves even in big moments."

Vikings still have a lot left to prove

Associated Press

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. — The quarterback, running back and left tackle are all out, likely for the whole season.

The Minnesota Vikings have been playing as if nobody's missing at all.

"In the NFL," coach Mike Zimmer said, "it's adapt or you get eaten up."

Injuries are a given in this game, so overcoming the loss of key players is hardly a novel accomplishment.

The Vikings (4-0) have only finished the first quarter of the schedule, so their replacements have much more to prove over the long haul that they can render moot the absence of Teddy Bridgewater, Adrian Peterson and Matt Kalil.

The way this team has responded to these potentially devastating setbacks, though, is the type of trait that title contenders possess.

"I say it all the time, because it's true about this football team. It's so important to have the right kind of guys in here," Zimmer said. "Guys that when it gets down to it, we fight."

The damage to Bridgewater's left knee that occurred in practice on Aug. 30 caused widespread consternation, but once the Vikings were able to visit with the popular quarterback they loosened up a little.

The trade for Sam Bradford was made only four days later, an instant pick-me-up for the players that signaled the organization was still serious about chasing that elusive championship.

Bradford was playing so well in his debut on Sept. 18 against the rival Green Bay Packers that the departure of Peterson with damage to his right knee wasn't as demoralizing as it could have been.

Jerick McKinnon and Matt Asiata fared relatively well filling in with Peterson out in 2014 while the child abuse case against the star running back played out.

Plus, the defense has reached a new height of dominance, in its third year under Zimmer.

The news, then, that Kalil would need season-ending surgery on his right hip became almost an afterthought at that

point.

The left tackle is crucial in the protection plan, frequently facing the opponent's best and fastest pass rusher, but Kalil had clearly been struggling through the injury at less than full strength. T.J. Clemmings, who started at right tackle as a rookie last season, has held his own over the past two games.

Bradford, who has yet to turn the ball over, has shown a quick release, an accurate touch and ample strength to throw deep.

He has especially been confident in throwing the ball to his most-trusted options, wide receiver Stefon Diggs and tight end Kyle Rudolph, in heavy traffic that Bridgewater was less willing to test.

The Vikings beat the New York Giants 24-10 on Monday behind their most-balanced offensive production to date in 2016, rushing for a season-most 104 yards.

"This is the first game where the offense scored all the points," Rudolph said.

"We finally were able to get things rolling on offense and let them just worry about stopping

people and not scoring, too."

Peterson led the league in rushing last season, but for whatever reason he hasn't been as dominant since the 2012 season when he won the NFL MVP award.

He's long been more comfortable lining up deep in the backfield, but Bridgewater and now Bradford are more effective in the shotgun or pistol formations.

Peterson is the type of power runner who has often thrived off wearing a defense down over the course of a game, a potentially limiting factor for the play calling with that temptation of his potential to break loose for a long gain at any time.

The run blocking was poor over the first three games, so the low production wasn't necessarily a sign that Peterson slowed down.

But McKinnon's versatility of style, plus a superior ability as a pass-catcher and pass-protector, just might be a better fit. Asiata is a capable complement for short-yardage situations, too.

Broncos' Talib shows he's one of league's best CBs

Associated Press

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — Three months ago, Aqib Talib was in a hospital room in Dallas with a gunshot wound to his right leg, the circumstances of the shooting as foggy as his future in football.

As the television in the corner showed images of his teammates laughing with the president in the Rose Garden, Talib, who had bought a custom-fitted \$3,500 suit to wear to the White House, instead awaited his discharge while wondering if he'd ever walk correctly again.

While everyone else was asking how he'd been shot, Talib worried if his NFL career was over.

Answers to that first question

have eluded both police detectives and league investigators ever since.

What is crystal clear is that Talib is not only back but he's returned to form as one of the game's great cornerbacks.

His 46-yard interception return for a touchdown against Andrew Luck and the Indianapolis Colts two weeks ago was his ninth career pick-6. On Sunday, he sparked the unbeaten Broncos' 27-7 win at Tampa Bay by picking off a pair of Jameis Winston passes.

Although his two interceptions led to Denver's first two touchdowns, Talib has been kicking himself this week knowing he might have taken them back the final 11 and 27 yards himself.

"Definitely, I definitely could have scored on both of them, according to the iPad," Talib said with a laugh. "I definitely could have scored on both of them, so I have to get better at that."

Only three players are better at it than Talib. Rod Woodson owns the record with a dozen pick-6s, one more than Darren Sharper and Charles Woodson.

Nobody has more than Talib's 33 interceptions since he entered the league in 2008.

"He's playing special, he's having a big year," said coach Gary Kubiak, who had Talib address the team Saturday night on the eve of his first game in Tampa since he was traded from the Buccaneers to New England midway through the 2012 season.

"It was special, man," Talib said of his return to the city where he began his career as a first-round draft pick out of Kansas nine years ago. "I got a warm welcome off the plane, into the hotel, on the field. Got a warm welcome, and to be able to put on show like that in front of the fans that I still have in Tampa, man, it was special."

Talib missed the final month of OTAs and much of training camp while recovering from his wound. His absence, combined with Super Bowl MVP Von Miller's protracted and sometimes nasty contract stalemate, were the marquee concerns in Denver's drama-packed offseason that included a quarterback shuffle and two defensive defections.

Miami trying to snap skid vs. Seminoles

Associated Press

CORAL GABLES, Fla. — Brad Kaaya tries not to think about the last two games against Florida State.

Tries to no avail, that is.

The Miami quarterback still has all the plays that got away from the Hurricanes in those matchups etched in his mind, ones that ultimately meant that his team couldn't close the deal after holding fourth-quarter leads against its archrival.

The next chance for No. 10 Miami (4-0, 1-0 Atlantic Coast Conference) to end what's now a six-game losing streak in the series is Saturday night, when No. 23 Florida State (3-2, 0-2) visits.

"Not being able to finish games," Kaaya said in a quiet moment after practice Tuesday. "It has been a killer for us."

"Finish" has been a buzzword all season around the Hurricanes, and it was again Tuesday. Practice on another hot and sun-drenched South Florida morning was winding

down, sweat-drenched players were getting tired and it was showing in the effort they were giving toward the end of the workout. And someone wasn't happy.

That someone wasn't a coach. It was Kaaya.

"He got on the group a little bit a couple times, just about their focus and execution," Miami coach Mark Richt said. "It was hot, it was late in the practice ... and he let them know a couple of times."

That's not even close to the first time Kaaya has spoken up.

If he thinks a team meal at a hotel before a game is a little too loud, he lets teammates know and they respond immediately. The Hurricanes rotate captains for each game, but whether he's out at midfield for the coin toss or not — and Kaaya is one of the four Miami players picked for this game — he's the undisputed leader of the locker room.

They can see that even up in Tallahassee.

"He's a lot calmer and more poised," Florida State coach Jimbo Fisher said. "You can see the maturity as he keeps going. He's just growing as a player, a very good player."

Two years ago at home, Miami led 16-0 in the first half and 26-20 in the fourth quarter before falling 30-26 to eventual national champion Florida State — the final margin in that game being the number of points the Hurricanes squandered with a short missed field goal and a blocked extra point.

Last year in Tallahassee, Miami was down 17-3 early and seemed on the cusp of getting blown out before rallying to take a 24-23 lead in the fourth. But that lead didn't hold up, either.

In both games, Dalvin Cook — a Miami native — ran for the go-ahead touchdown for Florida State.

"It's Miami week. It don't get no bigger than this," Cook said. "This is one of the games you came to Florida State (for), to play in this rivalry. We're going

to take full advantage of it. when you step in that stadium, man, it's something you can't even explain. It's different."

That it is, and this time, Kaaya is hoping for a different ending.

He can reel off the plays that got away with ease — including four passes in big moments that were batted away, three at the line of scrimmage — though he wishes he could forget them all.

"They all could have been game-changing plays," Kaaya said.

His third taste of this series awaits, and the stakes are high as always in this rivalry.

The Hurricanes have a chance to remain unbeaten in the ACC, end that long drought against the Seminoles and probably push their rivals out of the AP Top 25 and hand Florida State its first consecutive losses since 2011.

In other words, they're going to try to do exactly what their quarterback is telling them.

Top-ranked Alabama begins difficult SEC stretch

Associated Press

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — Alabama breezed through most of its early schedule with lopsided wins and one big comeback.

Now, the top-ranked Crimson Tide enter the meat of their schedule with three straight games against Top 20 teams, two of them on the road. The stretch begins Saturday at No. 16 Arkansas, with the Tide then going to No. 9 Tennessee before a home game with No. 8 Texas A&M.

"The next three weeks will be a grinder," center Bradley Bozeman said Monday.

A grinder, indeed. Alabama (5-0, 2-0 Southeastern Conference) has been tested only once this season, though it's taken a quarter or so to get going in several games.

That lone challenge, incidentally, came in the only SEC

road game so far. That's when Alabama overcame a 24-3 deficit and a late charge to edge No. 14 Mississippi 48-43 and end a two-year losing streak to the Rebels. Three of the next four are road games, closing with a trip to LSU.

'Bama stampeded its only other ranked opponent, then-No. 20 Southern California, 52-6 in the opener at Arlington, Texas. Besides Ole Miss, the Tide have won the other four games by an average of 37.5 points and lead the SEC in scoring offense while ranking second in scoring defense. With seven touchdowns, Alabama's special teams and defense have actually outscored three of the first five opponents.

That came against teams such as Kent State and Western Kentucky, though. The offense figures to improve along the way with three key freshmen

— quarterback Jalen Hurts, tailback Joshua Jacobs and right tackle Jonah Williams — banking some experience. Jacobs started in place of an injured Damien Harris (ankle) against Kentucky and rushed for 100 yards.

Williams has started every game and Hurts has so clearly solidified the starting job that opening-game starter Blake Barnett left the team and withdrew from school last week.

Now comes the toughest part of the schedule, though. After these four games, Alabama faces struggling SEC West opponents Mississippi State and Auburn and FCS team Chattanooga.

It really is nothing new since the Tide have faced 53 Top 25 teams since the start of the 2008 season and beaten 41 of them, a .773 winning percentage.

"Pretty much every year we

have a long SEC stretch, so I'm pretty used to it now," defensive end Dalvin Tomlinson said.

Tide players are also accustomed to tuning out the hype and adhering to Tide coach Nick Saban's message about staying grounded and not being satisfied with their performance.

There is room for improvement.

The passing game wasn't clicking in the first half against Kentucky. Botched execution also led to a fumble when tailback Bo Scarbrough bumped the arm of Hurts.

"I think our team is making progress, but I think we need to continue to do that and continue to work because every week in the SEC you've got a real challenge and a real test and that certainly won't be any different playing on the road this weekend against Arkansas," Saban said.