

World News Roundup



Security, maintenance and catapult officers gather as a US Navy F/18 Hornet jet flies over off the USS George H.W. Bush aircraft carrier on May 11, in the Atlantic Ocean. On the flight deck, in scorched trails of exhaust, F-18s and Rafales take off and land at a frantic pace. Guests on the US aircraft carrier USS Bush, French naval pilots are pulling out all stops to keep their training edge.

carriers of the US Navy, to keep their skills honed. (Inset): The French commander of the carrier Air wing, commander Marc (right), and Jim Mc Call, his US Navy counterpart on the USS George H.W. Bush aircraft carrier answer journalists questions on May 12, in the Atlantic Ocean. For ten days some 300 French sailors, including 16 pilots, their 12 Rafales fighter jets and one Hawkeye Surveillance plane are training on the USS George H.W. Bush aircraft carrier in the Atlantic ocean in what is been called the 'Chesapeake 2018 deployment'. (AFP)



Elijah Wood (right), 9, paddles a kayak as his cousin Alice Neiser-Schilling, 7, rides along while their mothers check on a family member in a flooded neighborhood, in Osyoos, British Columbia on May 13. The Regional District of Kootenay Boundary says about 3,000 residents remain on evacuation order due to the ongoing threat of a second flood, with high forecasted temperatures expected melt snow at higher elevations. (AP)

Politics

Felony invasion-of-privacy charge

Jury selection in Missouri gov's 'trial' taking longer

ST LOUIS, May 14, (AP): Opening arguments had been expected to begin Monday in the criminal trial of Missouri Gov Eric Greitens, but attorneys instead are still sorting through dozens of prospective jurors who will decide the case.

Greitens faces a felony invasion-of-privacy charge for allegedly taking and transmitting a photo of an at least partially naked woman without her permission in March 2015. If convicted, the Republican governor could be sentenced to up to four years in prison.

Jury selection began Thursday with a pool of 160 prospects. They first filled out a questionnaire, then some were subjected to further questioning by attorneys as they sought to weed out people who could have a bias or for whom service would be too burdensome.

Circuit Judge Rex Burlison acknowledged Friday that the process was taking longer than anticipated. He said some people originally scheduled to be questioned Friday would have to return Monday, and a second phase of the jury selection process would continue into Tuesday.

Greitens has acknowledged having what he says was a consensual affair but has denied criminal wrongdoing. He has declined to directly answer questions about whether he took the photo for which he is charged. Greitens has said the affair started and ended in 2015, as he was preparing to run for governor. He was elected in November 2016.

The woman, who has been identified only as K.S. in court filings, has testified that Greitens bound her hands to exercise equipment in March 2015 in the basement of his St Louis home, blindfolded her and removed her clothes before she saw a flash and heard what sounded like the click of a cellphone camera. She has said Greitens threatened to disseminate the photo if she spoke of their encounter but later told her he had deleted it.

Greitens faces a separate criminal charge in St Louis of tampering with computer data for allegedly disclosing the donor list of The Mission Continues to his political fundraiser in 2015 without the permission of the St Louis-based veterans' charity he founded. No trial date has been set for that case.

The Legislature also is to convene Friday in a monthlong special session to consider whether to try to impeach Greitens.

Authorities are reviewing whether to bring yet another charge against Greitens after a

former political aide testified to the attorney general's office that Greitens filed Missouri Ethics Commission documents in April 2017 falsely attributing the source of the charity donor list.

An investigation by a special House committee has turned up even more allegations against Greitens, including that he forcefully slapped and shoved the woman with whom he was having an affair. Officials have not released the woman's name.

Even Greitens' book has come under fresh scrutiny. Washington University in St Louis is reviewing whether Greitens' grant funds were misused after political aide Danny Laub testified that he was paid both by Greitens and the grant to simultaneously promote Greitens' political ambitions and book.

Greitens has refused bipartisan calls to resign from state legislative leaders. He's drawn parallels between the accusations against himself and those facing Republican President Donald Trump. And he's turned to social media to rally support.

The strategy has worked, at least among some.

"He made a bad choice by his infidelity," said Clay County resident Patsy Steelman Clark, who responded to the AP after posting on Greitens' Facebook page that the charges against him were "fake news" and "nonsense."

But "I know in my heart that he did nothing criminal," Clark told the AP in a direct message. "This is a witch hunt and it's obvious. The Governor and our President are in the same boat that the Liberals/Democrats are trying to knock holes in."

Yet some prominent Republicans have turned against Greitens, including state Attorney General Josh Hawley, who is seeking to challenge Democratic US Sen Claire McCaskill in an election that could help determine whether Republicans maintain control of the chamber.

Hawley called on Greitens to resign after the House released a report about his alleged sexual misconduct. He also supplied evidence to St Louis prosecutors leading to the criminal charge of misusing the charity donor list.

Despite Hawley's denouncement of Greitens, Democrats have run TV ads linking the two GOP politicians who won election as political outsiders. Republican consultants fear Greitens' troubles could taint GOP candidates in the November election.

The White House has signaled that Trump favors the move by the FCC in December to roll back many of the net neutrality rules, including those prohibiting internet providers from blocking or throttling content, or from selling "fast lanes" of traffic to get speedier access to consumers.

Democrats, however, see this as a winning issue in the midterms, particularly among younger voters. Polls have shown the public favors the rules,

and some Republicans in Congress have proposed legislation to put some of the net neutrality principles into law. (RTRS)

'Trudeau to visit MIT: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (troo-DOH) is scheduled to speak at a gathering of tech entrepreneurs at MIT. Massachusetts Institute of Technology officials say Trudeau will visit campus Friday to headline the annual meeting of the school's Solve initiative.

The project connects tech entrepreneurs with leaders in government, business and academia to tackle world problems.

MIT says it will be Trudeau's first visit to Cambridge since he was elected prime minister in 2015.

Other speakers include Eric Schmidt, the former chairman of Google's parent company, and Ursula Burns, the former CEO of the Xerox company.

The event requires a ticket but will be livestreamed on Solve's website. (AP)

Immigration

Separated families embrace at border

Immigration crackdown shifts to employers as audits surge

WASHINGTON, May 14, (Agencies): US authorities have sharply increased audits of companies to verify that their employees are authorized to work in the country. That's a sign the Trump administration's crackdown on illegal immigration is reaching deeper into the workplace.

US Immigration and Customs Enforcement said Monday that it opened nearly 2,300 employer audits between Oct 1 and May 4, easily surpassing 1,360 audits conducted between October 2016 and September 2017. Many of those reviews were launched following the January ICE audits and employee interviews at about 100 7-Eleven franchises in 17 states.

The head of ICE's Homeland Security Investigations unit, Derek Benner, tells The Associated Press that audits will total "well over" 5,000 this year. The agency plans to conduct between 10,000 and 15,000 audits annually.

Meanwhile, for three minutes, the border no longer existed for Ivan Castaneda and the family he left behind in the United States when he was deported to Mexico.

They clung together in a weekend reunion for the first time since US authorities sent him back to Mexico

two weeks ago as part of US President Donald Trump's migrant crackdown.

Castaneda's is just one of thousands of Mexican migrant families whose lives are now disrupted by the border.

On Saturday more than 300 separated families had the chance to embrace each other for three minutes under the hot sun, thanks to the "Hugs Not Walls" event organized by the Border Network for Human Rights, a US-based immigration reform group.

"Every hug is an act of protest," said Fernando Garcia, the lead organizer.

The fifth event of its kind saw the reunions take place at the river boundary that separates the Mexican city of Ciudad Juarez, in Chihuahua state, from the US city of El Paso, Texas.

"Why don't you come with us?" Castaneda's four-year-old son asked innocently, unaware of the trauma his parents have endured since their separation began a month ago.

Castaneda, 40, a former Mexican army soldier, fled to the US with his family from violence in their homeland, which registered a record 25,000 murders last year and is awash in crime linked to powerful drug cartels.

America

Vote on Hsapel on Wednesday: The US Senate Intelligence Committee will vote on Wednesday morning on President Donald Trump's nominee to be the new director of the CIA, **Gina Hsapel**, a committee aide said on Monday.

The vote will take place behind closed doors, as is customary for the intelligence panel.

Hsapel was grilled by lawmakers at her confirmation hearing last week over her role in the agency's past harsh interrogation system, pledging she would never restart the program or follow any morally objectionable order from Trump.

The nominee, who would be the first woman director of the Central Intelligence Agency, is expected to be approved by the committee and confirmed by the full Senate, now that at least two Democrats — Senators Joe Manchin and Joe Donnelly — have said they would join Republicans in supporting her.

Although Republicans John McCain and Rand Paul have announced opposition to Hsapel, Trump's fellow Republicans hold a 51-49-seat majority in the 100-member Senate and Vice-President Mike Pence could vote to break a tie. (RTRS)

'Expand drugs price negotiation': The Trump administration is considering expanding Medicare's ability to negotiate the cost of drugs by giving private payers a role in setting the price of medicines administered in hospitals and doctors' offices, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar said on Monday.

Azar's comments provided more details on the plan announced on Friday by President Donald Trump to lower prescription drug costs for Americans.

While Trump has vowed to tackle rising prices since running for office, his plan spared the pharmaceutical industry from direct government negotiations to control costs. Drugmaker shares rose for a second day on Monday as Wall Street analysts said the new policies should not hurt industry profits.

Medicare is the national health insurance plan run by the federal government for Americans over the age of 65.

Azar said that Trump views tougher negotiation as key to the plan, and that his agency will consider an alternative system for buying Medicare Part B drugs, which are administered by a healthcare provider and covered directly by the government.

Instead, the administration would seek to allow private sector payers to negotiate the price of those medicines, as they do in Medicare Part D, which covers drugs that patients pick up at the pharmacy. (RTRS)

Bid to restore Net Neutrality rules: Senate Democrats say they will force a vote on Wednesday on a resolution to restore the FCC's net neutrality rules.

All 49 members of the Democratic caucus are in favor of the resolution, along with Sen Susan Collins (R-Maine). If it passes, the resolution still faces a tough vote in the House, as well as the signature of President Donald Trump.



Trudeau



Hsapel

ARAB TIMES
Kuwait's No.1 English Newspaper

For Complaints

Please Call
55633270

