

STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Neller to Marines: 'There's a war coming'

The Washington Post

The Marine Corps commandant told about 300 Marines in Norway last week that they should be prepared for battle, predicting a “big-ass fight” to come.

“I hope I’m wrong, but there’s a war coming,” Gen. Robert Neller told the Marines on Thursday, according to Military.com. “You’re in a fight here, an informational fight, a political fight, by your presence.”

Neller was visiting a Marine rotational force near Trondheim, about 300 miles north of Oslo. The Marines have been stationed there since January. Their presence in Norway is intended to support operations by

NATO and the U.S. European Command, as well as to help the Marine Corps facilitate training in cold weather and mountainous conditions.

But Neller and other Corps leaders told the force they should be prepared for a change in their peacetime mission, should the need arise. In particular, Neller predicted the Pacific and Russia to be the focus of any conflict in the future outside of the Middle East, Military.com reported.

As the Marines’ top general, Neller is a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Pentagon’s senior-most leadership team responsible for contingency planning. It is unclear to what extent his comments were indicative of an actual war to come or merely

meant as a pep talk for troops stationed far from home during the Christmas holiday.

Lt. Col. Eric Dent, a spokesman for the general, told The Washington Post on Saturday night that Neller’s remarks “were intended to inspire and focus the Marines’ training.” He added the general had also told the troops none of the four countries he had referenced — Russia, China, Iran and North Korea — wanted to go to war.

“The thought of war has a way of motivating warriors to train hard and increase readiness. I cannot imagine any professional military leader suggesting to his or her Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen that we shouldn’t think that con-

flict is pending,” Dent said in an email. “Being ready is a constant practice and refocusing. Neller and others have said, ‘If you want peace, train for war.’ That’s exactly what we want and are doing.”

With unusual fanfare, President Donald Trump unveiled a new National Security Strategy last week that cast China and Russia as competitors for global power and as potential threats to the United States.

As The Washington Post’s Anne Gearan and Steven Mufson reported, however, the new national security strategy dances around Russia’s attempts to meddle in the 2016 presidential election, much in the way Trump has since he was elected.

Corps video advises Marines to log off, focus on loved ones

BY CHAD GARLAND

Stars and Stripes

Take a break from social media for the holidays and focus on time spent with loved ones in the real world.

That’s the message the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center in Twentynine Palms, Calif., wants Marines to take from its latest video posted Thursday on — what else? — Facebook.

The video is one of the latest attempts to reach Marines through social media as the Corps’ leaders embrace the humor that’s often the coin of the digital realm.

The light-hearted efforts come as the service confronted a social media scandal this year when an investigation found thousands of active-duty Marines and veterans had belonged to a Facebook group in which members had posted degrading messages about their fellow servicemembers online.

In the video, base commanding general Maj. Gen. William F. Mullen III and senior enlisted leader Sgt. Maj. Michael J. Hendges sit down for chow with a group of junior Marines, who scroll through social media feeds on their phones as they eat and chat.

The leaders reprise their respective roles, as the thoughtful and articulate general and his gruff, laconic heavy. These are parts the two played to comic effect in a widely shared video this past fall.

As an instrumental version of “The Carol of the Bells” builds to a crescendo, the millennial Marines become increasingly wrapped up in their digital worlds, frustrating the imposing and clearly old-school Hendges.

Like a modern take on Linus from the “Charlie Brown Christmas” special, one Marine stretches, cracks her knuckles and bends her head down over

a laptop keyboard, her fingers rapidly tapping.

Hendges can take no more and orders the Marines to stop, before Mullen offers sage advice.

“Hey Marines ... take time over the holidays to disconnect from your phones, talk to the people around you, especially your friends and family,” he says. “The most important people are the people you’re with, not the people on social media.”

There’s a real-life irony in that Mullen knows embracing social media helps amplify his command message.

“He understands the power of social media, yet wanted to get a message across to our Marines,” Capt. Karen Holliday, director of the base’s communications strategy and operations, said via email.

The command experienced that power in September with a video that offered a humorous take on the standard safety

briefing given by many commanders before the long Labor Day weekend. At the time, Holliday said it “was (a) tough sell to senior leadership, but they loved the final product.”

Produced by a lance corporal and directed by a Marine veteran, the two-minute video reached 2.5 million viewers, Holliday said Friday. Commanders throughout the service are turning to digital platforms to engage their Marines, she said.

“We are extremely lucky in the [Marine Corps] in that many of our leaders have realized the benefit of this type of communication,” Holliday said.

No digest on Monday

Stars and Stripes will not produce a print edition or news digest on Monday.

US issues alert over N. Korean propaganda

By **SETH ROBSON**
Stars and Stripes

U.S. Forces Korea is warning servicemembers on the Korean Peninsula to stay alert to potential insider threats after North Korean propaganda appeared on American bases.

The 8th Army reported that propaganda leaflets were discovered at Seoul's Yongsan Garrison on Thursday, shortly after a North Korean soldier defected across the heavily fortified border just north of the South Korean capital.

In an alert posted later that day on USFK's Facebook page, officials said a significant number of North Korean propaganda leaflets and CDs had been placed at strategic locations on multiple U.S. military installations in South Korea.

"Given the number of foreign nationals with access to our military installations via employment, sponsorship and partnership programs, the potential for insider threats is always a reality," the alert said. "It is essential for our personnel to report all [propaganda] and suspicious individuals to the appropriate authorities to help mitigate potential threats."

Propaganda is used to influence people's attitudes, beliefs and behaviors and those distributing it seek to disrupt operations and to degrade readiness, the alert added.

It also warned personnel not to post propaganda on social media and to beware of unfamiliar CDs that could contain malware or viruses.

USFK advised personnel to report propaganda, people distributing it or suspicious individuals to security forces.

Russian submarine activity is prompting alarm in NATO

The Washington Post

BRUSSELS — Russian submarines have stepped up activity dramatically around undersea data cables in the North Atlantic, part of a more aggressive naval posture that has driven NATO to revive a Cold War-era command, according to senior military officials.

The apparent Russian focus on the cables, which provide Internet and other communications connections to North America and Europe, could give the Kremlin the power to sever or tap into vital data lines, the officials said. Russian submarine activity has increased to levels unseen since the Cold War, they said, sparking hunts in recent months for the elusive watercraft.

"We are now seeing Russian underwater activity in the vicinity of undersea cables that I don't believe we have ever seen," said U.S. Navy Admiral Andrew Lennon, the commander of NATO's submarine forces. "Russia is clearly taking an interest in NATO and NATO nations' undersea infrastructure."

NATO has responded with plans to re-establish a command post, shuttered after the Cold War, to help secure the North Atlantic. NATO allies also are rushing to boost anti-submarine warfare capabilities and to develop advanced submarine-detecting planes.

Britain's top military commander also warned that Russia could imperil the cables that form the backbone of the modern global economy. The privately owned lines, laid along some of the same corridors as the first transatlantic telegraph wire in 1858, carry nearly all of the communications on the internet, facilitating trillions of dollars of daily trade. If severed, they could snarl the Web. If tapped, they could give Russia a valuable picture of the tide of the world's internet traffic.

"It's a pattern of activity, and it's a vulnerability," said British Air Chief Marshal Stuart Peach in an interview.

"Can you imagine a scenario where those cables are cut or disrupted, which would immediately and potentially catastrophically affect both our economy and other ways of living if they were disrupted?" Peach said in a speech in London this month.

The Russian Defense Ministry did not respond to a request for comment about the cables.

The Russian sea activity comes as the Kremlin also has pressed against NATO in the air and on land. Russian jets routinely clip NATO airspace in the Baltics, and troops drilled near NATO territory in September.

Russia has moved to modernize its once-decrepit Soviet-era fleet of submarines, bringing online or overhauling 13 craft since 2014. That pace, coming after Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula set off a new era of confrontation with the West, has spurred NATO efforts to counter them. Russia has about 60 full-size submarines, while the U.S. has 66.

Among Russia's capabilities, Lennon said, are deep-sea research vessels, including an old converted ballistic submarine that carries smaller submarines.

"They can do oceanographic research, underwater intelligence gathering," he said. "And what we have observed is an increased activity of that in the vicinity of undersea cables. We know that these auxiliary submarines are designed to work on the ocean floor, and they're transported by the mother ship, and we believe they may be equipped to manipulate objects on the ocean floor."

That capability could give Russia the ability to sever the cables or to tap into them.

Lennon declined to say whether NATO believes Russia actually has touched the cables. Russian military leaders have acknowledged that the Kremlin is active undersea at levels not seen since the end of the Cold War, when Russia was forced to curtail its submarine program in the face of economic turmoil and disorganization.

Trump sends holiday greetings to troops abroad

Associated Press

PALM BEACH, Fla. — President Donald Trump sent Christmas greetings to U.S. troops stationed around the world.

From Mar-a-Lago, the Palm Beach, Fla., estate where Trump was spending the holidays, he spoke by video hook-up

on Christmas Eve to members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard, stationed in Qatar, Kuwait and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Trump told the troops that Americans are thankful for them and their families. He said they're "the greatest people on earth."

He offered praise to the Coast Guard for saving thousands of lives during a series of deadly hurricanes in the United States.

Trump told the troops that "every American heart" is thankful for them and is asking God to watch over them and their families.

3 charged over stolen Guard guns, gear in SC

The (Rock Hill, S.C.) Herald

LANCASTER, S.C. — Federal officials have charged three suspects from Lancaster with possession of a grenade launcher, machine guns, other weapons and military gear that was stolen from the Army National Guard armory.

Officials recently seized many of the weapons and other military gear, including night-vision goggles. At least three machine guns still are missing, federal officials said.

It's not known who stole the weapons and other equipment. Federal documents indicate the suspects tried to sell the items.

Brandon Shane Polston, 32; Austin Lee Ritter, 23; and Kimberly Denise Cannon, 39, all of Lancaster, were indicted Wednesday in federal court. They each are charged with having the machine guns and the grenade launcher, according to federal prosecutors and court documents. The three also face weapons and receiving-stolen-goods charges in Lancaster County based on the gun seizure, records show.

Lancaster police told Lancaster National Guard officials that a police officer saw two machine guns during a Nov. 26 traffic stop, according to a federal department of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms affidavit.

After the weapons had been seized during the stop, Lancaster police went the same day to the armory. Policemen found the doors and the gun vault unsecured, federal officials said in the affidavit. A team from the State Law Enforcement Division responded, and found that National Guard officials at the armory were "unaware of the theft of items and the unsecured building ...," the federal affidavit said.

Lt. Col. Cindi King, a spokesperson for the S.C. National Guard, said the federal investigation is ongoing.

Ala., Wis. Air National Guard fields picked to host F-35As

Stars and Stripes

The futures of Air National Guard bases in Alabama and Wisconsin were bolstered Thursday by news that they'll be receiving some of America's most advanced multirole stealth fighters.

Dannelly Field in Montgomery, Ala., and Truax Field in Madison, Wis., have been chosen as "preferred locations" to host F-35A Lightning II squadrons, an Air Force statement said.

"Selecting Truax Field and Dannelly Field will increase Air National Guard F-35A units providing 5th Generation airpower around the world," Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson said in the statement.

If the sites pass environmental analyses, the F-35As — which lack the short-takeoff, vertical-landing capabilities of the F-35B used by the Marine Corps — are expected to begin arriving

at Truax in early 2023 and at Dannelly later that year.

"As F-35As arrive at these locations, we will use the existing aircraft at these fields to replace the aging F-16s at other Air National Guard units," Wilson added.

The Air Force will continue to fly a mix of fifth- and fourth-generation fighters into the 2040s, the statement said. The purpose is to maintain enough jets to meet combatant commander requirements, to provide required training and to allow a reasonable deployment tempo for the force.

The service also considered Gowen Field in Idaho, Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Michigan and Jacksonville Air Guard Station in Florida.

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Japan's Cabinet OKs \$46B defense budget in wake of N. Korean threats

BY HANA KUSUMOTO

Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's Cabinet on Friday approved a record \$45.8 billion defense budget for next fiscal year to help cope with growing ballistic missile threats from North Korea.

The budget — expected to pass both houses of the Diet — is a 1.3 percent increase over fiscal year 2017 and the seventh consecutive increase since Abe took office in 2012, Defense Ministry officials said.

"Japan will build up its defense capabilities while focusing on the further enhancement of joint functions in order to seamlessly and dynamically fulfill its defense responsibilities," the budget proposal says.

It goes on to explain how the government wants to respond to intrusions on remote islands, ballistic missile attacks and threats from outer space and cyberspace.

North Korea has escalated its missile program during the

past year, test-firing more than 20 missiles over and around Japan. Last month, it launched a powerful intercontinental ballistic missile toward the northern island of Hokkaido that experts believe is capable of reaching the U.S. mainland.

The budget allocates \$1.2 billion for costs related to missile defense, including \$6.2 million for the land-based Aegis Ashore system and \$41.5 million for upgrades to the Japan Aerospace Defense Ground Environment, or JADGE.

Japan recently announced plans to purchase Aegis Ashore to strengthen its ability to intercept incoming missiles alongside its Aegis-equipped ships and land-based Patriot batteries. JADGE will be used to respond to missiles with lofted trajectories or to any attack that is difficult to foresee.

The budget also includes \$19.4 million for standoff missiles requested after the original proposal was made in August. This includes the implementa-

tion of Joint Strike Missiles to be installed on advanced F-35A Lightning II stealth fighters. Japan is scheduled to field a new F-35A squadron in Misawa by March 2018.

"It will become possible to execute various operations more effectively and safely by dealing with sea-surface and landing units invading into Japan from outside the enemy's search and attack ranges without approaching the enemy," Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera told reporters earlier this month.

To respond to China's expanding naval activities, \$813.4 million has been allocated to build two escort ships along with \$614.9 million for a submarine with improved monitoring capabilities.

Japan also budgeted \$1.74 billion for hosting U.S. forces in Japan and \$2 billion to pay for U.S. troop realignment.

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President attacks FBI official via Twitter

Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — President Donald Trump again questioned the impartiality of FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe, who is planning to retire from the bureau in the months ahead after being buffeted by attacks over the agency's alleged anti-Trump bias.

In a tweet Saturday, the president wrote: "How can FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe, the man in charge, along with leakin' James Comey, of the Phony Hillary Clinton investigation (including her 33,000 illegally deleted emails) be given \$700,000 for wife's campaign by Clinton Puppets during investigation?"

McCabe spent hours behind closed doors on Capitol Hill last week being grilled by lawmakers on two separate committees as part of a new investigation of the FBI and its 2016 inquiry into Clinton's email practices when she was secretary of state. His role supervising the email investigation

has come under renewed scrutiny.

McCabe's wife, Jill, received \$700,000 in donations from Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe's political action committee and the Virginia Democratic Party for a state Senate race in 2015. The money was donated before McCabe was promoted to deputy director and assumed a supervisory role in the Clinton email investigation. McAuliffe is a longtime supporter of Clinton and her husband, former President Bill Clinton.

McCabe became acting FBI director in May after Trump fired Comey, who was overseeing the bureau's investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election. Trump maintains there was no collusion between his campaign and the Russian government and has blasted the investigation as a "witch hunt."

From his South Florida home where he is spending the holidays, Trump also tweeted that McCabe "is racing the clock to retire with full benefits. 90 days to go?!!!"

McCabe plans to retire in about 90 days, when he becomes fully eligible for pension benefits, The Washington Post reported Saturday, citing people familiar with the situation.

Trump and his Republican allies have made it clear that they want McCabe out of the FBI. But McCabe is a civil service employee who cannot be fired without clear evidence of wrongdoing.

Republicans claim an anti-Trump bias exists at the FBI, citing the campaign donations to McCabe's wife and, more recently, the release of hundreds of text messages between FBI counterintelligence agent Peter Strzok and FBI lawyer Lisa Page. Strzok and Page used words like "idiot" and "loathsome human" to describe Trump.

Strzok was removed from the team of Special Counsel Robert Mueller over the summer after the text messages surfaced.

One of deadliest storms of year pounds the southern Philippines

Associated Press

ZAMBOANGA, Philippines — One of the deadliest storms to hit the Philippines this year blew out of the country's south Sunday after leaving more than 120 people dead and 160 missing in landslides and flash floods.

Tropical Storm Tembin strengthened into a typhoon before moving into the South China Sea. Most of the dead and missing were reported in the hard-hit provinces of Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur and on the Zamboanga Peninsula.

Intense rainfall in the mountains most likely caused landslides that blocked rainwater, said Marina Marasigan, of the government's disaster-response agency. When the naturally formed dams broke from the pressure, torrents of rainwater smashed into the villages below.

A large number of dead and missing was also reported in Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur provinces, where floodwa-

ters from a mountain washed away several riverside houses.

Thousands of villagers fled to emergency shelters, and more than 500 passengers remained stranded in airports and seaports after the coast guard prohibited ferries from venturing out in the rough seas and several flights were canceled as the storm raged Saturday.

The typhoon was packing maximum sustained winds of 75 mph and gusts of up to 90 mph.

Earlier in the week, another tropical storm left more than 50 people dead and 31 others missing, mostly due to landslides, and damaged more than 10,000 houses in the central Philippines.

Among the areas battered by the latest storm was Marawi, a lakeside city in Lanao del Sur that is still recovering from a five-month siege by pro-Islamic State group extremists that left more than 1,000 people dead and displaced its entire population of about 200,000 people.

Prosecutor says gunman targeted police officers

Associated Press

HARRISBURG, Pa. — There's "no doubt" a gunman who fired at police in several locations in the state capital, wounding one of them before they shot and killed him, was targeting police officers, a prosecutor said.

Ahmed Aminamin El-Mofty fired at a Harrisburg police officer Friday afternoon and later at a state trooper, wounding her before pursuing her, Dauphin County District Attorney Ed Marsico said.

"He fired several shots at a Capitol police officer and at a Pennsylvania state police trooper in marked vehicles," Marsico told reporters, flanked by state police, capitol police and FBI officials.

The gunfire began shortly after 4 p.m. Friday, when the man fired several shots at a state capitol officer in downtown Harrisburg, striking his car several times and sending one shot "that went very close to hitting him," Marsico said. About 20 or 30 minutes later, he

fired several shots at the state trooper, striking her with one of those shots.

The trooper is "doing well," is in good condition and is expected to make a full recovery, Marsico said.

El-Mofty pursued the trooper to a residential neighborhood, where city and state police encountered him.

El-Mofty had ties to the Middle East and recently traveled there, but the motive for the attack was unknown, Marsico said.

Marsico asked for information from the public about the man, who also had ties to the city and its western suburbs across the Susquehanna River. He declined to comment on whether the man was known to police.

Department of Homeland Security acting press secretary Tyler Q. Houlton said Saturday that El-Mofty was a naturalized U.S. citizen who was admitted to the country from Egypt on a family-based immigrant visa.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Truck collision spills fish onto interstate

FL ORLANDO — Hundreds of live fish were left flopping on Interstate 4 in Florida when one tractor-trailer rear-ended another, spurring troopers to close part of the highway.

Florida Highway Patrol spokeswoman Kim Montes said several bins filled with fish tanks “sloshed forward” when the flatbed truck carrying them hit the other vehicle early Friday near Orlando.

Montes troopers closed two lanes of the road for several hours to clean up the “slimy situation.”

State police bloodhound found after being lost

CT DANBURY — A Connecticut State Police bloodhound that went missing in a wooded area has been found alive and well.

Police said Friday morning that the dog named Texas had been recovered.

The dog was involved in a search Wednesday evening for a man with autism who had gone missing in Danbury near Wooster Mountain. During the search a handler lost his footing on the steep terrain and dropped the dog’s leash.

Another bloodhound located the missing man, who was brought safely out of the woods.

‘Thirsty Cowboy’ robbery suspect held

AZ MESA — A convicted felon has been arrested in connection with a series of armed robberies in Mesa and Tempe.

Mesa police said Aaron Michael Hess, 58, is facing several counts of armed robbery

with a deadly weapon and aggravated assault along with kidnap-apprehension.

They said Hess is suspected in three armed robberies in Mesa and one in Tempe between Nov. 27 and Dec. 12.

Police dubbed them the “Thirsty Cowboy” case because of the types of places that were robbed and the robber’s attire.

Zoo’s female lion, last of triplets, dies at 17

NY SYRACUSE — A female African lion that lived most of her nearly 18 years at an upstate New York zoo has died.

Officials at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo said the lioness named Kierha died Dec. 17. The zoo said the cause of death hasn’t been determined, but Kierha recently had been anesthetized for examination and testing “after showing signs of health issues common to elderly female felines.”

Kierha and her two siblings, Mindine and Joshua, were born in April 2000 at the Baton Rouge Zoo and arrived in Syracuse as 8-month-old cubs. Mindine died in 2015 and Joshua passed away the next year.

Official, 4 others held in prostitution sting

MD CRISFIELD — A Maryland city councilman is one of five people arrested in a state police prostitution sting.

News outlets report Maryland State Police said in a release that Paul Erik Emely, 45, a Crisfield city councilman, was arrested Dec. 19.

Troopers assigned to the Salisbury area coordinated the operation in Wicomico County following complaints from local citizens and business owners. State police criminal investigators assisted with the operation.

Bus driver accused of drinking, driving kids

NY ALBANY — Officials in upstate New York suspended a bus driver who was accused of drinking while driving students.

WTEN-TV reported a staff member at the Montessori Magnet School in Albany suspected the driver had been drinking Dec. 15 when they smelled alcohol. School officials said the driver ignored the staff member and continued driving.

Officials said a transportation supervisor then directed the bus driver to stop. Authorities said they later determined the driver’s blood alcohol content was 0.04 percent.

Bed bug spurs push to eradicate at VA center

KS TOPEKA — A single bed bug is causing headaches at the Veterans Administration health center in Topeka.

The Topeka Capital-Journal reported that staff at Colmery O’Neil VA Health Center on Friday diverted ambulances from the emergency department after the discovery of a single bed bug.

Spokesman Joseph Burks said the bug was found Friday nearing the nursing station in the emergency department and eradication efforts began immediately.

Man nearly struck by police, then arrested

IL SOMONAUK — A 30-year-old old man who nearly was struck by a police car while walking toward traffic was arrested after officers learned he was wanted for driving on a suspended license.

The (DeKalb) Daily Chron-

icle reported that police say the Sheridan man was wearing dark clothing and walking in the street about 1:50 a.m. Saturday in Somonauk, southwest of Chicago.

Officers later learned that a warrant had been issued after the man failed to appear for a hearing in a DeKalb County court.

Landlord accused of asking tenants for sex

KS WICHITA — The U.S. Department of Justice filed a lawsuit accusing a Wichita landlord and property manager of inappropriately touching female tenants and repeatedly asking them for sex in exchange for rent.

The lawsuit names Thong Cao, Mai Cao, Van T. Le and Tong Nguyen as the defendants. The Justice Department said each defendant owns or owned the properties where the harassment occurred.

The suit also alleges Thong Cao evicted tenants who refused to engage in sexual conduct with him.

Sheriff’s office puts 74 on ‘nice list’ for \$100

GA FORSYTH — A Georgia sheriff’s department played Santa for 74 people who are “down on their luck” this holiday season.

The Telegraph of Macon reported that Monroe County sheriff’s deputies on patrol were issuing people who appear to be in need of help \$100 bills as part of its third “secret Santa cash giveaway.”

The \$7,400 giveaway is funded by two donors who thought it would be a positive form of community outreach for law enforcement.

From wire reports

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Army gets by Penny, Aztecs

Associated Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — Army coach Jeff Monken was able to joke afterward.

"We had 'em all the way," Monken deadpanned.

It wasn't quite that easy for the Black Knights.

Darnell Woolfolk scored on a 1-yard run with 18 seconds left, Kell Walker converted a go-ahead 2-point run and Army added a last-play defensive touchdown for a 42-35 victory over San Diego State on Saturday in the Armed Forces Bowl.

After Rashaad Penny's fourth touchdown run of the game gave San Diego State (10-3) a 35-28 lead with 5:47 to play, Army (10-3) drove 72 yards for the tying score and winning conversion.

"It was tough, but we were confident we'd move the ball," Army quarterback Ahmad Bradshaw said.

On the Aztecs' final play, they made multiple laterals from their 40. The final lateral was grabbed by Army's Elijah Riley, who returned it 29 yards for a touchdown.

The Black Knights tied a school record for wins set by

the 1996 team.

Penny ran for 221 yards, his fifth straight game of at least 200 yards. His scores came on runs of 81, on his first carry, 31, 49 and 4 yards.

Juwan Washington added the Aztecs' other touchdown on a 78-yard kickoff return in the first half's closing seconds.

"Obviously, Rashaad and Juwan had a great night," Aztecs coach Rocky Long said. "Our defense played really, really poorly. And that's coaching. So, that's my fault."

Army dominated the time of possession. The Black Knights ran 91 plays to the Aztecs' 30 and held the ball for 46:00 to San Diego State's 13:53.

"That's our brand of football," Monken said. "We don't have anybody like they have — when you break through the line, it's six points."

Woolfolk ran for two touchdowns, and Bradshaw and Andy Davidson ran for one each.

Monken said there was no doubt the Black Knights would go for two points if they pulled within one in the closing minutes with a touchdown.

"That No. 20, Rashaad Penny — if we went into overtime, he's

going to get the ball in his hands again," Monken said. "There's no way I wanted to watch that anymore."

Walker took the pitch and raced toward the right corner of the end zone.

"Our O-line did a tremendous job," Walker said. "All I had to do was catch it and run."

Running records fall: Penny finished with a school-record 2,248 rushing yards this season, breaking the mark set last season by Donnel Pumphrey. He said afterward the record doesn't mean anything since the Aztecs finished with a loss. Penny also became the fourth FBS player ever to run for 200 yards in five straight games.

Mission accomplished: Army's seniors progressed from records of 4-8 and 2-10 during their first two seasons to 8-5 and 10-3, with two straight wins over Navy and the school's first Commander-in-Chief's Trophy since 1996.

"We flipped the script last year and built the foundation that we're still building to where 10-win seasons are now the expectation," linebacker Alex Aukerman said.

Flowers lifts USF

Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Quinton Flowers did it again at the Birmingham Bowl, launching another winning touchdown throw with a game against a Power 5 team on the line.

Flowers threw a 26-yard touchdown pass to Tyre McCants with 16 seconds left to give No. 23 South Florida a 38-34 victory over Texas Tech in the Birmingham Bowl on Saturday.

Flowers led the Bulls (10-2) to a second straight dramatic victory in the bowl game at Legion Field, throwing for a pair of touchdowns in the final 4:26 after struggling in the first half.

"I was telling myself, I've got to hit my guys in the chest," Flowers said. "I've got to put the ball in their chest and just give them a chance. I just went out there and my coach called the play that I wanted and thank God Tyre did what he was supposed to do and I did what I was supposed to do and we came out with the victory."

The Bulls, who are 21-4 the past two seasons, won last year's Birmingham Bowl on Flowers' 25-yard touchdown pass in overtime against South Carolina.

The Red Raiders (6-7) had taken the lead back with Nic Shimonek's 25-yard TD pass to a wide-open T.J. Vasher in the end zone with 1:31 remaining. That left Flowers with plenty of time to work, it turns out.

He ran 13 and 21 yards for first downs, the latter coming on a third-and-10 play. Then he found McCants on their second scoring connection.

The senior passed for 311 yards and four touchdowns. He also ran 14 times for 106 yards and a fifth score. Marquez Valdes-Scantling gained 133 yards on three catches.

Shimonek took Texas Tech across midfield in the final seconds but his desperation pass on the run was completed well short of the end zone.

"Defensively, it was stop after stop that we had to go get," first-year South Florida coach Charlie Strong said.

Appalachian State shuts down Toledo

Associated Press

MOBILE, Ala. — Appalachian State's improved defense was a huge reason the program closed the regular season on a three-game winning streak and won a share of the Sun Belt Conference title.

The Mountaineers (9-4) saved the best for last in a Dollar General Bowl blowout.

Appalachian State's swarming, opportunistic defense was the catalyst for an impressive 34-0 victory over Toledo on Saturday night. The Rockets came into the game averaging nearly 40 points per game, but fell behind early and looked completely overmatched. They managed just 146 total yards while turning the ball over four times.

"When we get a little bit of a lead, that's when we're really dangerous," Appalachian State coach Scott Satterfield said. "Once we get that lead and our defense has their bearing straight, the other team starts forcing the ball down the field and that's when we get turnovers."

Appalachian State's defense had improved

during the season's final few weeks, giving up just 10 points per game in wins over Georgia State, Georgia Southern and Louisiana-Lafayette. The performance against the Rockets was even better. Linebacker Anthony Flory led the Mountaineers with eight tackles and intercepted a pass in the first quarter that helped shift the momentum.

"The defense has just been really solid," Satterfield said. "They've tackled well over the last month and haven't given up the big play."

The Mountaineers' offense had a good night as well, especially on the ground. Jalin Moore, who was the game's Most Valuable Player, ran for 125 yards and a career-high three touchdowns to lead a running game that finished with 327 yards.

"It meant everything sending these guys out with a 'W' like this," Moore said. "I stressed a lot about it. I knew what was at stake. I just tried to play a perfect game for myself and for my boys. It's kind of emotional."

Senior quarterback Taylor Lamb, who was starting his 49th straight game, threw for 131 yards.

Ravens top Colts, edge closer to berth

Associated Press

BALTIMORE — The Baltimore Ravens need one more win to get into the playoffs.

The Indianapolis Colts must play one more game before their painful season finally comes to an end.

Baltimore (9-6) remained on course to end its two-year postseason drought by defeating the Colts 23-16 Saturday. With a win over Cincinnati at home next Sunday, the Ravens will enter the playoffs as an AFC wild card.

"We'll be itching to back out there on Sunday and to get that game under day," quarterback Joe Flacco said. "But we've got to continue to do our business the right way, continue to do what we've been doing, and I think we'll be all right."

What the Ravens have been doing is winning — sometimes impressively and, as was the case Saturday, sometimes ugly.

The Ravens didn't force a turnover, scored only two touchdowns and were dangerously close to going into overtime at home against lowly Indianapolis.

"We didn't play our best game," coach John Harbaugh readily acknowledged.

Despite letting the lowly Colts hang in there right to the end, the Ravens pulled out a much-needed victory.

"Good teams find a way, especially in December," safety Eric Weddle said.

The Colts (3-12), on the other hand, are still looking for that elusive winning formula. After a blocked punt put Indianapolis in position to force overtime, the Colts frittered away their last chance.

"A lot of things haven't gone our way this year," safety Darius Butler said.

Indianapolis close the season on Dec. 31 at home against Houston.

Joe Flacco threw for 237 yards and two touchdowns, Justin Tucker kicked three field goals and the Ravens did just enough to squeeze out a victory.

"I wish we had gotten into the end zone one more time," Flacco said. "It's not always pretty."

Indianapolis closed to 16-13 in the third quarter before Flacco threw a 4-yard touchdown pass to Maxx Williams with 8:40 remaining.

It was 23-16 when Anthony Walker blocked a Ravens punt, giving the Colts the ball at the Baltimore 27 with 2:36 left. Indianapolis moved to the 10 before a third-down sack and a fourth-down incompleteness ended the comeback bid.

"We had a great chance to win this game," Colts quarterback Jacoby Bris-

sett said. "We just didn't get it done down there."

Flacco, who went 29-for-38, has thrown for seven TDs with just one interception over his last four games.

"We're a very excited, a very confident football team," Flacco said.

The Colts have lost six in a row for the first time since 2011, when they opened 0-13. That was the year before they drafted quarterback Andrew Luck, whose absence this season with a shoulder injury contributed heavily to the team's slide into the AFC South cellar.

Brissett completed 16 of 33 passes for 215 yards and Frank Gore had 68 yards rushing and a touchdown catch for Indianapolis. More importantly, the Colts did not commit a turnover against a team that leads the NFL with 33 takeaways.

Adam Vinatieri kicked three field goals for the Colts, but he had one blocked and came up short on a 60-yard try at the end of the first half.

Flacco went 16-for-22 for 157 yards to help the Ravens take a 13-7 halftime lead.

After kicking a field goal on its first possession, Baltimore blocked a field goal try by Vinatieri. The Ravens then launched a 71-yard drive that ended with Flacco tossing a 6-yard touchdown pass to Michael Campanaro for a 10-0 lead.

Vikings shut out Packers, eye first-round bye

Associated Press

GREEN BAY, Wis. — While winning at Lambeau Field means a lot to the Minnesota Vikings, the NFC North champions have bigger goals in mind.

A first-round playoff bye is well within reach.

The Vikings took care of business on their end with a 16-0 victory Saturday over the injury-depleted Green Bay Packers, the team's first shutout in 24 years. Having already clinched the division title, Minnesota (12-3) could wrap up a first-round bye if Carolina loses to Tampa Bay on Sunday.

"I'm hoping we can get one more win, work on some things we need to work on ... and then go out and play our rear ends off in the playoffs," Vikings coach Mike Zimmer said.

Stefon Diggs caught a 4-yard pass from quarterback

Case Keenum just inside the back line of the end zone in the first quarter for the only touchdown. After the game, Keenum stopped before heading up the tunnel at Lambeau, clapping his hands above his head while Vikings fans chanted "Skol! Skol!"

They felt right at home in Titledown.

"Defense played absolutely incredible today, and we did enough. It doesn't matter how, it matters how many," Keenum said.

The Packers (7-8) managed to hold a 239-236 edge in total yards. They were still shut out twice in a season for the first time since 2006.

"I never felt more defeated, more embarrassed by a performance. Yeah, we had opportunities, and we didn't connect when we did," receiver Randall Cobb said.

In its defense, the team field-

ed a lineup that often looked like one coach Mike McCarthy might send out for a game late in the preseason. The Packers had already been eliminated from playoff contention.

Brett Hundley was 17-for-40 for 130 yards with two interceptions in taking over at quarterback again for Aaron Rodgers, who returned to injured reserve this week after missing seven games earlier in the year with a collarbone injury.

"It's so frustrating just because of the fact that I know what I can do," Hundley said. "But to go out there and not be consistent — which is my number one goal — and just give our team an opportunity to win each game, that hurts."

The Vikings forced an incompleteness into the end zone on fourth-and-4 from the 14 early in the fourth quarter to turn away the Packers' last

best effort to cross the goal line. Minnesota safety Harrison Smith ended another Green Bay drive with an interception at the Vikings 5 late in the second quarter.

Diggs finished with five catches for 60 yards. Keenum was 14-for-25 for 139 yards.

Starting outside linebackers Clay Matthews (hamstring) and Nick Perry (ankle/shoulder) missed the game for Green Bay, along with cornerback Damarious Randall (hamstring). The Packers didn't have leading receiver Davante Adams, who is in the concussion protocol, and then lost wideout Jordy Nelson and tight end Richard Rodgers to shoulder injuries in the first half.

"Injuries are unfortunate. We had a lot of opportunities tonight. We didn't make the plays," McCarthy said.

NBA roundup

Nuggets stop Warriors' 11-game streak

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Gary Harris scored 19 points to lead a balanced Denver offense and the Nuggets stopped the Warriors' 11-game winning streak with a second impressive road victory in two nights, beating Golden State 96-81 on Saturday.

Nikola Jokic added 18 points and nine rebounds and Jamal Murray had 14 points, six rebounds and five assists for the Nuggets after their Friday win at Portland. They held the defending NBA champions to a season low for points.

Kevin Durant had 18 points in a particularly poor shooting performance for the typically efficient NBA Finals MVP. He was 6 for 17 and missed all five of his 3-point attempts as the Warriors shot 38.6 percent.

Draymond Green had 10 points, six assists and five rebounds in his second game back after missing five of six with soreness in his right shoulder. He took a sharp elbow to the face from Jokic with 7:27 remaining and went down hard.

Klay Thompson scored 15 for the Warriors, still minus two-time MVP Stephen Curry because of a sprained ankle.

Celtics 117, Bulls 92: Kyrie Irving scored 25 points, Jaylen Brown had 20 and host Boston coasted past Chicago.

Jayson Tatum added 13 points for the Eastern Conference-leading Celtics (27-9) as all five starters were in double figures. Reserve guard Marcus Smart scored 11 and rookie Daniel Theis grabbed a season-high 15 rebounds to go with 10 points.

Thunder 103, Jazz 89: Russell Westbrook had 27 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists, and visiting Oklahoma City beat Utah for its fourth straight win.

Rookie guard Donovan Mitchell scored 29 points for the Jazz after missing the last two games with a big toe contusion.

Pelicans 109, Heat 94: Ian Clark scored 19 points, Anthony Davis added 17 and New Orleans went on a big second-half run to pull away from host Miami.

DeMarcus Cousins had 16 points, eight assists and seven rebounds for the Pelicans, who were 15 for 25 from 3-point range and shot 53 percent overall. E'Twaun Moore scored 15 and Jrue Holiday had 13.

Wizards 130, Magic 103: Mike Scott scored 18 points, Otto Porter Jr. and Bradley Beal each had 17, and host Washington handed injury-ravaged Orlando its eighth straight defeat.

Hawks 112, Mavericks 107: Dennis Schroder matched his career high with 33 points, including 27 in the second half, to help Atlanta beat visiting Dallas in a matchup of last-place teams.

Raptors 102, 76ers 86: DeMar DeRozan scored 29 points, Serge Ibaka had 17 and Toronto beat Philadelphia for its 10th straight home victory.

Pacers 123, Nets 119 (OT): Victor Oladipo scored 38 points and was perfect from the free-throw line, helping host Indiana escape with a victory over Brooklyn.

Hornets 111, Bucks 106:

Dwight Howard had 21 points and 16 rebounds, Kemba Walker had 19 points and Charlotte battled back from an 18-point deficit to beat visiting Milwaukee.

Grizzlies 115, Clippers 112: Tyreke Evans scored 30 points, Marc Gasol had 17 points and a season-high 15 rebounds and host Memphis beat Los Angeles to snap a three-game losing streak.

Spurs 108, Kings 99: LaMarcus Aldridge had 29 points and 10 rebounds, and visiting San Antonio bounced back from a disappointing loss to beat slumping Sacramento.

Trail Blazers 95, Lakers 92: Maurice Harkless completed a go-ahead three-point play with 21.4 seconds remaining and Portland ended a three-game losing streak by beating host Los Angeles.

Timberwolves 115, Suns 106: Jimmy Butler scored 32 points to lead six Minnesota players in double figures, and the visiting Timberwolves never trailed against Phoenix.

Top 25 roundup

Bruins upset No. 7 Kentucky behind Holiday, Wilkes

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — UCLA guard Aaron Holiday delivered a steadying performance and a clutch finish to a made-for-TV holiday weekend event.

And he did it in the same arena where his brother, Jrue Holiday, plays home games in the NBA — albeit to the disappointment of a decidedly pro-Kentucky crowd.

Holiday capped a 20-point performance with a pivotal driving scoop and two free throws in the final 33 seconds, and UCLA upset No. 7 Kentucky 83-75 on Saturday.

Kris Wilkes also scored 20 points, and Thomas Welsh added 13 points and 11 rebounds for UCLA (9-3), which won for the seventh time in 15 meetings between these historical college basketball powerhouses.

No. 5 North Carolina 86, Ohio State 72: Joel Berry II and Theo Pinson each

scored 19 points, and No. 5 North Carolina bounced back from a loss to Wofford with a convincing victory over Ohio State on Saturday in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Pinson scored six points on flawless free throw shooting inside the final 1:06 of the game as the Tar Heels (11-2) kept the Buckeyes (10-4) at bay in the CBS Sports Classic.

New Mexico State 63, No. 6 Miami 54: Zach Lofton scored nine of his 15 points in the second half and New Mexico State knocked off Miami in the Diamond Head Classic semifinals in Honolulu.

The Aggies (11-2) beat a ranked team for the first time in 10 seasons and handed the Hurricanes (10-1) their first loss, leaving Villanova, Arizona State and TCU the lone undefeated Division I teams.

No. 10 West Virginia 86, Fordham 69:

Jevon Carter and Sagaba Konate had double-doubles to lead host West Virginia.

Carter had 10 points and a career-high 12 assists while Konate had 12 points and 11 rebounds as the Mountaineers won their 11th straight.

No. 21 Tennessee 79, Wake Forest 60: Jordan Bowden scored 17 points and visiting Tennessee shot 59 percent after halftime.

Keyshawn Woods scored 18 points for the Demon Deacons (7-5), who had won six straight.

No. 23 Seton Hall 74, Manhattan 62: Angel Delgado scored 15 points and grabbed 18 rebounds, Khadeen Carrington scored 15 and Desi Rodriguez added 13 points, seven rebounds and five assists for host Seton Hall.

The victory was the seventh in eight games for the Pirates (11-2).