

STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Las Vegas copes with the aftermath

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — The victims just kept coming. In cars, in ambulances waiting four or five deep, from the walking wounded to the barely alive, they arrived in droves.

“I have no idea who I operated on,” said Dr. Jay Coates, a trauma surgeon whose hospital took in many of the wounded after a gunman opened fire from his 32nd-floor hotel suite Sunday night on a country music concert below. “They were coming in so fast, we were taking care of bodies. We were just trying to keep people from dying.”

It was America’s deadliest mass shooting, with at least 59 killed and 527 injured, some by gunfire, some during the chaotic escape. Scores remained in critical condition Tuesday.

University Medical Center of Southern Nevada was one of many hospitals that were overflowing.

“Every bed was full,” Coates said. “We had people in the hallways, people outside and more people coming in.”

He said the huge, horrifying wounds on his operating table told him this shooting was something different.

“It was very clear that the first patient I took back and operated on that this was a high-powered weapon,” Coates said. “This wasn’t a normal street weapon. This was something that did a lot of damage when it entered the body cavity.”

The gunman, 64-year-old high-stakes gambler and retired accountant Stephen Paddock, killed himself as authorities stormed his hotel room at the Mandalay Bay hotel casino. He had 23 guns — some with scopes — in the room where he had been

Veterans among victims, heroes of mass shooting

BY DIANNA CAHN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON—In early July, months before he was gunned down in Sunday’s massacre on the Las Vegas Strip, Navy combat veteran Christopher Roybal posted a haunting message on his Facebook page that began with the words “What’s it like being shot at?”

“A question people ask because it’s something less than 1 percent of our American population will experience,” the Afghanistan War veteran wrote. At first, it’s anger and genuine fear coupled with excitement, he wrote. But after it happens too many times, the excitement fades and “anger is all that’s left.”

“What’s it like to be shot at?” he concluded. “It’s a nightmare no amount of drugs, no amount of therapy and no amount of drunk talks with your war veteran buddies will ever be able to (help you) escape.”

On Sunday, Roybal was one of 59 people killed when a mass shooter opened fire on the crowd of 22,000 at a country music concert. No active-duty servicemembers were among the dead or injured, the Pentagon said, but reports of National Guard, reserve and military veterans are slowly emerging.

Off-duty Las Vegas police Officer Charles Hartfield was a military veteran-turned-cop who recently published a memoir about a life of public service, according to the Las

Vegas Review-Journal.

In another section of the concert venue, former Marine combat veteran Scott Yarmer was quick to recognize the sound of gunfire. The resident of Aurora, Colo., told KDVR-TV in Denver that he turned to his friend and said, “We gotta go.”

A former Army sniper in Iraq, Rob Ledbetter was tending the wounded. He had attended the concert with a group including his wife; his brother, who was shot in the chest, and sister-in-law; and his boss, who was shot in the back.

Ledbetter told The Associated Press that he started to treat the injured. He used a flannel shirt off someone’s back to apply a makeshift tourniquet on a wounded teenage girl whose face was covered in blood. He compressed a shoulder wound, applied pressure to a bullet wound through a leg and helped carry one injured man to Las Vegas Boulevard and put him on the back of a truck headed to the hospital.

A Military.com blog compiled a list of other “hero vets” who kicked into action. Taylor Winston, a former Marine and an Iraq veteran, told CBS News he and his girlfriend were dancing the two-step when the gunfire started. He helped throw people over a fence to get out of harm’s way. Then he stole a truck and started transporting the injured to the hospital. He took as many as 30 people.

staying since Thursday. He knocked out two windows to create sniper’s perches he used to rain rapid fire down on the crowd of 22,000 people some 500 yards away.

He also had two “bump stocks” that can be used to modify weapons to fire continuously, as if fully automatic, according to two U.S. officials briefed by law enforcement who spoke on condition of anonymity.

At Paddock’s home, authorities found 19 more guns, explosives and thousands of rounds of ammunition. Also, several pounds of ammonium nitrate, a fertilizer that can be turned into explosives, were in his car, authorities said.

The FBI discounted the possibility of international terrorism, even after Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack. But beyond that, the motive remained a mystery, with Sheriff Joseph Lombardo saying, “I can’t get into the mind of a psychopath at this point.”

President Donald Trump on Tuesday called the gunman “demented” and a “very, very sick individual.” Asked about gun laws, the president said, “We’ll be talking about gun laws as time goes on.”

His muzzle flashes visible in the dark, Paddock began shooting after 10 p.m. and appeared to fire unhindered for more than 10 minutes, according to radio traffic, as police frantically tried to locate him.

The crowd, funneled tightly into a wide-open space, had little cover and no easy way to escape. Victims fell to the ground, while others fled in panic. Some hid behind concession stands or crawled under parked cars.

Senators grill DOD chiefs on Afghan war strategy

BY CLAUDIA GRISALES
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A key group of senators took the country's top defense officials to task Tuesday over their inability to obtain crucial details from the Pentagon or the White House on the U.S. war strategy in Afghanistan.

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, received a frustrated and sometimes angry reception during a hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee focused on military plans in Afghanistan and South Asia.

At the start of a full day of congressional hearings for Mattis and Dunford, Sen. John McCain, chairman of Armed Services Committee, said the Pentagon was woefully behind on its responsibility to work in concert with Congress.

"We want to be your partners. But this committee will not be a rubber stamp for any policy or president. We must be well-informed," a frustrated McCain, R-Ariz., told Mattis and Dunford at the hearing.

"We must be convinced of the merits of the administration's actions. And, unfortunately, we still have far more questions than answers about this new strategy," McCain said.

The hearing highlighted the strained relationship between key senators and President Donald Trump's administration, especially as it attempts to revamp the U.S. strategy to combat terrorism overseas. The new strategy includes sending about another 3,000 U.S. troops to Afghanistan.

Mattis' and Dunford's testimony on Capitol Hill comes

during the week of the 16th anniversary of U.S. forces fighting in Afghanistan. U.S. and coalition forces began combat operations against al-Qaida in the country in 2001 following the 9/11 attacks. More than 2,000 U.S. troops have been killed and more than 20,000 injured in the war.

In highlighting the communication breakdown between Congress and the Pentagon, McCain scolded Mattis and Dunford for their "bizarre" move not to submit prepared written testimony to the Armed Services Committee ahead of Tuesday's hearing.

Mattis said defense officials will do better.

I recognize "the need to maintain the closest possible dialogue with Congress and, specifically, with this committee," he said. "I pledge the Department of Defense will be fully responsive to your requirement to be kept apprised of current and planned operations."

Mattis then expanded on the Pentagon's new strategy to "regionalize, reinforce, reconcile and sustain" operations in Afghanistan. The strategy is to focus on a larger region that includes India, Pakistan and other surrounding countries, realign with more advisers on training and advisory support and ensure the plans are sustainable, he said.

Today, there are about 11,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan, along with more than 320,000 Afghan and coalition forces.

"We must always remember, we are in Afghanistan to make America safer and ensure South Asia cannot be used to plot transnational attacks against the U.S. homeland or our partners and allies," Mattis said.

Beacon use opens Navy ships to online mapping

BY SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

Naval enthusiasts are tweeting what they believe are U.S. warship positions after commanders ordered the vessels to activate their beacons while in congested waters to avoid collisions.

The order to turn on the Automatic Identification System locators, reported by NPR on Friday, follows a series of collisions that have killed 17 sailors in the Pacific in recent months.

However, it appears that the new procedure is also allowing people to track the warships online.

A tweet posted on Sunday that maps the location of a "US GOV VSL" approaching Hong Kong reads, "Reason to believe this is USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76)."

The aircraft carrier and the guided-missile destroyer USS

Chafee were anchored near Hong Kong on Monday, a Pacific Fleet statement said.

NPR reported that it still isn't clear whether the USS Fitzgerald was transmitting its AIS at the time of a June collision that killed seven sailors off the coast of Japan. However, it is known that the USS John S. McCain was not when it hit a merchant ship near Singapore two months later, killing 10.

Retired Vice Adm. William Douglas Crowder, a former 7th Fleet commander and a former deputy chief of naval operations, told NPR that Navy ships typically use locators in receive-only mode, which allows them to see other vessels using the system but doesn't let other ships see them.

"It's all about operational security," Crowder said. "We don't want to be broadcasting our exact position to everyone."

Soldier killed in Iraq just starting 1st deployment

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The U.S. soldier killed in a roadside bomb blast Sunday in Iraq was a transport driver less than a month into his first overseas deployment, according to the Pentagon.

Army Spc. Alexander W. Missildine, 20, died Sunday of wounds suffered when his vehicle struck an improvised explosive device in northern Iraq, according to a Pentagon statement released Tuesday.

He was assigned to the 710th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division from Fort Polk in Louisiana.

One other American soldier was injured in the attack on a U.S. convoy traveling in Salaheddin province in northern central Iraq, which includes

Shirqat, one of a few remaining Iraqi towns where Islamic State militants control territory.

Missildine was from Tyler, Texas. He joined the Army in July 2015 and arrived at his unit at Fort Polk that December. The unit deployed to Iraq in September, replacing an element of the Army's 82nd Airborne Division, tasked with training and assisting Iraqi security forces as they battle the remains of ISIS in the group's final Iraqi territories — around Hawija in Kirkuk province and in western Anbar province near the Syrian border.

Missildine was the 13th U.S. servicemember killed by enemy actions in Iraq or Syria since the United States began fighting ISIS in 2014, according to Pentagon data. More than 50 troops have been wounded in action.

Trump gets firsthand look at Puerto Rico

Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — On the ground in Puerto Rico nearly two weeks after a hurricane ravaged the island, President Donald Trump heaped praise Tuesday on his administration's relief workers and, more selectively, Puerto Rican officials after earlier dismissing critics of the federal response as "politically motivated ingrates."

Trump told officials and relief workers assembled in an airplane hangar that the low death toll from Hurricane Maria — he was told 16 or 17 — was a tribute to the relief efforts. "We've saved a lot of lives," he said, and singled out Gov. Ricardo Rossello for "giving us the highest praise."

The help didn't come cheap, he said. "I hate to tell you, Puerto Rico, but you've thrown our budget a little out of whack.

"But that's fine," he said, "because we've saved a lot of lives."

The most prominent critic, San Juan Mayor Carmen Yulin Cruz, attended the first event, in an airport hangar, shaking Trump's hand as he went around a table greeting officials before sitting in the shadow of a hulking, gray military plane.

Days earlier, Cruz said the Trump administration was "killing us with the inefficiency," pleading for more effective federal leadership in the crisis.

Air Force One brought the president, first lady Melania Trump and aides to Puerto Rico in late morning. They were expected to spend more than five hours on the ground, meeting first responders, local officials and some of the 3.4 million people whose lives have been upended by a hurricane that, in the president's words, left the island U.S. territory

"flattened."

The plane descended over a landscape marked by mangled palm trees, metal debris strewn near homes and patches of stripped trees, yet with less devastation evident than farther from San Juan.

At least in his first moments on the island, Trump remained focused primarily on the reviews his administration is getting. "He didn't play politics at all," he said of the governor, making clear that he considers those who have criticized him to be politically driven. Trump misstated Maria as a Category 5 hurricane; it was Category 4 when it hit Puerto Rico.

"I appreciate your support and I know you appreciate ours," he said. "Our country has really gone all out. It's not only dangerous, it's expensive. But I consider it a great honor."

Before leaving Washington, he said Puerto Ricans who have

called the federal response insufficient "have to give us more help."

Large-scale protests against Trump, talked about in advance, failed to materialize by early afternoon, with only a few handfuls of people gathering around San Juan to decry his criticism of local politicians.

The trip is Trump's fourth areas battered by storms during an unusually violent hurricane season that has also seen parts of Texas, Florida, Louisiana and the U.S. Virgin Islands inundated by floodwaters and hit by high winds.

Nearly two weeks after the Puerto Rico storm, 95 percent of electricity customers remain without power, including some hospitals. And much of the countryside is still struggling to access such basic necessities as food, fresh water and cash.

Facebook estimates 10M saw ads linked to Russia

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Facebook said ads that ran on the company's social media platform and have been linked to a Russian internet agency were seen by an estimated 10 million people before and after the 2016 election.

The company turned 3,000 ads over to three congressional committees Monday as part of their investigations into Russian influence in the 2016 election. In a new company blog post, Facebook's Elliot Schrage said the ads appeared to focus on divisive social and political messages, including LGBT issues, immigration and gun rights. In many cases, the ads encouraged people to follow pages on those issues.

Fewer than half of the ads — which ran between 2015 and 2017 — were seen before the election, with 56 percent of them seen after the election. Some of the ads were paid for in Russian currency.

Congressional investigators have recently focused on the spread of false news stories and propaganda on social media and have pressured Facebook, along with Twitter and Google, to release any Russia-linked ads. Facebook's ads were turned over to the House and Senate intelligence committees and the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The company already has given similar material to Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into the Russian meddling.

Facebook said last month that the ads appear to have come from accounts associated with a Russian entity called the Internet Research Agency. The company said it found 450 accounts and about \$100,000 was spent on the ads.

Schrage defended the site's ability to target certain demographic groups but said "ads containing certain types of targeting will now require additional human review and approval."

Watchdog opens probe into Zinke's travel

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The inspector general for the Interior Department has opened an investigation into Secretary Ryan Zinke's travel during seven months in office, from his use of taxpayer-funded charter and military planes to his mixing of official trips with political appearances.

Nancy DiPaolo, a spokesperson for Deputy Inspector General Mary Kendall, described a broad investigation into Zinke's "travel in general," including "modes of travel, costs and schedules."

She said the probe was prompted by numerous complaints from employees and the public and recent newspaper articles. Reps. Ra Grijalva, D-Ariz., and Donald McEachin, D-Va., the top Democrats on the House Committee on Natural Resources and the panel's subcommittee on oversight and investigations, respectively, also

requested an investigation.

Zinke, a former Navy SEAL commander and former congressman from Montana, is one of several Trump administration Cabinet secretaries whose travel is under scrutiny. Tom Price, another former member of Congress who was secretary of Health and Human Services, resigned Friday after taking at least \$400,000 in chartered flights at taxpayer expense. The watchdog for the Environmental Protection Agency also is investigating agency head Scott Pruitt's frequent travels to his home state of Oklahoma.

In June, Zinke and his staff chartered a four-hour private flight from Las Vegas to near his home in Montana.

The flight cost taxpayers \$12,375, according to an Interior Department spokeswoman. Commercial airlines run daily flights between the two airports and charge as little as \$300.

Gravitational waves scientists win Nobel

Associated Press

STOCKHOLM — The Nobel Physics Prize 2017 has been awarded to three scientists for their discoveries in faint ripples flying through the universe called gravitational waves — proof of a theory developed by Albert Einstein a century ago and that scientists say fundamentally alters our understanding of the universe.

Sweden's Royal Academy of Sciences announced Tuesday that the winners are Rainer Weiss, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Barry Barish and Kip Thorne, of the California Institute of Technology.

The three were key to the first observation of gravitation-

al waves in September 2015.

When the discovery was announced several months later, it was a sensation not only among scientists but the general public.

"The best comparison is when Galileo discovered the telescope, which allowed us to see that Jupiter had moons, and all of a sudden we discovered that the universe was much vaster than we used to think about.

With this discovery, we can study processes which were completely impossible, out of reach to us in the past," said Ariel Goobar, of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.

With the technology that the three developed, "We may even see entirely new objects

that we haven't even imagined yet," said Patrick Sutton, an astronomer at Cardiff University in Wales.

Weiss, in a phone call with the announcement news conference at the Swedish academy, said, "I view this more as a thing that recognizes the work of a thousand people."

Gravitational waves are extremely faint ripples in the fabric of space and time, generated by some of the most violent events in the universe.

The waves detected by the laureates came from the collision of two black holes some 1.3 billion light-years away. A light-year is about 5.88 trillion miles.

The waves were predicted by Einstein a century ago as part

of his theory of general relativity. General relativity says that gravity is caused by heavy objects bending space-time, which itself is the four-dimensional way that astronomers see the universe.

The German-born Weiss was awarded half of the \$1.1 million prize amount, and Thorne and Barish will split the other half.

In the 1970s, Weiss designed a laser-based device that would overcome background noise that would disturb measurements of gravitational waves.

He, Thorne and Barish "ensured that four decades of effort led to gravitational waves finally being observed," the Nobel announcement said.

Mother accused of confining her teen daughters for years

Associated Press

DECATUR, Ind. — An Indiana woman accused of keeping her two daughters confined at home for years allegedly failed to educate the now-teenage youths, who told authorities their mother gave up on them "a long time ago." The 64-year-old woman faces three counts of neglect of a dependent.

Police said the woman's daughters were emaciated and pale when officers arrived at their filthy Decatur, Ind., home in January to investigate a neglect report. Officers were summoned to the home, about 20 miles south of Fort Wayne, three days after the teens' mother was hospitalized following a fall inside the home.

Two women who were friends of the girls' cousin had, at his urging, taken the sisters to eat at a fast-food restaurant and then to shop for groceries because the home was without food a day before the mother fell, according to court documents.

During that trip, the girls did not know how to place a food order at the restaurant and had no social interaction skills at all,

according to the affidavit filed Sept. 20 by the Adams County prosecutor. The youngest girl appeared mesmerized by the food products available inside the grocery they visited.

"I always dreamed of this, going to the store," she told the women, according to the affidavit.

A psychologist later found that the sisters — who are now ages 19 and 16 — suffered psychological trauma from "neglect and isolation," according to the affidavit, which states that the sisters suffered from a "lack of any meaningful interaction with others" for several years.

When police were summoned to the sisters' home a few days after their shopping trip, officers found the two-story house unkempt and filled with a foul odor, while the girls were "very skinny" and pale with long, greasy hair.

The girls' mother was released on bond from the Adams County Jail last week after a judge entered a not-guilty plea on her behalf.

A telephone listing for her rang unanswered Monday.

Pathologist: VX poison killed half brother of North Korean leader

Associated Press

SHAH ALAM, Malaysia — A Malaysian government pathologist testified Tuesday at the trial of two women accused of killing the estranged half brother of North Korea's leader that the banned VX nerve agent caused his death.

His report, submitted as evidence at the trial in Malaysia's High Court, stated that VX was found not just on Kim Jong Nam's face and eyes but also in his blood, urine, clothing and bag. The 11-page report said an examination of Kim's body showed damage to his organs, including part of the brain, both lungs, his liver and spleen.

Siti Aisyah, of Indonesia, and Doan Thi Huong, of Vietnam, pleaded not guilty on Monday, the trial's first day, to killing Kim on Feb. 13 at a crowded Kuala Lumpur airport terminal. They are accused of wiping VX on Kim's face in an assassination widely thought to have been orchestrated by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

The women have said they thought they were playing a harmless prank for a hidden-camera TV show and were tricked by men suspected of being North Korean agents.

Mohamad Shah Mahmood, one of two pathologists who examined Kim's body, told the court that "the cause of death is acute VX nerve agent poisoning" and that there were no other contributing factors.

The post-mortem report said toxicology tests found traces of drugs in Kim's body used to treat diabetes, hypertension and gout. The report gave Kim's age as 46 and his name as Kim Chol, the pseudonym he used in the North Korean passport he carried at the time of his death.

Kim weighed 211 pounds and had tattoos on his chest, arms and back, including a colored dragon head breathing fire and a man with two fishlike figures, the report said.

North Korea has denied any role in the killing and hasn't even acknowledged the dead man was Kim Jong Nam.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Authorities: Man, 87, bitten by an alligator

FL DELAND — Authorities said an 87-year-old man was bitten by an alligator in Florida.

The Orlando Sentinel reported that the 7- to 8-foot-long alligator bit the man at Lake Beresford, near DeLand, on Sunday morning. The man's identity has not been released.

Volusia County Sheriff's Office spokesman Andrew Gant said the man's hand and leg were bitten but he was alert and conscious. Medics took the man to a hospital.

Police say man filed false report for drugs

PA PHILIPSBURG — State police said a Pennsylvania man falsely reported someone stole his prescription drugs in hopes the police report would persuade his doctor to prescribe more of the drugs.

Troopers from the Philipsburg barracks haven't released the name of the suspect but say he called them Sept. 27 to report his Xanax had been stolen.

Police eventually determined that was false and that the man had been taking more of the tranquilizer than he was supposed to and the theft report was a ruse to get his doctor to file a replacement prescription.

Xanax is commonly prescribed to treat anxiety, but is also often abused. Police said the man has been charged with filing a false report to law enforcement.

Mom questions charges in daughter's death

MO SPRINGFIELD—A mother is questioning the charges filed against a man accused of providing al-

cohol to her daughter, who died with a blood-alcohol content seven times higher than the state's legal limit.

The Springfield News-Leader reported that Keelan Miller, 22, of Sedalia, is free on bond on charges of abandonment of a corpse and evidence tampering in the death of Camille Crews, 19.

Court records say Miller woke up last November to find Crews dead. Police say Miller called 911 using a fake name after dragging the corpse outside the apartment, throwing away some of her clothes and washing the bedsheets.

Crews' mother, Serena Latham, wants a manslaughter charge. Prosecutors say state law won't support it.

Lindbergh beach stunt draws thousands

ME OLD ORCHARD BEACH — Thousands of people lined a beach in Maine to watch 15 small planes land on the sand — a stunt modeled after aviator Charles Lindbergh's surprise landing at Old Orchard Beach in 1927.

The Sunday afternoon event was organized by Chase Walker, 15, to raise money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. The Portland Press Herald reported that organizers estimated about 6,000 people attended.

Lindbergh was forced to land on the beach on July 24, 1927, after experiencing bad weather.

Doctor charged with trafficking morphine

KY LAWRENCEBURG — A Kentucky doctor has been indicted on charges related to trafficking morphine.

WKYT-TV reported that Kenneth Hines, 73, was arrested Sept. 27 at his office in Lawrenceburg and indicted by

a grand jury on drug-trafficking charges.

Kentucky State Police officers said the Drug Enforcement Agency took Hines' license to write prescriptions. Troopers also searched his Lawrenceburg Medical Clinic, which is now closed for business.

Hines was released from the Shelby County Jail after posting a \$10,000 cash bond.

Fire crews dispatched to haunted attraction

SC BLACKSBURG — Multiple fire crews were dispatched to a popular haunted attraction in South Carolina.

News outlets reported the Cherokee County Sheriff's Office dispatch said five fire departments were on scene at The Fear Farm in Blacksburg Sunday night. Dispatchers said a neighbor reported a fire at 9:35 p.m. The status and extent of the fire is unknown.

The Fear Farm spans more than 8,000 square feet and offers multiple on-site attractions. It opened for the season Saturday night, according to its website, but was not open Sunday.

Arrest made after man shot dead in recliner

NC NEWTON — Authorities have made an arrest in connection with the death of a man who was shot in the head through a window while sitting in a recliner in a North Carolina home.

News outlets reported that Jeffery Douglas Brittain, 23, of Maiden, was arrested Sunday morning and charged with felony murder in the Thursday night death of Justin Tyler Smith, 19.

The Catawba County Sheriff's Office said in a press re-

lease that deputies believe the slaying was "over a dispute about a girl."

Catawba County Sheriff Coy Reid said Smith's body was discovered when a man going to the Newton home to cut the grass Friday afternoon found a bullet hole in the window.

Woman searching for wallet fatally struck

FL KISSIMMEE — The Florida Highway Patrol said a woman was struck and killed by a vehicle as she searched for her wallet on a Florida highway.

Sgt. Kim Montes said in a news release that Margarita Contreras, 58, had been involved in a crash a short time before she was killed early Sunday. The vehicles involved in that crash were moved to a parking lot, and Contreras thought she had dropped her wallet in the road.

Montes said Contreras was hit by a vehicle that then fled the scene. She was taken to a hospital, where she died.

The incident remains under investigation.

Loggerhead sea turtles hatched on Assateague

MD ASSATEAGUE ISLAND — Around 100 baby loggerhead sea turtles recently hatched on Assateague Island National Seashore in Maryland and made their way to sea.

The National Park Service said that although multiple sea turtle nesting attempts have taken place in the past years, this is the first confirmed hatch. It's also rare for loggerheads, an endangered species, to nest north of Virginia.

A statement said approximately 100 hatchlings made their way from a single nest site in Maryland.

From wire reports

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and Military News

NHL Eastern Conference preview

Offseason deals leave race wide open

Associated Press

A handful of Pittsburgh Penguins players whose names are on the Stanley Cup, some of them twice or even three times, are gone.

The same goes for core players from the back-to-back Presidents' Trophy winning Washington Capitals.

The goliaths of the East haven't fallen apart, but maybe they've lost just enough to make the conference winnable for just about anyone. Pittsburgh no longer has forwards Nick Bonino, Chris Kunitz and Matt Cullen, defensemen Trevor Daley or goaltender Marc-Andre Fleury. Washington couldn't afford to keep Justin Williams, Karl Alzner and Kevin Shattenkirk.

The Penguins and Capitals are still favored to finish 1-2 in the brutal Metropolitan Division, but improvements made by the New York Rangers, Carolina Hurricanes and a return to health for members of the Tampa Bay Lightning have cracked the Eastern Conference wide open.

"The competition level is as high as ever," Boston Bruins goaltender Tuukka Rask said. "There's a lot of teams that have a chance to win the Cup. Making the playoffs, it's very tough nowadays. I think we're not the only team when we always say, 'We

want to make the playoffs and then we'll see what happens' because you just want to make the playoffs and then anything can happen. There's no real favorites."

Pittsburgh is still the betting favorite, and if Sidney Crosby, Evgeni Malkin and Co. make it happen they'd become the first NHL team with three consecutive titles since the early 1980s New York Islanders dynasty. Then again, Lightning captain Steven Stamkos is healthy after a knee injury ended his 2016-17 season, the Hurricanes got a top goaltender in Scott Darling and the Toronto Maple Leafs are only expected to get better now that Auston Matthews and the kids have some playoff experience.

Some things to watch in the Eastern Conference this season:

Youth is served: Matthews is only 20, but now there's a whole new crop of potential teenage stars, including the New Jersey Devils' No. 1 pick, Nico Hischier, and the Philadelphia Flyers' No. 2 pick, Nolan Patrick. The Swiss-born Hischier turned heads with some big-time plays in the pre-season and in the process ratcheted up expectations.

Price is right: The Canadiens lost defenseman Andrei Markov and winger Alexander Radulov and traded their top defensive prospect for forward Jonathan

Drouin. Montreal probably should make the playoffs despite all the changes because of goaltender Carey Price, who won the Hart and Vezina Trophies in 2014-15 and missed most of the 2015-16 season with a knee injury.

"He is the best goalie in the NHL," Drouin said. "He's proved it for a lot of years now."

Price has some competition in Columbus' Sergei Bobrovsky and Washington's Braden Holtby, the past two Vezina winners. The play of those three and Pittsburgh's Matt Murray will likely determine the order of finish in the East.

C'mon, Crosby: After leading the league with 44 goals in the regular season and the playoffs with 27 assists, there's no doubting Crosby has another MVP season in him. Teammates and opponents always expect him to sharpen another skill, though he could just keep scoring goals better than anyone else.

"He was always, I think, a passer a little more — always looking for other guys," Fleury said. "But he doesn't have a crazy hard shot. It's just how quick the release is. He's skating, he's looking around and the shot comes [from] any angle. His backhand is good too, probably as hard as anybody."

NHL Western Conference preview

Predators face tough challenge to repeat

Associated Press

The Nashville Predators are proof anything is possible in the NHL playoffs. History suggests they are up against quite a challenge.

Nashville made it into the last postseason as the eighth-seeded team in the Western Conference and ended up becoming just the third team seeded last to reach the Stanley Cup Final since 1994.

The Predators couldn't stop Pittsburgh from repeating, and they're about to find out how hard it is to defend a championship in their stacked conference. The Western Conference has not had a repeat champion since the Detroit Red Wings pulled off the feat in 2008

and 2009, hoisting a Stanley Cup and then losing a Game 7 against the Penguins.

Nashville's appearance in the playoffs, though, was not a fluke. The franchise was in the postseason for the third straight year and the 10th time in 13 seasons. And, the city should be prepared to have a good time again next spring, catfish and all.

Here's a look at some other things to watch in the West:

Logjam ahead: The Colorado Avalanche, easily the NHL's worst team last season, may be the only team in the Central Division without a legitimate shot to make the playoffs. The division was so tough last year that Nashville finished a relatively distant fourth behind Chicago,

Minnesota and St. Louis. Each of those teams figures to be just as good this season and will have to compete with Dallas, which seemed to lead the league in major moves.

Don't sleep on Winnipeg, either. The Jets have made the playoffs only once in the last decade, but they could break through this season. Mark Scheifele, a 24-year-old center, quietly ranked among league leaders with 82 points last season. He leads a team with rising stars Patrik Laine, a 19-year-old winger who was taken No. 2 behind Auston Matthews, and 21-year-old Nikolaj Ehlers.

Cautious Connor: The Pacific Division is so stacked even the 20-year-old, reigning NHL MVP is far from cocky about

his team's chances.

"It's so competitive," said Edmonton's Connor McDavid, who was given an eight-year extension last summer. "It is a grind. And the Pacific, especially, I think you see a lot of teams that are right around that 100-point mark, 95-point mark, that are kind of right on the cusp."

Veterans in Vegas: The Vegas Golden Knights are betting a few veterans making at least \$5 million this season can help them be relatively competitive in their debut season: goaltender Marc-Andre Fleury and forwards James Neal and Reilly Smith. The Knights had three of the top 15 picks in the draft, including center Cody Glass sixth overall.

Chiefs overtake Redskins in final minute

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Alex Smith has earned plenty of detractors over the course of his career, getting labeled as a “game manager” and a quarterback who is unable to lead his team when the pressure is on.

He quieted all those doubters once again Monday night.

Smith threw for 293 yards with touchdowns through the air and one on the ground. His 37-yard pass to Albert Wilson on a broken play late in the fourth quarter set up Harrison Butker’s go-ahead, 43-yard field goal that helped push Kansas City to a 29-20 victory over the Washington Redskins.

“Alex never says anything. Everybody else says everything,” Chiefs coach Andy Reid said. “He just keeps doing good and doesn’t worry about all that. He’s a seasoned veteran.

“I’ve told you before, I love the guy,” Reid continued. “He’s everything you want as a coach and comes to work every day. He’s the first one in and the last one out. All of these things that you’re supposed to do, he does. This is what we see every day.”

He certainly outplayed his

more touted counterpart, Redskins quarterback Kirk Cousins, who threw for 220 yards and two touchdowns but was unable to march his team for a touchdown down the stretch.

They had to resort to a 40-yard field goal with 47 seconds left, enough time for Smith to lead the Chiefs the other way and get Butker into position for his go-ahead kick.

Justin Houston returned a fumble for a touchdown on the final play of the game.

“It was a great game. Both teams were fighting, playing hard,” Redskins linebacker Mason Foster said. “We’ve got to make more plays so we win. That’s what it comes down to.”

Injury bug: Both teams had key contributors fall victim to injuries during this game. Chiefs right guard Laurent Duvernay-Tardif went down with a knee injury in the first quarter, and was quickly deemed out. After the game, Reid said that Duvernay-Tardif sprained his knee.

“We’ll do all the tests tomorrow and see exactly where he’s at there,” Reid said.

Redskins cornerback Josh Norman fractured a rib, and

coach Jay Gruden expects him to miss a few weeks. Their secondary would continue to be depleted, as a number of other defensive backs — including starting safety Deshaun Evans, who hurt his hamstring — would go down for at least part of the game.

Running back Rob Kelley left with an ankle sprain and offensive tackle Trent Williams missed time as well, meaning the Redskin’s bye next week comes at the perfect time.

Third quarter control: The Redskins ran only four plays in the entire third quarter, possessing the ball for less than two minutes.

After the half started with a Kansas City drive for a touchdown, the Redskins’ Cousins threw a 69-yard pass to tight end Vernon Davis on their first play. Two plays later, Cousins found wide receiver Ryan Grant for a short touchdown pass.

The Chiefs took over again with just under 8 minutes left, draining the clock down to a single second before the Redskins would snap the ball again. Cousins commended Kansas City’s ability to control posses-

sion of the ball throughout.

“I think it goes back to the Chiefs being able to convert third downs and stay on the field,” he said. “They had good methodical drives with a lot of plays and it chewed up a lot of clock. I think that’s why they’re an undefeated football team because they do some really good things on offense and kept the ball out of our hands.”

The Hunt continues: Chiefs running back Kareem Hunt continued his strong rookie campaign, rushing for 101 yards on 21 attempts. But despite joining Curtis McClinton for the second-most 100-yard rushing games in a Chiefs’ rookie season, all that matters to him is that Kansas City is unbeaten.

“Winning is more meaningful,” Hunt said. “I could have 50 yards, as long as we win, I’m happy.”

Reid is happy to see that approach in his budding star.

“He’s keeping a level head about it which is important,” Reid said. “He’s a young guy and he’s getting a lot of accolades, and he got a ton of them last week, and came out and played hard-nosed.”

Raiders quarterback Carr will miss from 2 to 6 weeks

Associated Press

ALAMEDA, Calif. — Oakland Raiders quarterback Derek Carr will miss between two and six weeks after breaking a bone in his back during a loss to the Denver Broncos.

Coach Jack Del Rio said Monday that a CT scan showed that Carr has a transverse process fracture in his back after being injured in the third quarter of a 16-10 loss Sunday. Del Rio said these injuries typically sideline players for two to six weeks.

“It’s always a big blow to lose a good player, a key player and your quarterback,” Del Rio said. “The good news is he’s not gone for the year. We’ll get him back. It could be as short as two weeks, it could be longer. We’ll see. We’ll deal with that as it

goes.”

Former Cowboys quarterback Tony Romo and the Panthers’ Cam Newton each had similar injuries in 2014 and missed only one game each.

This is the second significant injury Carr has suffered in less than 10 months. He broke his leg in the second-to-last game of the regular season in 2016 with the Raiders holding a 12-3 record. Oakland lost the regular-season finale with Matt McGloin starting at quarterback to miss out on winning the division and then was eliminated in the first round of the playoffs with Connor Cook starting.

The Raiders hope they are better equipped to handle the absence this year with E.J. Manuel at quarterback. Manu-

el, a first-round pick in Buffalo in 2013, showed some encouraging signs when he relieved Carr after the injury.

Manuel completed 11 of 17 passes for 106 yards. He led a 73-yard drive for a field goal that ended when Jared Cook couldn’t catch a well-thrown ball in the end zone. He then moved the Raiders across midfield while seeking a late, go-ahead touchdown before throwing a game-sealing interception on a deep shot to Amari Cooper with 1:46 to play.

“I don’t feel like the moment was too big for him,” Del Rio said. “I felt like he was accurate, made good decisions with the exception of putting that one up late. ... I liked the demeanor he played with. I like the certainty

he played with and I liked his accuracy.”

Manuel started just three games the past two seasons for the Bills and will be seeking his first win as a starter on Sunday against Baltimore since beating Miami 29-10 on Sept. 14, 2014.

The Raiders will have plenty of issues to fix on offense after being held to 10 or fewer points in consecutive games for the first time since 2009, when it happened three times in a row with JaMarcus Russell at quarterback.

Oakland has been held to fewer than 10 yards on 17 of 25 plays the past two weeks, thanks in part to the inability to convert on third downs. The Raiders are just 2 for 23 on third downs in the two losses.

Martinez trade key for Diamondbacks

Associated Press

PHOENIX — The Arizona Diamondbacks acquired slugging outfielder J.D. Martinez from the Detroit Tigers on July 18 for three minor leaguers.

It might go down as one of the best mid-season acquisitions in baseball history.

Martinez has had a thunderous last half to the season, and it only picked up steam down the stretch.

"I've never seen anything like what he's done the last month," Diamondbacks center fielder A.J. Pollock said. "Yeah, we kind of keep looking, 'Where would we be without J.D.?'"

In 62 games with the Diamondbacks, Martinez hit .302 with 29 home runs and 65 RBIs, and he has fit in perfectly with the team's "family" culture nurtured by first-year manager Torey Lovullo.

"It's been a great couple of months," Martinez said.

The last month has been spectacular.

In September, Martinez hit .404 (40-for-99) with 16 home runs (tying a National League record), eight doubles, 36 RBIs and 24 runs scored in 24 games.

"It's a good run I'm on," he said. "I just want to keep it up and continue in the playoffs."

Martinez and the Diamondbacks host the NL wild-card game against Colorado on Wednesday night.

"It's cool, it's a great feeling," he said of what he's done in Arizona so far, "but the job's not done yet. We've got one game we've got to get in and we've got to keep it going."

Catcher Chris Iannetta said the key to Martinez's success is the work he does.

"I think no one hits more than him, no one watches more video and studies his own swing, studies opposing pitchers," Iannetta said.

Lovullo said Martinez's production at the plate is the result of all that effort.

"The thing that people don't see is what he does behind the scenes," the manager said. "There's notes in a notebook. There's video and studying. There's tendencies and habits. There's constant practice and perfection of the swing. And it translates."

Combined with his time in Detroit, Martinez hit .303 with a career-high 45 home runs.

"I get a chance to sit next to

him or stand next to him before he's going in the on-deck circle, and it's the same routine," Lovullo said. "He does it with his eyes open. He does it with his eyes closed. I know there is a lot of muscle memory that he has perfected. So when he walks up to home plate, it's just put things in automatic and let it happen."

Martinez's September included a fabulous night in Dodger Stadium, when he became the 18th player in major league history to hit four home runs in a game.

"He's been a huge part of this team, helped us get where we are," pitcher Patrick Corbin said. "... It feels like he's going to homer every time at the plate."

The Tigers got Dawel Lugo, Sergio Alcantara and Jose King in exchange for Martinez, certainly a bargain for arguably the best position player on the market before the trade deadline. And he was just what Arizona needed, a corner outfielder who could bat behind Paul Goldschmidt in the heart of the Diamondbacks lineup.

"I was disappointed leaving Detroit because that was obviously my home for so many

years," Martinez said, "but at the same time I was excited to be joining a playoff-caliber team."

Almost immediately, he fit right into the Diamondbacks tight clubhouse.

Martinez is, Lovullo said, "a tremendous teammate and a part of this family we developed here."

"He came here mid-season," the manager said, "and it's hard for players to walk into that environment. He immersed himself into this culture and he's become one of us."

A free agent at the end of this season, Martinez has said he'd like to stay with the Diamondbacks. But with every power surge at the plate, his value rises.

The cost of keeping him might well be too steep for a franchise that has one of the lower payrolls in baseball at under \$100 million.

So if the Diamondbacks lose the wild-card game to the Rockies, it could well be Martinez's final game in an Arizona uniform.

"I hadn't even thought of that," he said.

Well-rested Gonzalez ready for playoffs with Rockies

Associated Press

DENVER — Rest assured, Carlos Gonzalez is a different player since August.

Turns out, the Colorado Rockies' charismatic outfielder just needed a good night's sleep.

Struggling at the plate early in the season, Gonzalez tossed and turned each night before finally visiting a sleep specialist about two months ago. Now, it's his bat that's awake as he and the Rockies are headed to the postseason for the first time since 2009. This is better than a dream, too, for the only holdover player from that '09 squad.

"It's just special," said Gon-

zalez, whose team travels to Arizona to take on the Diamondbacks in the NL wild-card game Wednesday. "I went through a lot of struggles, losing seasons, rebuilding seasons. I've seen so many good players leaving this house.

"But I always believed I was going to be able to stay here and celebrate with my teammates and the fans. They always show me love. That means everything for me."

The player nicknamed Cargo was hitting .214 in mid-July as he tinkered with his swing. And the harder the lifetime .291 hitter worked, the more he seemed to struggle.

And the more he struggled,

the worse his sleeping habits became.

The pattern was similar each night — get home from a game, think about it, watch movies or TV until around 3 a.m. and fitfully fall asleep only to wake up exhausted.

A touch of insomnia is something that's plagued him for years in large part because of all the travel. Last season, Gonzalez said he sometimes relied on sleeping pills to nod off.

"But I didn't feel like they were helping me, because the next day I felt bad," said Gonzalez, who boosted his average to .262 this season with a strong finish. "I was trying to stay away from those, but still

not sleeping.

"Finally, I talked to my agent, talked to a lot of people, to figure out how we're going to attack the problem. In August, that's when I started talking to this doctor about doing the right thing to get to sleep."

Mostly, it was some relaxation recommendations — keeping his room cool and dark, having his phone well out of reach and no movies after games. That's helped him get a solid seven hours of sleep each night.

In addition, he also adjusted his grip on the bat. That, combined with slumber, has paid dividends, with Gonzalez hitting .325 over August and September with eight of his 14 homers.