

Doctors: Sen. John McCain has brain tumor

WASHINGTON (AP) — Arizona Sen. John McCain, the 2008 Republican presidential nominee with a well-known maverick streak that often vexes his GOP colleagues, has been diagnosed with a brain tumor, his office said in a statement Wednesday.

The 80-year-old lawmaker has glioblastoma, an aggressive cancer, according to doctors at the Mayo Clinic in Phoenix, where McCain had a blood clot removed from above his left eye last Friday.

“Subsequent tissue pathology revealed that a primary brain tumor known as a glioblastoma was associated with the blood clot,” his office said in a statement.

According to the American Brain Tumor Association, more than 12,000 people a year are diagnosed with glioblastoma, a particularly aggressive type of tumor. The American Cancer Society puts the five-year survival rate for patients over 55 at about 4 percent.

It’s the same type of tumor that struck McCain’s close Democratic colleague in legislative battles, the late Ted Kennedy of Massachusetts.

Trump rages at Sessions in New York Times interview

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump told *The New York Times* in an interview Wednesday that he never would have appointed Jeff Sessions as attorney general had he known Sessions would recuse himself from overseeing the Russia investigation.

In an extraordinary denouncement of one of his earliest backers in Washington, Trump said Sessions’ decision to recuse himself from all matters related to Russia was “very unfair to the president.”

“Sessions should have never recused himself,” Trump told the paper, “and if he was going to recuse himself he should have told me before he took the job and I would have picked somebody else.”

Sessions’ recusal, announced following revelations that he had failed to disclose meetings with Russia’s ambassador to the U.S., effectively paved the way for the appointment of Robert Mueller as special counsel. Mueller’s investigation into Russian meddling in the 2016 election and potential ties between the Russian government and Trump campaign aides has cast a growing cloud on Trump’s administration.

In the interview, Trump also appeared to threaten Mueller, suggesting he had damaging information on the former FBI director.

Trump’s embrace of Russia making top advisers wary

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump’s persistent overtures toward Russia are placing him increasingly at odds



AP Photo/Noah Berger

California wildfire destroys 29 structures

(AP) — An air tanker drops retardant while battling a wildfire near Mariposa, Calif., Wednesday. The fire has forced thousands of people from homes in and around a half-dozen small communities, officials said. California fire officials say 29 structures have been destroyed by a blaze burning in the rugged mountains outside of Yosemite National Park.

It is not clear how many of those structures are homes.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection says the fire on Wednesday also grew to 75 square miles. Containment remains at 7 percent.

More than 3,000 firefighters are fighting the 4-day-old wildfire, which is about 35 miles west of Yosemite.

California fire spokesman Jordan Motta says the wildfire is moving south, away from Yosemite.

with his national security and foreign policy advisers, who have long urged a more cautious approach to dealing with the foreign adversary.

The uneasy dynamic between the president and top aides has been exacerbated by the revelation this week of an extended dinner conversation between Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin at the recent summit in Germany. The previously undisclosed conversation, which occurred a few hours after their official bilateral meeting, raised red flags with advisers already concerned by the president’s tendency to shun protocol and press ahead with outreach toward Russia, according to two U.S. officials and three top foreign officials.

The officials spoke only on condition of anonymity to discuss private conversations. Deep divisions are increasingly apparent within the administration on the best way to approach Moscow in the midst of U.S. investigations into Russian meddling in the American presidential election. Trump has repeatedly cast doubt on the conclusion of U.S. intelligence agencies that the Russian government sought to tip the election in his favor and has dismissed investigations into the possibility of collusion between his campaign and Moscow as a “witch hunt.”

House panel approves budget with hopes for tax reform

WASHINGTON (AP) — A key House panel on Wednesday approved a Republican fiscal plan that probably won’t deliver on its promises to balance the budget, but would begin to clear a path for a GOP effort to overhaul the tax code this fall.

The Budget Committee approved the measure by a party-line 22-14 vote. The plan proposes deep cuts to safety net programs like Medicaid and food stamps and reprises a controversial Medicare plan strongly opposed by President Donald Trump — though Republicans only want to deliver on a small fraction of the cuts.

Instead, to most Republicans on Capitol Hill, the most important element of the plan is the procedural pathway it would clear to allow Republicans to pass their top priority — an overhaul of the tax code — later this year without fear of a blockade by Senate Democrats. Passing a budget through Congress is the only way to get a GOP-only tax plan enacted this year.

Republicans argue that growing deficits and debt are part of the reason for slow economic growth and that big benefit plans like Medicare and Medicaid need changes now to keep them from going broke for

future generations.

“Both parties in Washington have failed to abide by a simple principle that all American families and small businesses do — that we must live within our means,” said Budget Chairman Diane Black, R-Tenn. “Balancing the budget requires us to make tough choices, but the consequences of inaction far outweigh any political risks we may face.”

Trump campaign inner circle called before Senate committees

WASHINGTON (AP) — Members of the Trump campaign’s inner circle, including his eldest son and son-in-law, are being called before Senate committees next week to talk about the 2016 election.

The week has the potential to deliver the most high-profile congressional testimony involving the Russian meddling probes since former FBI Director James Comey appeared in June.

Donald Trump Jr. is scheduled to appear July 26 before the Senate Judiciary Committee along with former campaign chairman Paul Manafort, according to a witness list released by the panel Wednesday.

Also, a lawyer for Trump’s powerful son-in-law and adviser said Jared Kushner will speak to the Senate intelligence committee Monday.

“As Mr. Kushner has been saying since March, he has been and is prepared to voluntarily cooperate and provide whatever information he has on the investigations to Congress,” said attorney Abbe Lowell. “He will continue to cooperate and appreciate the opportunity to assist in putting this matter to rest.”

Report: Trump ends covert plan to arm Syrian rebels

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has decided to halt the CIA’s years-long covert program to arm and train moderate Syrian rebels battling the regime of the nation’s president Bashar al-Assad. Russia had long pushed the United States to end the program.

The phasing out of the secret program was reported by *The Washington Post* on Wednesday. Officials told the newspaper that ending the operation reflects Trump’s interest in finding ways to work with Russia.

The program was a key component begun by the Obama administration in 2013 to put pressure on Assad to relinquish power. But even its supporters have questioned its usefulness since Moscow sent forces in Syria two years later.

Russia long saw the anti-Assad program as an assault on its interests. Ending the plan, in addition to appeasing Russian President Vladimir Putin, is also an acknowledgment of the United States’ limited ability to remove Assad from power.



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