

Russia arrests hundreds of protesters

Associated Press

MOSCOW — Russian police moved quickly Saturday to disperse peaceful protests against President Vladimir Putin's military mobilization order, arresting hundreds in several cities across the vast country.

Police detained nearly 750 people, including over 370 in Moscow and some 150 in St. Petersburg, according to OVD-Info, an independent website that monitors political arrests in Russia. Some of those arrested were minors, OVD-Info said.

The demonstrations followed protests that erupted within hours Wednesday after Putin, in a move to beef up his volunteer forces fighting in Ukraine, announced a call-up of experienced and skilled army reservists.

The Defense Ministry said that the partial mobilization initially aimed to add about 300,000 troops to beef up its outnumbered volunteer forces in Ukraine.

The mobilization marked a sharp shift from Putin's effort to cast the seven-month war as a "special military operation" that doesn't interfere with the lives of most Russians.

The Russian leader and Defense Minister

Sergei Shoigu said the order applied to reservists who had recently served or had special skills, but almost every man is considered a reservist until age 65 and Putin's decree kept the door open for a broader call-up.

Across Russia's 11 time zones, men hugged weeping family members before being rounded up for service amid fears that a wider call-up might follow.

Some media reports claimed Russian authorities planned to mobilize more than 1 million recruits, which the Kremlin denied.

Moving to assuage public fears over the call-up that could erode Putin's grip on power, authorities announced that many Russians working in high tech, communications or finance would be exempt.

After some of the pilots of the Russian flag carrier Aeroflot and other airlines reportedly received call-up notices, pilots and traffic controllers unions moved quickly to secure a government promise that they, too, would be excluded from the mobilization.

Many Russian men bought up scarce and exorbitantly priced airline tickets out of the country as rumors swirled about a pending border closure. Thousands others fled by car, creating lines of traffic hours or even days long at some borders. The massive ex-

odus underlined the unpopularity of the war and fueled public outrage.

In a sign the Kremlin was starting to worry about a backlash, the head of a top state-controlled TV station harshly criticized military authorities for hastily sweeping up random people to meet mobilization targets instead of calling up people with specific skills and recent military service, as Putin promised.

On Saturday, police deployed in force in the cities where protests were scheduled by opposition group Vesna and supporters of jailed opposition leader Alexei Navalny. They moved quickly to arrest demonstrators, most of them young people, before they could hold protests.

In Moscow, a heavy contingent of police roamed a downtown area where a protest was planned and checked the IDs of passers-by. Officers rounded up those they deemed suspicious.

In St. Petersburg, small groups of demonstrators managed to gather and shout protest slogans before being rounded up.

In the city of Novosibirsk in eastern Siberia, over 70 people were detained after singing an innocuous Soviet-era song praising peace.

Venezuela may use 'Fat Leonard' as bargaining chip

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — A fugitive defense contractor nicknamed "Fat Leonard" who claims to have incriminating sex photos of U.S. Navy brass could become the latest bargaining chip in Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro's efforts to win official recognition from the Biden administration, according to experts.

But it's unclear how hard the U.S. government will fight for the return of Leonard Glenn Francis, the Malaysian owner of a ship servicing company in Southeast Asia who is the central character in one of the lar-

gest bribery scandals in Pentagon history.

He fled home custody in San Diego on Sept. 4 and was arrested by Venezuelan police Tuesday attempting to board a flight at the Simon Bolivar International Airport outside Caracas. Francis had his first court appearance Thursday, according to a law enforcement official in Venezuela who spoke Friday to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss judicial proceedings.

The official, who had been briefed on the case, said now it is

up to the United States to make the next move. U.S. authorities have 30 days to formally request his extradition, something that the official viewed as unlikely given that the Biden administration recognizes opposition leader Juan Guaido — not Maduro — as the country's legitimate ruler.

Venezuela and the United States have an extradition agreement but it's not clear if U.S. authorities have made a formal request.

The Biden administration doesn't officially recognize Maduro's socialist government, has

no embassy in Venezuela and has imposed crushing sanctions on the country that have further embittered relations. U.S. indictments against Maduro and several members of his inner circle on narco-terrorism or money laundering charges have been a major irritant between the countries.

"I have no doubt the Venezuelans will make hay of (Francis' arrest), especially because they have felt the effects of the long arm of the U.S. justice system," said David Smilde, a longtime expert on Venezuela who teaches at Tulane University.

Prosecution rests in Bonhomme arson

The San Diego Union-Tribune

Navy prosecutors rested their case Friday against the sailor accused of starting the devastating fire on the amphibious assault ship Bonhomme Richard, just 1,000 feet from where the \$1.2 billion warship burned more than two years ago.

Seaman Recruit Ryan Sawyer Mays, a 19-year-old deck seaman on the ship at the time of the fire, is charged with aggravated arson and the willful hazarding of a vessel.

Mays denies starting the blaze. He faces life in prison if convicted.

With no eyewitness to anyone setting the fire, Capt. Jason Jones told the military judge Friday that he and fellow prosecutors had met their burden to proceed with the case in response to a defense motion to find Mays not guilty at this juncture in the trial. Mays had the motive and opportunity to start the fire, Jones said, and circumstantial evidence is still evidence — especially in an arson case where the crime scene was destroyed.

The Navy's key witness, a sailor on watch on the Bonhomme Richard the day of the fire, testified Thursday he saw Mays walk down a ramp from the upper vehicle storage area — where he was on watch — to the lower vehicle storage area about 20 minutes before seeing smoke.

An investigator from the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives testified earlier in the week that the fire was set intentionally in that lower storage area,

called the "lower V," just after 8 a.m. that morning.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Kenji Velasco, who was also a deck seaman at the time, is the only witness placing Mays at the scene near when investigators say the fire began. He said he saw a person he believes to be Mays, wearing a face mask, hat and "boot camp" coveralls. Velasco said the person was the same build as Mays and that Mays stood out among Deck Department sailors for wearing that type of coverall, as most wore a different, flame-resistant coverall uniform on board.

Velasco said the person was carrying a metal bucket with both hands and passed about 7 feet from him. "I love Deck," the person said as he passed, according to Velasco.

Velasco said he recognized Mays' voice but wasn't sure Mays was on duty that day. He said on July 13, 2020 — the day after the fire — he called a Deck Department duty supervisor to find out. During that call he told Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class Beau Benson he'd seen someone in boot camp coveralls head into the lower V just before the fire and asked if Mays was on duty.

Benson told him yes, Velasco said. Velasco then asked where he'd sent Mays after duty section muster, but Benson couldn't say. Benson also testified and confirmed the conversation took place. He testified he remembered Velasco being "fixated" on one person but did not remember who.

Later on the day after the fire, Velasco

said, he told Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class Matthew Betz about the person he saw the morning of the fire going into the lower V. Velasco said Betz told him Mays wore boot camp coveralls upon hearing that detail.

Betz confirmed this conversation took place during his testimony Thursday.

Benson, Betz and other Bonhomme Richard Deck Department sailors testified Mays made it known on board he was not happy and wanted to get back into the Navy SEAL training pipeline at Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL school in Coronado.

Prosecutors allege this was Mays' motive in starting the fire — that he hated being a deck seaman on a ship and was looking for a way back to BUD/S.

Prosecutors wrapped their case Friday afternoon with testimony from two Navy masters-at-arms who were tasked with escorting Mays to the Miramar brig upon his arrest on Aug. 20, 2020. Both testified they heard Mays utter "I'm guilty, I did it," upon learning he was going to the brig.

Gary Barthel, a civilian military attorney who previously represented Mays, has been in court for the trial. He said these statements, and others attributed to Mays, are key for the prosecution.

"Because this is a circumstantial case, they have to establish guilt somehow," Barthel said Friday after court.

Mays' court-martial resumes at Naval Base San Diego on Monday morning, when the defense will put on its witnesses.

Texas police kill recruiter who fatally shot wife

New York Daily News

A military recruiter in Texas shot and killed his wife as she was being interviewed by Naval Criminal Investigative Service in-

Correction

A new plan for commissary funding announced in a memorandum from Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Sept. 22 aims to reduce the price of food items in commissaries by 3% to 5%. The Pentagon initially provided an incorrect savings percentage that was included in a previous version of this story.

investigators regarding allegations of abuse she recently raised against her husband, police said.

The violence unfolded Thursday inside a home in Atascocita around 1:30 p.m., according to the Houston Chronicle. Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez said the female victim was speaking with two NCIS agents when the suspect walked in and opened fire.

One of the NCIS agents was wounded in the gunfire and remained hospitalized in fair condition Thursday night. Harris said the second agent escaped the incident uninjured.

The woman, who was holding her child

when the shooting unfolded, was also struck and later pronounced dead on the scene.

Gonzalez told KHOU that first responders discovered the unharmed child still in its mother's arms when they arrived at the residence.

The suspect fled the shooting scene in a dark-colored sedan, but authorities managed to locate him around 5 p.m. That's when he exited the vehicle, firearm in hand, and again opened fire on law enforcement officers.

He was killed during the subsequent shootout, according to Gonzalez. Authorities believe he was trying to reach his mother's house before his fatal confrontation with authorities.

US steps up diplomatic efforts with China

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The Biden administration on Friday ramped up its diplomatic efforts to press China to end provocative actions against Taiwan and warned it about any active support for Russia in its war against Ukraine.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken made both cases in a meeting with his Chinese counterpart on Friday in a meeting on the sidelines of the annual U.N. General Assembly in New York, according to U.S. officials. The session was one of the few that Blinken kept on his schedule after the death of his father on Thursday.

The officials wouldn't describe the Chi-

nese response, but said Foreign Minister Wang Yi was receptive to the messages and that the two men discussed the need "to maintain open lines of communication and responsibly manage the U.S.-China relationship, especially during times of tension."

The talks between Blinken and Wang come amid a period of intense tensions on both issues and ahead of an expected meeting in November between Presidents Joe Biden and Xi Jinping. Biden's recent comments about Taiwan and China's tacit support for the war in Ukraine are just two of the latest irritants in relations between Washington and Beijing.

State Department spokesman Ned Price

said Blinken had affirmed to Wang the administration's commitment to "maintaining peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait" despite Biden's assertion earlier this week that the U.S. would send troops to defend Taiwan in the event of a Chinese invasion.

On Russia, U.S. officials said Blinken underscored the damage that would be done to the Sino-U.S. relationship should Beijing take a more active role in supporting the war in Ukraine. U.S. officials have said they are cautiously optimistic about recent comments from Chinese leaders about their concerns over the war and its consequences, and Blinken wanted to drive the point home.

New York City weighs large tents to house migrants

Associated Press

NEW YORK — New York City's mayor says he plans to erect hangar-sized tents as temporary shelter for thousands of international migrants who have been bused into the Big Apple as part of a campaign by Republican governors to disrupt federal border policies.

The tents are among an array of options — from using cruise ships to summer camps — the city is considering as it struggles to find housing for an estimated 13,000 migrants who have wound up in New York after being bused north from border towns in Texas and Arizona.

"This is not an everyday homelessness crisis, but a humanitarian crisis that requires a different approach," New York

Mayor Eric Adams said in a statement Thursday.

New York City's huge system of homeless shelters has been straining to accommodate the unexpected new flow of migrants seeking asylum in the United States.

In Arizona and Texas, officials have loaded people on buses for free trips to Washington and New York City. More recently, Florida, which has a Republican governor running for reelection, flew migrants — at public cost — to Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts.

Adams said the city had opened 23 emergency shelters — and was considering 38 more — to handle the people bused into the city since May. The city also recently opened a new, multimillion dollar intake center to

help the newcomers quickly get settled.

The first tent has been proposed for a remote corner of the Bronx, a parking lot at a popular city beach on Long Island Sound where public transportation is limited. Officials are looking into other areas.

A rendering of the likely design of the facility, released by the city, showed rows and rows of cots. Presumably, the tent would be heated, as autumn nights in the city can be quite cool, but the city released few details.

City officials said these facilities — which they call "humanitarian emergency response and relief centers" — would only house migrants for up to four days while the city arranged other types of shelter.

Immigration advocates said the plan was not well thought out.

Opponents of school vouchers file to block expansion

Associated Press

PHOENIX — Public school advocates who oppose a massive expansion of Arizona's private school voucher system enacted by the Republican-controlled Legislature and signed into law by Republican Gov. Doug Ducey in July filed enough signatures Friday to block it from taking effect.

The law, which extends the program to every child in the state, was on hold instead of taking effect Saturday. If a review finds that Save Our Schools Arizona has met the requirement for nearly 119,000 valid signatures — and if those signatures survive any court challenges filed by voucher backers — it will remain blocked until the Novem-

ber 2024 election.

Beth Lewis, executive director of the grassroots group formed when a similar expansion passed in 2017 and was successfully challenged at the polls, said Friday that the group turned in 141,714 signatures. That's fewer than they hoped, since groups trying to refer laws to the voters or get initiatives on the ballot usually aim for at least a 25% cushion.

Voters rejected the earlier expansion by a 2/3 majority in the 2018 election.

Lewis put part of the blame on Ducey, who held onto the bill for 10 days after the Legislature adjourned, a move that cut the amount of time opponents had to collect sig-

natures from 90 to 80 days.

"We definitely wish we would have had those 10 days that Ducey stole from the voters to build our cushion," Lewis said.

Voucher opponents say the program siphons money away from the state's public schools, which have been underfunded for decades and educate the vast majority of the state's students, although Ducey and the Legislature have pumped cash into the system over the past several years. Backers of the voucher program say it allows parents to choose the best school for their children. Ducey is a major "school choice" backer and touted the expansion at a ceremonial bill signing in August.

Puerto Ricans still in dark after Fiona

Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — Half of Puerto Rico is without power more than five days after Hurricane Fiona struck — including an entire town where not a single work crew has arrived.

Many on the U.S. territory are angry and incredulous, and calls are growing for the ouster of the island's private power company.

Fuel disruptions are worsening the situation, forcing grocery stores, gas stations and other businesses to close and leaving apartment buildings in the dark because there is no diesel for generators.

Many are questioning why it is taking so long to restore power since Fiona was a Category 1 storm that did not affect the entire island, and whose rain — not wind — inflicted the greatest damage.

"It's not normal," said Marcel Castro-Sitriche, an electrical engineering professor at the University of Puerto Rico in Maya-

guez. "They have not given a convincing explanation of what the problem is."

He noted that Puerto Rico's Electric Power Authority and Luma, a private company that took over the island's power transmission and distribution last year, also have not released basic information such as details of the damage to the electricity grid.

"We don't know the extent of the damage yet," Castro said, adding that he was concerned and surprised that Luma had not brought in additional crews to boost extra manpower already on the island.

Luma has said Fiona's floods left several substations underwater and inaccessible, and it has insisted it doesn't need more personnel.

"We have all the resources we believe we need," said Luma engineer Daniel Hernandez.

The lack of power has prompted at least two mayors to activate their own repair

teams, and several other town leaders are calling for answers on why Luma crews have not reconnected homes and key infrastructure.

"They haven't even arrived here," said Yasmin Allende, municipal administrator for Hormigueros, a town in western Puerto Rico that is home to more than 15,600, many of them elderly.

She said town officials have provided a list of downed transformers and power lines as well as the exact location of dozens of damaged electric posts. They have even cleared openings around damaged spots to ensure that electricity could be restored as soon as possible, she said.

The island's power grid was already crumbling due to austerity measures, aging infrastructure and lack of maintenance when a powerful Hurricane Maria razed the system in 2017. Reconstruction of the grid had barely started when Hurricane Fiona hit last Sunday.

Approaching storm delays next NASA launch attempt

Associated Press

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — NASA is skipping this week's launch attempt of its new moon rocket because of a tropical storm that's expected to become a major hurricane.

It's the third delay in the past month for the lunar-orbiting test flight featuring mannequins but no astronauts, a follow-up to NASA's Apollo moon-landing program of a half-century ago. Hydrogen fuel leaks and other technical issues caused the previous scrubs.

Currently churning in the Caribbean, Tropical Storm Ian is expected to become a hurricane by Monday and slam into Florida's Gulf coast by Thursday. The entire state, however, is in the cone showing the probable path of the storm's center — including NASA's Kennedy Space Center.

Given the forecast uncertainties, NASA decided Saturday to forgo Tuesday's planned launch attempt and instead prepare the 322-foot rocket for a possible return to its hangar. Managers were expected to decide Sunday whether to haul it off the launch pad.

If the rocket remains at the pad, NASA could try for an Oct. 2 launch attempt, the last opportunity before a two-week blackout period. But a rollback late Sunday or early Monday likely would mean a lengthy delay for the test flight, possibly pushing it into November.

The Space Launch System rocket is the most powerful ever built by NASA. Assuming its first test flight goes well, astronauts would climb aboard for the next mission in 2024, leading to a two-person moon landing in 2025.

Study: Hyundais, Kias a theft risk without immobilizers

Associated Press

DETROIT — Some Hyundai and Kia cars and SUVs are missing a "key" anti-theft device, and thieves know.

An insurance industry group says these cars are stolen at nearly twice the rate of those in the rest of the auto industry because their keys lack computer chips for theft "immobilizer" systems.

The thefts apparently started in the Milwaukee area two years ago and spread to multiple Midwest cities and as far away as Colorado and New Mexico after instructional videos appeared on social media.

The Highway Loss Datas Institute, a unit of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, found that Hyundais and Kias without immobilizers had a vehicle theft claim rate of 2.18 per 1,000 insured vehicle years. The rest of the industry combined had a rate of 1.21. An insured vehicle year is equal to one vehicle insured for one year.

The institute, which issued its findings on Thursday, compared vehicles from the 2015 through 2019 model years. It studied vehicle theft claims from 2021.

Chip keys, which started to show up in the 1990s, communicate with another chip in the

ignition switch. If they match, the engines will start. If they don't match, a thief can't start the engine.

Keys don't have an immobilizer system in several lower-priced versions of vehicles from the two South Korean automakers such as the Kia Rio and Sportage and the Hyundai Accent, the institute said.

"Our earlier studies show that vehicle theft losses plunged after immobilizers were introduced," said Matt Moore, senior vice president of the institute. "Unfortunately, Hyundai and Kia have lagged behind other automakers in making them standard equipment."

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

County settles jail's bra dispute for \$405K

MO KANSAS CITY — A Missouri county has agreed to pay \$405,000 to settle two lawsuits filed in a dispute that began when some underwire bras set off metal detectors at the county detention center.

The Jackson County Legislature approved the settlement for two longtime jail employees who alleged in sexual discrimination lawsuits that they were reprimanded and given different duties when they repeatedly failed to pass the screening machines at the jail, The Kansas City Star reported.

Employees Charlotte Hardin and Linda Hengel sued after unsuccessful attempts to comply with the screening process, including taking off their bras and putting them back on after they cleared the machine.

Jail management had said undergarments were not allowed in the bins that went through an X-ray machine, although men were allowed to take off belts and put them back on after going through the machines.

Woman who brought raccoon to bar charged

ND MADDOCK — A woman who brought a wild raccoon into a North Dakota bar, which prompted state health officials to issue a warning about potential rabies exposure, is facing criminal charges.

Erin Christensen, 38, of Maddock, is charged with misdemeanor counts of providing false information to law enforcement, tampering with physical evidence and unlawful pos-

session of furbearers.

Christensen said her family found the raccoon on the side of a road about three months ago and named it Rocky.

She said they were nursing the animal back to health with plans to release it back into the wild. Authorities euthanized the animal, and it tested negative for rabies.

Christensen took Rocky to Maddock Bar on Sept. 6 during happy hour and showed the raccoon to customers. Bartender Cindy Smith said the animal never bit anyone at the bar.

Cops: Explosive device found in car near school

MD PARKVILLE — A man is facing charges after police said an improvised destructive device was found in his vehicle across the street from a Maryland middle school.

The middle school and a nearby elementary school were evacuated, but police said in a news release that it doesn't appear that the school was the intended target.

Baltimore County police found Joseph Vickery, 43, of Mount Airy near the middle school and he reportedly told police there was an "explosive device inside of his vehicle" and admitted to constructing an explosive device, according to charging documents.

Handwritten bomb-making instructions, fertilizer and a table-top stove were found in his vehicle, charging documents state. A search of his hotel room allegedly turned up materials used to manufacture explosive devices along with drugs.

Vickery is charged with pos-

session of an explosive or incendiary device with intent to create a destructive device and knowingly manufacturing, possessing or distributing a destructive device and drug and weapons offenses, according to court records.

3 suspects arrested in \$5M jewelry heist

CA BEVERLY HILLS — Three suspects were arrested in connection with a brazen smash-and-grab robbery where \$5 million worth of jewelry was stolen from a high-end Beverly Hills store earlier this year, police said.

Up to six robbers wielding sledgehammers smashed display cases and stole precious gems, designer watches and necklaces from Luxury Jewels of Beverly Hills on March 22.

A 20-year-old man and an unidentified juvenile were taken into custody in Long Beach, the Beverly Hills Police Department said in a news release.

A third suspect, a man from Gardena, was arrested by California Highway Patrol officers during a traffic stop in Barstow, officials said.

58 bison relocated in Grand Canyon park

ZG RAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK — Wildlife managers say 58 bison have been successfully relocated from the North Rim of Grand Canyon National Park.

The bison were transferred to the Intertribal Buffalo Council, who transported the animals to the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma and the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe of South Dakota.

Since reduction efforts began in 2018, park staff have removed 203 bison from the North Rim with 182 transferred to eight different tribes through an agreement with the Intertribal Buffalo Council.

The National Park Service began a science-based planning process in 2014 to manage bison overpopulation at the park.

Student charged in football game threat

UT SALT LAKE CITY — A University of Utah student was arrested and charged with making terrorist threats after police said she threatened to detonate a nuclear reactor if the school's football team failed to win a game.

Charging documents filed in Salt Lake City allege the 21-year-old student posted threats on the YikYak social media platform before Utah's game against San Diego State University, warning that she "was going to detonate the nuclear reactor that is located in the University of Utah causing a mass destruction."

The threats were allegedly posted on YikYak, a social media platform that allows users to post anonymously.

The charging documents said the student studied engineering and had knowledge of the university's nuclear reactor.

A university statement said the reactor was secured and campus law enforcement has protocols to ensure no breaches are made.

Officials said the student admitted to posting the threat and told investigators that it was meant as a joke.

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Cardinals' Pujols hits 700th career HR

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Albert Pujols seemed like a long shot in early August to reach 700 home runs, still more than a dozen swings from the hallowed mark and his power stroke all but gone.

Or so it appeared.

Now showing the pop of his youth in the final weeks of his career, the 42-year-old slugger got there with two long shots.

Pujols hit his 700th home run, connecting for his second drive of the game and becoming the fourth player in major league history to make it to the milestone as the St. Louis Cardinals routed the Los Angeles Dodgers 11-0 Friday night.

Pujols joined Barry Bonds (762 homers), Hank Aaron (755) and Babe Ruth (714) in one of baseball's most exclusive clubs.

"Don't get me wrong, I know where my places stand in this game, but since Day One when I made my debut, I was never about numbers, never about chasing numbers," Pujols said. "It was always about winning championships and tried to get better in these games."

Dodgers manager Dave Roberts gladly gushed about Pujols' accomplishment.

"This is like the Mount Rushmore of sluggers, so to reach that 700-home run mark, it's remarkable," Roberts said.

A man wearing a blue Dodgers shirt with Hideo Nomo's No. 16 on the back snagged the 700th homer ball. He was whisked under the stands as he clutched a black glove containing the historic souvenir ball to his chest.

Prolonged negotiations went on before the man was escorted out of Dodger Stadium flanked by 10 security personnel and into a waiting SUV.

"Souvenirs are for the fans," Pujols said. "I don't have any problem if they want to keep it. That's why the fans come here, to have a special moment of history."

Stirring up images of his dominant days as a three-time NL MVP, Pujols hit No. 699 in the third inning, then launched No. 700 in the fourth.

A 37-year-old Los Angeles man, Cesar Soriano, snagged No. 699. He turned the ball over to security after being told he could meet Pujols.

It's been a remarkable and resurgent run for Pujols. This was his 14th home run since the start of August for the NL Cen-

tral-leading Cardinals, and his 21st of the season.

Roberts marveled at the improbability in July of Pujols making history in late September.

"I wouldn't doubt him, but the stars seem to kind of have to align for it to play out like this," Roberts said. "I don't think Albert even thought it was a possibility."

Now, no one needs to wonder whether Pujols would've come back for a few extra swings next year had he finished this season at 699 or so.

Pujols took extra pleasure in making his mark at Dodger Stadium, where he said he regained his joy for the game while with the Dodgers last season.

"It's pretty special, especially with the Dodgers fans, to do it here," Pujols said. "And, you get to see both sides, they get to enjoy this and to do it in a Cardinals uniform is really special."

Pujols' historic homer was a three-run shot against reliever Phil Bickford. The ball landed in the first couple of rows of the left-field pavilion, the same location his two-run shot touched down the previous inning off left-hander Andrew Heaney.

Yankees beat Red Sox, but Judge doesn't homer

Associated Press

NEW YORK — It's only been a few days since Aaron Judge went deep. It just feels like more, with history hanging on his every swing.

Judge was held without a home run for the third straight game, keeping him at 60 for the season and one shy of Roger Maris' American League record, but the New York Yankees beat the Boston Red Sox 5-4 on Friday night.

Jose Trevino singled home the tiebreaking run with two outs in the eighth inning, and the first-place Yankees reduced their magic number to four for clinching the AL East title. They've won five games in a row and nine of 11.

With four of Maris' children in the ballpark again, Judge went 1-for-4 with a sharp single. He struck out twice and lofted a high fly to left field that excited the sellout crowd of 47,346 for a second or two.

Rockies 4, Padres 3 (10): Rookie Alan Trejo singled in the winning run in the 10th inning, highly touted prospect Ezequiel Tovar picked up hits on the first two

pitches he saw in the big leagues, and host Colorado stalled San Diego's playoff progress.

Mets 9, Athletics 2: Chris Bassitt (15-8) pitched eight sharp innings in his return to Oakland, Eduardo Escobar hit a grand slam and New York extended its lead in the NL East.

Orioles 6, Astros 0: Dean Kremer (8-5) pitched a four-hitter, Adley Rutschman homered and host Baltimore remained in the playoff hunt.

Marlins 5, Nationals 2: Braxton Garrett (3-6) pitched six effective innings in his first major league start in a month to lead host Miami past Washington.

Brewers 5, Reds 3: Andrew McCutchen drove in three runs, passing 1,000 RBIs for his career, and visiting Milwaukee beat Cincinnati.

Phillies 9, Braves 1: Rhys Hoskins homered and drove in four runs, Aaron Nola (10-12) pitched six shutout innings and host Philadelphia won its third straight.

Royals 5, Mariners 1: Brady Singer (10-4) pitched seven strong innings to lead host Kansas City past Seattle.

Rays 10, Blue Jays 6: Randy Arozarena hit his 20th homer and drove in six runs as host Tampa Bay tied Toronto at the top of the AL wild-card standings.

Tigers 5, White Sox 3: Riley Greene's sacrifice fly drove in a tiebreaking run in the seventh inning and visiting Detroit handed Chicago its fourth straight loss.

Angels 4, Twins 2: Taylor Ward homered twice and Shohei Ohtani (14-8) took a no-hitter into the fifth inning, helping visiting Los Angeles beat Minnesota.

Guardians 6, Rangers 3: Josh Naylor's tying RBI double was among five consecutive hits for his team in the sixth inning, rookie right-hander Cody Morris got his first big league victory, and visiting Cleveland moved closer to the AL Central title.

Cubs 6, Pirates 5: Esteban Quiroz hit a go-ahead single in the eighth, his second in three innings, and visiting Chicago got its fourth straight win.

Giants 6, Diamondbacks 5: J.D. Davis had the go-ahead RBI double in the ninth, Shelby Miller pitched 2⅓ innings of scoreless relief in his season debut and visiting San Francisco beat Arizona.

Air Force rolls to win over Nevada

Associated Press

AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. — Brad Roberts had 123 yards and three touchdowns rushing, Ben Brittain threw an 80-yard touchdown pass and Air Force defeated Nevada 48-20 on Friday night.

Brittain's 80-yard pass to David Cormier in the second quarter was the Falcons' only completed pass of the game. It was backup QB Brittain's first and only pass attempt since the 2020 season.

For Roberts, it was the second time in three games that he scored three rushing touchdowns, which is his career high. He also scored three times in a 41-10 win over Colorado two weeks ago.

The Falcons (3-1, 1-1 Mountain West) had 541 total yards,

461 on the ground. John Lee Eldridge had eight carries for 102 yards. With its ground game eating up time on the clock, Air Force had a 43:41-16:19 advantage in time of possession.

Toa Taua had seven carries for 73 yards and two touchdowns for the Wolf Pack (2-3, 0-1) Nate Cox completed 12 of 20 passes for 130 yards.

UTEP 27, Boise State 10: Gavin Hardison threw for one touchdown, Marcus Bellon returned a punt for another score and the host Miners defeated the Broncos.

Bellon's 47-yard punt return gave UTEP a 20-10 lead late in the third quarter. The Miners iced the game with a 14-play, 80-yard drive that took 9:10 off the clock in the fourth quarter. Reynaldo Flores capped the

drive with a 3-yard touchdown run.

Although the Miners (2-3) outgained the Broncos 148-53 in the first half, UTEP didn't take the lead until Hardison hit Jeremiah Ballard with a 42-yard touchdown pass with 2:10 remaining in the second quarter. It was the first career touchdown reception for Ballard, a redshirt freshman.

Hardison completed 10 of 11 passes for 123 yards. The Miners had 199 yards on the ground, led by Deion Hankins with 21 carries for 86 yards.

Syracuse 22, Virginia 20: Andre Szmyt knocked in five field goals, including the 31-yard game-winner with just over a minute left, and the host Orange held off the Cavaliers' second-half comeback.

Syracuse led 16-0 at half-time, but Virginia recorded three second-half touchdowns to take a 20-19 lead with just under six minutes remaining in the game. Syracuse (4-0, 2-0 Atlantic Coast Conference) has won its first four games for the first time since 2018 and got this one despite committing its first four turnovers of the season.

Syracuse drove to the winning field goal with help from a critical facemask penalty on a third-and-7 play from the Syracuse 41 that was called on a sack of Shrader. That moved the ball into Virginia territory and a 12-yard scramble by Shrader after the Cavaliers' sixth sack moved the Orange into position for the winning kick.

Homa, US turning Presidents Cup into rout

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Max Homa never felt more energized over a big putt on a Friday, perhaps because he never had so many people who shared in the celebration.

This is why making the Presidents Cup was at the top of his wish list this year, and his latest afternoon heroics at Quail Hollow exceeded expectations.

The final fourballs match was all square with two holes to play, the green surrounded by American players and caddies, captains and their red carts. Homa stepped toward the hole and slammed his fist when he made a 12-foot birdie putt for a 1-up lead.

And then it got even better. Taylor Pendrith was clutch with a 15-foot birdie putt as the Internationals tried to scratch out a third tie. Homa stepped up and delivered again with another 12-foot birdie putt for the win.

The matches felt closer. The

outcome was not. Homa's big putts at the end allowed the Americans to win another session by a 4-1 margin, stretching the lead to 8-2.

"It was pretty surreal," said Homa, who improved to 2-0 in his debut. "The atmosphere out there is insane. There's so many people you can feel them on the back of your neck."

Quail Hollow was packed with 40,000 fans on a gorgeous autumn day, with former Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush among those at the course.

In five matches that covered 87 holes, the players combined for 67 birdies and three eagles, and three matches went the distance.

All the International team could manage were two halves. What it faces now is a task even more monumental against a U.S. team that looks well on its way to a ninth straight win in this lopsided affair.

"We feel like we've played some pretty good golf, some solid golf tee-to-green, particularly the last couple of days," International captain Trevor Immelman said. "But we have absolutely been out-putted. No doubt about it."

He was with that final match as Homa and Billy Horschel dropped key putts down the stretch. And when Pendrith dropped his birdie on the last and it look like he and Corey Connors might escape with a half-point, Homa was just as clutch.

"I was nervous as could be over that putt, but it was fun," Homa said. "I was telling my wife, when we talk about things money can't buy, money cannot buy that feeling. And that was something that I will remember forever, and I will tell anybody who ever wants to hear about it how that felt."

For the second straight time on home soil, the powerful American team went into a

double session on Saturday with a mathematical chance to win the cup.

There are four matches of foursomes and fourballs, and the Americans had to win seven of them and halve the other to clinch the cup. That sounded unlikely, except for who they have and how they're playing.

The International teams led in one match — Mito Pereira and Christiaan Bezuidenhout, for a total of five holes — that ended in a halve with Cameron Young and Kevin Kisner.

Over two days and 10 matches, International teams have had a lead for only 10 of the 170 holes that have been played.

The 12 Americans are among the top 25 in the world and most of them are playing like it. The International team was cobbled together at the last minute with more defections to Saudi-funded LIV Golf run by Greg Norman, a former Presidents Cup captain.

Federer teams with Nadal in final match

Associated Press

LONDON — This day, this match, had to come, of course, for Roger Federer, and for tennis, just as it inevitably must for every athlete in every sport.

Federer bid adieu Friday night with one last contest before he heads into retirement at age 41 after a superlative career that spanned nearly a quarter-century and included 20 Grand Slam titles and a statesman's role. He wrapped up his days as a professional player with a loss in doubles alongside his longtime rival Rafael Nadal for Team Europe in the Laver Cup against Frances Tiafoe and Jack Sock of Team World.

The truth is that the victors, the statistics and the score (OK, for the record it was 4-6, 7-6 (2), 11-9) did not matter, and were all so entirely beside the point. The occasion was, after all, about the farewell itself. Or, better, the farewells, plural: Federer's to tennis, to the fans, to his competitors and colleagues. And, naturally, each of those entities' farewells to Fe-

derer.

"It's been a perfect journey," Federer said. "I would do it all over again."

When the match and, with it, his time in professional tennis ended, Federer hugged Nadal, then Tiafoe and Sock. And then Federer began crying. There were plenty of tears to go around; Nadal wiped his own away, too.

"When Roger leaves the tour, an important part of my life is leaving, too," said Nadal, 36, who used the words "sad" and "unforgettable" to describe the occasion.

As cascades of clapping and yells of affection came from the stands, Federer put his hands on his hips, his chest heaving. Then he mouthed, "Thank you," while applauding right back toward the spectators who had chanted, "Let's go, Roger! Let's go!" during the concluding moments of a match that lasted more than two hours and ended at about 12:30 a.m.

His wife, Mirka, their four children — twin girls and twin boys — and Federer's parents

joined him on the court afterward for embraces and, yes, more bawling. Members of both teams joined together to hoist Federer up in the air.

"It's been a wonderful day. I told the guys I'm happy; I'm not sad," Federer said. "I enjoyed tying my shoes one more time. Everything was the last time."

The Swiss star announced last week that the three-day team event, which was founded by his management company, would be his final event before retirement, then made clear the doubles outing would be the last match. His surgically repaired right knee — the last of three operations came shortly after a loss in the Wimbledon quarterfinals in July 2021, which will go down as his official exit in singles — is in no shape to allow him to continue.

"For me, just personally, (it was) sad in the first moment, when I came to the conclusion it's the best decision," Federer said in an interview with The Associated Press this week about his emotions when realizing it was time to go. "I kind

of held it in at first, then fought it off. But I could feel the pain."

He had said he wanted this to feel more like a party than a funeral, and the crowd obliged, rising for a loud and lengthy standing ovation when Federer and Nadal — each wearing a white bandanna, blue shirt and white shorts — emerged together from a tunnel leading out to the black court for the last match on Day 1 at the O2 Arena. They remained on their feet for nearly 10 minutes, through the pre-match warm-up, holding aloft phone cameras to capture the moment.

They came ready to roar for him, some with Swiss flags, some with homemade signs ("Idol Forever" read one), and they made themselves heard with a wall of sound when Federer delivered a forehand volley winner on the match's second point. Similar reactions arrived merely at the chair umpire's announcement before the third game of "Roger Federer to serve," and again when he closed that game with a 117 mph service winner.

Wilson, Gray lead US to win over China in World Cup

Associated Press

SYDNEY — A'ja Wilson admitted she was tired.

The WNBA MVP had just gotten to Australia less than 24 hours ago, fresh off a championship and the U.S. was playing its toughest opponent of the World Cup.

After a slow start, Wilson was clutch in the fourth quarter, finishing with 20 points to help the U.S. beat China 77-63 on Saturday.

"I don't know how I'm doing it," Wilson said. "You just put things aside ... It's like riding a bike. I am exhausted, I'm not going to lie about it. At this point I don't even think about it. I'm surrounded by greatness. I really lean on them. I don't even

know which way is up. I see it's daylight and feel I need to go to sleep."

The U.S. now has won 25 consecutive World Cup games since losing in the 2006 semifinals to Russia. The Americans advanced to the quarterfinals and are one win away from matching their record 26-game run from 1998-2006.

The teams came into the game unbeaten in the tournament. The U.S. (3-0) led 25-20 with 6:23 left in the first half before outscoring China 19-5 the rest of the second quarter, including the final 13 points. Alyssa Thomas and Breanna Stewart combined for seven of the 13 points during the game-changing burst.

Wilson closed the half with a putback that made it 44-25. She and Las Vegas teammates Chelsea Gray and Kelsey Plum were playing in their first game in Australia. The trio were in Las Vegas celebrating the franchise's first WNBA championship before arriving in Sydney.

The U.S. led 56-40 with 2:18 left in the third before China scored the final seven points of the period to get within nine. The Aces trio scored the first nine points of the fourth quarter to make it a 16-point game again.

"They put me in the best position to score the basketball," Wilson said of her teammates finding her in the fourth quarter.

However, China wouldn't go away. Trailing 67-51, Li Meng scored four points in a 9-0 burst to get her team to 69-60 with 2 minutes left.

Wilson ended the drought with two free throws and a reverse layup to seal the win.

Li finished with 21 points to lead China (2-1).

China had cruised to wins in its first two games, routing both South Korea and Bosnia and Herzegovina by an average of 55 points. The Chinese team hadn't faced a defense like the U.S., which had been solid in its first two games.

There was a big pro-Chinese crowd of roughly 9,400 fans for the game, including Hall of Famer Yao Ming.