

WORLD IN BRIEF

Associated Press

Full moon, comet starring in night sky show this weekend

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — A full moon and comet share double billing in a special night sky show this weekend.

A lunar eclipse starts everything off tonight. The moon will pass into Earth's outer shadow, or penumbra. The moon won't be blacked out like in a full eclipse. Only part of the moon will be shaded, but it should be easily visible from much of the world.

Comet 45P, meanwhile, will zoom past Earth early Saturday morning. It will be an extremely close encounter as these things go, passing within 7.7 million miles of Earth. Its relative speed: 14.2 miles per second, or a breakneck 51,120 mph.

The comet, glowing green, will be visible in the constellation Hercules. Binoculars and telescopes will help in the search.

Stargazers have been tracking Comet 45P for the past couple of months. The ice ball — an estimated mile across — comes around every five years. It's officially known as Comet 45P/Honda-Mrkos-Pajdusakova, named after the Japanese, Czech and Slovak astronomers who discovered it in 1948. The letter P stands for periodic, meaning it's a recurring visitor to the inner solar system.

The Slooh network of observatories will provide a live broadcast from the Canary Islands for both big events.

The eclipse will last more than four hours, beginning at 2:32 p.m. local time. The action will unfold early Saturday in Europe, Africa and western Asia.

New Zealanders race to save whales after 400 stranded

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — It was the sound of soft sighs and cries in the half-light that first struck Cheree Morrison, and then as the dawn broke she began to see the extent of the carnage — more than 400 whales had swum aground along a remote New Zealand beach.

About 275 of the pilot whales were already dead when Morrison and two colleagues found them today on Farewell Spit at the tip of the South Island.

Within hours, hundreds of farmers, tourists and teenagers were racing to keep the surviving 140 or so whales alive in one of the worst whale strandings in the nation's history.

Morrison, a magazine writer and editor, stumbled upon the whales after taking a predawn trip with a photographer and a guide to capture the red glow of the sunrise.

"You could hear the sounds of splashing, of blowholes being cleared, of sighing," she said. "The young ones were the worst. Crying is the only way to describe it."

There are different theories as to why whales strand themselves, from them chasing prey too far inshore to them trying to protect a sick member of the group.

New Zealand has one of the highest rates of whale strandings in the world, and today's event is the nation's third-biggest recorded stranding.

Packy, Oregon's beloved elephant, dies at 54

PORTLAND — Packy, the Asian elephant who drew international attention when he was born, including an 11-page spread in Life magazine, died Thursday at the Oregon Zoo. He was 54.



Tim Cuff/New Zealand Herald

Whales are stranded at Farewell Spit near Nelson, New Zealand today. New Zealand volunteers formed a human chain in the water at a remote beach today as they tried to save about 100 whales after more than 400 of the creatures beached themselves in one of the worst whale strandings in the nation's history. About three-quarters of the pilot whales were already dead when they were found this morning at Farewell Spit at the tip of the South Island.

Packy was 3 feet tall and weighed 226 pounds when he entered the world April 14, 1962, making headlines as the first elephant born in the Western Hemisphere in 44 years. Eager to see the baby elephant, more than 1 million people visited the zoo in Portland that year, the first time it ever hit that mark.

At the time of his death, Packy — who got his name from a radio contest — was the oldest male of his species in North America.

The elephant had been suffering from a drug-resistant strain of tuberculosis, and was euthanized after veterinarians failed to come up with an alternative treatment.

"We'd run out of options for treating him," Dr. Tim Storms, the zoo's lead veterinarian, said in a statement. "The remaining treatments involved side effects that would have been very hard on Packy with no guarantee of success, plus a risk of creating further resistance."

"None of us felt it would be right to do that. But without treatment, his TB would have continued to get worse."

Trump reaffirms 'one China' policy in call with Xi Jinping

BEIJING — President Donald Trump reaffirmed Washington's long-standing "one China" policy in a call with Beijing's leader, a move that could ease anger in China over his earlier suggestions that he might use Taiwan as leverage in negotiations over trade, security and other sensitive issues.

More than two months after deviating from decades of American diplomacy regarding Taiwan by accepting a phone call from the self-governing island's president, Trump appeared to be trying to reassure Beijing he would not seek to upend relations between the world's two-largest economies.

"This is an important step," said Bonnie Glaser, senior adviser on Asia at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C. "This will now pave the way for the engagement of the U.S. and Chinese governments on a wide range of issues."

The policy in place since 1979 requires Washington to maintain only unofficial ties with Taiwan, the self-governing island that China claims as its own territory. China views any hint of official U.S. recognition of the island as anathema to China's

revival as a great Asian power.

The long-awaited call between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Trump came Thursday evening, Washington time, the White House and China's state broadcaster CCTV said.

Japanese PM looks to win Trump's trust in White House talks

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's meeting with Japan's prime minister offers a chance to shore up a long-standing security alliance and repair economic ties shaken by U.S. withdrawal from a Pacific trade pact.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who is expected to propose more Japanese investment in the U.S., has wasted no time in trying to win Trump's trust. He was the only world leader to meet the Republican before inauguration, and will be the second to do so since the new president took office.

Trump and Abe will hold talks in the Oval Office today, followed by a joint news conference and a working lunch. Trump will then host Abe and his wife at his Mar-a-Lago Club in Florida. The two leaders are scheduled to play golf on Saturday.

Other leaders of America's closest neighbors and allies, such as Mexico, Britain and Australia, have been singled by their encounters or conversations with Trump. But Japanese officials are optimistic the invitation to visit Trump's "Winter White House" signals a more positive outcome.

Although the U.S. administration is only three weeks old, some repair work is already in order. Trump's "America First" rhetoric and campaign trail demands that allies pay more for their own defense sowed doubts in Tokyo about the new administration's commitment to an alliance that has underpinned security in the Asia-Pacific since the end of World War II and one which Abe has sought to strengthen.

Trump's health secretary pick confirmed narrowly for Cabinet

WASHINGTON — Rep. Tom Price, President Donald Trump's choice to be health secretary, is the latest of a handful of Cabinet nominees to eke out a confirmation victory in a bitterly divided Senate.

Following the pattern of strictly party-line votes on two previous nominees — Attorney General-designate Sen. Jeff Sessions and Betsy DeVos for Education secretary — the Georgia congressman was approved early today on a 52-47 vote. Former Exxon-Mobil CEO Rex Tillerson fared somewhat better than Sessions and DeVos, but still won confirmation for secretary of state by only a 56-43 margin.

Two other controversial Trump selections are set for votes Monday. By a 53-46 margin, the Senate ended procedural hurdles to financier Steven Mnuchin's nomination to be Treasury secretary. Final approval for Mnuchin and for physician David Shulkin to be veterans affairs secretary was set for Monday.

Minority Democrats have used Senate rules, where possible, to delay elevation of some Trump's nominees. And following Price's confirmation to head the Department of Health and Human Services, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said: "The Republicans launch their first assault in their war on seniors."

Democrats prolonged the debate on the 62-year-old Price until nearly 2 a.m. EST today, in arguments tinged with bitter accusations, reflecting the raw feelings enveloping Washington early in Trump's presidency.

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Pan Fried Oysters \$12

Willapa Bay Oysters with a ninja radish and cucumber tartar on a bed of watercress and preserved lemons

— OR —

Moroccan Meatballs \$12

Ground lamb meatballs with a pomegranate molasses glaze

THIRD COURSE

Dukkah Halibut \$32

Halibut on Israeli couscous, sunchoke confit, Mediterranean relish and tarragon vin blanc

— OR —

Pork Osso Buco \$32

Bone-in pork shank braised in Chianti jus on a creamy Pecorino polenta with bacon wrapped Brussel sprouts

FOURTH COURSE

Panna Cota \$8

Classic Italian sweet cream molds with raspberry coulis

— OR —

Amaretto Chocolate Mousse \$8