

# STARS AND STRIPES®

Thursday, September 8, 2016

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## Nominees wrangle over military issues

BY TRAVIS J. TRITTEN

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton staked out starkly different visions of U.S. foreign policy Wednesday in an attempt to sway wary veteran voters during back-to-back appearances in a nationally televised forum.

Trump said the country's military leadership under President Barack Obama has deteriorated and is an embarrassment, insisting he has a secret plan to defeat the Islamic State group and could better deal with foreign adversaries such as Russian President Vladimir Putin whose leadership he praised.

Former Secretary of State Clinton was often on the defensive over her email scandal and 2003 vote for the invasion of Iraq during the forum with an audience of veterans aboard the USS Intrepid aircraft carrier museum in New York City.

With just two months until the election, the candidates made their bid to convince traditionally Republican-leaning military voters — as well as the many distrustful general election voters — that they would be better at keeping the country safe, employing troops abroad and caring for the men and women who served.

"I think under the leadership of Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton, the generals have been reduced to rubble. They have been reduced to a point where it's embarrassing to our country," Trump said.

### The secret plan

"The fact is we have had the worst, and you could even say the dumbest, foreign policy. Our results are so bad," Trump said.

The real estate mogul and reality television star told forum moderator Matt Lauer that he has a plan for defeating the Islamic State group, but he will not make his plan public. Earlier Wednesday, Trump said as president he will ask generals to draft a second strategy within 30 days that could supplement his secret plan.

"If I win, I don't want to broadcast to the enemy exactly what my plan [is]. If I like the general's plan or I like my plan or a combination ... I'm not going to call you up and say, 'Matt, we have a great plan.' This is what Obama does," Trump said.

Trump said the United States failed to capitalize on the earlier ground war in Iraq and should have seized and profited from that country's oil reserves.

Also, Trump again bucked foreign policy convention and heaped praise on Putin, saying the former KGB officer is a better leader than Obama and that he would forge a close partnership with Moscow to defeat the Islamic State group.

### Clinton defends

As Trump laid out brash new plans, Clinton was dogged by questions over her record.

Her use of a private email server during her time as Obama's secretary of state from 2009-13 consumed one-third of her time onstage.

Clinton was asked by a retired naval flight officer why servicemembers should have confidence in her after her mishandling of sensitive information. The sailor said he would have been "prosecuted and imprisoned" for not following proper protocols.

Clinton insisted she had sent no classified documents through her private server. The email traffic was investigated

by the FBI and strongly criticized, though no charges were filed, and has been the subject of congressional inquiries.

The former senator was questioned over her hawkish position on toppling the government of Moammar Gadhafi in Libya and was again pressed to admit her vote authorizing the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq was a mistake.

A veteran who served as an Air Force intelligence analyst questioned Clinton's "extensive record" of military interventions.

"How do you respond to progressives like myself who worry and have concerns your hawkish foreign policy will continue and what is your plan to end wasteful war campaigns in which our peers, servicewomen and men continue to be killed and wounded?" she asked.

Clinton said as president she would use military force only as a last resort.

"I will do everything in my power to make sure that our men and women in the military are fully prepared for any challenge that they may have to face on our behalf but I will also be as careful as I can in making the most significant decisions any president and commander in chief can make about sending our men and women into harm's way," she said.

Clinton vowed to avoid another large-scale ground war.

### Military support

The forum sponsored by Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America served as a preview of how the upcoming face-to-face presidential debate might play out, but it was still unclear how the two candidate's performances will affect voters.

Past Republican candidates have enjoyed a wide advantage among military voters, and Trump, despite the widespread

controversy his campaign has stirred up, seemed to be continuing that trend this week.

Trump leads Clinton by 19 points among troops and veterans, according to a poll Wednesday by NBC News and Survey Monkey. Of the 3,358 polled, 55 percent said they would vote for Trump and 36 percent said they support Clinton.

"I think we have a traditionally more conservative military. [But] I am surprised by those numbers," said retired Army Maj. Gen. Donna Barbisch, who warned a Trump presidency could endanger troops.

Barbisch, a Republican, was campaigning Wednesday for the Democratic Party and said she will vote for Clinton.

The candidates have so far split general and flag officers who have made endorsements.

Trump announced endorsements this week from 88 top officers — important progress for a campaign that has faced defections by Republicans and opposition from national security experts due to Trump's controversial statements and brash foreign policy proposals, such as abandoning NATO allies that do not pay for military funding.

His endorsements came much more from generals and admirals in the Air Force and Navy, according to an analysis by The McPherson Square Group, a public relations firm with clients that include a liberal veterans group and a Democratic congresswoman.

Clinton has endorsements from 95 top officers. She has won much more support from Army and Marine Corps generals than Trump.

Still, both are disliked by many voters and have fewer endorsements than past candidates. In 2012, GOP candidate Mitt Romney received endorsements from 500 generals and admirals.

# Russian jet flies within 10 feet of P-8A

By TARA COPP

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON—A Russian jet flew within 10 feet of a U.S. Navy P-8A Poseidon aircraft over the Black Sea on Wednesday in what Pentagon officials warned was unsafe flying that risked increasing tensions be-

tween the two militaries.

The intercept lasted 19 minutes, said Pentagon spokesman Navy Capt. Jeff Davis, and involved a Russian Su-27 Flanker fighter jet.

“We have concerns when there is an unsafe maneuver like this,” Davis said.

“These actions have the potential to unnecessarily escalate tensions, and could result in a miscalculation or accident.”

The incident is the latest in a handful of near passes this year where Russian fighters have dangerously buzzed U.S.

ships or aircraft.

In April, two Russian Sukhoi Su-24 Fencer jets did low passes over the destroyer the USS Donald Cook in the Baltic Sea.

That same week, Russian aircraft did a close pass of another U.S. reconnaissance aircraft in the Baltic Sea.

## GAO: Military might struggle with readiness for 10 years

By TARA COPP

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The military’s ability to fully train and equip its forces is “at risk” and the military might struggle with readiness for another 10 years, the Government Accountability Office reported Wednesday.

In a declassified version of their June 2016 report on military readiness challenges, the government watchdog agency found that after almost 15 years of war, each of the services has identified rebuilding readiness — the ability of U.S. forces to fight — as a top priority.

However, military planners still lack information needed to make key decisions. For example, DOD is still trying to figure out what it needs to be ready for and how much it will cost to restore readiness.

“We found some fundamental challenges with the overall readiness recovery effort,” the GAO report said.

In its response, DOD said that it is still working with the services to identify possible threats.

“DOD is currently working to define for the services the ‘ready for what,’ which will provide the target for their readiness goals,” the Defense Department wrote in its official comments on the GAO’s report.

In the meantime, each of the

**‘You don’t know how bad readiness is until you are specific about its goals.’**

John Pendleton  
GAO director

services continues to struggle under the combined pressure of limited budgets and increasing operational demands. To meet the need, the services have prioritized training and equipping deployed units, often at the expense of units left at home. In addition, the military is pressed to rebuild as potential competitors, such as China, field more modern weapons.

“It will be a decade or more before many parts of the force reach the readiness goals that are currently being sought,” GAO director John Pendleton said. “You don’t know how bad readiness is until you are specific about its goals.”

A Stars and Stripes investigation into readiness of the Navy and Marine Corps’ F/A-18 fleet published last week found that the number of accidents involving the aircraft has jumped 44 percent since the sharp budget cuts known as sequestration.

## General kept clearance until ‘swinging’ exposed

*USA Today*

WASHINGTON — The Army waited to suspend the security clearance of a two-star general fired for his role in a sordid sex scandal until a day after revelations of his double life were published in USA Today, the Army has acknowledged.

Maj. Gen. David Haight had been in charge of plans and operations for the Pentagon’s European Command until an Army investigation in April determined he’d been involved in an 11-year-long extramarital affair with allegations of a “swinger lifestyle.” Haight also was found to have misused his government cellphone and email to conduct the affair.

Haight was stripped of his post and brought back to Washington. However, Haight maintained his clearance to review classified information five months after the Army inspector general’s findings about his double life were substantiated, documents show.

Moreover, Haight did not take a lie-detector test for his sensitive post in Europe because it was not a requirement for his job, according to two Army officials who are not authorized to speak publicly about the screening procedures.

Polygraph tests are rarely administered to senior officers like Haight, according to three senior Defense and government officials who were not authorized to speak about who gets

screened. There is no indication that Haight was the target of espionage, the officials say.

Requiring generals and admirals to take polygraph tests would subject hundreds more government officials to polygraph tests, slowing an already time-consuming process.

The Haight case shows the need for greater scrutiny of those with access to the nation’s top secrets, said Sen. Claire McCaskill, a Missouri Democrat and member of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

“We’ve got to take a holistic look at the entire process and determine how best to fill gaps that have become painfully evident in the system we’re using to ensure we can continue to trust those privy to the highest levels of secrecy in our government,” said McCaskill, who has been critical of the military’s clearance process. “And maybe even more challenging is that we need to try to do so in a way that doesn’t make the current backlog of clearance checks and rechecks unnecessarily worse — because frankly it’s a national security threat either way, and we’ve got to get this right.”

Haight had frequented swingers’ clubs around the country and had engaged in sex with multiple partners, his longtime girlfriend Jennifer Armstrong told USA Today. Senior government officials have raised concerns his double life would have made him susceptible to blackmail or espionage.

# Obama puts South China Sea back on the summit agenda

Associated Press

VIENTIANE, Laos — President Barack Obama put the long-simmering dispute in the South China Sea front and center on the agenda at a regional summit Thursday as it became clear that most of the other leaders gathered in the Laotian capital were going to let China off with a mild rebuke over its territorial expansion in the resource-rich waters.

“We will continue to work to ensure that disputes are resolved peacefully, including in the South China Sea,” Obama said at a meeting with leaders of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN. He said an international arbitration ruling on July 12 against China was binding and “helped to clarify maritime rights in the region.”

ASEAN held a separate meeting later Thursday with eight world powers, including China and the U.S., in a gathering known as the East Asia Summit.

The participants were expected to let China off with a muted reprimand over its expansionist activities in South China Sea, according to a draft of their joint statement.

The final version was not immediately released.

The U.S. has repeatedly expressed concern over Beijing’s actions in the resource-rich sea. Obama brought that up again.

Referring to the arbitration panel’s ruling that invalidated China’s territorial claims, Obama said, “I realize this raises tensions but I also look forward to discussing how we can constructively move forward together to lower tensions and promote diplomacy and regional stability.”

China shot back with comments aimed at the United States.

“A couple of extra-regional

countries still wanted to use the occasion of the East Asia Summit to talk about the South China Sea, particularly to press on the regional countries to abide by the arbitration, which is untimely and inappropriate,” Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Liu Zhenmin told reporters. He said it is “also against the trend in the region to resolve the disputes by cooperation and dialogue. In some sense they are being self-isolated,” he said.

The East Asia Summit draft statement said ASEAN and its partners “reaffirmed the importance of maintaining peace, stability and security and freedom of navigation in and overflight in the South China Sea.”

“Several Leaders remained seriously concerned over recent developments in the South China Sea. ... We stressed the importance for the parties concerned to resolve their disputes by peaceful means, in accordance with universally recognized principles of international laws,” it said.

The East Asia Summit draft statement was less forceful than the statement that ASEAN leaders issued on Wednesday to express concern over China’s island-building.

It said ASEAN “took note of the concerns expressed by some leaders on the land reclamations and escalation of activities in the area, which have eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions and may undermine peace, security and stability in the region.”

The use of the phrase “some leaders” underscores the fundamental problem ASEAN has in dealing with China — not all its members are willing to scold Beijing. Cambodia, for example, remains in China’s camp, as does Laos to a large extent, preventing any robust statement from the consensus-bound group.

## Zumwalt underway for weapons testing

Bangor (Maine) Daily News

BATH, Maine — The future USS Zumwalt and a crew of about 150 sailors were navigating the Kennebec River for the last time as the first-in-class DDG 1000 left Bath Iron Works on Wednesday headed for training operations, commissioning in Baltimore and a new homeport of San Diego.

At a cost of more than \$4 billion, the “stealth” destroyer is the largest ever built by the Navy, at more than 610 feet long and 81 feet across. It boasts a flight deck nearly twice the size of the Navy’s Arleigh Burke-class destroyers, which the Zumwalt line was designed to replace until cost overruns spurred the Navy to end the line after three vessels.

Capt. James A. Kirk, who commands the vessel, wrote in a March U.S. Naval Institute article, that the new destroyer can carry two MH-60R helicopters.

The three destroyers, which cost an estimated \$22 billion, are designed to deflect radar and provide missile and gun support for troops ashore.

The Zumwalt features new technologies, including a multifunction radar system designed to allow the ship to get closer to land without being detected, two advanced gun systems that fire Long-Range Land Attack Projectiles that can reach up to 63 nautical miles, an integrated undersea/anti-submarine warfare detection system and a vertical launching system. Perhaps more importantly, the Zumwalt’s integrated electric power will allow the Navy to add advanced air missiles, radars, rail guns, lasers and other advanced tools that will be important as the combat environment — and potential threats — evolve, Navy spokesman Lt. Robert Myers said previously.

## 6th Fleet commander moving to post in DC

Vice Adm. James G. Foggo III, commander of the Naples, Italy-based U.S. 6th Fleet, was tapped Wednesday to serve in a top Navy post, Pentagon announced.

Foggo will hold on to his current rank as the next director of Navy Staff at the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations in Washington, the Pentagon said.

A replacement for Foggo has not yet been announced.

Besides heading 6th Fleet, Foggo serves as deputy commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe/Africa.

U.S. 6th Fleet, a major theater during the Cold War, has received new attention in recent years because of the Syrian civil war, the spread of militant groups in North Africa and Russia’s growing assertiveness.

## Obama is not ready to concede Gitmo survival

VIENTIANE, Laos — President Barack Obama said he’s not ready to concede that the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, will remain open when he leaves office.

Obama was asked about the future of Guantanamo as he conducted a news conference wrapping up his final visit as president to Asia. The detention center was opened in January 2002 to hold foreign fighters suspected of links to the Taliban or al-Qaida.

Obama said his administration was still working diligently to shrink the prisoner population. He said that, as the population continues to decrease, he hopes the American people will ask about the expense of maintaining a facility that he believes isn’t necessary for their safety and security.

From staff and wire reports

## More GIs in Iraq in prep for Mosul op

By TARA COPP  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The United States has increased its forces in Iraq by almost 500 troops in the last week to support the operation to take Mosul from the Islamic State group, a Pentagon spokesman said Thursday.

The increase in personnel and equipment is needed to meet the Iraqi government goal of recapturing Mosul before the end of the year, Col. John Dorrian, the Baghdad-based spokesman for Operation Inherent Resolve told reporters at the Pentagon.

“[Iraqi] Prime Minister [Haider al-] Abadi has come out and said that he would like to get this done within the year, and we are going to be at the Iraqi Security Force’s side and be there to try to help pursue that,” he said.

Dorrian’s comments follow a Wall Street Journal report Thursday that Lt. Gen. Stephen Townsend, the top commander of operations against the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria, said the battle to recapture Mosul would launch in early October. Dorrian said that specific time frame is not accurate.

However, in the last week, U.S. forces based in Iraq have risen from about 4,000 to 4,460, he said. The additional forces are assisting with the “tremendous amount of work going on” to set the pre-battle conditions to defeat the estimated 3,000 to 4,500 Islamic State fighters estimated in Mosul, Dorrian said.

U.S. efforts include training Iraq’s army and security forces needed to push the Islamic State group out of the city and police forces needed to hold it once the terrorists are gone.

Between eight and 12 Iraqi brigades will be involved in the battle to retake Mosul, Dorrian said. About 6,500 Iraqi forces are training now, he said.

# Prosecutors: 2 GIs seriously wounded in Bergdahl search

*Associated Press*

RALEIGH, N.C. — Serious injuries to two soldiers who searched for Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl in 2009 show that he endangered his comrades by leaving his post in Afghanistan, prosecutors argue in a new filing.

The Sept. 1 motion lays out how prosecutors plan to tie the injuries into arguments that Bergdahl is guilty of misbehavior before the enemy, a relatively rare charge that carries up to a life sentence. Bergdahl also faces a desertion charge in the case scheduled for a 2017 trial.

Bergdahl’s attorneys, meanwhile, filed a separate motion Wednesday arguing that the general overseeing the case has improperly communicated with prosecutors without the defense’s knowledge.

Prosecutors say that Mark Allen, then a National Guard

sergeant first class, was part of a search mission about a week after Bergdahl disappeared from his post. Allen was shot in the head on July 8, 2009, and suffered traumatic brain injuries that leave him dependent on a wheelchair and unable to communicate, prosecutors say.

The filing also says that Spc. Jonathan Morita suffered broken bones and other hand and arm injuries when a rocket-propelled grenade was fired at him. The RPG didn’t explode, and Morita survived.

Prosecutors write that the men’s injuries will help them show that Bergdahl endangered his comrades, one of the elements of the misbehavior before the enemy charge. They request the judge to allow them to use the evidence in their case.

“The best evidence of endangerment ... remains the fact that servicemembers were actually

harmed during the crisis that the accused intentionally created,” the prosecutors wrote, adding that the search for Bergdahl was the only reason for the mission involving Allen and Morita.

Defense attorney Eugene Fidell declined to comment Wednesday on the prosecutors’ motion.

Earlier this year, defense attorneys argued against a separate effort by prosecutors to have Allen’s wife designated to serve as a representative for the wounded soldier during the case. Prosecutors say he’s unable to communicate.

“Allen’s injuries were directly caused by the Taliban, not by SGT Bergdahl,” defense attorneys wrote in January.

The judge overseeing the case declined to designate Allen’s wife as his representative in a July ruling.

## Afghan airstrikes reportedly drive back Taliban fighters in southern city

By CHAD GARLAND  
*Stars and Stripes*

KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghan officials said airstrikes Thursday drove back Taliban fighters who had stormed into a southern provincial capital, triggering street clashes and sending government officials fleeing.

The surprise assault on Tirin Kot, capital of Uruzgan province, occurred as Taliban fighters have seized new territory across the country and staged a series of suicide bombings in the capital Kabul.

Insurgents besieged the police headquarters and the provincial governor’s compound, according to the governor’s spokesman Doost Mohammad Nayab. Nayab said Afghan jets

and helicopter gunships sent the militants into retreat, pummeling Taliban vehicles as they sped away, he said.

But Nayab said fighting was ongoing in 17 locations around Tirin Kot, a city of 70,000 inhabitants. Local officials had fled to the airport, according to media reports.

Afghan air force Gen. Abdul Wahab Wardak said the strikes were being conducted by a combination of A-29 Super Tucano bombers, Mi-17 helicopters and MD-530 Cayuse Warriors from the Kabul and Kandahar air wings.

“The situation has changed with the help of the air force and hopefully it will be under control soon,” he said.

A spokesman for the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan said

no U.S. aircraft had conducted attacks, adding that there were no NATO advisers in the province.

Fighting in around Tirin Kot began late Monday, the same day the Taliban launched attacks in Kabul at the Defense Ministry and seized the office of an aid organization. Those attacks left at least 36 people dead and more than 100 wounded as of Tuesday afternoon.

Earlier on Thursday, Nayab warned that Tirin Kot could fall to the insurgents if Kabul didn’t send in reinforcements. He said the situation improved after the air attacks.

Two attack helicopters and 200 Afghan army commandos arrived in the capital to help fend off the Taliban late Wednesday, Nayab said.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Accused robber, 70, prefers jail to his wife

**KS** KANSAS CITY — A 70-year-old man charged with robbing a Kansas City bank said he did it because he preferred a jail cell over living with his wife.

Lawrence John Ripple is charged in federal court with the robbery last week of the Bank of Labor at 756 Minnesota Ave.

According to court documents, Ripple handed a teller a note that read, "I have a gun, give me money." The teller complied.

Instead of fleeing, Ripple took the money and then took a seat in the bank lobby, according to the documents. When a bank security guard approached him, Ripple told the guard, "I'm the guy you're looking for."

The guard took the money from Ripple and held him until police arrived, which wasn't long, because Kansas City, Kan., police headquarters is on the same block.

Questioned later by investigators, Ripple said he and his wife had argued and he "no longer wanted to be in that situation," according to the documents.

### Cops won't be charged in killing of groundhog

**NY** TROY — Authorities say they won't file criminal charges against two upstate New York police officers accused of using a golf cart to run down and kill a groundhog.

Police officials in the city of Troy said Tuesday that after an investigation it was determined there wasn't enough information to warrant charges.

Two police officers from the neighboring city of Rensselaer were accused of killing a groundhog by chasing it with

their cart during a late July police union outing at Troy's Frear Park Golf Course.

Rensselaer police officials said the officers remain on paid leave as the department's internal investigation continues.

### Victim of fake 911 call is suing over damages

**OH** TOLEDO — An Ohio man who was the victim of a fake 911 call is suing the city of Toledo and its police over damage done when they responded to the call by raiding his home and arresting him.

Donald McGranahan II, 33, an Army veteran, is seeking more than \$25,000 in damages. His lawsuit filed this week also alleges police caused him emotional distress and destroyed property they took in the September 2015 raid.

Toledo's law director told WTOL-TV the city will fight the lawsuit. He said officials agreed to pay for the home damage, but it hasn't done so yet because the parties haven't agreed on an amount and McGranahan must prove the value of the damaged property.

### Police officer sues bar after patron bites ear

**MA** SALEM — A rookie Massachusetts police officer who lost part of her ear when it was bitten by a woman she was arresting outside a bar has sued the suspect and the tavern.

The Salem News reported that Salem Patrolwoman Jessica Rondinelli's suit seeks monetary compensation for lost income and medical expenses, as well as compensation for permanent scarring. The suit says the bar was negligent for serving an underage patron.

Prosecutors say Rondinelli was responding to a fight out-

side the bar in the early morning hours of Aug. 7, and while Rondinelli was putting Emma Wiley, 19, in a cruiser, Wiley bit off a piece of the officer's ear.

### Breweries collaborate on fundraising beer

**MD** BALTIMORE — Four Maryland breweries are collaborating on a beer dubbed "Ryelief" that will benefit businesses affected by flooding in July.

The breweries say 100 percent of the proceeds from the beer's sale will be donated to the Ellicott City Partnership fund to benefit businesses in Ellicott City as well as the fund assisting Nepenthe Homebrew in Baltimore, which was also damaged by flooding July 30.

The flooding killed two people and devastated the Ellicott City historic district.

The breweries that collaborated on Ryelief are: Key Brewing Co. based in Dundalk; Monument City Brewing Co. and Brewer's Art in Baltimore, and White Marsh Brewing Co. in White Marsh.

Another beer benefiting the relief effort from Flying Dog Brewery and Jailbreak Brewing Co. comes out Friday.

### Opioid epidemic cited in hepatitis B cases

**ME** AUGUSTA — Health officials in Maine say the state's opioid epidemic has likely been a contributor to a rise in reported hepatitis B cases.

The Portland Press Herald reported the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention has reported 29 cases of acute hepatitis B this year through Sept. 1. In a typical year, Maine has fewer than 10 cases.

To combat the increase, health officials have advocated

for the expansion of needle exchange programs statewide.

### Drone video shows rock formation pushed

**OR** PORTLAND — A video shows that a sandstone rock formation on the Oregon Coast was being pushed by a group of visitors before it collapsed.

The video obtained by KATU-TV shows the visitors pushing the Cape Kiwanda structure until it crumbled to the ground. It was filmed around 5 p.m. on Aug. 29.

David Kalas said he was helping a friend film part of the coast with his drone when they noticed about eight people trying to push the pedestal down. Kalas said he started recording when it began wobbling.

Oregon State Parks officials initially said they didn't think the break was caused by humans.

### Report: Capital cyclists often ignore red lights

**DC** WASHINGTON — Bicyclists often ignore red lights in the nation's capital, but they rarely get ticketed.

NBC 4 reported that bike riders triggered the cameras more than 1,500 times since 2015. But the cameras have no way of identifying them.

D.C. police spokesman Dustin Sternbeck said the violations raise concerns about safety, not only for bike riders but motorists and pedestrians.

The cycling community shot back, saying most red-light violators are behind the wheel of a car or truck. In 2015, there were more than 60,000 red light camera violations triggered by cars in the District.

From wire reports

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# Griffin reinventing himself in Cleveland

Associated Press

BEREA, Ohio — From cast-off to captain.

Robert Griffin III may have changed the course of a career headed toward disaster.

Thrown out in Washington, where he was labeled selfish, moody and immature before his exit, Griffin has reinvented himself with the Browns, who believe the 26-year-old can not only guide them through another rebuild but perhaps become their long-term answer at quarterback.

During his first six months with Cleveland, RG3 has become a leader and the new face for a franchise still trying to find its footing.

"That's not something you take lightly," Griffin said Wednesday as the Browns prepared for their season opener against Philadelphia. It will be his first start since 2014.

Griffin takes nothing casually or for granted any longer.

He has moved on from his days with the Redskins and claims to have grown from his four-year stay in the nation's capital, where his fall from grace was akin to a scandalous politician's plunge.

The experience may have left Griffin scarred, but he's not

dwelling on his past and only embracing his second chance in Cleveland.

"Everything that I have been through personally in the league, it makes you have that emphasis on controlling what you can and focusing on what you can and when you get an opportunity make the most of it," Griffin said.

"Yeah, I'm extremely happy, not satisfied but happy with where I am, the opportunity that has been blessed upon me and being here with these guys is truly a blessing.

"I can't speak enough about how this locker room has been awesome. I have been able to grow as a player and as a leader in this locker room."

From the moment he arrived in Cleveland, Griffin has shown a desire to lead. Despite minimal interest elsewhere, the Browns signed him to a two-year, \$15 million contract, a deal that steered them away from drafting a QB with the No. 2 pick, a selection they traded to the Eagles, who as fate would have it are starting rookie Carson Wentz on Sunday.

Griffin has been out front with everything he's done. Whether it's in the weight room, classroom or on the field, he has led by example.

"He's kind of who I thought he was going to be," cornerback Joe Haden said. "He's a super, team-first guy, a dude that just wants to bond, have a friendship. He wants to have a bond with all his teammates. He's like me.

"He wants to be liked. He doesn't feel like there's no reason to have anybody walking around and not talking to everybody, so I get that and that's really special and I think that's why the team picked him as a captain."

Griffin was voted one of the team's five captains, a selection that even shocked coach Hue Jackson, who has been in the QB's corner from the outset.

"I was a little surprised, I will be very honest with you," said Jackson, who playfully laughed off the suggestion he rigged the election for Griffin.

"I was surprised because obviously Robert hasn't been here very long and we haven't played a real football game yet. So for him to be voted captain, he should feel good about that. His teammates feel good about him."

Pro Bowl tackle Joe Thomas was aware of Griffin's reputation for being self-centered before he came to Cleveland. He hasn't seen that guy yet.

"When a new player comes in you try not to have any preconceived notions about him based on the media or what you hear from other players," Thomas said. "Robert's been such a great leader, being accountable, doing all the things that you need a franchise quarterback to do.

"Walking into a new team is difficult no matter your position, but when you're expected to be the quarterback who is basically the head coach, offensive coordinator all in one, the stakes are so much higher and it's so much more difficult to just slide into that role seamlessly. But he's done an awesome job at it."

As he tries to escape his past, Griffin can't break completely free of it. Earlier this week, Redskins Hall of Fame cornerback Darrell Green called Griffin "selfish" and "childish."

Griffin, who is going through a divorce, was disappointed to hear the comments from Green, whom he considers a friend.

Griffin may have once fought back. Those days are gone. He's changed.

"It is nothing that I can control," he said. "I just focus on being here with the Browns, worry about football, and don't let anything distract me."

## New coaches hired for their offensive backgrounds

Associated Press

MIAMI — New Miami Dolphins coach Adam Gase likes to talk trash to his players, and the team's performance in recent years has provided plenty of fodder.

Miami's most recent NFL playoff victory was 16 years ago. The Dolphins haven't had a winning season since Barack Obama became president in 2008. Last year, they were outscored 139-65 by the rival Buffalo Bills and New York Jets.

And they keep getting coaches fired, which is why Miami is one of six NFL clubs with a new boss. The other teams are ripe

targets for insult, too, thanks to hard times.

Hired to lead turnarounds:

■ Gase, who won praise for his work with quarterbacks Jay Cutler, Peyton Manning and even Tim Tebow, and is now the NFL's youngest head coach at 38;

■ Ben McAdoo, 39, another young former offensive coordinator who was promoted by the New York Giants when Tom Coughlin departed after 12 seasons and two Super Bowl titles;

■ Dirk Koetter, promoted from offensive coordinator by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers when they made their fourth coaching switch since 2011;

■ Hue Jackson, a former Oakland Raiders head coach given a second shot by the Cleveland Browns;

■ Chip Kelly, hired by the San Francisco 49ers two weeks after he was fired at the end of his third season as coach of the Philadelphia Eagles;

■ Doug Pederson, a former NFL quarterback hired by the Eagles after Kelly's departure.

In addition, Mike Mularkey was promoted to Tennessee Titans head coach from the interim job.

All of the new head coaches have offensive backgrounds with mandates to score more for teams that finished below

.500 last season.

The Dolphins haven't won a playoff game since 2000, haven't had a winning season since 2008 and went 6-10 in 2015. Gase is Miami's ninth head coach since 2004, and his brash, mouthy energy has been embraced by players as a welcome change from staid predecessor Joe Philbin.

Asked if that sort of intensity is easier for a younger coach, Gase shrugged.

"I don't know," he said. "I've never been old yet."

It's the same for McAdoo, who's a generation removed from his 70-year-old predecessor, Coughlin.

# Murray ousted at Open

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Andy Murray lost his way, seven consecutive games and, eventually, his riveting five-set U.S. Open quarterfinal against Kei Nishikori after a loud noise from a malfunctioning sound system interrupted a key point, resulting in a do-over.

Whether or not the gong-like sound, and chair umpire Marija Cicak's let ruling, was the reason that Nishikori wound up coming back to win 1-6, 6-4, 4-6, 6-1, 7-5 on Wednesday, it surely will be what's most remembered about the back-and-forth, 4-hour match.

After all, Murray's extended discussions with Cicak and another official about the unusual episode came during a stretch in which he dropped 12 of 14 points.

He went from a lead of two sets to one, plus a break point at 1-all, to ceding the fourth set and trailing 2-0 in the fifth.

"I could have won the match for sure," said Murray, the No. 2 seed and 2012 champion at Flushing Meadows.

The No. 6 seed Nishikori reached a Grand Slam semifi-

nal for the first time since he was the U.S. Open runner-up two years ago. He faces No. 3 seed Stan Wawrinka, who ended the resurgent run of 2009 champion Juan Martin del Potro 7-6 (5), 4-6, 6-3, 6-2 in a quarterfinal that finished past 1 a.m. on Thursday. The other men's semifinal Friday is No. 1 Novak Djokovic against No. 10 Gael Monfils.

Earlier, Murray acknowledged a brief dip in play after the argument over the let but preferred to focus on other reasons for his exit.

"I broke serve enough times," Murray said. "I just didn't hold serve enough. That was the difference."

Perhaps.

But Murray complained about the ruling right away, gave away the next three points to lose the game, then brought it up again with Cicak at the ensuing changeover, saying something similar had happened earlier and play had continued.

That same type of noise came from the speakers again at 4-1 in the fourth set. It also had happened during a women's match Monday night between

Ana Konjuh and Agnieszka Radwanska.

The U.S. Tennis Association said Wednesday that a "digital audio sound processor" was at fault and would be replaced before the night session.

Despite all the fuss, Murray went ahead 5-4 in the fifth. But he wouldn't take another game. At 5-all, 30-all, Murray double-faulted to set up break point, and Nishikori converted by reaching for a stretch volley winner.

In the women's quarterfinals, Serena Williams was broken for the first time in the tournament, and lost a set for the first time, too, but eventually got past No. 5 Simona Halep 6-2, 4-6, 6-3. A year ago in the U.S. Open semifinals, Williams' bid for a calendar-year Grand Slam ended with a loss to unseeded Roberta Vinci of Italy.

On Thursday, Williams was scheduled to face 10th-seeded Karolina Pliskova of the Czech Republic, who reached the first major semifinal of her career by eliminating the 18-year-old Konjuh 6-2, 6-2. The other women's semifinal is No. 2 Angelique Kerber vs. two-time runner-up Caroline Wozniacki.

# Swimmer Lochte banned 10 months

Associated Press

Ryan Lochte is banned from swimming through next June and will forfeit \$100,000 in bonus money that went with his gold medal at the Olympics, part of the penalty for his drunken encounter at a gas station in Brazil during last month's games.

The U.S. Olympic Committee and USA Swimming announced the penalties Thursday. Lochte agreed to a ban that will also render him ineligible for world championships next July because he won't be able to qualify for them at nationals the previous month.

He'll get no monthly funding from either organization, can't access USOC training centers, must perform 20 hours of community service and will miss Team USA's post-Olympics trip to the White House.

Agreeing to four-month suspensions were Gunnar Bentz, Jack Conger and Jimmy Feigen, who were with Lochte at the gas station. Those sanctions, which end Dec. 31, also strip funding and training access and preclude them from the White House visit.

Bentz, 20, will also serve 10 hours of community service for violating a curfew rule for athletes under 21.

Last month, Brazilian police charged Lochte with filing a false robbery report, but Lochte has not said whether he'll return to Brazil to defend himself.

Lochte's gold in the 4x200 freestyle relay was one of 121 overall medals the United States won at the Olympics, yet his actions at the gas station overshadowed a large portion of the second half of the Olympics.

The International Olympic Committee's ethics commission is also looking into the incident.

# Newman's Cup chances take a hit

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Ryan Newman's championship hopes were dealt a blow Wednesday when NASCAR docked him 15 points before the final qualifying race for the playoffs.

Newman was already on the outside of the 16-driver field and trailed Jamie McMurray for the final spot by seven points. He is now 22 points behind McMurray after the penalty for failing post-race inspection at Darlington Raceway on Sunday night.

The Chase for the Sprint Cup championship field will be set Saturday night after the regular-season finale at Richmond International Raceway. Richard Childress Racing will not appeal the penalty, and blamed failing the laser inspection on the car hitting the wall during the race.

"There was clear damage to the right rear fender and tire," RCR said. "NASCAR has told us that the (laser) standard is clear and the car must pass post-race inspection even if damage

has been sustained."

There are currently three available spots in the Chase field, assuming Chris Buescher finishes Richmond ranked 30th or higher in the standings. Buescher qualified for the Chase with a win at rain-shortened Pocono, but he's got to remain inside the top 30 to be eligible for the playoffs.

Buescher has an 11-point lead over 31st-place. If he drops a position, a fourth spot would become open in the Chase field. The three drivers currently in position to make the Chase are Chase Elliott, Austin Dillon and McMurray. Newman would need to pass one of them in the standings to overcome the penalty.

In addition to the points deduction, NASCAR also fined Newman crew chief Luke Lambert \$25,000.

NASCAR on Wednesday also docked 15 points from Kyle Larson, but he's already qualified for the Chase based on his victory at Michigan. Chad Johnston, his crew chief, was fined \$22,500 because the car failed post-race inspection.

# Red Sox top Padres for AL East lead

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — The Boston Red Sox are leaving the country and taking something with them: sole possession of first place in the AL East.

Travis Shaw, Hanley Ramirez and Brock Holt homered and David Price threw seven solid innings to lead Boston past the San Diego Padres 7-2 on Wednesday night.

After securing the series win at San Diego, the Red Sox open a three-game series at Toronto on Friday.

“That’s what makes it fun to play this time the year,” Price said. “You are playing the teams right in front of you or right behind you. To be in this position is huge. It’s a testament to the

work we have done all year.”

The Red Sox took a one-game lead over the Toronto Blue Jays, who lost 2-0 to the New York Yankees. Boston, which completed interleague play with a 14-6 record, will play only AL East teams in the final 23 games.

Shaw, inserted into the lineup for a slumping Yoan Moncada, hit his 16th homer in the second inning, a two-run shot, and added an RBI single in the fourth.

“He obviously made an impact,” Red Sox manager John Farrell said. “He squared some balls up.”

Ramirez’s homer came in the eighth off Jake Smith’s first major league pitch.

Holt added a pinch-hit homer

in the ninth.

Price (15-8) won his season-high sixth straight start, allowing two runs and six hits. Price, who has won four of his last five road starts, struck out eight.

“I definitely felt good tonight to keep the ball away from the middle of the plate and execute pitches,” said Price, who threw 76 strikes in 98 pitches.

“[He] was extremely efficient with the number of pitches he threw,” Farrell said

Three relievers finished off the Padres, with Craig Kimbrel getting the final out.

Jarred Cosart (0-3) left after 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings after hurting his right leg while covering first base on Jackie Bradley Jr.’s grounder. Cosart landed awkwardly after reaching for Wil

Myers’ erratic throw which drew an error and led to the Red Sox rally.

Cosart strained his right hamstring and groin.

“Not really sure which one is worse right now,” Padres manager Andy Green said.

Boston’s three-run fourth inning was the difference. After Shaw’s RBI, Dustin Pedroia drove in Shaw and Chris Young with a double down the left-field line. Pedroia has hit safely in 13 of his last 14 games.

“It’s pretty cool to go out there and face those guys, it’s a playoff team,” Cosart said. “I was holding my own against one of the best pitchers in baseball and was finally getting in a good rhythm and I just hit a bump in the road.”

## Strasburg exits after injury in Nats’ victory

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Stephen Strasburg winced and, no doubt, so did everyone else who roots for the Washington Nationals.

The Washington ace felt a pinch in the back of his right elbow in the third inning and was forced to make an early exit Wednesday night in his first start since returning from the disabled list.

With a stadium full of teammates and fans wondering what went wrong, the NL East leaders went on to defeat Atlanta 5-4 in 11 innings.

After the game ended well past midnight, the Nationals said Strasburg would get an MRI. They didn’t elaborate on the severity of his injury.

“He had good command,” manager Dusty Baker said. “Usually if something’s wrong you don’t have command. So we’re hoping that it’s something minor, but we’ll find out tomorrow.”

Strasburg had been out since Aug. 17 because of soreness in the same elbow. The right-hander left after 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings, allowing a run on two hits.

“He did everything that was

asked of him (before the start),” Baker said. “He was cleared. He wasn’t trying to be a hero. He said he felt fine, but a lot of times you really don’t know until you get into the action.”

With Braves pitcher Mike Foltynewicz attempting to bunt after Dansby Swanson’s leadoff double, Strasburg’s 0-2 pitch sailed high.

Strasburg grimaced, walked around the mound and then threw another pitch, retiring Foltynewicz.

Washington’s trainer came out and Strasburg departed, covering his mouth with his glove as he reached the dugout.

Strasburg struck out four and walked none. He threw 42 pitches.

Jayson Werth drew a lead-off walk in the 11th and Daniel Murphy followed with a double off Jed Bradley (1-1). After Bryce Harper was intentionally walked to load the bases, Wilson Ramos singled off Brandon Cunniff to win it.

Mat Latos, the 10th Nationals pitcher, got one out for the win.

**Dodgers 3, Diamondbacks 1:** Yasiel Puig homered and drove in another run, and Brock Stewart became the fourth

straight rookie pitcher to win his start, helping Los Angeles beat visiting Arizona to win its fifth straight and complete a three-game sweep.

**Indians 6, Astros 5:** Carlos Carrasco overcame a home run and an apparent bug in his eye to pitch into the eighth inning, helping host Cleveland.

**Brewers 2, Cubs 1:** Jonathan Villar hit two home runs and Keon Broxton robbed Anthony Rizzo of a homer in the ninth inning to help Milwaukee beat visiting Chicago.

**Yankees 2, Blue Jays 0:** Bryan Mitchell earned his first major league win, combining with Luis Severino and Tyler Clippard to shut down Toronto in host New York’s victory.

**Rays 7, Orioles 6:** Corey Dickerson had a go-ahead RBI double in the seventh inning and host Tampa Bay avoided a three-game sweep.

**Mets 6, Reds 3:** Jose Reyes homered on the first pitch of the game, Noah Syndergaard lasted five shaky shutout innings and New York won its fifth in a row, beating host Cincinnati.

**Rockies 6, Giants 5:** Cristian Adames hit a two-run double in the ninth inning off Joe Nathan

in Colorado’s comeback victory over visiting San Francisco.

**Pirates 4, Cardinals 3:** Jung Ho Kang led off the eighth inning with a home run, and host Pittsburgh snapped an eight-game losing streak.

**White Sox 7, Tigers 4:** Avisail Garcia hit a go-ahead single against his former team in a four-run eighth inning and Chicago kept visiting Detroit to a game out of the final American League wild-card spot.

**Twins 6, Royals 5:** Miguel Sano’s hustle led his team to a pair of early runs and his RBI double tied it in the decisive seventh inning, helping host Minnesota beat Kansas City.

**Athletics 4, Angels 1:** Jharel Cotton won in his major league debut, leading Oakland past visiting Los Angeles.

**Mariners 8, Rangers 3:** Adam Lind hit the fourth grand slam of his career as part of his team’s five-run first inning, added a solo home run in his next at-bat and led host Seattle.

**Marlins 6, Phillies 0:** Andrew Cashner matched his season high for strikeouts with nine over 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings and earned his first win for host Miami in the victory.