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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Iraqi forces near Mosul's outskirts

Associated Press

KHAZER, Iraq — Iraqi and Kurdish forces advanced on a town near Mosul on Sunday as part of an operation to retake the northern city from the Islamic State group, which staged an assault in western Iraq that appeared to be another diversionary attack.

The Kurdish forces, known as peshmerga, said they “cordoned off” eight villages northeast of Mosul and are now less than 5½ miles from its outskirts. They said the cordoned-off area measures about 38 square miles and that they also secured a “significant stretch” of highway. The statement said eight car bombs were destroyed in the operation, including three by U.S.-led coalition aircraft, and “dozens” of militants were killed.

Those gains came after Iraqi and Kurdish forces launched an offensive against the nearby town of Bashiqa. Maj. Gen. Haider Fadhil, of Iraq's special forces, said they had also taken part in the operation and that the town was surrounded.

Over the last week, Iraqi and Kurdish forces have been battling the Islamic State group in a belt of mostly uninhabited towns and villages around Mosul, contending with roadside bombs, snipers and suicide truck bombs.

In western Iraq, Islamic State militants stormed into the town of Rutba, unleashing three suicide car bombs that were blown up before hitting their targets, according to the spokesman for the Joint Military Command, Brig. Gen. Yahya Rasool.

He said some militants were killed but gave no exact figure. He said the militants did not seize any government buildings and that the situation “is under control.”

DOD chief in Irbil to review campaign

BY TARA COPP
Stars and Stripes

IRBIL, Iraq — Defense Secretary Ash Carter assured Kurdish leaders on Sunday that the U.S. would continue to provide air support for Kurdish forces in the campaign to liberate Mosul as questions remained over Turkey's role in that fight.

His arrival, which followed a visit to Baghdad on Saturday, coincided with an attack by Kurdish peshmerga forces on Islamic State militants in the village of Bashiqa. The village, located within the semi-autonomous Kurdistan region, is key not only for its proximity to Mosul but also because it is close to where Turkish advisers have trained fighters for the Mosul fight — a presence that has become a point of contention for Iraq's central government.

Kurdistan, a semi-autonomous northern region that is part of Iraq, has about 10,000 troops assisting in the battle. In a historic agreement between the central Iraqi government and the regional Kurdish government, the Kurds agreed to advance no farther than 20 miles to the east of Mosul and then to hold that territory while Iraqi security forces and federal police forces advance into the city.

During his visit to Irbil, Carter met with Kurdish Regional President Massoud Barzani to emphasize the significance of the Kurds' continued collaboration with Baghdad in driving the Islamic State group out of the city.

Carter said that during their

discussions, he assured Barzani that peshmerga forces were receiving “the full might of coalition air support.”

Some Kurdish forces have recently expressed their dissatisfaction with the air support they have been receiving from the U.S. and coalition air forces during the current offensive. But Kurdish military spokesman Brig. Gen. Halgord Hekmet downplayed the issue, saying that although there were a few challenges at the beginning of the campaign, the Kurds were now getting the air support they needed.

Disagreements over the role of Turkish forces in northern Iraq may challenge that partnership. So far, the combined effort by Iraqi and Kurdish forces has seen about 28,000 troops advance more quickly on Mosul than expected.

Kurdistan's regional government is hosting about 2,000 Turkish soldiers, who have trained 1,000 Kurdish and Sunni forces near Bashiqa, about 16 miles east of Mosul.

Iraq's government, led by Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, wants those Turkish soldiers out of the country and has said Turkish-trained units are not welcome to participate in the Mosul offensive,

Speaking to journalists accompanying Carter, Hekmet said the Turkish forces are not involved in the Bashiqa fight and that their presence was not an issue for the Kurds. “We at the [Kurdistan Regional Government] have a positive relationship with Turkey,” Hekmet said.

He said 25 Kurdish fighters have died since the fight for Mosul began. He added that his forces could use some additional equipment support.

The issue of Turkish involvement continues to be a point of contention between Baghdad and Ankara. Last week, after a meeting with Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan, Carter said the two countries had “agreed in principle” to an approach that would allow Turkey to be involved in the Mosul fight.

However, al-Abadi bluntly rejected that deal on Saturday in a meeting with Carter. Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim responded later in the day, saying Turkey was prepared to “take measures” on the issue.

Turkey, which lost control of Mosul and the oil-rich areas nearby after World War I, has long sought to exercise some degree of influence in the region, which is adjacent to its southern border. Today, Ankara still seeks a role in northern Iraq and Syria in order to keep tabs on growing Kurdish nationalism.

During the 1990s, Saddam Hussein's regime tacitly allowed Ankara to play a security role in the north, but more recently, the central government in Baghdad has opposed it, viewing the Turkish presence as an infringement on its sovereignty.

On Saturday, Brett McGurk, White House envoy on the fight against the Islamic State group, visited Barzani and also stressed the importance of the Kurds' continued participation in the campaign.

10K in Calif. Guard must repay bonuses

Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Nearly 10,000 California National Guard soldiers have been ordered to repay huge enlistment bonuses a decade after signing up to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan, a newspaper reported Saturday.

The Pentagon demanded the money back after audits revealed overpayments by the California Guard under pressure to fill ranks and to hit enlistment goals. If soldiers refuse, they could face interest charges, wage garnishments and tax liens, the Los Angeles Times said.

Faced with a shortage of troops at the height of the two wars, California Guard officials offered bonuses of \$15,000 or more for soldiers to reenlist.

A federal investigation in 2010 found thousands of bonuses and student loan payments were improperly doled out to California Guard soldiers.

About 9,700 current and retired soldiers received notices to repay some or all of their bonuses with more than \$22 million recovered so far.

Soldiers said they feel betrayed at having to repay the money.

“These bonuses were used to keep people in,” said Christopher Van Meter, a 42-year-old former Army captain and Iraq veteran who was awarded a Purple Heart. “People like me just got screwed.”

Van Meter said he refinanced his home mortgage to repay \$25,000 in reenlistment bonuses and \$21,000 in student loan repayments that the military says was improperly given to him.

The California Guard said it has to follow the law and collect the money.

“At the end of the day, the soldiers ended up paying the largest price,” Maj. Gen. Matthew Beevers, deputy commander of the California Guard, told the Times. “We’d

be more than happy to absolve these people of their debts. We just can’t do it. We’d be breaking the law.”

The Pentagon agency that oversees state Guard groups has said that bonus overpayments occurred in every state, but more so in California, which has 17,000 soldiers.

California Guard officials said they are helping soldiers and veterans file appeals with agencies that can erase the debts. But soldiers said it’s a long process and there’s no guarantee they’ll win.

Retired Army major and Iraq veteran Robert D’Andrea said he was told to repay his \$20,000 because auditors could not find a copy of the contract he said he signed.

D’Andrea appealed and is running out of options.

“Everything takes months of work, and there is no way to get your day in court,” he said. “Some benefit of the doubt has to be given to the soldier.”

WWII pilot, 101, gets last flight with his ‘godsend’ P-38

The (Colorado Springs, Colo.) Gazette

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — Frank Royal’s Air Force took off at 1:38 p.m.

A vintage aircraft clawed through the air followed by two chase planes, one carrying the 101-year-old pilot.

The last plane in the formation brought a tear to Royal’s eye. Its sleek lines still raise his pulse. He can hear the thrum of its twin engines without his hearing aids — World War II ingrained the 24-cylinder symphony permanently in his mind.

He has good reason to remember the details. That very plane, a fully restored P-38 Lightning named White-33, was Royal’s first love.

And he flew over Colorado Springs to tell her goodbye.

“I’m 101 and three-quarters,” Royal said after returning to the ground at the Colorado Springs Airport to the applause of family and admirers. “As of last week, I went under hospice care. It’s kind of a special day.”

Don’t feel sorry for Frank Royal. He’s not afraid of death. He calls that journey his real “final flight.”

Like a good pilot, Royal has a lengthy checklist of people to see and things to do. And seeing that P-38 in the air was one of them.

The love affair between Frank and White-33 centers on his service in World

War II and a reunion that took place against the longest of odds.

Born in Colorado during World War I and raised near Rocky Ford, Royal was an aspiring physician when he signed up to fly planes for the Army Air Corps.

Royal wished he’d stayed in college when he wound up in the Pacific flying the much-maligned Bell P-39 Airacobra, an odd machine with car-like doors and an engine behind the pilot.

In 1942, while his outfit battled nimble Japanese Zeros, Royal said his life was saved by the latest in American technology when his unit was pulled back to Australia to receive a fleet of new P-38s fresh from the Lockheed factory in California.

“It was a godsend, from a pilot’s standpoint,” he said.

His old P-39 had one 1,200-horsepower engine; the P-38 came with two 1,600-horsepower engines. It climbed like a rocket. The P-38 also had four .50-caliber machine guns and a 20 mm cannon mounted right in the nose.

That horsepower and firepower gave Royal and his comrades the first plane that could really tangle with the Japanese — he got one kill and two “probables.”

“It flew like a Cadillac, while the Airacobra flew more like a Ford,” said Royal, who twice earned the Silver Star for heroism over the Pacific.

But the wartime love affair had to end.

Royal wound up in the Pentagon planning air campaigns, and his beloved plane wound up in a scrap pit in the jungles of New Guinea, where the military put planes too worn out to haul home.

The coincidence that brought White-33 to Colorado Springs came thanks to Bill Klaers, who runs Westpac Restorations and the National Museum of World War II Aviation.

Klaers heard of the wreckage found in the New Guinea jungle and snapped it up. Westpac is America’s most renowned firm for restoring World War II wreckage into flying planes.

Klaers and his team took the junked plane from the jungle dirt and into his hangar, where craftsmen painstakingly replaced every missing or rotted piece.

Luck and fate intervened to reunite pilot and plane — Royal came to visit Westpac last year and told Klaers he had flown P-38s in the Pacific. After talking, the two realized that Royal actually had flown the plane Westpac was restoring.

“That’s the thrill of this,” said Jim Slatery, the plane collector who paid for White-33’s rebuild. “Frank was the happiest thing to happen to this whole project.”

Waiting months for White-33’s restoration made Frank Royal defy old age.

“It’s awesome,” the younger Royal said. “We know it has fueled him to stay around.”

Confusion follows Duterte comments on US

By ERIK SLAVIN
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has announced a separation from the United States. Divorce, however, is far from certain.

The new Philippines leader sounded like a spouse snuggling up to a new lover while taking jabs at an estranged mate as he made his first trip to China, where leaders lavished him with trade deals and loans, loudly applauded his shift away from Washington and laughed at his jokes at the expense of the U.S.

“Americans are loud, sometimes rowdy. Their larynx is not adjusted to civility,” Duterte said while speaking before China’s elite at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, according to a video broadcast by Rappler, a Philippine news site.

Duterte already has said he is ending joint military exercises with the U.S. and talked Thursday about forming an alliance with China that could include Russia.

“I realign myself in your ideological flow, and maybe I would also go to Russia to talk to (President Vladimir) Putin and tell him that there are three of us against the world — China, Philippines, Russia,” Duterte said.

But afterward, his Cabinet officials were in damage-control mode, offering reassurances that trade and economic ties with the U.S. would continue.

Trade Minister Ramon Lopez went so far as to say that “separation” doesn’t really mean breaking up.

“Let me clarify: The president did not talk about separation,” Lopez told CNN Philippines in Beijing. Instead, he said the Philippines was “breaking being too much dependent on one side.”

Duterte’s spokesman, Ernesto Abella, said the president’s announcement was a “restatement” of his bid to chart an independent foreign policy.

Duterte wanted to “separate the nation from dependence on the U.S. and the West and rebalance economic and military relations with Asian neighbors” like China, Japan and South Korea, Abella said in a statement.

So it remains unclear just how Duterte’s rhetoric will affect the U.S.-Philippines alliance, and beyond that, the security balance in a region where tensions over territorial claims continue to simmer.

Making his first foreign trip, Duterte was able to leave behind criticism from the U.S. and the U.N. about the extrajudicial killings in his bloody drug war, which has left more than 3,400 dead. China made statements supporting the drug war and Duterte’s policing efforts. And in turn, he was a good guest, not taking China to task for its aggressive buildup in the South China Sea, even though he has an international tribunal ruling in his favor over disputed reefs and islands.

Duterte repeatedly has insulted President Barack Obama and has derided U.S. aid, including military hardware, as hand-me-downs, while railing against what he sees as interference by the former colonial power. In China, he said he was undertaking a “separation” from the U.S.

If Duterte follows up on his threats, the U.S. could lose access to Philippine bases, which formed the core of a bilateral agreement struck in 2014 and, more recently, was approved by the Philippine supreme court.

“The U.S. military presence can still be maintained, but the rotational presence would have been a much more powerful foundation to respond to contingencies,” said Carlyle Thayer, a regional security consultant and professor emeritus at the University of New South Wales in Australia. “The U.S. loses a little bit of that, but its prestige is undermined by having the president of the Philippines make these

comments.”

Duterte told his Chinese audience during his visit that it was “time to say goodbye” to America, but he didn’t explicitly say he would end the U.S.-Philippines security alliance, which requires the U.S. to defend the Philippines if attacked.

The decision to end a treaty is “completely within the discretion of the president,” Pacifico Agabin, a constitutional expert and former dean of the University of the Philippines College of Law, told Reuters earlier this year.

However, moving that far could affect the leverage he is using to move toward China, and possibly Russia. It also could risk his domestic policy-driven popularity.

Only 22 percent of respondents to the Philippine Social Weather Survey in September said they trusted China, while 66 percent said they had “much trust” in the United States.

Duterte may be betting that perceived economic gains will change public opinion.

Philippine statements said the two sides had agreed to \$13.5 billion in trade deals and loans, although they did not provide details on how far any deals were from being implemented.

Some question whether continued attacks on the U.S. eventually will hurt him, especially after the honeymoon period Philippine presidents typically enjoy after an election ends.

“People used to find his language humorous, but now people are not finding it funny anymore,” said Babe Romualdez, an opinion columnist for The Philippine Star who supports close U.S. ties. “There’s a mood change in many of the people in business and in the higher political echelons of society.”

Stars and Stripes reporters Wyatt Olson and Hana Kusumoto contributed to this report.
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US troops: Gitmo ‘Diary’ prisoner thanked captors

Miami Herald

GUANTANAMO BAY NAVAL BASE, Cuba — The captive who wrote “Guantanamo Diary” didn’t autograph any copies of his book before he went home, but he thanked some of the troops as he ended 14 years of detention without being charged, prison staff said Saturday.

“He was very happy, probably one of the most jovial people

here,” said an Army captain, an unnamed woman now serving as the commander of Camp Echo — the prison compound where Mohamedou Ould Slahi spent years apart from the other captives, and the last stop for detainees being sent away.

She quoted him as saying, “thank you for everything, and said good luck to us,” adding that “as far as I know, no” no soldier brought a copy of his widely published memoirs for a

farewell autograph.

The book, translated into about two dozen languages, was drawn from his 2005 handwritten account of his at-times brutal, Pentagon-authorized interrogation here as U.S. military intelligence agents sought to tie him to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks — something he confessed to after nearly going mad through isolation only to retract it later, apparently convincingly. He was

never charged with a crime.

In the book, he comes off as an at-times fearful figure who finds a way to forgive, or pity, his captors. He was allowed to write the pages only once his prison conditions improved.

In the Mauritanian capital, Nouakchott, The Associated Press quoted Slahi, 45, on Saturday as saying “my slogan is to not pursue complaints against anyone who made me suffer injustice.”

Monitoring elections harder after ruling

McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — November's presidential election is the first in more than 50 years in which the federal government won't send a full complement of observers to monitor elections in states, like Mississippi, with long records of discriminatory voting practices.

After the Supreme Court's 2013 decision in *Shelby County v. Holder* weakened a core provision of the Voting Rights Act, the Justice Department can deploy election observers from the Office of Personnel Management only where authorized by a court order. Because of that requirement, the department will deploy a smaller number of its own staff attorneys and other personnel to monitor elections next month in roughly half the states.

Unlike the special observers, the department staffers won't have the authority to view activity inside polling places and locations where votes are tallied unless they get approval from local officials. That potential loss of access to real-time voting operations is causing concern among civil rights and voting rights activists about the integrity of Mississippi's vote process.

"Not having that seat on the front lines creates a disadvantage," said Kristen Clarke, the president and executive director of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, one of the nation's leading civil rights organizations. "I think you need to be inside the polling sites shoulder to shoulder with poll workers and observing carefully every aspect of the process."

Federal observers "watch the election process, to collect evidence, to deter wrongdoing, to defuse tension and to promote compliance" with federal law, according to a recent speech by Vanita Gupta, the head of the civil rights division at the Justice Department.

In recent years, Mississippi elections have been a frequent target of that Justice Department scrutiny. From June 2009 to September 2013, the department sent election observers to 31 jurisdictions in the state following complaints of possible discrimination.

Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump is asking supporters to monitor polling places as "Trump election observers" in order to "stop crooked Hillary [Clinton] from rigging this election." Based on Trump's rhetoric about voter fraud, some fear the presence of partisan Trump observers could lead to increased episodes of voter intimidation.

In a statement, Mississippi Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann said federal monitors had continued to be "granted the same access to observe within a polling place as state observers" from his own office and from the state attorney general's office.

Trump team says 'we are behind' but can still win

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Donald Trump's campaign bluntly acknowledged Sunday that the real estate mogul is trailing Hillary Clinton as the presidential race hurtles toward a close but insisted he still has a viable path to win the White House.

With barely two weeks left and early voting underway in most of the U.S., Trump's team said "the race is not over" and pledged to keep campaigning hard — even in states like Virginia and Pennsylvania that polls show safely in Clinton's control. Campaign manager Kellyanne Conway laid out a path to the requisite 270 electoral votes that goes through Florida, Iowa, North Carolina and Ohio.

"We are behind. She has some advantages," Conway said Sunday. Yet she argued that Clinton's advantages — like a slew of bold-name Democrats campaigning for her — belied her lack of true support. "The current president and first lady, vice president, all are much more popular than she can hope to be."

She added: "We're not giving up. We know we can win this."

Yet even as Clinton appeared to be strengthening her lead, her campaign was careful not to declare premature victory.

"We don't want to get ahead of our skis here," said Clinton campaign manager

Robby Mook.

As part of his closing message, Trump was laying out an ambitious agenda for his first 100 days as president. Yet he undermined his own attempt to strike a high-minded tone on policy issues when he announced in the same speech that he planned to sue the numerous women who have accused him of groping and other unwanted sexual behavior.

"All of these liars will be sued once the election is over," Trump said Saturday during an event near the Civil War battlefield of Gettysburg, Pa.

Asked about Trump's remarks, Clinton told reporters between rallies Saturday in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia that she was done responding to what her opponent is saying and instead would focus on helping elect Democrats.

A day earlier, Clinton attacked Pennsylvania's Republican senator, Pat Toomey, saying in Pittsburgh that he has refused to "stand up" to Trump, as she praised his Democratic challenger, Katie McGinty.

Though mostly a recap of policies he's proposed before, Trump's speech included a few new elements, such as a freeze on hiring new federal workers and a two-year mandatory minimum sentence for immigrants who re-enter the U.S. illegally after being deported.

Iran's president blasts US campaign

Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani on Sunday criticized the U.S. presidential candidates' behavior during their recent debates.

"Did you see the debate and the way of their speaking, accusing and mocking each other? Do we want such a democracy in our country? Do we want such elections in our country?" Rouhani said, speaking to a crowd in the Iranian city of Arak.

"You see the United States that claims it has had democracy for more than 200 years," he said in comments broadcast live by state TV. "Look at the country, what the situation is where morality has no place."

Rouhani said that during his September visit to the United Nations General Assembly, he was asked which of the candidates he preferred. "I said, 'What? Should I prefer bad to worse or worse to bad?'"

Iran's state TV has broadcast two of the debates between Donald Trump and Hill-

ary Clinton in full. It has followed the campaign closely, often highlighting economic and social problems in the U.S. and the most confrontational debate segments.

Rouhani's speech marked his first public comment on the U.S. election.

Iran will hold its own presidential election in May 2017, and Rouhani is eligible to seek a second term.

Last month, hard-line former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said he will not run in the election. Opposition to his candidacy exposed the still-lingering wounds from the widespread unrest that followed his contested 2009 re-election.

Despite a landmark nuclear deal with the United States and world powers that went into effect in January, Tehran and Washington have not restored diplomatic ties that were cut after the 1979 Islamic Revolution and U.S. Embassy takeover.

The deal capped Iran's disputed nuclear activities in return for lifting international nuclear-related sanctions.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Emu found wandering along interstate

AZ PHOENIX — State troopers say an emu crossed a Phoenix road, got to the other side and narrowly avoided getting hurt.

Arizona Department of Public Safety spokesman Quentin Mehr said the agency received reports Friday about 10 a.m. that an emu was on the loose on Interstate 10. According to Mehr, a responding trooper found the bird in the median. The emu then crossed the interstate and ended up on the dirt shoulder.

Mehr said a second trooper showed up and both officers drove alongside the animal to keep it from entering traffic lanes.

An officer from the Arizona Department of Agriculture arrived and used a lasso to wrangle the emu into a trailer. Authorities said it is still unclear how the emu came into the area.

Man gets 18 years for meth mailed in toaster

HI HONOLULU — A man convicted in a drug case involving six pounds of crystal methamphetamine mailed to Hawaii in a toaster has been sentenced to 18 years in prison.

Jurors convicted Allen Gorion on meth-dealing and conspiracy charges. He and his co-defendant were arrested last year after picking up the package, which was mailed to Kapolei from North Hollywood, Calif.

Authorities intercepted the package, replaced most of the drugs with fake meth and delivered it.

Gorion said he didn't know there were drugs in his car. He denied touching the bag, even though special powder that authorities put on the fake drugs was on his hands.

Reporter accepts man's apology for racial slurs

SC CHARLESTON — A North Carolina television reporter said he accepts the apology of a man who used racial slurs against him as he worked in Charleston.

Multiple media outlets reported Brian Eybers, 21, was ordered Friday to serve seven days of house arrest and to enroll in a drug treatment program for his confrontation with Steve Crump, a black reporter at WBTV in Charlotte, N.C.

Eybers apologized to Crump in court. He was released to the custody of his mother.

A WBTV photographer filmed the confrontation, during which Eybers directed racial slurs at Crump and called him a former slave.

Police charged Eybers with disorderly conduct and possession of a crack pipe.

Authorities: Officer drove drunk on duty

NJ MONTVILLE — Authorities say a New Jersey police officer was driving drunk while on duty.

Morris County prosecutors said Montville officer Kurt Geisinger was suspended with pay after being charged Friday.

Authorities said Geisinger was driving an unmarked patrol car at the time but apparently did not have any interaction with the public and was not involved in a crash.

Woman's abdominal pain reveals surprise baby

GA STOCKBRIDGE — Abdominal pain sent Stephanie Jaegers to the hospital.

She told her husband, Mi-

chael, she believed it was due to kidney stones.

When they arrived at Piedmont Henry Hospital in Stockbridge on Tuesday, doctors asked if she might be pregnant. She said no, and doctors began preparing her for X-rays. But after some observations, doctors changed plans and began preparing her for an ultrasound.

Michael Jaegers told WXIA-TV doctors told him his wife was pregnant — 38 weeks pregnant, to be exact.

At 3:50 a.m. Wednesday, Shaun Jude Jaegers was born. At 7 pounds, 3 ounces and 19 inches long, he appeared to be very healthy — even without any prenatal care.

Woman with skull, stick leads police to body

CA SACRAMENTO — It sounds like a Halloween prank but Sacramento police say it was all too real.

Authorities said a homeless woman led them to a decomposing body after she was seen walking down the street with a human skull on a stick.

Police told KTXL-TV that the woman was spotted Wednesday on Connie Drive. Police stopped her at an abandoned house.

Sgt. Bryce Heinlein said the woman told them she had found the skull and led them to an abandoned homeless camp a couple of blocks away. That's where officers found the rest of a decomposing body.

The coroner was working to determine the identity of the remains and the cause of death.

Officials: Daughters buried dad, 94, in yard

FL EUSTIS — Investigators say two women panicked when they found their 94-year-old father dead in his central Florida home and bur-

ied him in the yard.

Lake County Sheriff's spokesman Fred Jones said Thursday that Melvin Kort's daughters confessed to burying him. Their secret started unraveling in September after deputies received a tip about a body buried near the home.

Authorities were conducting a DNA test to confirm Kort's identity. An autopsy showed no signs of trauma. Jones said Kort died four to five years ago.

The Orlando Sentinel reported Kort's brother reported him missing in July and told investigators he hadn't spoken to him in nine years. Deputies stopped by the home and the daughters said their father had moved up north.

The case has been forwarded to the state attorney's office.

Cops: Man tried to trade pot for snowmobile

OR PORTLAND — Authorities say they arrested a man who arranged to trade a pound of marijuana for a snowmobile that was posted for sale on Craigslist by an Oregon State Police trooper.

KATU-TV reported that the 29-year-old Sandy man was cited for possession and delivery of marijuana as well as driving on a suspended license.

Police said the suspect offered the trooper a pound of weed in exchange for the vehicle online. The trooper agreed to meet up with him at a gas station on Saturday.

The suspect was then stopped while driving around the parking lot and cited.

Oregon law allows adults ages 21 and older to have up to an ounce of marijuana outside their home and 8 ounces in their home.

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STARS AND STRIPES®

Cubs head to World Series

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Cursed by a Billy Goat, bedeviled by Bartman and crushed by decades of disappointment, the Chicago Cubs are at long last headed back to the World Series.

Kyle Hendricks outpitched Clayton Kershaw, Anthony Rizzo and Willson Contreras homered early and the Cubs won their first pennant since 1945, beating the Los Angeles Dodgers 5-0 Saturday night in Game 6 of the NL Championship Series.

The drought ended when closer Aroldis Chapman got Yasiel Puig to ground into a double play, setting off a wild celebration inside Wrigley Field, outside the ballpark and all over the city.

Seeking their first crown since 1908, manager Joe Maddon's team opens the World Series at Cleveland on Tuesday night. The Indians haven't won it all since 1948 — Cleveland and the Cubs have the two longest title waits in the majors.

"This city deserves it so much," Rizzo said. "We got four more big ones to go, but we're

going to enjoy this. We're going to the World Series. I can't even believe that."

Deemed World Series favorites since Opening Day, the Cubs topped the majors with 103 wins to win the NL Central, then beat the Giants and Dodgers in the playoffs.

The Cubs overcame a 2-1 deficit against the Dodgers and won their 17th pennant. They had not earned a World Series trip since winning a double-header opener 4-3 at Pittsburgh on Sept. 29, 1945, to clinch the pennant on the next-to-last day of the season.

The eternal "wait till next year" is over. No more dwelling on a history of failure — the future is now.

Hendricks pitched two-hit ball for 7¹/₃ innings. Chapman took over and closed with hitless relief, then threw both arms in the air as he was mobbed by teammates and coaches.

The Cubs shook off back-to-back shutout losses earlier in this series to pound the Dodgers for 23 runs in the final three games.

And they were in no way overwhelmed by the moment

on Saturday, putting aside previous frustration.

In 1945, the Billy Goat Curse supposedly began when a tavern owner wasn't allowed to bring his goat to Wrigley. In 2003, the Cubs lost the final three games of the NLCS to Florida, punctuated with a Game 6 defeat when fan Steve Bartman deflected a foul ball.

Even as recently as 2012, the Cubs lost 101 times.

This time, no such ill luck.

Bryant had an RBI single and scored in a two-run first. Dexter Fowler added two hits, drove in a run and scored one.

Contreras led off the fourth with a homer. Rizzo continued his resurgence with a solo drive in the fifth.

That was plenty for Hendricks, the major league ERA leader.

Hendricks left to a standing ovation after Josh Reddick singled with one out in the eighth. The only other hit Hendricks allowed was a single by Andrew Toles on the game's first pitch.

Baez, Lester share NLCS MVP honors

Associated Press

CHICAGO — When Jon Lester was a free agent two years ago, one of the reasons he decided to sign with the Chicago Cubs was a group of promising prospects that included all-around dynamo Javier Baez.

Look where they are now.

Lester and Baez were selected co-MVPs for the NL Championship Series on Saturday night after leading the Cubs to their first NL pennant since 1945.

Baez hit .318 (7-for-22) with five RBIs against the Dodgers, picking up right where he left off in the Division Series. The versatile Baez also made a couple of the NLCS' most exciting plays, stealing home during Chicago's victory in the opener and robbing Adrian Gonzalez of a hit with a terrific barehanded scoop in Game 5 on Thursday night.

"Just having fun," Baez said. "Living my dream, playing like a little kid, moving everywhere, catching the ball and making plays."

Next up for Baez and the Cubs is the World Series against Francisco Lindor and the Indians, beginning Tuesday night in Cleveland. Baez and Lindor are part of a dynamic group of young players from Puerto Rico that also includes Houston shortstop Carlos Correa.

Lester, one of baseball's most accomplished playoff performers, went 1-0 with a 1.38 ERA in two starts against Los Angeles. He has allowed just two runs in 21 innings in three postseason games this year.

Lester's \$155 million, six-year deal in December 2014 was a key moment in the Cubs' turnaround from also-ran to contender. The left-hander is a sure bet to get the ball in Game 1 against the Indians, looking to improve to 4-0 in four World Series starts after helping Boston win it all in 2007 and 2013.

Lester and Baez became the first NLCS co-MVPs since Cincinnati relievers Rob Dibble and Randy Myers in 1990.

LA's Kershaw struggles in Game 6

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Clayton Kershaw's playoff renaissance is over, at least for this year. The Los Angeles Dodgers ace flopped at a big moment — again.

Kershaw's postseason résumé took another hit in Game 6 of the NL Championship Series, finishing off the reeling Dodgers. The Chicago Cubs battered the three-time Cy Young Award winner on their way to a 5-0 victory Saturday night, making it 28 years and counting since the Dodgers last won the World Series.

"This day is never fun, the ending of a season," Kershaw said. "You look back and think about the whole season as a whole. It's tough to swallow tonight, obviously, but I'd rather

be in this position and fail than not to get to be in this situation at all."

Kershaw could have started Game 5 on three days' rest, but manager Dave Roberts decided to save him for Saturday night at Wrigley Field. Roberts was hoping a couple more days would help Kershaw duplicate his performance from Game 2, when he pitched seven innings of two-hit ball in a 1-0 victory.

After winning a pair of shutouts in Games 2 and 3, the Dodgers dropped the next two by a combined score of 18-6. Even the great Kershaw was unable to slow Chicago's momentum, and Roberts' first season as Dodgers manager ended in disappointment.

The left-hander allowed four earned runs and seven hits

while dropping to 4-7 with a 4.55 ERA in 18 playoff games.

Dexter Fowler hit a ground-rule double on Kershaw's third pitch of the night, and the Cubs were off and running. Kris Bryant followed with an RBI single. Then left fielder Andrew Toles dropped Anthony Rizzo's fly ball to the gap in left-center, setting up Ben Zobrist's sacrifice fly.

It was the first time Kershaw had given up two runs in the first inning all season.

While Kershaw struggled against the Cubs, the Dodgers were shut down by Kyle Hendricks and Aroldis Chapman. Los Angeles managed just two hits and four baserunners, with none of them advancing past first.

Penn State stuns Buckeyes

Associated Press

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. — The white out in the stands became the white out on the field as Penn State fans mobbed their Nittany Lions. Well after the biggest victory of the post-Joe Paterno era was over, the cries of “We Are! Penn State!” echoed underneath 56-year-old Beaver Stadium and bounced off its big rusty metal beams.

It felt like the good ol’ days for Penn State football and Happy Valley was downright ecstatic Saturday night after the Nittany Lions upset No. 2 Ohio State 24-21.

“Obviously these types of wins are important,” coach James Franklin said. “To be honest with you, I don’t want to spend a lot of time thinking about the big picture right now, I just want to soak this all in. I

just want to enjoy tonight.”

Grant Haley returned a blocked field goal 60 yards for a touchdown with 4:27 left in the fourth quarter and the Nittany Lions sacked J.T. Barrett twice on Ohio State’s final possession to seal a milestone victory for Penn State:

- First against Ohio State since 2011.

- First over a ranked team under Franklin.

- First against a top-five team since 1999 against Arizona.

- First against a top-two team since 1990 against No. 1 Notre Dame.

- First in Beaver Stadium against a team ranked so high since 1982 against No. 2 Nebraska.

Penn State (5-2, 3-1 Big Ten) took its first lead against the

Buckeyes when Marcus Allen leaped high to block Tyler Durbin’s 45-yard field goal attempt and Haley made the scoop and sprint to the end zone.

“It’s something you dream about as a kid,” Haley said. “Just running to the end zone and falling, it was a huge sigh of relief, like, everything, all the hard work this team’s put in coming into play against the No. 2 team in the country.”

The Buckeyes (6-1, 4-1 Big Ten) had their 20-game road winning streak snapped.

Two seasons ago the Buckeyes bounced back from an early loss and won the national championship. Last season one loss turned out to be enough to eliminate Ohio State from the College Football Playoff.

Oklahoma, Texas Tech set records

Associated Press

LUBBOCK, Texas — Baker Mayfield knew Texas Tech’s offense would put up points Saturday night.

“I told some of the guys at halftime, ‘If you’re scared and you don’t want to score every drive, then stay in here,’” the Sooners quarterback said.

The only thing to stop No. 16 Oklahoma after that was the final whistle.

Mayfield passed for seven touchdowns and 545 yards to help the Sooners beat Texas Tech 66-59 in a game that broke the NCAA record for combined offensive yards with 1,708.

Mayfield completed 27 of 36 passes and broke the school game touchdown mark of six held by Landry Jones.

The Sooners scored on five of their six second-half possessions, and the exception was when they ran out the clock in the fourth quarter.

Joe Mixon caught three touchdowns passes and Dede Westbrook had two for the Sooners (5-2, 4-0 Big 12). Mixon also ran for two touchdowns, a 46-yarder and a 42-yarder. He finished with 263 yards rushing and 114 yards receiving. He’s the first Sooner ever to reach 200 yards rushing and 100 receiving in the same game.

“I thought Joe Mixon just had a game for the ages,” Sooners coach Bob Stoops said.

Westbrook caught nine passes for 202 yards.

“He’s phenomenal,” Texas Tech coach Kliff Kingsbury said. “He’s just better than anybody we had on the field.”

Pat Mahomes threw for five touchdowns and 734 yards for Texas Tech (3-4, 1-3). His passing yards total tied the NCAA record, matching Connor Haldiday when Washington State played California in 2014.

“Someone told me (about tying the passing record) in the locker room,” Mahomes said. “But, like I said, we didn’t win the game, so it really didn’t matter.”

Allen, Tide power past Aggies

Associated Press

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — When Alabama couldn’t shake Texas A&M in a battle of unbeaten, Top 10 teams, it was Jonathan Allen’s scoop-and-score defensive touchdown that effectively brushed aside the latest would-be challenger.

What else?

A star defensive end, Allen returned a fumble 30 yards for a touchdown in the final seconds of the third quarter to help Alabama beat the sixth-ranked Aggies 33-14 Saturday and continue a non-offensive scoring streak that’s as impressive as those 20 consecutive wins.

The Crimson Tide (8-0, 5-0 Southeastern Conference) moved on as the powerhouse league’s last unbeaten team, getting yet another in a long string of defensive scores. Allen scooped up the ball after Ryan Anderson knocked it loose from Keith Ford to finally build a cushion over the Aggies (6-1, 4-1), who led 14-13 well into the third.

“You know you don’t think about it,” Allen said. “It’s all reaction. We just train ourselves to pick up all loose balls in practices and it’s good to see it happening in the game.”

It’s happening again and again.

The score was 20-14 when Allen extended Alabama’s streak to 10 games with a score on defense or special teams, pushing the season’s total to 12. Allen now has scored twice on fumble returns.

“I think that was the real turning point in the game, because it changed the momentum of the game,” Tide coach Nick Saban said. “Those plays are always huge in games, but that one was especially huge.”

The Tide, however, sustained a big loss when safety Eddie Jackson was injured in the fourth quarter and didn’t come back after a punt return. Saban said Jackson, a senior and team leader, is out for the season with a broken leg.

Alabama’s freshman quarterback Jalen Hurts then gal-

loped 37 yards for another score, stepping out of a defender’s grasp and making a nifty move to get past another. The Tide was rolling again, a powerful encore to easy wins over ranked Tennessee and Arkansas teams.

The Aggies seemed poised to put up the biggest fight, with a defense that kept the pressure on Hurts and a handful of big runs by quarterback Trevor Knight. Then Allen and Anderson changed that in an instant. Costly penalties hurt the Aggies, too, including a roughing the passer penalty to keep Alabama’s go-ahead touchdown drive going earlier in the third.

“You really have five minutes in the game that determined what happened,” Texas A&M coach Kevin Sumlin said. “We extended the drive with the roughing the passer, then we extended the drive again, I think it was an offside. So you back that up with a fumble returned for a touchdown in a game like this, against a team like that, that can’t happen.”

Worth, No. 24 Navy run over Memphis

Associated Press

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Will Worth and No. 24 Navy played keep-away with Memphis while running the Tigers into the ground.

Worth rushed for a career-high 201 yards and three touchdowns, and the Midshipmen put on a dazzling display of ball control in a 42-28 victory Saturday.

In addition to operating the triple option in near-flawless fashion, Worth completed three of four passes for 85 yards and two scores.

“We take what we can get, and today, the quarterback run game was there,” Worth said. “We could manage that and set up a couple of pass plays to be able to score through the air. It’s just executing the game plan.”

The last Navy player to reach the 200-yard mark on the ground was Keenan Reynolds in 2014.

Worth carried 31 times and orchestrated an attack that held the ball for nearly 40 minutes. That left high-scoring Memphis little time to counter-punch.

“It was kind of hard because we weren’t doing a great job of getting off the field defensively,” Tigers coach Mike Norvell said. “Offensively, it’s hard to be in rhythm, it’s hard to stay in rhythm.”

The Midshipmen (5-1, 4-0 American Athletic Conference) gained a season-high 447 yards on the ground, averaging 6 yards per carry.

The victory put Navy in sole possession of first place in the AAC West and served as a suitable encore for its 46-40 upset of defending league champion Houston two weeks ago.

Navy’s 14-game home winning streak is its longest at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium since the facility opened in 1959.

Tony Pollard returned a kickoff 100 yards and Riley Ferguson completed 25 of 40 passes for 333 yards and two touchdowns for Memphis (5-2, 2-1). But the Tigers simply

couldn’t score enough to offset the damage inflicted by Navy’s sensational running attack.

“They kind of got after us up front and we had a couple of assignment issues,” Norvell said. “But I just thought they did a great job executing.”

Hawaii 34, Air Force 27 (2 OT): Dru Brown threw a 25-yard touchdown pass to Marcus Kemp on the first play of the second overtime and Hawaii ended the Falcons’ 15-game home winning streak.

Jalen Rogers intercepted a Nate Romine pass on fourth down to seal it for the Rainbow Warriors, who won consecutive road games for the first time since 2010.

Brown and Kemp also connected on a 13-yard score in the first OT after Romine summer-saulted into the end zone for a 5-yard score.

Luke Strelbel had a chance to win it on the final play of regulation, but his 32-yard field goal attempt went wide right.

The Falcons (4-3, 1-3) lost at Falcon Stadium for the first time since Nov. 21, 2013, against UNLV.

North Texas 35, Army 18: Jeffrey Wilson rushed for 160 yards and three touchdowns and North Texas beat Army on a wet, raw Saturday at Michie Stadium.

Fresh from a bye week, North Texas (4-3) rallied in the second half behind Wilson, who was coming off a career-high 188-yard performance two weeks ago. Wilson scored on a 41-yard run and 1-yard plunge in the third quarter as the Mean Green stunned the Black Knights.

Army (4-3) entered the game ranked second against the run, allowing just 99 yards per game.

North Texas sealed the victory, its first in five tries against Army, on a turnover. Army was driving at midfield early in the fourth, but tight end Dalton Mendenhall had it stripped by Eric Jenkins and the Mean Green recovered at its own 12-yard line.

Howard, Red Wings shut down Sharks

Associated Press

DETROIT — Jimmy Howard and Gustav Nyquist may be rebounding after each disappointed in 2015-16.

Howard made 30 saves and Nyquist scored twice, helping the Detroit Red Wings beat the San Jose Sharks 3-0 on Saturday night.

Howard lost the No. 1 goaltender job to Petr Mrazek last season, and Nyquist slumped to 17 goals after combining for 55 the previous two seasons.

“I feel like it’s coming there,” Howard said of his game. “The little things we’ve been working on. Little bit more patience.”

Andreas Athanasiou also scored for Detroit, which won its fourth straight after losing its first two games of the season.

San Jose goalie Martin Jones stopped 29 shots. The defending Western Conference champions have lost three of four.

Flyers 6, Hurricanes 3: Jakub Voracek scored twice and host Philadelphia pulled away from road-weary Carolina.

Wayne Simmonds and Shayne Gostisbehere each had a goal and an assist, and the Flyers won for the first time at home this season and snapped a three-game winless streak.

Canadiens 4, Bruins 2: Carey Price stopped 19 shots in his second start, and Brendan Gallagher and Phillip Danault each had second-period goals to lift visiting Montreal to a win over Boston.

Price, playing just his second game after a bout with the flu at the start of the season, missed most of last season with a right knee injury.

Predators 5, Penguins 1: Kevin Fiala and Viktor Arvidsson scored two goals each to lead injury-riddled host Nashville to a victory over defending champion Pittsburgh.

Blue Jackets 3, Stars 0: Sergei Bobrovsky made 32 saves in his 13th career shutout and visiting Columbus beat Dallas.

Josh Anderson, Scott Hartnell and Matt Calvert scored for Columbus.

Rangers 4, Capitals 2: Rookie Jimmy Vesey scored the tying and go-ahead goals 3 minutes apart in the second period to lead New York to a victory over host Washington.

Blackhawks 5, Maple Leafs 4 (SO): Jonathan Toews and Artemi Panarin scored in the shootout to give the Blackhawks a win over visiting Toronto after Chicago came back with two late goals to force overtime.

Panthers 5, Avalanche 2: Shane Harper scored his first two NHL goals to lift host Florida over Colorado.

The Panthers blew the game open in the third period as they scored three of four goals in a span of 2:26.

Lightning 4, Senators 1: Andrei Vasilevskiy made 27 saves, Vladislav Namestnikov and Steven Stamkos scored early in the second period, and visiting Tampa Bay beat Ottawa.

Devils 2, Wild 1 (OT): Taylor Hall scored 29 seconds into overtime and host New Jersey rallied to beat Minnesota.

Joel Eriksson Ek scored the lone Minnesota goal in his NHL debut.

Blues 6, Flames 4: David Perron scored his first three goals of the season and added an assist to lead visiting St. Louis.

Paul Stastny, Patrik Berglund and Alexander Steen also scored for the Blues, while defenseman Alex Pietrangolo had two assists.

Kings 4, Canucks 3 (SO): Tanner Pearson scored for the fourth time this season and got the lone shootout goal as host Los Angeles handed Vancouver its first loss.

Alexander Edler tied it for the Canucks on a power play with 34.4 seconds left in the third period.