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# THE STAR

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Robert Gilman and his sister Lexi Gilman are seen in a family photo. According to family, the siblings were close.  
PROVIDED BY GLOBAL REACH

## Footage shows man’s life in Russian prison

Advocacy group:  
Marine abused  
before release

Michael Loria  
USA TODAY

Security footage of U.S. citizen Robert Gilman in a Russian prison shows the former Marine knock a jailer to the ground with a punch to the face after the guard prodded Gilman’s private parts. Several guards jumped Gilman from behind in response and beat him, the footage shared with USA TODAY shows. Russian authorities sentenced Gilman to additional years in prison after the incident. He was first detained in Russia on questionable charges ahead of the country’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Gilman, 32, was released Aug. 11, and

According to U.S. Sen. Ed Markey, Gilman was diagnosed 50 days before his release with dissociative stupor, a kind of psychological condition brought on by trauma. The Massachusetts Democrat said it left Gilman “essentially catatonic.” He was unable to eat or go to the bathroom.

allowed to return to the United States amid a rapid decline in his health. President Donald Trump credited Russian President Vladimir Putin with granting Gilman’s release on a “Humanitarian Basis.” However, according to those close to Gilman, the Marine-turned-school-teacher’s recent dissociative stupor diagnosis was not the result of some new change in prison life. Instead, Gilman’s “essentially catatonic” state in recent weeks was brought on by moments like those in the video: a

cycle of physical and physiological abuse aimed at breaking the former Marine. “The only reason he was in bad shape is because of what the Russians did to him,” Eric Lebson, a chief strategy officer at Global Reach, told USA TODAY. The nonprofit dedicated to bringing home wrongfully imprisoned Americans has been working to secure Gilman’s release for more than two years. “They were trying to break him

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## The best fast-food breakfast is found at Biscuitville

Charlie Kingree  
Wilmington StarNews  
USA TODAY NETWORK

A North Carolina-based restaurant chain was named the best for fast-food breakfast by USA TODAY. And there’s two places you get it near Gastonia and Shelby. USA TODAY 10BEST rankings are selected by readers and editors to create a consensus top 10 list. Recently, they came together for the 2026 fast food breakfast rankings. The top spot was claimed by a chain based in North Carolina. No, it wasn’t Bojangles -- although that N.C. staple did find its own place on the list. Instead, Biscuitville, the fast-food biscuit chain based in Greensboro, was ranked No. 1.

Where to get the best fast-food breakfast

Biscuitville has 85 locations scattered all over North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia.

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## Trump orders South Korea drill cuts

President cites costs, Seoul’s stance on Iran

Costas Pitas, David Lawder and Heejin Kim  
REUTERS

WASHINGTON – President Donald Trump on Aug. 16 instructed the Pentagon to “substantially reduce” joint military exercises with long-term Asian ally South Korea, citing the cost of the drills and Seoul’s refusal to take part in actions against Iran. Hours before exercises were scheduled to begin, Trump said on his Truth Social site he was “not happy” that the United States had agreed to participate and highlighted his “very good relationship” with Kim Jong Un, the leader of nuclear-armed and heavily sanctioned North Korea. “These exercises are not only costly ... but send a signal that is totally inappropriate and hostile, to a Country that, as long as Donald J. Trump has been President, has been unthreatening and respectful,” Trump wrote. The annual Ulchi Freedom Shield joint military exercises are scheduled to run until Aug. 27, with about 18,000 South Korean military personnel participating.

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