



The San Diego Union-Tribune

\$1.85 PLUS TAX

sandiegouniontribune.com

WEDNESDAY • NOVEMBER 22, 2017

VICTIM IN FIERY DEATH A N. KOREA CAPTIVE

Man found ablaze in S.D.; police: either accident or suicide

BY LYNDAY WINKLEY & TERI FIGUEROA

Aijalon Gomes stepped on the world stage eight years ago when he walked across a frozen river into North Korea.

Months later, he again made headlines when a former president secured his release from the socialist nation.

His death on Friday also drew attention, when an off-duty officer found him engulfed in flames in a dirt field not far from Fiesta Island. He was 38.

Investigators suspect Gomes' death was either an accident or a suicide, San Diego police said Tuesday.

An off-duty California Highway Patrol officer was driving on Pacific Highway near Sea World Drive about 11:30 p.m. when he saw Gomes on fire, running then collapsing, homicide Lt. Todd Griffin said.

Gomes had recently moved to the San Diego area from Boston, Griffin said, but it is unclear exactly where he was residing.

Then 30 years old, Gomes made international headlines in 2010 when he illegally crossed into North Korea from China by walking across a frozen stretch of the Tumen River, and was soon

SEE GOMES • A7

FCC TO SCRAP NET NEUTRALITY

Rules were designed to ensure equal access to Internet

BY CECILIA KANG

The Federal Communications Commission released a plan Tuesday to dismantle landmark regulations that ensure equal access to the Internet, clearing the way for Internet service companies to

charge users more to see certain content and to curb access to some websites.

The proposal, made by the FCC chairman, Ajit Pai, is a sweeping repeal of rules put in place by the Obama administration. The rules prohibit high-speed Internet service providers, or ISPs, from stopping or slowing down the delivery of websites. They also prevent the companies from charging customers extra fees for high-quality

streaming and other services.

The announcement set off a fight over free speech and the control of the Internet, pitting telecom titans like AT&T and Verizon against Internet giants like Google and Amazon. The Internet companies warned that rolling back the rules could make the telecom companies powerful gatekeepers to information and entertainment. The telecom companies say the ex-

isting rules prevent them from offering customers a wider selection of services at higher and lower prices.

"Under my proposal, the federal government will stop micromanaging the Internet," Pai said in a statement. "Instead, the FCC would simply require Internet service providers to be transparent about their practices so that consumers can buy the service plan that's best for them."

Pai, a Republican who

has pursued an aggressive deregulation agenda, was widely expected to have his plan approved during a meeting Dec. 14. The two other Republicans on the commission generally vote with Pai, giving them a majority over the two Democrats.

Telecom and Internet companies are expected to lobby hard in Washington — and directly to the public — as they did when the cur-

SEE NET • A6



HAYNE PALMOUR IV - UT

ON DECK CIRCLE

Gracie Figueroa of the United States and Hannah Taylor of Canada square off in a women's junior/cadet preliminary bout as part of the Battle on the Midway wrestling event held on the USS Midway in San Diego on Tuesday. See Bryce Miller's column, D1.



TSVANGIRAYI MUKWAZHI - AP
At 93, Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe was the world's oldest head of state.

MUGABE RESIGNS AS ZIMBABWE'S PRESIDENT

BY NORIMITSU ONISHI & JEFFREY MOYO

HARARE, Zimbabwe
Robert Mugabe — who has ruled Zimbabwe since independence in 1980 and once proclaimed that "only God will remove me!" — resigned as president Tuesday shortly after lawmakers began impeachment proceedings against him.

The speaker of the Parliament, Jacob Mudenda, read a letter in which Mugabe said he was stepping down "with immediate effect" for "the welfare of the people of Zimbabwe and the need for a peaceful transfer of power."

Lawmakers erupted into cheers, and jubilant residents poured into the streets of Harare, the capital. It seemed to be an abrupt capitulation by Mugabe, 93, the world's oldest head of state and one of Africa's longest-serving leaders.

"It's the best thing that's ever happened to Zimbabwe," Perseverance Sande, 20, said in central Harare minutes after news of the resignation began spreading, as crowds of

SEE MUGABE • A8



EVAN VUCCI - AP

President Donald Trump defended Senate candidate Roy Moore on Tuesday, saying the Alabama Republican had denied allegations of sexual misconduct with teenage girls.

TRUMP BACKS MOORE, ACCEPTS HIS DENIALS

President breaks with GOP leaders over sexual misconduct allegations

BY MICHAEL D. SHEAR & ALAN BLINDER

WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump broke with leading Republicans Tuesday and voiced support for Roy Moore, the Republican Senate candidate in Alabama who has been accused of sexual misconduct with teenagers and has seen his campaign's prospects imperiled.

In his first extensive remarks on the accusations that date back decades, the president cited the vigorous denials by Moore, who is facing off in a high-stakes special election against Doug Jones, the Democratic candidate.

"He totally denies it," Trump

said of Moore, who has been accused of molesting a 14-year-old girl and sexually assaulting another teenager.

Trump also said he was "very happy" that women in the United States are now coming forward with accusations of sexual misconduct against lawmakers and media figures, many of them Democrats.

Asked by a reporter about whether electing "a child molester" was better than electing a Democrat in the Alabama race, Trump responded by insisting that Moore denies the charges against him.

"He says it didn't happen," the president — who himself has been accused of, and denied, a history of sexual impropriety — told reporters

SEE TRUMP • A10



ROY MOORE

CONYERS FACES ETHICS PROBE OVER HARASSMENT ALLEGATIONS

BY ELISE VIEBECK & MIKE DEBONIS

WASHINGTON

The House Ethics Committee launched a formal investigation into allegations that senior Democratic lawmaker Rep. John Conyers of Michigan sexually harassed female aides and used office funds to settle a former staffer's claim that she was fired after rejecting his advances.

Committee Chairwoman Susan Brooks, R-Ind., and ranking Democrat Ted Deutch, D-Fla., announced the start of a probe of

Conyers, 88, the longest-serving member of the House and top Democrat on the powerful Judiciary Committee.

"The Committee is aware of public allegations that Representative John Conyers Jr. may have engaged in sexual harassment of members of his staff, discriminated against certain staff on the basis of age, and used office resources for impermissible personal

purposes," Brooks and Deutch said in a statement.

Shortly after the probe was announced, BuzzFeed News reported a second allegation by a former Conyers aide, who claimed in court filings this year that he sexually harassed her. BuzzFeed reported the 2015 settlement between Conyers and an unnamed former employee late Monday.

On Tuesday, Conyers initially denied that he had settled sexual harassment claims when asked by a reporter at his Detroit home. Later in the day, he reversed himself and ac-

knowledgeed the settlement while emphasizing that he never admitted fault.

Conyers said he would cooperate with a House investigation into the matter.

"I expressly and vehemently denied the allegations made against me, and continue to do so," Conyers said in a written statement.

"My office resolved the allegations — with an express denial of lia-

SEE CONYERS • A10

■ A11 • CBS fires Charlie Rose over reports of sexual misconduct.

TODAY'S DEAL



Tune-up your garage door just in time for the holidays with a service and safety inspection for \$29.99 from Sears Garage Door Repair! Buy now at SanDiegoUnionTribune.com/UTDeals.

U-T INDEX

Comics	C5	Editorial	B5	Lottery	A4	Scores	D4
Crossword	C7	Horoscope	C7	Obituaries	B4	Television	E4
Dear Abby	C7	Letters	B5	Stocks	C3	Weather	A12

