

STARS AND STRIPES®

Friday, October 21, 2016

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Islamic State counterattacks in Kirkuk

Associated Press

KIRKUK, Iraq — Islamic State militants armed with assault rifles and explosives attacked targets in and around the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk early Friday, in an assault that appeared aimed at diverting Iraqi security forces from an offensive against Mosul.

Multiple explosions rocked the city, and gunfire rang out from the area around the provincial headquarters. Smoke billowed over the city, and the streets were largely deserted out of fear of militant snipers.

The Islamic State group said its fighters targeted the provincial headquarters.

Three suicide bombers stormed a power plant in the town of Dibis, north of Kirkuk, killing 13 workers, including four Iranian technicians, before blowing themselves up as police arrived, said Maj. Ahmed Kader Ali, the Dibis police chief.

Iran's Foreign Ministry

spokesman Bahram Ghasemi condemned the Kirkuk assault, which he said killed four Iranians and wounded three others, according to the official IRNA news agency.

The Turkmeneli TV station, which had shown live coverage of smoke rising outside the provincial headquarters, said that one of its reporters, Ahmet Haceroglu, was killed by a sniper while covering the fighting.

Kirkuk is about 100 miles from the Islamic State-held city of Mosul, where Iraqi forces have been waging a wide-scale offensive since Monday.

The militants have resorted to suicide bombings in and around Baghdad in response to battlefield losses elsewhere in the country. But the complex assault in Kirkuk more closely resembled those carried out by the Taliban in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Kirkuk is an oil-rich city claimed by both Iraq's central government and the largely

autonomous Kurdish region. Kurdish forces assumed full control of Kirkuk in the summer of 2014, as Iraq's army and police crumbled in the face of the Islamic State group.

Kemal Kerkuki, a senior commander of Kurdish peshmerga forces west of Kirkuk, said the town his base is in also came under attack early Friday, but his forces repelled it.

He said the Islamic State group maintains sleeper cells in Kirkuk and the surrounding villages.

Kirkuk province is home to hundreds of thousands of people displaced by the conflict.

Iraqi and Kurdish forces backed by a U.S.-led coalition launched a multipronged assault this week to retake Mosul and surrounding areas from the Islamic State group.

Iraqi forces advanced as far as Bartella, a historically Christian town about 9 miles from Mosul's outskirts, by Thursday.

An Associated Press reporter traveling with the Iraqi special forces on Friday saw homes along Bartella's main road painted with Islamic State graffiti, including the first Arabic letter in a derogatory word for Christians used by the militants to mark Christian property.

Islamic State militants had sprayed graffiti on the inside walls of the town's church as well. Iraqi soldiers raised the national flag over the building and rang the church bell, signaling its liberation.

"Bartella was liberated yesterday, and today we are inside its church," Lt. Gen. Talib Shaghatai said. "I bring the good news to our Christian brothers that the church is liberated."

Some 3,900 people, or about 650 families, have fled Mosul and the nearby Hamdaniyah district since the operation began this week, according to Adrian Edwards, of the U.N. refugee agency.

Russian carrier move prompts concern at NATO

By JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

STUTT GART, Germany — A Russian aircraft carrier is steaming toward the Mediterranean Sea, sparking concerns that Moscow intends to intensify its bombing campaign in Syria by dispatching a 30-year-old vessel on its first combat deployment.

The move could be as much about optics as tactics as Moscow seeks to showcase to Western adversaries its ability to deploy forces far and wide.

NATO is monitoring the Russian carrier group's moves.

"We are concerned this Russian carrier group will support

military operations in Syria in ways that will increase humanitarian suffering," NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said during a news conference at his Brussels headquarters.

On Thursday, Russia's only flattop, the Admiral Kuznetsov, and a group of accompanying warships — including the nuclear-powered battlecruiser Peter the Great — were sailing through the North Sea and English Channel.

The deployment of Russian sea-going firepower comes at a tense time between the West and Russia, whose relations are at an all-time post-Cold War low. Disputes run the gamut — from allegations over Rus-

sian cyber meddling in the U.S. presidential election to Ukraine and the conflict in Syria, where Russian and Syrian planes have been bombing rebel-held parts of the city of Aleppo.

Earlier this month, Russia announced plans to expand its naval supply base at the Syrian port of Tartus, which in the past has been a logistical hub for Russian ships patrolling in the Mediterranean. The plan is to install new air and anti-submarine defense systems, enhanced docking capacity and command and control infrastructure, Russian officials have said.

At U.S. European Command headquarters in Stuttgart, of-

ficials said they are monitoring the Russian fleet as they do any other large ship movements through its area of interest.

Russia sending warships through the Mediterranean is not uncommon, and in and of itself is not of concern, Stoltenberg said.

"It is important to underline Russia has the right to operate in international waters, and this is not the first time we have seen this carrier group deployed to the Mediterranean," Stoltenberg said. "What creates concern now is this carrier group may be used to contribute to the military operation over Syria and be used to increase attacks in Aleppo."

USS Wasp replaced amid Libya operation

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — The Navy's USS San Antonio is now serving in the Mediterranean Sea as part of Operation Odyssey Lightning, replacing another warship in a move that will alter the type of air power being brought to the fight in Libya.

The USS San Antonio replaces the USS Wasp as part of a planned switch, U.S. Africa Command said on Friday.

While Marine Harrier fight-

ers have been a part of the operation aboard the Wasp, the San Antonio does not host fighters.

Still, AFRICOM said the mission, which began in August, will continue. "At the request of the GNA (Libya's government of national accord), U.S. assets will continue to provide precision airstrikes to the GNA-aligned forces," said Chuck Prichard, an AFRICOM spokesman.

Prichard added that the San Antonio is "more than capable of sustaining the current

mission."

The USS San Antonio joins the effort with UH-1 Y Hueys and AH-1 W Cobras from the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit's Aviation Combat Unit, VMM-264, AFRICOM said.

The Wasp had played a key role in Navy and Marine Corps efforts in support of Libya's fragile national government, which is conducting an offensive against Islamic State fighters in the coastal city of Sirte. In nearly three months, more than 200 airstrikes have been

carried out in and around Sirte. Prichard said the mission's focus has not changed, and forces have "only been tasked to provide air-strike support and not part of any ground operation."

U.S. warplanes have been conducting regular airstrikes against the militants in support of Libyan ground forces. The USS San Antonio, a part of the Wasp Amphibious Ready Group, is now positioned off the northern coast of Libya, AFRICOM said.

2 Americans killed in Afghanistan identified

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

The Pentagon has identified two Americans, including one soldier, killed in an attack Wednesday near a NATO coalition base in the Afghan capital, Kabul.

Sgt. Douglas J. Riney, 26, of Fairview, Ill., and Michael G. Sauro, 40, of McAlester, Okla., died of wounds received from encountering hostile enemy forces, a Pentagon statement said Thursday. Riney was as-

signed to the Support Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas. He entered active-duty service in July 2012 as a petroleum supply specialist and had previously served in Afghanistan from July 2014 to February 2015, The Associated Press reported.

Sauro was assigned to the Defense Ammunition Center, McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, McAlester, Okla.

He was described as a "stand-

up guy, both as a manager and a friend," and a "joy to work with" by colleagues quoted by Oklahoma City's Koco 5 News.

He had been in Afghanistan for one month and was scheduled to return to the U.S. in March. It was his third Afghan deployment, Koco 5 News said.

The Afghan Defense Ministry described the incident that killed Riney and Sauro as an insider attack. The attacker was wearing a military uniform when he assaulted a

group of foreign soldiers at 11 a.m. near a military base in the Rish Khor area of western Kabul, said Defense Ministry spokesman Gen. Dawlat Waziri. The assailant was killed, the ministry said.

Riney and Sauro had been conducting duties as part of a train-and-advise operation by the NATO-led Resolute Support mission.

Another servicemember and two other U.S. civilians sustained injuries in the attack and were in stable condition.

Navy makes huge clean energy purchase from solar array

The Washington Post

On Friday in Maricopa County, Ariz., the U.S. government was expected to hit a clean energy milestone: what officials are calling the largest procurement of renewable energy by the federal government, in this case from a desert solar array.

The new 150-megawatt Mesquite 3 solar array is in Arizona, but the electricity it generates will be sent to California's electric grid and will power roughly one-third of the electricity needs of 14 naval installations in the state, including San Diego's

naval base and the Marines' Twentynine Palms and Camp Pendleton.

"Today we're going to throw a switch and start getting those electrons flowing to our 14 bases," said Dennis McGinn, the assistant secretary of the Navy for energy, installations and environment, who spoke from Arizona where he was on site for the plant's opening ceremony.

The deal will let the Navy buy solar power at a fixed price for 25 years from the array, which is owned by Sempra Energy.

"To me, the essence of solar

power is, you know what the price of the fuel is going to be for the next 25 years, or more," McGinn said. "It's predictable, it provides financial planning and energy planning stability to our calculation, and it's part of our diversified energy portfolio."

The Navy has distinguished itself as a leader in the clean energy space of late, also experimenting with biofuels for planes, ships and vehicles, and even trying to subtly change officers' behavior to make them more energy conscious, based on the idea that using less energy provides a tactical advantage.

The move is being celebrated not only by the Navy, but also the Energy Department, which contends that the dramatic growth of large-scale solar plants in the Southwest is a direct result of major investments made by its Loan Programs Office.

In 2010, the U.S. didn't have a single utility-scale, solar photovoltaic farm, a new analysis from the Loan Programs Office notes. But \$4.6 billion in loans from the Energy Department led to the installation of five such plants, capable of generating 1.5 gigawatts, or billion watts, of electricity capacity.

FAST members guard planes, crews

By CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

CAMP SHORAB, Afghanistan — After a few orbits high over the airfield at the former British military base in Afghanistan, the C-130J Super Hercules began a rapid descent to the ruddy-brown earth.

“Look for stopped vehicles,” U.S. Air Force Capt. Erik Svendsen, the pilot, said to his co-pilot over the intercom. “It’s unusual. It means bad things.”

The two craned their necks and swiveled their heads, checking the fast-approaching ground below through the bank of cockpit windows. Soon joining them in this ritual was Staff Sgt. Thomas Tyrone, 26, a member of the late September mission’s Fly-Away Security Team, or FAST.

In teams of two to four, the “air marshals of Afghanistan,” as one member calls them, guard the flight deck from potential hijackers on certain flights and provide added perimeter security around the aircraft while parked at high-risk airfields like Shorab. The base, formerly known as Camp Bastion, is located near the capital of Helmand province, where fighting now rages between government forces and Taliban insurgents.

“We’re the first and last line of defense,” said Tyrone, a

Georgia native. “If anything happens, it’s two dudes out there hoping for the best.”

Tyrone is with a 13-man FAST detachment from Hill Air Force Base in Utah that deployed to Bagram Air Field for six months in April. By the end of September, they’d collectively logged more than 250 missions, racking up nearly 1,000 flight hours while securing aircrews that hauled more than 8,000 passengers and 6,500 tons of cargo across Afghanistan.

After 15 years at war, some places stubbornly remain, or have again become, hostile to Western forces in the country.

Camp Shorab, an Afghan base built on what remains of camps Bastion and Leatherneck, where thousands of Western personnel lived at the height of the war, now hosts just a few hundred U.S. and allied troops and advisers.

But it doesn’t meet the Air Force’s high standards for flight-line security, which puts it on a short list of airfields in Afghanistan that call for a fly-away security detail on the C-130s ferrying passengers and supplies from Bagram and back.

On the ground, the team is responsible for keeping asylum-seekers at bay and fending off attackers long enough for the pilots to get the turboprop-

ered Super Hercules airborne, even if that means the team stays behind.

Their added combat training and firepower — M-4 rifles, compared with the aircrew’s 9 mm handguns — are a comfort “when you’re someplace sketchy,” said Capt. Michael Morrison, Svendsen’s co-pilot.

“It’s one less thing to worry about,” he said.

Shorab requires only a two-man team, but some places are sketchier than others. In Kunduz, which the Taliban took briefly last year and again entered this month, the airfield lacks a perimeter fence, which means flights there arrive with a larger number of FAST members.

Still, Shorab has its threats. On the approach in late September, someone spotted a truck stopped along a road outside the base perimeter, under the planned flight path to the runway. Svendsen began a dizzying evasive maneuver, banking the hulking transport plane to avoid the airspace over the truck, just in case it was packed with explosives.

In the cockpit, Tyrone also reads the terrain for traffic volume and things that seem out of place, he said, details he passes on to intelligence officials and uses to identify looming threats he may face on the flight line.

Among the dangers, “the big one is vehicles coming at you,” said Airman 1st Class Jesse Johnson, 22, something a parked truck at the end of the runway could become. Johnson, who is from southern Michigan, was Tyrone’s partner on the mission.

After donning protective gear and radios, Tyrone and Johnson made their way with their rifles through the cavernous cargo bay to the back ramp of the aircraft as it taxied along Shorab’s hot, dry runway. They jumped out, taking up posts about 30 feet from the plane — front and rear — and scanning the horizon with rifles at the ready.

The plane’s four turboprop engines continued to run, blowing hot exhaust at Tyrone. Morrison, the co-pilot, said crews used to shut the engines down at Shorab until FAST members told them that the engine start checklist takes longer than they could expect to hold off attackers.

This visit to Shorab was uneventful, however. Passengers got off, a few got on, and just before the crew raised the ramp, Tyrone and Johnson were called in from the perimeter.

“The takeoff might be weird,” Tyrone said, taking his seat again near the cockpit. The pilot would have to avoid the truck again on the way out.

Carter visits Turkey amid rifts over Iraq, Syria

By TARA COPP
Stars and Stripes

ANKARA, Turkey — Ankara has agreed in principle to negotiate with Baghdad on the contentious issue of the role of Turkish forces in the battle for Mosul, potentially defusing tensions between the two nations as Iraqi troops advance on the Islamic State-held city, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter said Friday.

Iraq began an offensive Monday to retake Mosul, Iraq’s second-largest city, which the Islamic State group seized in a

lightning offensive in 2014.

The military campaign involves 18,000 Iraqi security forces and 10,000 Kurdish fighters — but not the Turkish forces already in northern Iraq nor any of the Sunni forces that the Turks have been training for the Mosul campaign. The Shiite-led Iraqi government to date has not supported Turkish involvement in the battle and has become increasingly agitated by Ankara’s refusal to withdraw its forces.

It remained unclear what the potential agreement would mean for the Turkish contingent.

Turkey has said the forces are necessary to maintain its own border security, but the troops’ continued presence sparked an exchange of angry statements as Baghdad launched the major offensive against the Islamic State group.

Carter met with Turkish Defense Minister Fikri Isik and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to discuss the broader campaign but also to ease escalating tensions between the two nations over the issue.

“These are two close friends of ours,” Carter said of Iraq and

Turkey. “In the case of Turkey, it is a NATO ally, and we want to keep everybody focused on the objective here, which is to defeat (the extremists).”

Carter said Iraq’s sovereignty was one of the principles Ankara agreed on, but that a way forward would also consider Turkey’s interests in having a role in the battle, given its shared border and Sunni ties to Mosul’s population.

Carter said he was “confident” that a solution could be found that addresses “the sensitivities of all the parties.”

Big statue of nude woman in Calif. stirs controversy

Associated Press

SAN LEANDRO, Calif. — There have long been complaints about the lack of women in the tech industry. Now there's a towering female figure, in a tech park across the bay from San Francisco, although not quite what some people had in mind.

A 55-foot tall statue of a nude woman unveiled this week in the working-class community of San Leandro is stirring controversy and a lot of conversation.

At the base of the 13,000-pound statue is a message in 10 languages that says: "What would the world be like if women were safe?"

The statue — roughly three times as tall as Michelangelo's David — is made of steel mesh in the form of a graceful dancer, with an arched back and arms stretched overhead. The debate is not over its artistic merit but whether it's appropriate in public.

"If she's a ballerina, she should have some clothes on," said Tonette Watts, 57, a resident and mother of a teen girl, who stopped and stared at the statue on her way to work. "If you've got kids, you do not want them seeing that."

Another parent, Keith Ver-ville, 48, studied the sculpture and then asked: "Why is it so big? And so not clothed?"

The statue, named "Truth is Beauty," is on private property at the edge of a new tech office complex — in a highly trafficked and visible area just across from San Leandro's commuter rail station.

Many people, including city officials, have welcomed the statue as a reflection of the changing demographics in San Leandro, where young millennials now outnumber older residents.

"This is something I'd never have thought would come to San Leandro," said Mayor Pauline Russo Cutter. "It's edgy and modern, and it makes me proud."

Trump, Clinton trade barbs as NYC charity roast turns bitter

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The annual Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation Dinner, a white-tie gala in New York that is often the last time the two presidential nominees share a stage before Election Day, is traditionally a time when campaign hostilities are set aside.

Not this year.

Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton traded sharp barbs and brutal takedowns Thursday, the night after their final debate, with many in the well-heeled crowd turning on the Republican nominee midway through his remarks and showing him with jeers.

Trump, who had drawn big laughs earlier in the speech, appeared to lose the room as he repeatedly dug in with caustic swipes at Clinton, drawing rare boos at a charity event meant to raise money for impoverished children throughout New York.

He appeared to straddle the line when he talked about how "listening to Hillary rattle on and rattle on" has made him better appreciate his longtime nemesis Rosie O'Donnell. But he then seemed to cross it when he referred to her as "corrupt" during a lengthy riff on the FBI's investigation into her use of a private email server as secretary of state.

"Hillary is so corrupt she got kicked off the Watergate Commission. How corrupt do you have to be to get kicked off the Watergate Commission? Pretty corrupt," he said to boos and at least one call demanding he get off the stage.

He then appeared to segue into the standard attack lines of his rally speeches, setting aside jokes to bring up material contained in hacked Clinton campaign emails.

"Hillary believes that it's vital to deceive the people by having one public policy and a totally different policy in private," he said to growing

jeers. "Here she is tonight, in public, pretending not to hate Catholics."

Clinton also veered into personal digs, making one joke in which she said the Statue of Liberty, for most Americans, represents a symbol of hope for immigrants.

"Donald looks at the Statue of Liberty and sees a '4,'" Clinton joked. "Maybe a '5' if she loses the torch and tablet, and changes her hair."

Trump and Clinton sat one seat apart, with New York's Cardinal Timothy Dolan acting as the buffer.

Dolan later called his seat "the iciest place on the planet."

Some of Trump's jokes landed well, drawing laughs from both the crowd and Clinton.

His biggest laughs came as he talked about Michelle Obama getting rave reviews for a speech. "They think she's absolutely great. My wife Melania gives the exact same speech, and people get on her case," he said.

And some of his attack lines flashed a sense of humor that has been mostly absent from the grueling campaign. Clinton was the first one to laugh when Trump joked that she had bumped into him earlier in the night "and she very simply said 'Pardon me,'" an unobscure reference to the Republican nominee's frequent declarations that she should go to jail.

Clinton, meanwhile, was more self-deprecating than Trump, joking that she's taken a break from her "usual nap schedule" to attend and suggesting that the audience should be pleased she's not charging her usual fee for speaking in front of potential donors.

But she also got in some digs at Trump, a few of which drew scattered jeers. Clinton said she understood why Trump was leery of teleprompters because they can be difficult to follow and "I'm sure it's even harder when you're translating from the original Russian."

Trump will accept 'clear election result'

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Donald Trump has stepped back slightly from his refusal to say during his debate with Hillary Clinton whether he would concede if he loses on Election Day, failing to stem the criticism that flowed from Republicans and Democrats over an attitude some contended struck at the heart of American democracy.

"I would like to promise and pledge to all of my voters and

supporters and to all of the people of the United States that I will totally accept the results of this great and historic presidential election," Trump said Thursday while campaigning in Ohio. After letting that vow hang in the air for a few seconds, he added, "if I win."

Putting aside his mocking tone, Trump said he would accept "a clear election result" but reserved his right to "contest or file a legal challenge" if he lost. He brushed off the

likelihood of that happening with a confident prediction that "we're not going to lose."

While Trump maintained he would win, numerous Republican leaders conceded he was heading for defeat barring a significant shift in the campaign's closing days. The GOP's top concern was salvaging its majority in the Senate, followed closely by worries over the Republicans' once-comfortable grip on the House.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Company's network brings vets together

CT GROTON — U.S. Navy contractor Electric Boat is bringing military veterans who work at the company together to try to improve their job satisfaction, reduce attrition and recruit more veterans.

The "EB Veterans Network" launched Thursday at the Groton, Conn., headquarters, Rhode Island manufacturing facility and satellite sites nationwide.

It aims to connect veterans through social events and mentoring, to build a community and camaraderie. It will also connect them with veterans' resources and staff at the company to answer their questions.

Bank places 'lucky pennies' across US

MI DETROIT — Stopping to pick up a stray penny off the ground may not seem worth the effort, yet one bank is trying to change that mindset by placing 100 fake pennies across the country worth \$1,000 apiece.

Ally Bank said it hopes to encourage Americans to save through its "Lucky Penny" promotion. The lucky pennies carry a copper color like real pennies, but have the bank's logo instead of Abraham Lincoln's head. The flip side lists its value at 100,000 cents.

The pennies have been placed in New York; Los Angeles; Chicago; Washington, D.C.; Miami; Denver; Detroit; San Diego; Charlotte, N.C.; and Austin, Texas.

The coins can be redeemed online until the end of the year.

Nearly \$10K in cash is returned to owner

NY SENNETT — Nearly \$10,000 in cash a res-

taurant owner left in a shopping cart at a New York store has been returned thanks to a couple who found the money.

Managers at the Tractor Supply Co. store in Sennett in the Finger Lakes region said the couple found around \$9,800 in an envelope Monday morning.

The Citizen of Auburn reported the couple turned the envelope over to the store's staff, did their shopping and left without giving their names.

A local restaurant owner called the store Monday saying she had put a week's worth of her restaurant's receipts in the envelope and left it in a cart.

The woman said she'd like to find the couple to reward them.

Couple celebrates wedding with puppies

MN MAPLE GROVE — A Minnesota couple celebrated their wedding day by posing with puppies.

Kathryn and Brad Ziemer, of Maple Grove, wanted to highlight the work of Secondhand Hounds, which rescues dogs from high-kill shelters. So instead of flowers, the couple chose puppies when they tied the knot on Oct. 15.

Kathryn Ziemer said, "Who doesn't love puppies?" She said having the animals at the wedding was more about the animal rescue, which she calls "incredible."

KMSP-TV reported that members of the wedding party did not know about the puppies until they went outside for group photos and found 13 pit bull puppies waiting.

Police nab a bandit with taste for cookies

CT STAMFORD — Police in Connecticut said a bandit with a taste for espresso and fancy cookies was nabbed because he asked an officer for

directions to a pastry shop.

Stamford Police Lt. Thomas Barcello told the Stamford Advocate that Donald Newman-Smith, 26, had covered his face with a bandanna when he robbed a convenience store on Monday, getting away with around \$800.

Soon after, a police investigator was responding to the convenience store when Newman-Smith asked him how to get to the pastry shop.

Later, the investigator recognized the man as he watched surveillance footage of the robbery. Officers went to the shop and found Newman-Smith at an outside table, drinking an espresso with a dozen Pignoli cookies.

Police officer saves unresponsive child

TX GRANBURY — A Texas police officer has been honored for going out of his way to help save a little boy's life.

Police in Granbury said Officer Chase Miller was scanning his radio's EMS channel on Oct. 12 when he heard a dispatcher call for paramedics to respond to a 911 call about a 3-year-old boy who had stopped breathing. Miller realized he was near the location and immediately responded.

Video from Miller's dash cam shows him performing CPR on the boy until the child resumed breathing. The boys' parents told the officer he had suffered a fever-induced seizure.

Miller was given the city's Life Saving Award on Tuesday. He was joined at the ceremony by the boy and his family.

Work crews to move state's largest tree

ID BOISE — Crews are working to remove Idaho's largest sequoia tree from

where it sits next to a hospital due to construction.

The Idaho Statesman reported that on Wednesday, Environmental Design Inc., a company whose expertise is moving large trees, began work to move the 104-year-old tree from next to St. Luke's to a new site at Fort Boise Park.

The hospital will pay around \$300,000 to move and care for the tree.

In order to move the tree, which stands 98 feet tall and is more than 20 feet around, crews will dig a trench around the sequoia and prune its roots to a 20- to 25-foot radius. A special watering plan will help heal the roots before the tree is moved in spring 2017.

Bullet holes damage Emmett Till marker

MS GLENDORA — A sign at the site where Emmett Till's body was found has been damaged by what appears to be bullet holes.

WJTV-TV reported the historical marker in Tallahatchie County has been receiving a lot of attention after Kevin Wilson Jr. posted a picture of the damage on Facebook on Saturday. The sign has more than 40 holes in it.

"That marker was just evidence that there are people who are still living in those areas who still hold those ideologies dear to their heart," Wilson said. "Ideology that we're trying to get away from."

The Emmett Till Interpretative Project is raising money to get the sign replaced.

Till, 14 a black boy from Chicago, was kidnapped and brutally killed in 1955 after witnesses said he whistled at a white woman. His murder helped rally the civil rights movement.

From wire reports

Your objective source for military news
updated 24/7 from bases
around the world.
Now online at www.stripes.com.

STARS AND STRIPES®

Chicago Cubs head home with 3-2 lead

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — One win away. Two chances at home. Seven decades of waiting.

The Chicago Cubs closed in on their first World Series trip since 1945 by beating the Los Angeles Dodgers 8-4 on Thursday in Game 5 of their National League playoff series.

Jon Lester pitched seven sharp innings, Addison Russell hit a tiebreaking homer and the Cubs grabbed a 3-2 lead in the NL Championship Series.

On deck, a pair of opportunities to wrap up that elusive pennant at Wrigley Field.

"The city of Chicago has got to be buzzing," manager Joe Maddon said. "We're not going to run away from anything. It's within our reach right now."

The Cubs' first opportunity to clinch comes Saturday night in Game 6, when Dodgers ace Clayton Kershaw faces major league ERA leader Kyle Hendricks.

"That's a game we expect to win," Los Angeles manager Dave Roberts said.

Of course, the Cubs were in the same favorable position 13 years ago — heading home to Wrigley with a 3-2 lead in the NLCS.

But even with ace pitchers Mark Prior and Kerry Wood starting the final two games, Chicago collapsed against the Marlins in one of its most excruciating failures.

More than a decade later, the franchise is still chasing its first World Series championship since 1908.

"We've heard the history," center fielder Dexter Fowler said, "but at the same time we're trying to make history."

Budding star Javier Baez was in the middle of everything for the Cubs, a common theme this October. The second baseman made a sensational defensive play when the game was still close in the seventh, and his three-run double capped a five-run eighth that made it 8-1.

After busting out of his postseason slump Wednesday, Russell hit a two-run homer for the second straight game. This one was a sixth-inning drive off losing pitcher Joe Blanton that gave Chicago a 3-1 lead.

"Just rounding the bases, it was pretty exciting," Russell said. "Pumped up, not only for myself but for the team and that little cushion that Jonny had to go forward from that."

Baez had three of Chicago's 13 hits, matching the team's total in Game 4, when

the Cubs snapped a 21-inning scoreless streak and won 10-2.

Lester allowed one run and five hits, improving to 2-0 in three playoff starts this year. He has given up two runs in 21 innings.

The left-hander struck out six and walked one in a slow-paced game that lasted 4 hours, 16 minutes.

"These guys won the game for us," Lester said, nodding toward Russell and Baez. "I was just kind of along for the ride."

Anthony Rizzo's run-scoring double gave the Cubs a 1-0 lead in the first.

Los Angeles tied it in the fourth on Adrian Gonzalez's RBI groundout.

Russell homered on an 0-1 pitch from Blanton, who gave up a single to Baez leading off the sixth. Baez stole second before Russell's shot to left-center put the Cubs ahead on another unusually hot night at Dodger Stadium.

Blanton took his second loss of the series. The veteran right-hander gave up consecutive homers in the eighth inning of Game 1, including a tiebreaking grand slam by pinch-hitter Miguel Montero.

"Our confidence hasn't wavered," Roberts said. "This series certainly isn't over."

Dodgers counting on Kershaw in Game 6

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Clayton Kershaw gripped a baseball in his left hand and grimaced while he watched Game 5 of the NL Championship Series from the dugout.

The Los Angeles Dodgers' best pitcher was ready and eager, and he was sitting on three days of rest. Manager Dave Roberts could have deployed him Thursday night in Chavez Ravine and probably again in relief at Wrigley Field.

Roberts declined to play his ace, instead holding his top card for the weekend. The Dodgers decided to rely on rookie Kenta Maeda and their busy bullpen against the NL's best offense.

Those pitchers hung in for the first three hours, but eventually proved to be no match for Jon Lester in the Chicago Cubs' 8-4 win. Los Angeles now trails the NLCS 3-2 after getting outscored 18-6 in two straight home games.

But the Dodgers didn't sound discouraged as they packed up for their flight.

"We can grab that momentum by one name," Dodgers first baseman Adrian Gonzalez said. "Kershaw."

Although Roberts has already proven unafraid to do unorthodox things with his pitchers in October, he stuck to a conventional plan to save Kershaw for Game 6.

And instead of pitching to clinch a pennant Saturday night, Kershaw must attempt to save the Dodgers' season again.

"We've got Clayton going in Game 6, so that's a game we expect to win," Roberts said.

Kershaw volunteered to pitch Game 5, but Roberts had several reasons to turn him down.

Roberts figured he would need to start Maeda at some point in the next three games, and he hoped the home crowd would benefit the inconsistent Japanese right-hander. With a day off Friday, Roberts also knew he could go deep into his bullpen — which has thrown a majors-high 43 innings in the postseason — with no repercussions.

"It's not an elimination game," Roberts said after Game 4. "And I think the accumulation of [Kershaw's] usage over the last 10 days plays a factor in our decision."

Instead of pitching on three days' rest in Game 5, Kershaw will be pitching on

a luxurious five days' rest in Game 6. Although the three-time NL Cy Young Award winner already has pitched 19¹/₃ innings in the postseason, a midseason injury kept him off the mound for 2½ months, leaving his arm with much less accumulated action than in a normal season — 168¹/₃ innings combined this year, compared to 246¹/₃ last season.

Kershaw shrugs off that notion, saying he feels pretty much the same as he did in previous Octobers. The biggest difference is that Kershaw, who acquired a reputation for postseason struggles over the past several seasons, has begun to erase that reputation this fall while he attempts to reach his first World Series.

The Dodgers are eager to see their ace at his best.

"We have Kershaw going the next game, which we're excited about," said Blanton, who gave up two homers and five runs to the Cubs in Game 1 after four scoreless appearances against the Nationals. "Our backs are against the wall, but we kind of like that. We've been there the whole year. We were in this situation in Washington, too. Maybe it's where we need to be."

Packers' Rodgers sharp in win over Bears

Associated Press

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Aaron Rodgers set a record. The Chicago Bears lost another quarterback.

After a slow start in the red zone, the Green Bay Packers picked up the pace in the second half to overpower their offensively-challenged NFC North rivals.

Rodgers threw for 326 yards and three touchdowns, Davante Adams and Ty Montgomery emerged as playmakers in the second half and Packers beat the Bears 26-10 on Thursday night.

Rodgers was 39 of 56, setting a franchise mark for completions in a game. It was the Packers' first contest without injured running back Eddie Lacy.

"A lot of moving parts, a very satisfying victory at home," coach Mike McCarthy said.

The Packers (4-2) moved effectively on short gains most of the night, but couldn't break into the end zone until Adams caught the first of his two touchdown receptions with 9:11 left in the third quarter for a 13-10 lead.

Rodgers and Adams combined again for a 4-yard score

on the first play of fourth quarter for a 10-point lead.

The Bears (1-6) lost quarterback Brian Hoyer to a broken left arm in the second quarter. With Jay Cutler already out with a right thumb injury, Chicago turned to third-stringer Matt Barkley.

An offense that was already 31st in the league in scoring got worse. Barkley was 6 of 15 for 81 yards and two interceptions.

"Well, when you lose your starting quarterback it can be disruptive," Bears coach John Fox said. "It's not an excuse, it's just a reality,"

He tried to lean on the rush against the NFL's third-best run defense. It didn't work either.

Kadeem Carey had 48 yards on 10 carries, including a 24-yarder. Receiver Alshon Jeffery was held to three catches for 33 yards against a Packers secondary without its top three cornerbacks because of injuries.

It got so bad for the Bears that Rodgers had more completions (37) than the Bears had offensive plays (36) by 5:31 of the fourth quarter.

That 37th completion for Rodgers was a 2-yard touch-

down pass to Randall Cobb for a 16-point lead.

Adams, Montgomery and Cobb each finished with at least 10 receptions.

Hoyer hurt: Hoyer left early in the second quarter after getting hit by Julius Peppers and Clay Matthews on an incompletion on third-and-6 from midfield. The right-handed Hoyer looked as if he landed on his left arm. He was attended to by trainers on the field for a couple minutes before going to the locker room. Hoyer was 4 of 11 for 49 yards.

Triple threat: Adams had 13 catches for a career-high 132 yards, making Jordy Nelson-like moves to spin out of tackles for extra yards. Adams had just been cleared earlier Thursday from the NFL's concussion protocol after leaving the loss Sunday to Dallas.

Cobb finished with 11 catches for 95 yards.

Montgomery, who got the start in the backfield with running backs Lacy (ankle) and James Starks (knee) out, finished with 10 catches for 66 yards, and nine carries for 60 yards.

"You do what you have to do, you play the way you have to

play," McCarthy said.

Big Floyd: The Bears' only touchdown came from rookie pass-rushing linebacker Leonard Floyd, who forced Rodgers to fumble on third-and-10 from the 15 on a sack. Floyd recovered the ball in the end zone for a 10-6 lead, 30 seconds into the third quarter.

Floyd had been limited in practice this week with a calf injury.

"He's got those kind of abilities. It's been problematic a little bit having him out there, but it was good to have him back out there tonight," Fox said.

The Packers scored touchdowns on their next three drives.

Slow start: The Packers moved effectively with short passes in the first half but stalled on three drives inside the 22. Mason Crosby salvaged two series with field goals, but the Packers went scoreless on another drive when Montgomery was stopped on a fourth-and-goal run from the 1.

Green Bay, which led 6-3 at the half, exploited the Bears' underneath coverage. They also threw short passes as a substitute for the running game.

McAdoo unsure if Giants will keep kicker Brown

Associated Press

LONDON — Coach Ben McAdoo said Friday that the New York Giants have not yet decided whether Josh Brown will remain on the team after admitting to abuse of his former wife.

McAdoo faced repeated questioning about the kicker following the Giants' first practice in London for a game Sunday against the Los Angeles Rams.

Brown did not travel to London and the team has yet to say if he will be suspended or cut following this week's publication of King County Sheriff's Office records in which the player said he physically abused his wife, Molly, over a protracted period. She told police in those documents that the abuse and other threatening behavior stretched from 2009, when she was pregnant with their daughter, to the Pro Bowl

in January 2016.

At the Pro Bowl in Honolulu, Brown's wife said she called NFL security to move her and her three children to another hotel to avoid harassment from her estranged husband. She said he pounded on her hotel door seeking to get in. The allegation is included in the final report filed last month by the investigating detective, King County Sheriff's Det. Robin Ostrum.

When asked whether the Giants knew about Brown's behavior at the Pro Bowl, McAdoo repeatedly said the Giants were still gathering information. Finally, he answered: "I'm not going to answer that."

When a reporter asked McAdoo about his comments earlier this year suggesting he would show no tolerance for players abusive of their family members, McAdoo said his comments then were more nuanced.

"When did I say zero tolerance?" he said,

adding: "I do not support domestic violence, if that's what you're asking. I do not condone it."

McAdoo described Brown as a practicing Christian who was trying to improve his behavior and the Giants organization was supporting him in this. But when asked to explain how the Giants supported him or monitored his off-field behavior, McAdoo said he couldn't detail any specific acts of support.

The Giants have signed Robbie Gould, an 11-year veteran of the Chicago Bears who was cut in September for salary cap reasons. The 34-year-old will practice with the team Saturday.

"I've seen him make a lot of kicks against me in the past. He's been successful, and we're hoping that continues," the coach said of Gould.

Pens rally in third to win Cup rematch

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Evgeni Malkin, Scott Wilson and Patric Hornqvist scored during a furious third-period rally to lead the Pittsburgh Penguins to 3-2 victory over the San Jose Sharks on Thursday night.

The Penguins trailed by two goals after two largely lifeless periods in a rematch of last June's Stanley Cup Final before catching fire late. Hornqvist and Malkin both finished with a goal and an assist. Marc-Andre Fleury stopped 32 shots and bought the Penguins time until the offense finally got going.

Tomas Hertl and Patrick Marleau scored for the Sharks, who controlled the first 40 minutes and appeared well on their way to a one-sided victory before falling apart late. Martin Jones made 17 saves but saw the play in front of him break down in the third.

Ducks 3, Flyers 2: At Philadelphia, Ryan Garbutt's goal broke a tie in the third period and sent Anaheim to its first win of the season.

The Ducks opened 0-3-1 and had failed to score more than two goals in any of those games. Chris Wagner and Corey Perry also scored to help the Ducks spoil Philadelphia's home opener.

Bruins 2, Devils 1: Patrice Bergeron scored the tiebreaking goal with 75 seconds left in his season debut to give host Boston the victory.

After missing the first three games with an unspecified injury, Bergeron took regular shifts in the home opener. He was on the ice when linemate Brad Marchand tied it 1-all with just under 10 minutes left in regulation, and he was there again to slide in the game-winner.

Capitals 4, Panthers 2: Alex Ovechkin scored the game-winning goal midway through the third period to lift visiting Washington.

Jaromir Jagr became the third player to score 750 goals.

He is in third place in the NHL, behind only Wayne Gretzky (894) and Gordie Howe (801).

Canadiens 5, Coyotes 2: Carey Price made 27 saves in his season debut to help host Montreal beat Arizona.

Price sat out since most of last season after injuring his right knee on Nov. 25. He missed the first three games of this season because of the flu.

Avalanche 4, Lightning 0: Matt Duchene had two goals and an assist, and Semyon Varlamov made 27 saves for his 21st career shutout to lead visiting Colorado.

Andreas Martinsen and Carl Soderberg scored for the Avalanche, who are 2-1 on a four-game trip.

Wild 3, Maple Leafs 2: Eric Staal scored twice and host Minnesota recovered from another deficit to beat Toronto.

Staal has three goals in his first four games with his new team, and his game-winner with 8 minutes left kept Minnesota unbeaten in its three-game homestand despite allowing the first goal in each game.

Kings 4, Stars 3 (OT): At Dallas, Alec Martinez scored 1:20 into overtime for Los Angeles.

Martinez's wrist shot from the slot went past a screen by Tanner Pearson to beat Stars goalie Kari Lehtonen.

Oilers 3, Blues 1: Connor McDavid had a goal and an assist as host Edmonton won its second straight game.

Hurricanes 4, Flames 2: Victor Rask scored his third goal of the season to lead visiting Carolina over Calgary.

Rask's power-play goal with 3:48 left in the first period made it 2-0 as the Hurricanes built up a lead and never gave it up to pick up their first win of the season.

Canucks 2, Sabres 1: Jacob Markstrom made 26 saves and Daniel Sedin scored the game-winner in the third period as host Vancouver downed Buffalo.

Hokies romp Canes

Associated Press

BLACKSBURG, Va. — Virginia Tech didn't let a surprising loss five days ago linger, and the Hokies are once again atop the ACC's Coastal Division race.

Jerod Evans threw for two touchdowns and ran for a third and Virginia Tech (5-2, 3-1 Atlantic Coast Conference) beat Miami 37-16 on Thursday night, pulling into a tie with No. 22 North Carolina atop the division.

Evans hit Bucky Hodges with scoring throws of 7 and 12 yards, and Travon McMillian ran for 131 yards for the Hokies.

"There were certain plays we put in this week that I had a feeling I was going to get the ball on, and the coaches just dialed it up," Hodges said after leading the team with seven catches for 66 yards.

Brad Kaaya threw for 323 yards and two touchdowns for the Hurricanes (4-3, 1-3), but he also was sacked eight times as they lost their third in a row.

The Hokies limited Miami to 42 rushing yards on 29 carries thanks to the sacks.

"Obviously the key for us was we needed to stop the run and make Miami one-dimensional, and we were able to do that," Hokies defensive coordinator Bud Foster said. "We really did a great job attacking the line of scrimmage, keeping the lanes and the gaps tight, keeping those backs in a phone booth, so to speak."

Joe Yearby had a 41-yard run for the Hurricanes, but otherwise managed just 18 yards on his eight other carries.

"The defense was playing tough, stacking the box," he said. "They did everything we expected them to do."

Woody Baron had 2½ sacks for Virginia Tech, and Vinny Mihota had two despite having his shoulder pop out late in the first half.

"I'm not going to throw anyone under the bus," Hurricanes coach Mark Richt said. "Sacks have to do with a lot of things."

Blocked FG lifts Boise St.

Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho — When Brigham Young University lined up to attempt a game-winning field goal with 16 seconds remaining, Boise State nose tackle David Moe was struggling to get his shoe on along the sideline as head coach Bryan Harsin was pleading for someone to help Moe.

"That might have been the most stressful moment in the whole game," Harsin said. "BYU is lining up for a field goal and I can't get my nose tackle out there."

Moe got his shoe on in time, and he blocked the 44-yard attempt and help Boise State escape with a 28-27 victory Thursday night in a wild finish.

The Broncos (7-0), who won their 23rd straight non-conference home game, overcame five turnovers in the victory. Since 2004, FBS teams that are minus-5 in the turnover category

are 9-231.

"I think it shows the will of this team," Boise State linebacker Tanner Vallejo said. "We scratched and clawed and were able to get the win. This is a confidence booster for this team."

BYU (4-4) still had another chance to win the game after Rhett Almond's field goal attempt was blocked. The ball didn't cross the line of scrimmage and Mitch Juergens recovered for BYU, giving the Cougars the ball at the Boise State 42 with 8 seconds left.

The Cougars, who beat Boise State on a last-minute Hail Mary play last season, couldn't duplicate the magic on the final play of the game as the ball was knocked down in the end zone.

Brett Rypien threw for 442 yards and three touchdowns with two interceptions. McNichols rushed for 140 yards and had 109 yards receiving and two touchdowns.