

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## Poll: Many see US failure in Afghanistan

BY JOHN VANDIVER

*Stars and Stripes*

Nearly half of Americans think the U.S. has failed to achieve most of its goals in Afghanistan, 17 years after the start of what has become the nation's longest war, according to a new poll.

Forty-nine percent of Americans say the U.S. has failed in its goals, while 35 percent say it has mostly succeeded, Pew Research Center said in a survey released Friday. Sixteen percent responded that they didn't know whether it was successful or not.

The judgment of the war follows Pew surveys conducted in 2014 and 2015, which also reported predominately negative views.

In 2015, 56 percent described the war as "mostly a failure."

The latest Pew poll, which surveyed 1,745 people, was conducted from Sept. 18-24. There was a margin of error of 2.7 percent.

A major difference between this poll and

the earlier ones is that Republicans and Democrats have flipped in their respective outlooks. During the Obama administration, Democrats were more likely to look favorably on progress being made in Afghanistan. Now, Republicans are more optimistic, with 48 percent saying the U.S. has succeeded in Afghanistan compared with 28 percent of Democrats and left-leaning independents.

Overall, however, the Pew survey found little sign of optimism over a conflict frequently referred to among veterans as the "Forever War."

While the decision to use military force in Afghanistan to oust the Taliban — a response to the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 — was regarded by most Americans as the right move at the time, people increasingly see the decision to intervene as having been a mistake.

"As the initial decision to use military force in Afghanistan grows more distant, public opinion has become more divided on

whether it was the right decision or wrong decision," Pew said.

In early 2002, support for the war was at 83 percent, and by 2006, 69 percent still said the military campaign was the right decision.

Now, just 45 percent of those polled say the U.S. made the right decision in using military force, and 39 percent say it was the wrong decision. In early 2002, support was at 83 percent, and by 2006, 69 percent still said the military campaign was the right decision.

Despite the steady erosion of public support, the war in Afghanistan garners little active public opposition. And in Washington, legislators rarely debate the merits of the war.

A new White House counterterrorism strategy, a 34-page document released Thursday, does not even mention Afghanistan, though the U.S. is described as a nation at war facing "radical Islamist terrorist groups."

## Pentagon IDs soldier killed in Afghanistan

BY CHAD GARLAND

*Stars and Stripes*

James A. Slape, an explosive ordnance disposal technician was posthumously promoted from specialist to sergeant, was fatally wounded Thursday as he worked to clear an area of explosives in southern Helmand province in Afghanistan after a blast had damaged a vehicle.

"He left his vehicle and was working to clear the area when another IED detonated," said Sgt. First Class Debra Richardson, a spokeswoman for the NATO Resolute Support mission Kabul, via email. Slape "was medically evacuated to a medical care facility but despite valiant efforts to save him, his wounds were fatal."

Slape was assigned to 430th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, 60th Troop Command, North Carolina Army National Guard, based in Washington, N.C.

The 23-year-old from Morehead City, N.C., had joined the National Guard in 2013 and graduated from the Army's explosive ordnance disposal course in 2015.

He deployed with his unit in April and was scheduled to return home in the spring of 2019, said Lt. Col. Matthew DeVivo, a North Carolina National Guard spokesman.

Slape was based at Camp Dwyer in Helmand's Garmsir district in the heart of a region largely controlled by the Taliban. Helmand has been the bloodiest of the country's 34 provinces for coalition troops since 2001.

Using an abbreviation for armored personnel carrier, a Taliban spokesman claimed on social media Thursday that an IED "shred (a U.S.) APC ... to pieces" near Camp Dwyer in Helmand's Garmsir district. Richardson did not say what type of vehicle had been damaged in the blast or how badly it was damaged, other than describing it as "non-mission capable."

On Facebook Friday, several of Slape's friends changed their profile photos to images of the Army's Explosive Ordnance Disposal Badge covered by a black band symbolizing mourning.

"We are deeply saddened by the news of Sgt. James Slape losing his life while serv-

ing our country," Maj. Gen. Greg Lusk, North Carolina National Guard adjutant, said in a statement. "We honor his courage, his selfless service and we extend our deepest sympathy to his family, friends, and fellow soldiers as we hold them firmly in our hearts and prayers during this difficult time."

The death marks the seventh combat fatality and eighth overall fatality in Afghanistan this year for U.S. forces, a tiny fraction of the number of deaths at the height of the war in 2010 when about 500 Americans were killed in the country.

Slape, who was supporting the Resolute Support mission to train, advise and assist Afghan forces battling the Taliban insurgency, is the 26th North Carolina Army National Guard soldier to be killed in action since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the military said in a statement.

Sunday marks 17 years since a U.S.-led coalition launched the invasion that would topple the Taliban regime, which had been harboring the al-Qaida terrorist group that had plotted and carried out the 9/11 attacks.

# Pompeo pledges unity in N. Korea talks

Associated Press

TOKYO — U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo pledged Saturday that the Trump administration's effort to get North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons would be fully coordinated with allies Japan and South Korea, as he prepared to travel to Pyongyang under pressure to produce tangible progress toward that goal.

Pompeo met Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Tokyo on the eve of his fourth visit to North Korea, during which he'll be looking to arrange a second summit between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and plot a path forward on denuclearization. Japan, notably, has been wary of Trump's initiative, fearing it could affect its long-standing security rela-

tionship with the U.S.

Pompeo told Abe that it is important for him to hear from the Japanese leader "so we have a fully coordinated and unified view" and vowed to raise the cases of Japanese citizens abducted by North Korea when he sees Kim and officials in Pyongyang on Sunday. Pompeo will then travel to South Korea and China to review the negotiations.

"It is important for us to hear from you as I travel to Pyongyang to make sure that we are fully in sync with respect to missile programs, (chemical and biological weapons) programs," Pompeo told Abe. "We will bring up the issue of the abductees as well and then we will share with you how we hope to proceed when we are in Pyongyang tomorrow."

Pompeo's diplomatic offensive comes as Trump presses to meet with Kim for a second time after their June summit in Singapore produced a vague agreement on denuclearization with few, if any, specifics.

Despite the historic meeting, the two sides are deadlocked over how to achieve that goal and Trump canceled Pompeo's initial planned return to North Korea last month.

In contrast with South Korea, whose President Moon Jae-in has been at the forefront of encouraging Trump's rapprochement with the North, Japan has been decidedly cautious, insisting that its interests and concerns be addressed.

Abe did not speak of differences but highlighted the importance of demonstrating to the world that the U.S.-Japan

alliance is "more robust than ever" and stressing the importance of "thorough coordination" with Washington on all aspects of North Korea policy.

Pompeo has repeatedly refused to discuss details of negotiations, including a U.S. position on North Korea's demand for a declared end to the Korean War and a proposal from Seoul for such a declaration to be accompanied by a shutdown of its main known nuclear facility.

Speaking aboard his plane on Friday, Pompeo said his mission was to "make sure that we understand what each side is truly trying to achieve ... and how we can deliver against the commitments that were made" in Singapore. He said they would develop options, if not finalize, the location and timing of a second Trump-Kim summit.

## GOP poised to confirm Kavanaugh

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Brett Kavanaugh seems assured of surviving a Supreme Court nomination fight for the ages after two wavering senators said they'd back him despite weeks of shocking accusations, hardball politics and rowdy Capitol protests.

Announcements by Republican Susan Collins of Maine and Democrat Joe Manchin of West Virginia that they'll support the conservative jurist made Saturday's confirmation vote a formality, an anticlimactic finale to a battle that riveted the nation for nearly a month.

While Democrats' defeat was all but certain, the Senate remained in session overnight, though the chamber was mostly empty. The roll call seemed destined to be nearly party-line, with just a single defector from each side capping a contest fought against the backdrop of the #MeToo movement and President Donald Trump's unyielding support of his nominee.

Kavanaugh's opponents raised concerns that he'd push the court further right, including possible sympathetic rulings for Trump. But for the past few weeks, the battle was dominated by allegations that he sexually abused women decades ago — accusations he emphatically denied.

"Millions of Americans, millions of women are watching us today," said New

York Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, one of the Democrats who take to the Senate floor early Saturday to rail against Kavanaugh. "They're waiting to see whether or not, when a woman comes forward and says that she is a survivor of sexual assault, does this chamber, do the individuals here take her seriously?"

A day earlier, Collins had told fellow senators that Christine Blasey Ford's dramatic testimony last month describing Kavanaugh's alleged 1982 assault was "sincere, painful and compelling." But Collins said the FBI had found no corroborating evidence from witnesses whose names Ford had provided.

"We will be ill-served in the long run if we abandon the presumption of innocence and fairness, tempting though it may be," she said. "We must always remember that it is when passions are most inflamed that fairness is most in jeopardy."

Those passions were on full display in a fight that could energize both parties' voters in elections for control of Congress just five weeks away.

The showdown drew raucous demonstrators, largely anti-Kavanaugh, to the Capitol, where they raised tensions by confronting lawmakers despite an intensified police presence. Another 101 protesters were arrested Friday, the U.S. Capitol Police said.

## Tabernacle Choir renamed in shift

Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — The world-famous Mormon Tabernacle Choir will be singing the same tune but under a new name.

The choir was renamed Friday to strip out the word Mormon in a move aimed at ending shorthand names for the religion that have been used for generations by church members and others.

The singers now will be called the Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints said in a statement. It's a nod to the home of the choir for the past 150 years, the Tabernacle, located on church grounds known as Temple Square in downtown Salt Lake City.

The group had been known as the Mormon Tabernacle Choir since 1929, when it began broadcasting a weekly radio program to a wide audience.

Church President Russell M. Nelson announced guidelines in August requesting that people stop using "Mormon" or "LDS" as substitutes for the church's full name. He said "Latter-day Saints" was acceptable shorthand.

The faith holds that the full church name was given by revelation from God to founder Joseph Smith in 1838.

# VA's incorrect housing stipends frustrate

BY NIKKI WENTLING

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs has acknowledged technical issues are causing 340,000 student veterans to receive incorrect housing stipends to begin the new school year, but now lawmakers and advocates contend the problem is bigger — many veterans are not receiving the payments at all.

Veterans going to school using the GI Bill were supposed to receive their second housing payment for the semester on Oct. 1. In the days since, veterans have been contacting the VA, veterans groups, their lawmakers and schools to question them about their missing money. Some of them haven't received any money, and others received amounts far less than what they're owed.

Stars and Stripes heard from 14 veterans in 14 states who received either the wrong amount or no housing allowance at all. Some of them called the VA and waited on hold until they gave up, and others reached out to their elected representatives. Six mentioned the lack of payment affected their ability to pay their rent or other bills.

Leo Cheng, a Navy veteran who attends Columbia University in New York City, hadn't been paid as of Friday, and he knows of other veterans at the school who are in the same situation.

"New York is an extremely expensive city to live in, so the VA falling behind by even a month for our [housing allowance] payments can be very stressful for most to try and float expenses out of our savings," Cheng wrote in an email. "Nearly all of us here do not live in the dorms, we don't get any leeway for not paying rent on time."

## IT issues

The VA said last month about 340,000 veterans would get incorrect housing payments because of IT issues.

Last year, Congress approved the Forever GI Bill, which included numerous changes to veterans' education benefits. One change calls for calculat-

ing veterans' housing allowances based on the ZIP codes of the campus where they attend classes, rather than defaulting to the main campuses.

When the VA went to make the change, its IT systems failed, VA Secretary Robert Wilkie told senators at a Sept. 27 hearing.

"We received instructions from Congress, and those instructions, they attempted to implement them on a 50-year-old computer system," Wilkie said at the time. "Even something as simple as changing the percentages broke the system."

It's uncertain exactly when the problem will be fixed. In a letter to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs last month, VA Undersecretary of Benefits Paul Lawrence wrote he expected the agency to develop its software by the end of September, followed by "several weeks of testing."

VA officials have repeatedly said the problem caused only a small difference — about 1 percent — in veterans' housing allowances. Veterans are receiving allowances based on 2017 rates that don't account for cost-of-living increases in 2018, they said.

However, some veterans are citing more drastic problems.

## Widespread delays

Navy veteran Michael Krause, who attends Kansas State Polytechnic, said his payment was off by about \$700.

"I realize these things are hard to solve, but it's frustrating when students are relying on this money to pay for housing," Krause wrote in a message. "My landlord is willing to work with me a little, luckily. But others might not be so lucky."

Air Force veteran Bryce Remkes said his wife, Catherine, who is using his GI Bill benefits for a master's program at Georgia State University, has received "random amounts." Nick Sorenson, an Army veteran attending Utah Valley University, said he received only a partial payment. Army veteran Jay Kirell, who attends Ivy Tech Community College in Indiana, received a payment that was about \$200 short.

At Colorado State University, veterans flooded into the school's veteran services office last month to complain of incorrect payments, said Marc Barker, director of the office. Barker said Friday that he has more recently seen a large number of veterans who haven't received their payments at all. He added the situation was "very challenging."

Navy veteran Robert Epps lives in Washington state and is working toward an electrical engineering degree through American Public University. The monthly housing allowance "makes it possible to make ends meet and take care of my wife and two children," he said. He and his wife have a third child on the way.

Epps wrote Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., because he could not reach anyone at the VA about the lack of payment.

"Suffice it to say, this is not happening at a good time for my family," Epps wrote Murray. "What savings we did have are now gone."

When Army veteran William Miller, a student at Loyola University in New Orleans, didn't receive his housing payment Oct. 1, he called the offices of his elected representatives in the House and Senate, as well as Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards. He then applied for financial help from the Veterans of Foreign Wars, which provides grants for veterans facing unexpected financial difficulties.

VFW spokesman Joe Davis said the organization is "evaluating the magnitude of the problem and seeing how we may be able to assist some veterans."

Representatives from schools nationwide are contacting the nonprofit Student Veterans of America, which has chapters at colleges across the country. On Friday, SVA heard from Middle Tennessee State University and East Tennessee State University, both of which reported student veterans at their schools were experiencing "significant delays" in payments.

There are 550 students at East Tennessee State who use the GI Bill, 30 of whom told Antonio Banchs, the school's director of veterans affairs, that they

haven't received their housing allowances. Banchs said the VA is only sharing "bits and pieces" of information.

"I belong to a message board that is nationwide, and we've been communicating with each other for months now, asking each other, 'Are you seeing this problem,'" Banchs said. "As it turns out, yes, everyone is experiencing this problem. Something is happening, and I guess the worst part about it is the VA is not talking to us. My students come to us for help, and I don't know what to tell them."

## A growing workload

The VA conceded in a statement Friday that processing times for veterans' education benefits are longer than normal because of the IT issues related to the Forever GI Bill.

The VA brought on 202 more employees to help process the claims and is requiring employees to work overtime, said VA Press Secretary Curt Cashour. He said the VA is now working through 16,000 claims daily.

In a letter dated Sept. 28, Rep. Phil Roe, R-Tenn., brought up the issue to the VA. Roe is the chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Roe cited the workload of veterans' claims for education benefits, which was 248,396 claims as of Sept. 21. During the same week in 2017, the workload was nearly 85,000 fewer, at 163,771.

By Sept. 29, the workload had decreased to 226,568, though it's still higher than the same week last year, when the VA was working on 146,971 claims for education benefits. Cashour said the workload was about 183,000 as of Friday.

"I continue to be concerned about the current workload of education claims pending at VA regional processing offices," Roe wrote. "This increased workload is likely to result in processing delays for living stipend payments and other benefits for students."

In a statement Friday, Roe said, "Veterans not getting their living stipends creates an incredible hardship." He said the issue is "unacceptable" and "must be urgently addressed."

# More bodies in disaster-stricken Indonesia

Associated Press

PALU, Indonesia — Search teams pulled bodies from obliterated neighborhoods in the disaster-stricken Indonesian city of Palu on Saturday as more aid rolled in and the government said it was considering making devastated areas into mass graves.

Indonesia's disaster agency said the death toll from the powerful earthquake and tsunami climbed to 1,649, with at least 265 people still missing, though it said that number could be higher. More nations sent aid, and humanitarian workers fanned out in the countryside.

The dead were still being recovered more than a week after the double disaster. Eight victims in black body bags of the national search and rescue agency were arranged in a row in the crumpled Palu

neighborhood of Balaroa, destined for a mass grave.

Relatives cried as people placed long pieces of white cloth, to represent a Muslim burial rite, inside the bags.

Among them was Rudy Rahman, 39, who said the bodies of his 18- and 16-year-old sons had been found. His youngest son remained missing. He watched as rescue workers unloaded the bags from a truck. His wife wept inconsolably.

"They were found in front of my brother's house opposite the mosque," Rahman said. "They found them holding each other. These two brothers were hugging each other."

Balaroa was one of the areas hardest hit by the Sept. 28 magnitude 7.5 quake, which threw homes in the neighborhood tens of yards away and left cars upright

or perched on eruptions of concrete and asphalt. Many children were in the area's mosque at the time of the quake for Quran recitation. An assistant to the imam had said none survived.

Indonesia's top security minister, Wiranto, who uses a single name, said the government is mulling the possibility of turning Balaroa and Petobo, another neighborhood in Palu, into mass graves. Petobo disappeared into the earth as the force of the quake liquefied its soft soil. Liquefaction also struck a large section of Balaroa.

Wiranto said efforts to retrieve bodies are problematic in those neighborhoods, where homes were sucked into the earth, burying possibly hundreds of victims.

He said it's not safe for heavy equipment to operate there.

## Interpol asks China for info on its missing leader

Associated Press

PARIS — Interpol has made a formal request to China for information about its missing Chinese president who seemingly vanished on a trip home, citing concerns for his well-being.

The Lyon-based international police agency said in a brief statement Saturday that it used law enforcement channels to submit its request about the status of Meng Hongwei.

The agency "looks forward to an official response from China's authorities to address concerns over the president's well-being," the statement said.

China, in the midst of a weeklong holiday, had yet to comment.

Meng's wife said she hasn't heard from him since he left Lyon at the end of September. France has launched its own investigation. French authorities said he boarded a plane and arrived in China, but his subsequent whereabouts are unknown.

Meng, 64, is also a vice minister for public security in China.

Previously, Interpol had said that reports about Meng's disappearance were "a matter for the relevant authorities in both France and China."

The South China Morning Post, a Hong Kong newspaper, has suggested that Meng may have been the latest target of an ongoing campaign against corruption in China.

The newspaper said that upon land-

ing last week Meng was "taken away" for questioning by what it said were "discipline authorities." The term usually describes investigators in the ruling Communist Party who probe graft and political disloyalty. The Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, the party's secretive internal investigation agency, had no announcements on its website about Meng and couldn't be reached for comment.

Meng is the first from his country to serve as Interpol's president, a post that is largely symbolic but powerful in status. Because Interpol's secretary general is responsible for the day-to-day running of the agency's operations, Meng's absence may have little operational effect.

## Banksy artwork self-destructs after selling for \$1.4M

Associated Press

LONDON — Art prankster Banksy has struck again.

A work by the elusive street artist apparently self-destructed in front of startled auction-goers on Friday, moments after being sold for \$1.4 million.

The spray-painted canvas "Girl With Balloon" went under the hammer at Sotheby's in London, fetching more than three times its pre-sale estimate and equaling a record price for the artist.

Then, as an alarm sounded, it ran through a shredder embedded in the frame, emerging from the bottom in strips.

A post on Banksy's official Instagram

account showed the moment — and the shocked reaction of those in the room — with the words "Going, going, gone ..."

Sotheby's — which had noted before the sale that the work's ornate, gilded frame was "an integral element of the artwork chosen by Banksy himself" — expressed surprise at the incident.

"It appears we just got Banksy-ed," said Alex Branczik, head of contemporary European art at the auction house.

The auction house said it was "in discussion about next steps" with the buyer. Some art-market watchers have suggested the work could be worth even more in its shredded state.

"We have not experienced this situation in the past, where a painting spontaneously shredded, upon achieving a record for the artist," Branczik said. "We are busily figuring out what this means in an auction context."

Banksy is not the first artist to deconstruct his own work. In the years after World War II, German-born artist Gustav Metzger pioneered "auto-destructive art," creating paintings using acid that ate away the fabric beneath.

Banksy, who has never disclosed his full identity, began his career spray-painting buildings in Bristol, England, and has become one of the world's best-known artists.

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Store owner: Don't warm your urine here

**FL** JACKSONVILLE — A Florida gas station owner has placed a sign in his store asking customers not to warm urine in the microwave.

Parul Patel says he's become "sick and tired" of people walking into his BP gas station and On the Fly convenience store in Jacksonville to warm their containers of urine. The store is within walking distance of two labs that offer drug testing services and collect urine samples.

Patel said a woman became aggressive a few months ago when he asked her not to warm urine. She asked to see a sign that says it's not for that purpose. So he made one.

## Toddler shreds more than \$1,000 in cash

**UT** HOLLADAY — A toddler in Utah was a little too helpful when he shredded more than \$1,000 that his parents were saving.

Ben and Jackee Belnap were saving the cash to reimburse Ben's parents for University of Utah season football tickets. They had \$1,060 in an envelope, which disappeared over the weekend.

Ben told KSL-TV the couple started searching the house when Jackee hollered, "I found it." She was holding the shredder.

Their 2-year-old son, Leo, helps his mom shred junk mail or important documents that they want to get rid of.

## Carriage horses' escape may lead to fine

**SC** CHARLESTON — The owner of two carriage-tour horses who ab-

sconded for a brief stroll in South Carolina has been cited by the city in which it operates.

Dan Riccio is the director of Charleston's Department of Livability and Tourism. He told The Post and Courier that Carolina Polo and Carriage Co. was cited for allowing animals at large, which carries a fine of up to \$1,087.

According to an incident report, workers at a different carriage-tour operation were told of an equine couple walking down the street Sunday.

## Police: Man shot pair who made him drop pot

**KY** LEXINGTON — Police in Kentucky say a man has shot two people outside of a gas station when they made him drop his marijuana.

News outlets report Maxwell R. Wilburn, 21, was arrested Wednesday and charged with first-degree assault. Lexington police say Wilson has been sought since mid-September and was apprehended by U.S. marshals.

Court records and an arrest citation said Wilburn shot a man and woman who were taking him home from a party in September when they made him drop the drug. Police say Wilburn got into fight with the 25-year-olds before he shot each of them several times. The woman and man were taken to a hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

## Postal contractors charged with mail theft

**NY** ROCHESTER — Authorities say two men who worked as postal contractors in upstate New York were arrested for stealing mail.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Rochester said Thursday a 30-year-old and a 28-year-old man

stole numerous gift cards and credit cards while loading mail into airplanes at Rochester International Airport.

Prosecutors say one man would rifle through the mail while the other acted as a lookout.

A third 31-year-old man is accused of using the cards to buy items online and go shopping in stores.

The men have been charged with conspiracy and mail theft.

## Woman helped after wheelchair lost power

**CA** LANCASTER — Two Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies went the extra mile for a woman after her motorized wheelchair ran out of power.

The wheelchair wouldn't fit in their patrol car and the woman did not want to leave it behind. So in a video posted on Facebook, one of the deputies pushed her back to her Lancaster, Calif., home.

His partner teased him about the "slow" pace of the trip, which was about a mile.

## Sheriff: Stolen money bought lizards, rare cat

**FL** MERRITT ISLAND — Investigators say a Florida woman used some of the money she stole from her employer to purchase an exotic cat, rare lizards and to make a \$12,000 down payment on a car.

The Brevard County Sheriff's Office arrested Jaymi Lyn Nicholas, 29, on Tuesday on multiple fraud charges in the theft of \$264,529 from Space Coast Realty.

Florida Today reported Nicholas worked as a bookkeeper for the company.

Sheriff's officials say the checks were deposited into her

accounts between July 2017 and April 2018. Other employees found several checks that had been voided by Nicholas and contacted authorities.

## Police: Man beaten with hammer at wine store

**DC** WASHINGTON — Police in the nation's capital are searching for a man they say beat another man with a hammer inside a wine store.

News outlets quote a Metro police report as saying the man was walking along a street Thursday afternoon while carrying a hammer when he spit on the victim. It said the victim verbally confronted the man, who then chased the victim and another person into a wine store.

It said the man then repeatedly hit the victim's head with the metal hammer. The two fell to the floor, where the other person began hitting the suspect with a bottle of wine. It says the suspect then fled. The victim suffered non-life-threatening injuries.

## Man says cow is regular back-seat passenger

**OH** DAYTON — An Ohio man driving home from work Tuesday said he did a double-take before firing up his cellphone to record a cow poking her head out the back window of a pickup truck.

WKEF-TV reports the video posted by Tipp City's JD Blair on Facebook has gone viral with more than 200,000 shares and nearly 8 million views.

The pickup truck's driver, Cory Morris of Ludlow Falls said 18-month-old Annie has been part of his life since her mother rejected her at birth. He says the 800-pound Annie regularly climbs into the back seat of his truck.

From wire reports

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# Sale strong as Red Sox win Game 1

BY JIMMY GOLEN  
Associated Press

BOSTON — Chris Sale left the mound to a standing ovation and then waited along with anxious Red Sox fans while the Boston bullpen frittered away most of a five-run lead.

Bases loaded in the sixth inning. Two runs.

Bases loaded, nobody out in the seventh. The Yankees scored another.

A leadoff home run by Aaron Judge in the ninth made it a one-run game.

It was only after Craig Kimbrel struck out the last three New York batters that Sale could savor the first postseason win of his career, a 5-4 victory over Boston's longtime rivals Friday in Game 1 of the AL Division Series.

"There's no holding back now. It's everything on the table, everything you've got," Sale said after striking out eight and taking a four-hit shutout into the sixth. "I threw every pitch tonight like he was going to take the ball out of my hand after. You have to go up there and do what you have to do to get a win."

Game 2 in the best-of-five series is Saturday night, with Boston starting another pitcher trying to overcome a history of postseason struggles: left-hander David Price is 0-8 as a starter in the playoffs. He'll face Yankees righty Masahiro Tanaka.

"It's a five-game series, and getting them to use the bullpen is a good thing," Judge said. "We were able to scratch a couple of runs off them. We've got to build off that coming into tomorrow."

In the first playoff matchup between the teams since 2004, J.D. Martinez hit a three-run homer off J.A. Happ in the first. The 108-win Red Sox made it 5-0 in the

third and then white-knuckled it as New York slowly chipped away after Sale left with two on and one out in the sixth.

New York, which won 100 regular-season games plus the AL wild-card game against Oakland, got three singles and two walks in the sixth, scoring two before Brandon Workman — the only player on the Red Sox roster with a World Series ring — struck out Gleyber Torres to end the threat.

The Yankees loaded the bases with nobody out in the seventh but scored just one run. Boston manager Alex Cora used scheduled Game 3 starter Rick Porcello to get two outs in the eighth before turning to Kimbrel for a four-out save.

"We almost caught them," Yankees manager Aaron Boone said. "I thought we did a really good job of pecking away, a good job of giving ourselves opportunities, and just ran out of time there."

It was the first ALDS matchup between the clubs and the first in the postseason since the Red Sox staged an unprecedented rally from a 3-0 deficit in the 2004 AL Championship Series to advance and then won the World Series to end their 86-year dynasty of disappointment. (They also met in the ALCS the year before, and it ended with Boone's 11th-inning homer in Game 7, better known in Boston as the game when manager Grady Little inexplicably left a tiring Pedro Martinez on the mound.)

Boston fans were ready, with derisive chants for the Yankees during introductions and again after J.D. Martinez smacked a 2-0 fastball into the glove of a stem cell researcher in the front row of the seats above the Green Monster.

"Everything you did before in the season doesn't matter anymore. This is the playoffs," said Martinez, who signed with Boston as a free agent in the offseason. "You

know what the situation is. You're playing the Yankees. This is the playoffs. You have to go. And now is the time to get it going."

Sale left with a 5-0 lead after giving up singles to Judge and Stanton in the sixth; both came around to score. In all, Sale was charged with two runs on five hits and two walks in 5 1/3 innings — the longest playoff outing for a Red Sox starter since 2013.

Martinez and Benintendi each had two hits for Boston. Judge had three hits, including the only extra-base hit, and Luke Voit had two singles for New York, which went 1 for 7 with runners in scoring position.

Happ lasted just two innings for his shortest postseason start, allowing five runs on four hits and a walk while striking out two.

**Power outage:** The Yankees had 10 hits, but the first nine were singles. Stanton, who hit 38 homers in the regular season, had four of the Yankees' 13 strikeouts.

"Sometimes you know that goes with Giancarlo sometimes," Boone said. "If you make pitches against him, his outs are a lot of times strikeouts. ... You have to live with that sometimes."

**No relief:** Ryan Brasier faced three batters and two of them reached. Workman got a big out but also allowed two hits and a walk. Matt Barnes walked one but allowed an inherited runner to score. Even the usually reliable Kimbrel coughed up a run. Just like that, the 5-0 lead was down to one run.

It was exactly the kind of performance that had Boston fans in a panic entering the series. But Workman insisted the team is still confident in its bullpen.

"I believe we're the guys that are going to get the job done," he said.

## Kluber's playoff woes return in loss to Astros

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Cleveland Indians ace Corey Kluber insisted Friday's loss had nothing to do with his playoff woes last season.

It just looked that way, a lot.

A year after he was hit hard in a pair of postseason starts, it happened all over. The Houston Astros tagged him for three home runs and roughed up the Indians 7-2 in Game 1 of the AL Division Series.

"I don't think they're related," Kluber said. "I don't

think that the starts from last postseason had any bearing on today. I just made a few mistakes to the wrong guys."

Kluber's performance followed a strong regular season in which he won a career-best 20 games, posting a 2.89 ERA across an AL-leading 215 innings.

Last season, Kluber went 18-4 with an MLB-best 2.25 ERA in the regular season to earn his second AL Cy Young Award. In the playoffs, however, Kluber's ERA jumped to 12.79 in two starts after he al-

lowed nine runs and four homers in two ALDS tries against the New York Yankees.

Kluber has enjoyed success at this time of year, too, nearly pitching the Indians to the 2016 championship. Cleveland hasn't won the World Series since 1948, and was counting on Kluber to take them far.

Kluber struggled with his location early, hitting two batters after plunking only three in the regular season. But he didn't allow a hit until the fourth inning when Alex Bregman homered. After walking Yuli

Gurriel, Kluber gave up two-out singles to Tyler White and Josh Reddick that produced another run.

George Springer led off the fifth inning with a 402-foot homer. Two pitches later, Jose Altuve also connected, sending a drive a drive to the Crawford Boxes in left field that put Houston up 4-0.

"I really just left the ball elevated over the plate and picked the wrong three guys to do that to," Kluber said. "You've got to be able to keep the ball in the ballpark in these games."

# Dodgers notch 2nd straight shutout vs. Braves

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The Dodgers head to Atlanta full of confidence after consecutive shutouts gave them a commanding 2-0 lead over the Braves in their National League Division Series.

Now the Braves must win the first postseason game in their new ballpark to extend their season. And they face some daunting history: only three times have teams that trailed 2-0 rallied to win a best-of-five playoff series under the 2-2-1 format.

Atlanta was outscored 9-0 and outhit 10-9 in losing the first two games at Dodger Stadium, where Los Angeles slugged five homers.

Game 3 is Sunday night at SunTrust Park, with Kevin Gausman expected to take the mound for the Braves. He was 5-3 with a 2.87 ERA in 10 starts after Atlanta acquired him from Baltimore at the July 31 trade deadline in a six-player

deal.

The Baby Braves ran into back-to-back dominant pitchers in Hyun-Jin Ryu and Clayton Kershaw in Los Angeles. Atlanta didn't advance a runner past second base in Game 1 and twice got runners to third in Game 2, but couldn't score.

"We need to go out there and string some hits together, a couple big innings," shortstop Charlie Culberson said.

They might be hard-pressed to do that against rookie Walker Buehler, who starts Game 3 for the Dodgers having drawn comparisons to ace Kershaw.

"Obviously, it's a big spot," Los Angeles manager Dave Roberts said, "but he continues to kind of surpass all expectations."

Buehler, a 24-year-old right-hander, last pitched on Monday, allowing one hit in 6 2/3 innings and striking out three in the NL West tiebreaker victory over the Rockies.

"I kind of look at it as like a

baby step," Buehler said about having pitched in a crucial regular-season Game 163. "Obviously, this will be my first playoff game. But 163 has got to be somewhere between a regular game and a playoff game. I'm just kind of going with the same game plan and try and stay under control."

Atlanta manager Brian Snitker acknowledged he can't do much more than juggle his lineup because the Braves' bench is thin.

"I don't know that moving guys around, giving them different looks in the lineup when you're swinging the bats like we are is even the answer," he said, "but we'll try something a little different."

The Braves closed the regular season with three losses in their last five games, managing just one run in those defeats.

"We've got to start scoring some runs and hopefully we can do that in front of our home crowd," said first baseman

Freddie Freeman, who was 1-for-8 with two strikeouts in the first two games.

Braves leadoff hitter Ronald Acuna Jr. fared only slightly better, going 2-for-8 with two strikeouts. Center fielder Ender Inciarte went 2-for-6 with two strikeouts, while cleanup hitter Nick Markakis was 1-for-7 with two strikeouts in the two losses.

"This team's better when we've had our backs against the wall," Inciarte said. "We've shocked a lot of people already — we can do it again."

The Braves are back in the postseason for the first time since 2013, having won 90 games in earning the NL East title earlier in their rebuild than most projected.

However, the Braves are 1-8 in playoff series when they lose Game 2. Their lone victory came in the 1996 NLCS when they lost to St. Louis and came back to take the series in seven games.

# Brewers blank Rockies, take 2-0 lead

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — It turns out there is way more to the Milwaukee Brewers than just Christian Yelich.

The rest of this Brew Crew can play, too. Especially those guys in that loaded bullpen.

Jhoulys Chacin pitched five sparkling innings on short rest, Mike Moustakas contributed two more big hits and the Brewers blanked the Colorado Rockies 4-0 Friday to take a 2-0 lead in their NL Division Series.

While the sweet-swinging Yelich had a quiet day by his lofty standards, the NL Central champions showed off their supporting cast on the way to their 10th straight win going back to an impressive finish to the regular season. Erik Kratz had two hits and two RBIs, and Milwaukee's bullpen closed the door after Chacin delivered in his playoff debut.

"It's been the story of the last six weeks for us for sure, re-

ally since the trade deadline, is we've become a team with a lot of depth, and that's how we're going to have to win," manager Craig Counsell said. "They're making an effort to be very, very cautious with Yelich. It's pretty clear. So guys behind him are going to have opportunities."

Game 3 is Sunday at Coors Field. Another win, and Milwaukee is into the NL Championship Series for the first time since its previous postseason appearance in 2011.

"The only thing that changes is that we hit first," Moustakas said. "Other than that, it's still baseball. It'll be a little bit of a hostile environment."

The Rockies, who have played in four different cities since Sunday, are hoping a return to more familiar surroundings will help jump-start their dormant lineup.

"We're going home, where we feel really good hitting," shortstop Trevor Story said.

"Hopefully we can get it turned around there."

Nolan Arenado had two of Colorado's six hits — just two more than the franchise playoff low set in Thursday's 3-2, 10-inning loss in Game 1. The wild-card Rockies have scored six times in their last four games, and their potent lineup is showing signs of frustration.

Chris Iannetta snapped his bat in half over his right leg after he struck out with a runner on third, no one out and Colorado down 1-0 in the seventh. Arenado threw down his bat and helmet after he struck out swinging in the fifth. Carlos Gonzalez leaned over with his hands on his knees after he lined out in the eighth.

"They've got some quality arms. They've got good stuff," manager Bud Black said. "But with that said, it is a little surprising that we're not generating some runs."

The Rockies had just one hit through eight innings in the se-

ries opener before rallying for two runs in the ninth against Jeremy Jeffress. But the All-Star was back to his normal self in Game 2, working around a single in the eighth and ninth for his first save in his third career playoff game.

The excitable right-hander punctuated the win with a big fist pump after retiring David Dahl for the final out.

"It's fun," Jeffress said with daughter Jurnee, 4, sitting in his lap. "I'm enjoying every single moment, and that shows."

Jeffress shared some Gatorade with Jurnee while she waited patiently for him to finish up.

"Every time I leave that bullpen, I say it's for her," said Jeffress, 31. "I mean, to have her watch and understand — she understands. She does fist pumps just like I do. She understands, and to have her here enjoying this moment with me, it's great."

# Busch, Harvick to start 1-2 at Dover

Associated Press

DOVER, Del. — Kyle Busch and Kevin Harvick have been the drivers to beat all season.

They'll be the ones to catch again at Dover.

Busch and Harvick, who each have seven wins, will start 1-2 on Sunday at Dover International Speedway to kick off the round-of-12 playoff race on the mile concrete track.

Rain washed out NASCAR Cup qualifying Friday, setting the lineup on points and giving the top dozen spots to the 12 playoff drivers.

Sports betting is legal in Delaware, and fans can now place bets on the race winner and other prop bets at Dover International Speedway. Busch and Harvick both have 3-1 odds to win Sunday's race.

Busch said the pole was about six to eight spots higher than he thought he might have qualified in the No. 18 Toyota for Joe Gibbs Racing.

"It's certainly better for us not to go out there and have to bust out a really fast lap," he said.

Dover starts the next three-race playoff round that includes Talladega and Kansas, with eight drivers advancing.

Martin Truex Jr., Brad Keselowski and Clint Bowyer round out the top five. Joey Logano, Kurt Busch, Ryan Blaney, Chase Elliott, Kyle Larson, Aric Almirola and Alex Bowman start sixth to 12th.

Busch came to Dover celebrating a bigger milestone than a pole.

Busch and his wife Samantha, who have been public about their struggles with infertility, announced this week they are ready to start in vitro fertilization (IVF) to try and have a second child. The Busches used IVF to conceive their son, Brexton. They hope for a daughter this time.

"We'll go through embryo implementation in early November," Busch said. "Hopefully that gets going and everything

goes smooth. If everything goes smoothly, there is a lot of good to talk about."

Here's what else is going on at Dover.

**Who's out:** Jimmie Johnson can extend his own track record with a 12th win at Dover.

But he'll remain stuck on seven championships.

Johnson, tied with Dale Earnhardt and Richard Petty for most career Cup titles, blew a chance to snap a 58-race losing streak last week at Charlotte Motor Speedway.

Johnson tried to dive inside and pass Martin Truex Jr. with two turns remaining on the roval course and he ended up spinning. Johnson collected Truex, who spun off course, and Johnson's car came to a stop. Ryan Blaney scooted past for the surprise victory.

"It was nice to be up there mixing it up with the guys. I haven't been in that position in a while," Johnson said.

Johnson would have qualified for the next round of playoffs had he just settled for second place. Instead, Johnson wound up eighth and out of the playoffs.

The 42-year-old Johnson has slogged through the worst season of his 17-year career. The Hendrick Motorsports driver swept Dover in 2002 and 2009 and also won races in 2005, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2017.

**Hot streak:** Dover opens the second round of the playoffs, with the next two races at Talladega and Kansas.

The 12 playoff drivers — especially the 10 who don't drive for Roger Penske — might feel some added pressure to win at Dover to earn the automatic berth into the next round.

Team Penske drivers Keselowski and Logano have combined to win five of the last seven races at Talladega.

"It seems like that's where we are because we're pretty aggressive when it comes to superspeedway racing," Penske said.

## NHL roundup

# Labanc scores in OT as Sharks top Kings

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The San Jose Sharks are looking like the Western Conference contenders that many are expecting this season.

The Sharks used Kevin Labanc's goal 2:53 into overtime to beat the Los Angeles Kings 3-2 Friday night.

"The guys played like we needed to win this game and we found a way to do it," San Jose coach Pete DeBoer said. "We lost our home opener and found a way to come into a tough building and I thought we played well."

San Jose was defeated by Anaheim 5-2 in its opener on Wednesday, but looked better in its second game. Meanwhile, the Kings struggled to put the puck into the net, which has been a theme of the past couple seasons. They were outshot 33-21 and came up empty in five power-play opportunities.

"We were trying to rush plays in the first period. Once we got the first goal we kind of settled down and started making plays," said Kings forward Anze Kopitar, who had a first-period goal.

The Sharks took a 2-0 first-period lead before Los Angeles rallied and forced the overtime.

Martin Jones made 19 saves as San Jose beat the Kings for the fourth time in its last five meetings.

Jonathan Quick made 30 saves for Los Angeles, which dropped to 0-5 when the Sharks are the opening opponent.

San Jose scored two goals on its first six shots in the first period. Timo Meier put the Sharks on the board at 9:42 of the first when he directed a Marc-Edward Vlasic shot near the blue line past Quick. Evander King followed four minutes later with a wrist shot after a turnover deep in the Kings' end. It was his second goal of the season.

Los Angeles rallied as Kopy-

tar scored off a deflected shot late in the first period that cut the deficit in half. Tyler Toffoli grabbed a deflection off the end boards and fired it past Jones 37 seconds into the second, tying the score at 2-all.

The game appeared to be headed to a shootout, but Logan Couture found Labanc rushing to the net and hit him with a perfect pass to beat Quick. Erik Karlsson, who San Jose acquired in a trade during the offseason, also got an assist, his first point with the Sharks.

"It's a pretty good feeling to start out a road trip with a win," Labanc said. "The refs were not giving us the calls we wanted but we played our battle."

**Hurricanes 3, Blue Jackets 1:** Sebastian Aho and Micheal Ferland each had a goal and an assist and Curtis McElhinney — picked up off waivers three days ago — had 31 saves in visiting Carolina's victory over Columbus.

Jordan Martinook also scored to help give Carolina coach Rod Brind'Amour his first NHL win and ruin the home opener for the Blue Jackets.

The 35-year-old McElhinney was signed Tuesday as a backup after starting goalie Scott Darling was injured last weekend. A former Columbus backup, McElhinney got the start Friday after Petr Mrazek played the first leg of a back-to-back the previous night.

Brandon Dubinsky scored and Sergei Bobrovsky stopped 32 shots for the Blue Jackets.

Martinook got it started 1:43 into the game when he rifled a shot over Bobrovsky's glove from the slot off a nice feed from 18-year-old Andrei Svechnikov, the No. 2 pick in the June draft who picked up his first NHL point with the assist.

Dubinsky tied it later in the first when he tipped in a rebound off McElhinney's skate.