

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## 3 Green Berets killed in Niger ambush

BY CHAD GARLAND  
AND JOHN VANDIVER

*Stars and Stripes*

Three U.S. Army Special Forces soldiers were killed in an ambush Wednesday in Niger, and two injured servicemembers have been transported to a military hospital in Germany for treatment, U.S. Africa Command said Thursday.

The names of the servicemembers are being withheld pending notification of next of kin. The injured troops are in stable condition as they receive treatment at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany, AFRICOM said.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with the families and friends of the fallen service members," AFRICOM said in a statement.

The soldiers were attacked on a joint patrol while training troops in Niger, a country where U.S. forces have been a fixture for many years as part of an effort to bolster the fighting capabilities of regional partners. "U.S. Africa Command can con-

firm reports that a joint U.S. and Nigerien patrol came under hostile fire in southwest Niger," AFRICOM said.

The injured soldiers initially were taken to Niger's capital city of Niamey, unnamed officials told The Associated Press.

The attack reportedly occurred 120 miles north of Niamey, near the Mali border, where al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb militants have conducted cross-border attacks before. The Nigeria-based Boko Haram terrorist group also conducts frequent attacks inside Niger.

About 30 men from a Nigerien security and intelligence battalion and eight American escorts in five vehicles were responding to an attack near the village of Tongo Tongo when the patrol was lured into the ambush, Radio France Internationale reported, citing an unnamed military source.

Namatta Abubacar, an official in Niger's Tillaberi region, told Reuters that five Nigerien soldiers were among the dead.

Niger is a key strategic location for Western counterterrorism efforts in West Africa. U.S. and other Western forces, including Germans, are deployed to the region to support local troops with training, advice and assistance, including with intelligence operations, in their battle against extremists.

"One aspect of that is training, advising and assisting the Nigeriens in order to increase their ability to bring stability and security to their people," AFRICOM said.

The U.S. is building a base in the city of Agadez in central Niger, from which it plans to launch drone flights. The military has long used a separate facility near Niger's capital to conduct unmanned surveillance flights.

The death Wednesday marks the first American combat fatality in the mission with the Nigerien armed forces. Warrant Officer Shawn Thomas, 35, a soldier assigned to 3rd Special Forces Group at Fort Bragg, N.C., was killed in a noncombat

vehicle accident in the country in February.

In May, a Navy SEAL was killed during operations in Somalia, marking the first combat death in that country since the 1993 Black Hawk Down incident in which 18 servicemembers were killed.

As military operations have picked up in Africa, the military commander overseeing those efforts has raised concerns about insufficient resources that could put personnel at increased risk.

In March, AFRICOM chief Gen. Thomas Waldhauser warned of inadequate surveillance, poor supply chain networks and an inefficient personnel-rescue system. In testimony submitted to Congress, Waldhauser said only 20 to 30 percent of the command's intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance requirements are being met.

AFRICOM relies heavily on contracted search-and-rescue assets because of a lack of resources.

## USS John S. McCain heads to Japan for repairs

BY TYLER HLAVAC

*Stars and Stripes*

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The USS John S. McCain has left Singapore for its homeport in Japan, where it will undergo repairs from a summer collision that killed 10 sailors.

The decision to do the work at Yokosuka was made after damage assessments revealed it would be faster and cheaper than sending the warship stateside, the Navy said in a statement. The decision also allows McCain sailors to stay with their families during the repairs.

Sailors, families and base workers held a memorial ceremony Wednesday at Yokosuka for the 10 McCain sailors who died in the Aug. 21 collision with an oil tanker near Singapore.

The guided-missile destroyer, which departed Singapore's Changi Naval Base on Thursday, will link up with the heavy-lift transport vessel MV Treasure, the Navy said. The McCain will spend a few days loading onto the MV Treasure before being hauled to Yokosuka.

While repairs take place, McCain sailors will conduct training needed to prepare the ship

to resume operations with the 7th Fleet, Navy officials said.

Meanwhile, the McCain's sister ship, the USS Fitzgerald, is heading stateside for repairs to damage from a June 17 collision with a merchant vessel off Japan that killed seven sailors. Navy officials cited the complexity of the work and limited dry dock space as reasons for not fixing the ship at the Yokosuka.

Fifty sailors from the Fitzgerald's crew of about 300 will remain aboard the ship when it travels to Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, Miss., this fall. Most of the remaining crew will

be reassigned to other units in Japan, officials said.

Although the McCain collision was deadlier, the ship suffered less damage, allowing it to be repaired in Japan, officials said.

"Damage is less significant, impacted fewer systems compared with [the Fitzgerald]," 7th Fleet spokesman Cmdr. Clay Doss said.

"For example, there was no significant damage to the superstructure, which is more likely to require U.S.-based shipyard repairs."

# Marine becomes first female AAV officer

*The (Anaheim, Calif.) Orange County Register*

Second Lt. Mariah Klenke has done most everything with total commitment.

So it was no surprise to her parents, Darrell and Tina Klenke, that the 24-year-old from Breese, Ill., made history Tuesday by becoming the first female Marine to graduate from the Marine Corps Assault Amphibian Officer Course and to earn the military occupational specialty of assault amphibian officer.

Six other Marines graduated with Klenke in a ceremony held at the YAT-YAS Museum, which houses old assault vehicles and memorabilia from the 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion at Camp Pendleton.

Klenke's first duty station will be with the 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion with the 1st Marine Division.

"We cannot overlook the historic nature of this day," Col. Dan Yaroslaski, commander of the Assault Amphibian School, said at the ceremony. "The Marine Corps has been through the process of integration. We can stop talking about integration. This is who we are. We have set the standards every Marine has to pass. There has been no distinction between male and female."

Klenke was the first woman to enter the course after the Pentagon lifted its ban on women in combat roles in 2015.

For the past year, the former collegiate soccer player has held her own with her male counterparts. Klenke has been held to the same requirements as male Marines — first in Officer Candidates School, then in The Basic School and most recently in the Assault Amphibian Vehicle Officer Course.

Throughout her training, Klenke said, she was never treated differently from her male counterparts.

# Russia hacking US soldiers' phones

BY JOHN VANDIVER  
*Stars and Stripes*

STUTTGART, Germany — Moscow apparently is targeting rank-and-file U.S. military personnel for information while they are operating in Eastern Europe and while going to Russia as tourists, according to military officials and media reports.

U.S. troops have been pulled out of line during cruise ship stops in Russia, where they've been questioned and harassed by intelligence operatives in recent months, military officials in Europe said.

Meanwhile, along NATO's eastern flank, troops appear to be targeted through covert means.

Such incidents, focused on troops assigned to NATO battle groups deployed to deter potential Russian aggression in the Baltics and Poland, signal a return to Cold War-era espionage tactics that were less common in the years after the fall of the Soviet Union.

Lt. Col. Christopher L'Heureux, who leads a 2nd Cavalry Regiment deployed to Poland, told the Wall Street Journal recently that his phone was hacked, along with the phones or social media accounts of at least six of his troops operating not far from the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad.

"They were geolocating me, whoever it was," L'Heureux said. "I was like, 'What the heck is this?'"

L'Heureux told the Journal he suspected the hacking was part of a Russian effort to intimidate personnel and to glean information.

The Journal documented a series of other cases, including a U.S. soldier's encounter in Latvia with a suspected Russian operative who knew personal information about the soldier.

U.S. military officials in Europe declined to

comment on the hacking incidents and referred questions to U.S. Cyber Command.

Col. Daniel King, a CYBERCOM spokesman, said in a statement that he "can neither confirm nor deny" cases of phones being hacked, but that he had "no reason to doubt what the Lt Col said."

Since Russia's 2014 intervention in Ukraine, which prompted NATO to bolster its defenses near Russia's border, tensions have been rising in Europe.

Western concern about Russia centers largely on Moscow's penchant for mischief in the cyberspace realm. Allies have complained about everything from information operations aimed at influencing Western elections to Russia's deployment of "little green men" to Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula, where disguised Russian troops created confusion as they operated in uniforms without national insignia.

A Russian 2007 cyberattack on Estonia that crippled networks served as an early sign of Russia's fast-evolving skills in unconventional battlegrounds.

The military is reluctant to delve into specifics about Russian information operations. To highlight specific cases as alarming or dismiss them outright as minor harassment could signal to Russia that its methods are either having their desired effect or indicate they are falling short and need to be stepped up.

Moscow routinely denies involvement in such operations.

The Army has quietly taken steps to bolster the awareness of personnel stationed in Europe.

Operational security training by the Army currently highlights the ways in which troops can be targeted by intelligence services. In recent months, on-base training has dealt with concerns about U.S. troops being questioned while in Russia off duty.

# Rubio: Dismiss officer over statements

*Watertown (N.Y.) Daily Times*

The outrage over a Fort Drum officer's statements supporting communism and against President Donald J. Trump have reached Capitol Hill, with Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., calling for the officer's dismissal.

In a letter to acting Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy, Rubio said 2nd Lt. Spenser Rapone's statements should be an "extreme embarrassment" for West Point and the U.S. Army and that his West Point diploma should be revoked.

"It is extremely concern-

ing that someone who so often expressed such hostile views towards the United States' system of government was able to obtain a commission," Rubio wrote. "Rapone's revolutionary ideas were harbored long before he was commissioned as an Army Second Lieutenant. Were West Point administrators or faculty aware of his views and behavior?"

Rubio also called for information on how West Point will ensure soldiers with similar views "do not waste more taxpayer funds" by attending the academy.

"The Army's premier officer commissioning source must ensure an individual like Spenser Rapone is never given the opportunity to lead or serve beside American soldiers," he said.

Rapone, a member of the 10th Mountain Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team, first drew attention when he tweeted an image from his account, @punkproletarian, with "Communism Will Win" written into his West Point cadet hat.

Other online statements criticized Trump and members of his administration.



# Navy closes college offices for sailors returning to US

By SCOTT WYLAND

*Stars and Stripes*

NAPLES, Italy — Lawrence Daley credits face-to-face college counseling for his decision to obtain a master's degree while he was in the Air Force in the early 1990s.

Daley, who's now a counselor at the Naples Navy college office, recalled his counselor strongly encouraging him to pursue an advanced degree, which Daley feels has given him an edge when applying for jobs.

"The human touch is important," he said. "This is not just about school; it's about life."

Sailors enrolling in college courses will continue to enjoy the personal touch overseas but will find it absent when they transfer back to the States. The Navy on Oct. 1 closed its last four stateside college offices, which had offered in-person help on college choice, course selection, education planning, tuition assistance, testing and other matters.

The overseas college offices will remain open. Sailors in the United States will be directed to the Navy's Virtual Education

Center, where they will get assistance online and through a call center.

The Navy is the only military branch phasing out college offices. It shuttered 20 offices in 2009 and 16 offices last year. The remaining four, including at the Norfolk Naval Station, closed this week.

Closing the college offices will save about \$2.3 million, the Navy says, and will serve younger sailors who prefer handling tasks with the computer and phone.

Schools such as the University of Oklahoma will continue to run their own on-base programs in the United States. Directors at the Navy's regional commands will work with the schools.

An on-base office, such as the one in Naples, acts as a hub for the colleges, guiding students to the schools that serve their academic goals and helping the programs to run smoothly, said Mitzi Williams, University of Maryland University College's regional director for the Mediterranean.

"They very much guide our operations," Williams said. "They coordinate all of this."

## Ash Carter takes issue with 'combat' question

*The Washington Post*

During the latter stages of former President Barack Obama's time in office, a question wouldn't go away: Why were so many senior government officials hesitant to say that U.S. troops were in combat against Islamic State?

Former Defense Secretary Ash Carter addresses the issue in a new essay, saying that "the 'combat' question" occupied "a great deal of my time." The strategy to defeat ISIS centered on backing indigenous forces in Iraq and Syria, and it was a "challenge" to explain that "while also remaining clear about the danger and heroism involved for the U.S. forces enabling them," Carter wrote.

"The president clearly wanted to reassure the American people that we were not involving ourselves in large-scale ground combat, and the people of the region did not want invasion-sized forces to return either," said in his essay, published by Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. "But the avoidance of that word — 'combat' — risked minimizing the risk and sacrifice of U.S. and coalition forces. With the press and above all with the troops, this hairsplitting didn't fly."

Carter blames the "eager to play gotcha" media for not accepting that the Pentagon's description of events was accurate. Journalists "constantly searched for any hint of U.S. troops in 'combat' roles or that they had moved closer to the front lines,"

he wrote.

The issue came to a head several times, particularly after Master Sgt. Joshua Wheeler, a member of the Army's elite Delta Force, became the first U.S. servicemember killed in combat in the anti-ISIS campaign on Oct. 22, 2015. At the time, Pentagon officials typically said that the U.S. had no combat role in the mission, which began in June 2014 and expanded to include airstrikes two months later.

Wheeler's death made it clear how difficult it was to explain the "strategic concept of enabling local forces and the tactical reality of risk and, yes, 'combat,'" Carter acknowledged. He told Wheeler's wife, Ashley, that her husband had died in combat, he recalled, and later said the same thing to the media while noting that the U.S. mission was primarily focused elsewhere.

"I think to the extent there's a distinction, turning around the word 'combat,'" he said in a Pentagon news conference six days after Wheeler's death. "It's not between a particular operation, but between the mission, the overall mission. And the overall mission of the U.S. forces in Iraq is to enable, by equipping, training, advising, and assisting, capable-and-motivated local forces."

The administration's grappling with the definition of combat came after years of promises that the U.S. military would not get involved in another prolonged ground campaign.

## Iraqi prime minister says Hawija retaken from ISIS

*Associated Press*

PARIS — Iraqi government forces have retaken the northern town of Hawija, one of Islamic State's last strongholds in Iraq, the country's prime minister said Thursday.

Haider al-Abadi said in Paris that the fight against ISIS now will focus on the border zone with Syria.

"I want to announce the liberation of the city of Hawija today," he said, calling it a "victory not just for Iraq, but for the whole world."

Plans to retake Hawija had been complicated by political wrangling among the

Iraqi security forces, Shiite armed groups and Kurdish peshmerga troops. The town is part of the Kirkuk governorate, which is disputed between the central government in Baghdad and the northern Iraqi Kurdish autonomous region.

Iraqi forces launched the operation to retake the town, which lies 150 miles north of Baghdad, late last month, just two days after Iraqi forces began an offensive against ISIS holdouts in Iraq's vast western Anbar province.

Earlier in the month, Iraqi and U.S.-led coalition planes had stepped up a cam-

paign of airstrikes on Hawija, targeting ISIS bases and weapons facilities.

ISIS has been losing ground steadily and seeing its sprawling caliphate — which in 2014 spanned a third of the territory of Iraq and also neighboring Syria — crumbling fast. The territory it still holds in the western province lies mainly along the border with Syria in the Euphrates River.

"We should chase this terrorist organization everywhere," al-Abadi said. "This is a very dangerous organization that works for spreading instability."



# Clues to gunman's motives are elusive

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Those seeking to know the motive of Las Vegas gunman Stephen Paddock have had little more to chase than hints and shadows.

Paddock led such a low-key, private life that few seemed to know him well, and those who did had no sense he was capable of perpetrating America's deadliest mass shooting.

Where other mass killers have left behind a trail of plain-sight clues that help investigators quickly understand what drove them to violence, Paddock, 64, had nearly no close friends, social media presence nor other clear connections to the broader world.

Even the No. 2 official in the FBI said Wednesday he was surprised investigators have not uncovered more about why a man with no obvious criminal record would cause so much bloodshed.

Working with what little they know, investigators have zeroed in on a weapon-buying binge Paddock went on one year before he gunned down 58 people Sunday at a country music festival from a 32nd-floor room at the Mandalay Bay casino resort before killing himself.

They wonder if he had some sort of mental break at the time that drove him to start making

plans for mass murder.

They also know he rented an apartment in a Las Vegas high-rise over another music festival the weekend before the massacre, though not why.

They know he was a major gambler and are looking at related records, though even in very public casinos he played the very private game of video poker.

They know he had a plan to survive the shooting and to try to escape, though would not say how.

Clark County Sheriff Joseph Lombardo said at a news conference Wednesday night that Paddock must have had some help along the way, given his huge arsenal, the explosive materials found in his car, and his meticulous plan, but they don't know who that might be.

Paddock's girlfriend, Marilou Danley, 62, returned Tuesday from the Philippines and was being interviewed by the FBI.

She said she was devastated by the carnage and would cooperate with authorities.

Analyzing Paddock's computer, cellphone and other electronic devices, investigators have found no obvious ideological motive, no clear connection to extremists or activist groups and no outward display of mental illness.

# Some Republicans open to legislation banning 'bump stocks'

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Senior congressional Republicans said they are open to considering legislation banning "bump stocks" like the shooter in Las Vegas apparently used to make semi-automatic rifles perform more like fully automatic weapons.

The comments from lawmakers including the No. 2 Senate Republican, John Cornyn, of Texas, marked a surprising departure from GOP lawmakers' antipathy to gun regulations of any kind. But they were far from a guarantee of a path forward for the new legislation by Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., especially with Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and House Speaker Paul Ryan making clear their priorities are elsewhere.

"I own a lot of guns and, as a hunter and sportsman, I think that's our right as Americans," Cornyn told reporters, "but I don't understand the use of this 'bump stock' and that's another reason to have a hearing."

Cornyn later said he'd spoken with Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, and that Grassley was interested in convening a hearing.

The devices, known as "bump stocks," are legal and originally were intended to help people with limited hand mobility fire semi-automatic weapons without the individual trigger pulls

required. They can fit over the rear shoulder-stock assembly on a semi-automatic rifle and with applied pressure cause the weapon to fire continuously, increasing the rate from between 45 and 60 rounds per minute to between 400 and 800 rounds per minute, according to Feinstein's office.

The government gave its seal of approval to selling the devices in 2010 after concluding that they did not violate federal law.

Feinstein has a careerlong history on the issue of guns after becoming mayor in San Francisco after her predecessor was gunned down. She authored an assault weapons ban that was in place for a decade before expiring in 2004, and said she had been considering trying to reintroduce that more sweeping legislation, as she's done unsuccessfully after past mass shootings. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer urged her to go with a narrower bill that might be likelier to draw support.

In the House, Rep. David Cicilline, D-R.I., introduced a bill to ban the manufacture, possession, transfer, sale or importation of bump stocks. Rep. Dina Titus, D-Nev., whose district includes the site of Sunday night's rampage, said: "The victims and families in Las Vegas don't need an explanation about the difference between machine guns and firearms with 'bump stocks.' They need action."

# Study: For-profit colleges see higher loan-default rate

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Students who attended for-profit colleges were twice as likely or more to default on their loans than students who attended public schools, according to a federal study published Thursday.

The report by the National Center of Education Statistics looks at students who began their undergraduate education in 2003 and defaulted on at least one loan over the next 12 years.

Fifty-two percent of the students who attended for-profit schools defaulted on their loans. That's compared with 17 percent for those who attended four-year public institutions and 26 percent at community colleges.

The report also finds that the for-profit students defaulted on their federal student loans in greater numbers than their predecessors eight years before.

The report comes as Education Secretary Betsy DeVos re-

writes rules that had been put in place by the Obama administration to protect students who said they were defrauded by their for-profit colleges.

Of the students who started college in 2003, 27 percent had defaulted on at least one loan after 12 years, the study found. For those who started their undergraduate education in 1995, the default rate was 18 percent. The rate of full repayment was 20 percent in the younger group,

compared with 24 in the older group.

Default rates were higher for those students who never completed their education, the study said.

"Degree completion is a key component of a student's ability to repay their loan," said Joshua Goodman, a professor of public policy at Harvard University. "Simply attending college without completion doesn't really pay off."



# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Motorcyclist sought in odd shoplifting case

**ND** FARGO — Fargo police are looking for a motorcycle driver who allegedly drove at officers who were arresting a shoplifting suspect.

Authorities believe the motorcyclist is an accomplice of the woman who was arrested in the Scheels parking lot Tuesday night on charges of shoplifting and resisting arrest.

Police said the motorcyclist drove by and struck but did not injure the woman. The man then turned around and drove toward the officers before fleeing.

## Man dead in home likely died a year ago

**GA** ELLENWOOD — Police believe a skeleton found in a Georgia home belongs to a man who might have been dead for over a year.

News outlets reported a DeKalb County neighbor called police Monday after a homeless man spotted the remains Friday. Authorities found the skeleton lying in bed.

DeKalb police spokeswoman Shiera Campbell said the county medical examiner's office is working to determine the cause of death, but it might be challenging. Campbell said authorities don't know how long the man's been dead, but the going estimate is two years.

## 12 charged in food stamp fraud scheme

**FL** FORT LAUDERDALE — Federal investigators said 12 people in Florida are accused of defrauding the government out of more than \$20 million by illegally trading food stamps for cash.

The Sun Sentinel reported that store owners and employees accepted payments for illegal

cash transactions involving no purchases of food. The program, formally known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, provides food benefits to low-income people via debit cards.

Federal prosecutors say the fraud in Broward and Miami-Dade counties operated by swiping food stamp recipients' debit cards at the stores to make it look like they bought food. Instead, the fraudsters gave the card holder cash and then claim full reimbursement by making it appear food was purchased.

## Man sneaks snakes over border in socks

**NY** BUFFALO — A man who was caught trying to sneak snakes into Canada in his socks has pleaded guilty.

Federal prosecutors in Buffalo say Chaoyi Le, 28, faces up to five years in prison after pleading guilty Tuesday to violating wildlife regulations.

He was arrested in 2014 at the Lewiston-Queenston Bridge in western New York after Canadian border agents discovered three live albino western hog-nose snakes hidden in his socks. At first, Le said he'd found them in a New York park, but he eventually admitted buying them.

Authorities say Le, a Chinese citizen who lives in Mississauga, Ontario, was trying to avoid a U.S. Fish and Wildlife inspection.

## State sees increase in gonorrhea cases

**AK** ANCHORAGE — The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services said the state is experiencing an outbreak of gonorrhea, part of a national increase in the disease.

Alaska's reported cases climbed from 1,115 in 2015 to 1,454 in 2016. That's a 31 percent increase, and the problem

has not abated in 2017.

The department reported 1,035 cases this year. More than half were in Anchorage and nearly 60 percent were in people age 29 or younger.

Gonorrhea is curable with proper medication. The department said sexually active people should use condoms and regularly get tested for gonorrhea and other sexually transmitted diseases.

## Man faces 28th charge for DWI

**MN** FERGUS FALLS — A 64-year-old Minnesota man is facing his 28th DWI charge.

Danny Lee Bettcher, of New York Mills, was charged last week in Otter Tail County with felony-level drunken driving and refusing to submit to a preliminary breath test.

Bettcher was arrested after leaving the VFW in New York Mills. According to the complaint, an off-duty deputy was in the VFW, saw Bettcher drinking and alerted authorities.

Police pulled Bettcher over after he ignored a stop sign and drove 10 to 15 mph on Highway 10 while swerving. Bettcher told the officer he was "way over" and to take him to jail.

## Get Thanksgiving meal in an egg roll at fair

**NC** RALEIGH — It's another year of diet-killing selections at the North Carolina State Fair, including a Thanksgiving meal which doesn't require a plate.

The fair, which begins Oct. 12, has issued its menu. Among the choices is a Thanksgiving egg-roll with turkey, gravy, mashed potatoes, stuffing and cranberry sauce inside a wonton wrapper. To complete the experience, there's fried pumpkin pie.

For fairgoers not ready to

celebrate the holiday, there are other items to enjoy, including roasted corn on the cob coated in mayonnaise and Flamin' Hot Cheetos.

## Couple born same day in same hospital

**MA** TAUNTON — A couple born on the same day at the same Massachusetts hospital have exchanged vows more than two decades later.

The Taunton Gazette reported Jessica Gomes and Aaron Bairos got married Sept. 9. Each was born on April 28, 1990, at Morton Hospital in Taunton.

They met through mutual friends in high school.

Jessica said she and Aaron figured out they were born on the same day "pretty early on" when they took a driver's education class together and saw the proof on their learner's permits.

## Mom found passed out in SUV at school

**WA** GRAHAM — Authorities say a woman found passed out behind the wheel of her SUV at her child's school had a blood-alcohol level nearly six times the legal limit.

The Pierce County Sheriff's Department said Tuesday that breath tests showed the 33-year-old woman's blood-alcohol content was .461 and .466. The state legal limit is .08.

The woman was taken to a hospital for medical observation and cited for DUI. The child was placed with a family friend.

The department said a staff member at Graham Elementary School walked the woman's child to the SUV Monday afternoon for pickup and found the mother asleep behind the wheel. When the mother woke up, the staff member smelled alcohol on her breath and called 911.

From wire reports

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Reporting  
World, National  
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# Diamondbacks prevail in wild-card game

Associated Press

PHOENIX — Relief pitcher Archie Bradley hit a stunning triple in the seventh inning, driving in two runs with one of four three-baggers by Arizona that sent the Diamondbacks past the Colorado Rockies 11-8 in the National League wild-card game Wednesday night.

Paul Goldschmidt launched an early three-run homer and the Diamondbacks built a 6-0 lead before ace Zack Greinke faltered. Colorado climbed back into it and cut it to 8-7 when Nolan Arenado and Trevor Story hit back-to-back homers in the eighth off Bradley, perhaps exhausted from hustling around the bases and shouting in excitement to giddy teammates.

But then A.J. Pollock knocked in two runs with Arizona's fourth triple, this one off closer Greg Holland, as the Diamondbacks scored three times in their half of the eighth to finally put away a wild game.

Arizona moved on to a best-of-five Division Series against the NL West champion Dodgers, a team the Diamondbacks beat the last six times they played. Game 1 is Friday night in Los Angeles.

Arizona became the first team with four triples in a postseason game since the Boston Americans (now Red Sox) twice hit five during the first World Series back in 1903 against Pittsburgh.

It was that kind of crazy night in the desert as the two NL West foes slugged it out. Daniel Descalso also homered for the Diamondbacks, and Ketel Marte tripled twice.

Bradley, the spirited reliever who had one hit in four at-bats all season, knocked Pat Neshek's 3-1 pitch to deep left-center with two outs in the seventh for the first triple by a reliever in postseason history.

The lanky pitcher, a fan favorite with a bushy beard, regrouped from the two solo homers he gave up to get the final two outs of the eighth with the Diamondbacks clinging to a one-run lead.

Fernando Rodney allowed a run in the ninth before closing it out.

Jonathan Lucroy doubled twice, scored two runs and drove in one for the Rockies in their first postseason appearance since 2009.

Jake Lamb tied an Arizona postsea-

son record with four hits, all singles, and scored three times.

Marte, who came to Arizona with pitcher Taijuan Walker from Seattle for Jean Segura in an offseason deal, became the first player to triple twice in a postseason game since Mariano Duncan did it for Philadelphia against Atlanta in the 1993 NL Championship Series.

The home team won for just the second time in the six NL wild-card games since the one-game format was adopted in 2012. The hosts hadn't even scored in the last three, but the Diamondbacks ended that before their first out.

Goldschmidt, in an 0-for-17 slump to end the regular season, hit the first pitch he saw from ineffective starter Jon Gray into the left-field seats for a three-run shot.

Greinke blanked the Rockies on one hit through three innings but never made it through the fourth as Colorado, known for its power at the plate, got back into it with small ball — five hits, four of them singles. Greinke finished with four runs allowed on six hits in 4 2/3 innings.

## Nats' Strasburg healthy, ready for playoffs

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Stephen Strasburg's relationship with the postseason always has been complicated.

Still is, in a way.

For all of his regular-season excellence since the Washington Nationals made him the No. 1 overall pick in the 2009 amateur draft — the 14-strikeout debut, the 84-45 career record, the 3.07 ERA — Strasburg has thrown all of five playoff innings for a team that has won four of the past six NL East titles.

"The talent and the way he throws the ball and the way he knows how to pitch and the way he competes has always been one of the best," first baseman Ryan Zimmerman said Tuesday after the team's NL Division Series workout at Nationals Park. "It's just a matter of him being able to stay on the mound."

Strasburg's lone postseason appearance came in 2014. Otherwise, there was the infa-

mous shutdown in 2012, and an arm injury last year. This time around, Strasburg is healthy. The question is when he'll be on the mound against the defending World Series champion Chicago Cubs: Game 1 on Friday? Or Game 2 on Saturday?

"We haven't confirmed that yet. But he's certainly a capable No. 1 starter in the playoffs," Nationals general manager Mike Rizzo said about the No. 1 overall pick in baseball's 2009 amateur draft. "We feel good about running him out there if he were the guy. And who better? We have two aces, and one of them will pitch Game 1."

While Washington keeps waiting to announce its playoff rotation, the Cubs made their starting staff known Wednesday: Kyle Hendricks in Game 1, Jon Lester in Game 2, Jose Quintana in Game 3 and Jake Arrieta in Game 4, if necessary.

Complicating things for the Nats is reigning NL Cy Young Award winner Max Scherzer's

health. He tweaked his right hamstring in his final regular-season start and says that while he can run and lift weights with that leg, a full throwing motion hurts. So while Strasburg tossed a bullpen session off a mound Tuesday — the sort of thing he normally would do two or three days before a start — Scherzer was limited to throwing in the outfield grass.

"We really haven't determined what game we're eyeing yet. The first and foremost thing is just making sure that whenever I do take the ball, I'm able to go out there and compete the way I'm able to compete," Scherzer said.

Asked whether he's certain he will face the Cubs, Scherzer replied: "Oh, I'm pitching in the NLDS. I'm pitching in the NLDS."

So, too, is the 6-foot-4 Strasburg, for a change. And he's been every bit Scherzer's equal — if not better — down the stretch this season. In his last eight starts, Strasburg went 5-1

with a 0.84 ERA.

"Stephen's really good. Everybody knows that. He's Stephen Strasburg," left fielder Jayson Werth said. "But to have a healthy Stephen Strasburg, and one that's clicking also going into the postseason, it's going to be really good to have. We've definitely missed him a couple times. So to have him — and in shape, in form — is going to be huge for us."

Overall in 2017, Strasburg went 15-4 with a 2.52 ERA and 204 strikeouts in 175 1/3 innings. He made 28 starts, his most since 2014, which could be a result of various changes he made to his offseason and in-season routines.

"I mean, I just, like, put in a lot of work in the offseason and stuff and you just try to listen to your arm the whole year and try not to tweak stuff too much," said Strasburg, who begins a \$175 million, seven-year contract next season. "It's got its ups and downs. You try to focus on what you can control."



## NHL roundup

## Blues prevail over Penguins in opener

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — The Pittsburgh Penguins insist they're well aware of the bumpy road ahead as the two-time defending Stanley Cup champions chase history.

Just in case they needed a reminder, Alex Pietrangelo and the St. Louis Blues provided one.

Pietrangelo's wrist shot from just inside the left circle beat Matt Murray 1:15 into overtime to give the Blues a 5-4 victory Wednesday night in the season opener for both teams. The Blues recovered after letting a two-goal, third-period lead slip away, with Pietrangelo's shot hitting Murray's shoulder and slipping under the crossbar for his second goal of the game.

Paul Stastny had a goal and an assist for the Blues, Brayden Schenn and Colton Parayko also scored, and Jake Allen finished with 29 saves.

"Gave up the two goals, but we held it together on the bench," Pietrangelo said. "We knew we had a chance, especially if he got to overtime and we did."

Sidney Crosby and Conor Sheary scored 54 seconds apart in the third to tie it, but the Penguins couldn't complete the comeback on a night they raised the franchise's fifth Cup banner to the rafters at PPG Paints Arena. Justin Schultz and Olli Maatta also scored for the Penguins. Murray stopped 29 shots but Pittsburgh struggled at times defensively, giving the Blues wide swaths of open ice to take aim at Murray.

"I think that we'd rather not put ourselves in that position, but that was the case, and I thought we found a way to get a couple big goals and get ourselves back in it," Crosby said. "We've got to improve. But yeah, I mean to get that point was important. We have to build off of that now."

Just 115 days after finishing off a heated challenge from Nashville in the Final, the Penguins began the quest for the first three-peat in 35 years with one last nod to the 2016-17 club that became the first team since Detroit in 1997 and 1998 to go back-to-back.

The players received their commemorative bling during

a private ceremony on Tuesday night, coming together to pose with their respective nine-carat rings that feature nearly 400 diamonds and come engraved with coach Mike Sullivan's mantra "play the right way."

**Flyers 5, Sharks 3:** Wayne Simmonds scored his second power-play goal to break a tie with 10:33 remaining and completed an opening-night hat trick with an empty-netter as visiting Philadelphia beat San Jose.

Claude Giroux and Jordan Weal also scored to get the Flyers off to a good start after missing the playoffs last season. Jakub Voracek and Shayne Gostisbehere each had three assists for Philadelphia.

Brian Elliott made 32 saves in his first game with the Flyers after signing a \$5.5 million, two-year contract this summer.

**Oilers 3, Flames 0:** Connor McDavid scored a hat trick in the season opener, Cam Talbot made 26 saves and host Edmonton blanked Calgary.

Mike Smith stopped 42 shots in his debut for the Flames, who fell to 0-7-1 in their last

eight openers.

McDavid, the NHL MVP last season, began the scoring 11 minutes into the first period when he beat a helpless Smith after taking a pass from Leon Draisaitl. McDavid scored again eight minutes into the third on his third breakaway of the game. He put his third goal into an empty net on another setup from Draisaitl.

**Maple Leafs 7, Jets 2:** Patrick Marleau scored twice in his debut with his new team, leading visiting Toronto past Winnipeg.

The 38-year-old Marleau signed with Toronto as a free agent after 19 seasons with the San Jose Sharks. He has 510 career goals.

Nazem Kadri, James van Riemsdyk and William Nylander scored in a three-minute span in the first period. Auston Matthews and Mitch Marner also scored, and Frederik Andersen made 35 saves.

Mark Scheifele ended Andersen's shutout bid midway through the third period, and Mathieu Perreault also scored for Winnipeg.

## In danger of missing World Cup, US just needs to win

Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — Months and months of stumbles have put the United States in a precarious position. The Americans could miss the World Cup for the first time since 1986.

Preparing for Friday's crucial qualifier against Panama, the U.S. held a closed-doors scrimmage Wednesday against Orlando City's B team. A victory Friday would put the U.S. on track to reach its eighth straight World Cup with a win or possibly a tie at Trinidad and Tobago next week. Less than a victory against the Panamanians could lead to either a playoff next month or elimination.

"There's been a real sense of urgency," captain Michael Bradley said. "Obviously you get to the end and our margin for error is virtually gone."

Mexico has 18 points and has clinched one of the three berths from North and Central America and the Caribbean. Costa Rica has 15 points heading into its game against visiting Honduras and is on the verge of clinching.

Panama is third with 10 points, and the U.S. has nine and leads Honduras on goal difference. Trinidad has three points and is all-but-eliminated.

The top three nations qualify, and fourth place has a home-

and-home playoff next month against Australia or Syria — which plays its home games in Malaysia.

"People can come in and say it's just another game, but the reality is it's not just another game," winger Paul Ariola said. "We can be out. We could really, really complicate ourselves if we don't get three points this next game against Panama."

The U.S. has scored just 12 goals in eight matches in the hexagonal, half in a home rout over Honduras in Arena's first qualifier after he replaced Jurgen Klinsmann. One of Arena's more intriguing ros-

ter decisions was to bring back 32-year-old midfielder Benny Feilhaber, who hasn't appeared in a qualifier in eight years.

"He's a good passer, and in the final third of the field he has some qualities that I think we're lacking," Arena said.

Christian Pulisic, the star American midfielder who just turned 19, has been repeatedly fouled by opponents, and the U.S. will be seeking more offensive outlets.

Bradley said the goal is "to make sure that from the beginning we play in a way where the bar tilts in our favor, where we're mobile and aggressive."

# Bears' Trubisky ready for starting job

Associated Press

LAKEFOREST, Ill. — Chicago Bears quarterback Mitchell Trubisky thinks he can handle the pressure of his first NFL start Monday night against the Minnesota Vikings.

"You only get nervous or feel pressure when you're not prepared for the situation or where you don't know what you're doing," Trubisky said.

The Bears went into training camp insisting Mike Glennon was their starting quarterback, but a 1-3 record and eight turnovers led to a reversal.

And it's Trubisky Time in Chicago, as the Bears become the latest NFL team to throw a young quarterback into the mix.

"I think he's got a good mindset, I think he's got a good, natural feel," Bears coach John Fox said of Trubisky. "I think he's done a good job up to this point. I think he'll continue to do well moving forward."

At the beginning of training camp, Fox and general manager Ryan Pace were saying something entirely different about Trubisky's readiness. They insisted the starter was Glennon, who signed a three-year, free-agent contract with

\$18 million guaranteed.

But Glennon played himself out of the lineup and now it's Trubisky's turn to show what the second pick in this year's draft can do.

"Mike gave us everything he had," Fox said. "He prepared hard. It wasn't lack of preparation. He worked very hard at it."

"Just after four games it didn't go quite as well as everybody wanted and now we're taking a look at Mitch."

Glennon was 93-for-140 with four TDs and five interceptions. He had a passer rating of 76.9. He threw a key interception to give Pittsburgh a chance to tie it in the fourth quarter before the Bears won in overtime 23-17. In his two losses, Glennon committed seven turnovers.

During the preseason, Trubisky went 36-for-53 for 364 yards with three touchdowns and no interceptions, and became the backup ahead of third-stringer Mark Sanchez.

"I can't say enough good things about Mike throughout this whole process," Trubisky said. "Really, from Day 1, he's taken me in, accepted me and made me a part of the quarterback room. I've learned so much from him in just con-

tinually how well he carries himself even throughout this situation as a professional and as a person."

Trubisky's mobility had a lot to do with the change. He showed a knack in preseason for moving in the pocket and also outside of it before throwing. His style is in contrast to Glennon's.

"It's kind of a gunslinger's mentality," Trubisky said. "It's being methodical, staying within the offense, being consistent and doing my job."

"And then when things break down, I'm able to make plays and again get the ball to my playmakers. Because I'm not the best athlete on the field. There are other guys who do that. But when things can break down I can maybe make something happen."

Trubisky found out about the change Sunday night from Fox, and the announcement was made by the Bears on Monday.

Trubisky has already seen what some of the young quarterbacks selected this year are capable of, including Houston's Deshaun Watson, who led a 57-14 victory Sunday over Tennessee.

"We're in an era where

young quarterbacks are expected to come in and produce right away like veterans have, so it's a little bit different," Trubisky said.

"But I just think the types of people and players there are coming out (in the draft), they're able to handle it."

Glennon took the high road and promised continued support.

"Obviously, not what I wanted," Glennon said. "Not what I hoped for. But I still have a big role on this team. I'm still a captain of this football team. I'm going to handle it like a pro."

The Bears lost their opener at home to Atlanta 23-17 when they failed to get into the end zone on four plays from the 5-yard line. Besides beating Pittsburgh, they were blown out by Green Bay and Tampa Bay in road games.

"I think I played well enough to win two; didn't play well enough to win in the other two," Glennon said. "Obviously, turnovers were very critical."

"But I'm going to stay ready, be ready to go because [I'm] only one play away. I'll continue to help Mitch in any way I can."

## Spartans look to build credibility against Michigan

Associated Press

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Mark Dantonio is happy to skip the platitudes when it comes to Michigan State's biggest rivalry.

Other coaches may play it cool before a game of this magnitude, but who are they fooling?

"I think that's all coach talk, personally. I think coaches know what games are important. They understand," Dantonio said Tuesday. "They can stand up here and say, 'Well, this is just another football game,' but it's not."

The Spartans always take their matchup with Michigan seriously, and Saturday night's

game in Ann Arbor will be no different. The seventh-ranked Wolverines are clear favorites, and although Michigan State has won seven of the last nine meetings, the pendulum swung in the other direction last year. Michigan won 32-23, part of a 3-9 season for the Spartans that they're hoping was an aberration.

Dantonio has been Michigan State's coach for the past 10 meetings with Michigan, and he was an assistant for the Spartans earlier in his career. Turning this rivalry in Michigan State's favor was a significant accomplishment, and he's been more than willing to call the Wolverines out from time to time. A decade ago, Michi-

gan running back Mike Hart referred to Michigan State as a little brother, and that only added to the chip on the Spartans' shoulders.

"I am who I am and I just react the way I react sometimes," Dantonio said. "We get ready to play. They have got a good football team. Have a great amount of respect for what they have accomplished down there. Always have had that. My goal when I came here was to make that a rivalry. I think it's a rivalry. We'll leave it at that."

But after dominating the rivalry for a little while, Michigan State is in danger of ceding the upper hand. Last year's game was 30-10 early in the

fourth quarter, and another victory this season will have Michigan fans feeling — if they don't already — like the Wolverines have taken control of this series again.

Michigan State is coming off a 17-10 win over Iowa in its Big Ten opener. The Spartans have shown they can hold firm on defense, and they outgained Notre Dame in their only loss last month. But quarterback Brian Lewerke will face a significant test trying to move the ball this weekend.

Lewerke played against Michigan last year as a backup, throwing for 100 yards and a touchdown, but he broke his leg that day and missed the rest of the season.