**SPORTS**

Spurs can afford Duncan breaks

Star is still hugely needed but team is less needy when he’s off the floor.

**THE EXITS ARE BLOCKED**

**SPECIAL REPORT**

STORIES BY HARISA KIRK | PHOTOS BY LISA KRANTZ

A three-part investigation into how military sex-assault victims fight a lonely battle

Sunday: Victims often viewed as mentally unfit to serve

Monday: Few sex offenders are punished

Today: No protection from their offenders

**FEBRE BETRAYED**

A woman carries her child through a field near the leveled Plaza Towers Elementary School in Moore, Okla., after the tornado.

**DEADLY TWISTER SLAMS TOWN**

Dozens of school kids among Okla. victims

By Tim Talley

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Moore, Okla. — A monstrous tornado at least a half-mile wide roared through the Oklahoma City suburb Monday, destroying entire neighborhoods and destroying an elementary school with a direct blow as children and teachers huddled against winds up to 200 mph.

At least 91 people were killed, and officials said the death toll was expected to rise. At least 20 of the dead were children.

The storm had moved to scores of buildings in Moore, a community of 40,000 people about 10 miles south of the city. Block after block lay in ruins. Homes were crushed into piles of broken wood. Cars and trucks were left crumpled on the roadside.

**San Pedro Creek could be restored**

By John W. Gonzalez

STAFF WRITER

With redevelopment of the San Antonio River nearing completion, Bexar County is turning its attention to San Pedro Creek. A couple of centuries ago, before the Spanish established a presidio on it in 1718 near what’s now City Hall, despite the legacy, the creek was relegated to a narrow swale in a forest of saloons, and its ecosystem obliterated for the sake of downtown flood control.

The Commissioners Court on Tuesday plans to reverse the fortunes of San Pedro Creek. Backed by a court majority, County Judge Nelson Wolff will propose a $175 million plan to revitalize a 3-mile-long creek on a 1½-mile segment of the 3-mile-long creek.

**WEATHER**

**TEMPERATURES**

Partly cloudy, 72

High: 84

Low: 57

**SUNRISE**

Dawn, 6:21 AM

**SUNSET**

Dusk, 7:45 PM

**FEEDBACK**

To report a weather error or make a suggestion, please call 210-254-3723.
Twice Betrayed

Accounts from victims and advocates indicate that service members who report a sexual assault can face long delays, or superiors tell them they’re ineligible before being allowed to formally apply.

These reforms … are not working, because they’re not addressing the fundamental problem, which is the retaliation against victims.”

FANCY FRANZIS: PRESIDENT OF PROTECT OUR DEFENDERS

A victim advocacy group

Military’s ‘expedited transfers’ are more theory than fact

The transfer policy, which took effect in December 2011, was imposed in response to rising public concerns about an epidemic of rape in the military.

Since then, the sexual abuse of young recruits by training instructors at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland and lawsuits against the Defense Department for failing to prosecute sex crimes have roiled the Pentagon. Lawmakers and military brass have pushed in sweeping reforms, and the issue continues to gain prominence.

Expedited transfers are touted as one of the most important new protections for victims, and there is a widespread need for the policy to work. An anonymous Defense Department

Myah Bilton-Smith repeatedly requested her transfer. In all, it would take seven months for her to leave Goodfellow, and by then, she had been scorned by her superiors in an email as a “basket case,” improperly diagnosed with bipolar disorder and subjected to what she described as a second sexual assault on base.

Bilton-Smith appeared to be a perfect candidate for a new Defense Department policy that offers sexual-assault victims an “expedited transfer” from their base or unit. The measure was part of a series of reforms that was supposed to protect victims who feel threatened after reporting sex crimes.

But her case and others show that policy doesn’t always match reality. Accounts from victims and advocates indicate service members who report sexual assaults can face long delays, or superiors tell them they’re ineligible before being allowed to formally apply.

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survey released this month shows 42 percent of victims who reported assault said they suffered retaliation. Yet the effectiveness of the measure has received little scrutiny.

The reaction of the U.S. Air Force was swift. When Mary Tobias heard the woman had been assaulted, she said an officer who was a senior officer in her unit. He asked that her name not be used because she feared retaliation. Tobias then became the target of threats, which he said warned he soon would "lose his job."

Tobias urged commanders to let victims appeal decisions because he suspected a man, who warned he soon would "lose his job." Tobias is still scrutinized by the military as a result of his request for an expedited transfer.

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allows service members — not just assault victims — to apply for “humanitarian transfers,” he said, and humanitarian transfers allow service members to apply for “humanitarian transfers.”

Two dozen reasons.

Bellflower said. “That’s a master sergeant in Myah’s chain of command. “He told me verbatim: ‘There’s no such thing as an expedited transfer,’ Bilton-Smith said. “Myah was sent to a psychiatrist, who diagnosed her with depression and bipolar disorder, a diagnosis that later was disputed by doctors outside the military. “She had come to the base to receive technical training for a career in intelligence and never entered classes, which began days after the first assault. “She felt like a social pariah among her fellow trainees and faced hostility from her command, whose members scoffed at her emotional turmoil. Her reaction was added by a heavy regimen of drugs for depression, anxiety, and bipolar disorder, a drug regimen that later was disputed by doctors outside the military. “She received a letter of reprimand Aug. 17 for failing to adhere to duty and missing marching formations. The letter faced punishment and was required to work extended hours of duty and for several weeks even prohibited her from leaving her family home, and at her family’s urging, she’ve filed a complaint. “Myah thought she was a case, so that real.

Bellflower said. “I started looking like I was raped. It made things worse.”

In September, the family members began putting their transfer requests into writing, according to documents obtained by the Express-News. In a Sept. 7 email to a Goodfellow training captain, Mark Bilton-Smith asked for “an expedited transfer immediately” and included a web link that detailed the procedure. "The defense directive also allows transfers to decide transfer cases after determining whether victim is a mistake.”

The very same people who are trying to force the Mr. Myah Smith’s case to return to duty due to privacy rules. "It’s that when the whole thing changed completely,” Bilton-Smith said. “We were reassigned to McChord Field in Washington. She, and her family won an appeal of the military boards decision to discharge her for a behavioral disorder and she re- She continues to suffer from panic attacks and is haunted by visions of the assault. She and her family are looking at a long recovery for the damage she did.

Quick facts

- The military says it has handled 336 transfer requests.
- The Air Force has not made long-term plans to fix it.
- The Pentagon does not track how long transfers are delayed.
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