

STARS AND STRIPES®

Friday, February 17, 2017

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Memo: White House weighed Guard for immigrant roundup

Associated Press

The Trump administration considered a proposal to mobilize as many as 100,000 National Guard troops to round up unauthorized immigrants, including millions living nowhere near the Mexico border, according to a draft memo obtained by The Associated Press.

Staffers in the Department of Homeland Security said the proposal had been discussed as recently as Feb. 10.

The 11-page document calls for the unprecedented militarization of immigration enforcement as far north as Portland, Ore., and as far east as New Orleans.

The four states that border on Mexico were included in the proposal — California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas — but it also encompasses seven states contiguous to those four — Oregon, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana.

White House spokesman Sean Spicer said Friday the document was “not a White House document.”

“There is no effort to do what is potentially suggested,” he said. Spicer called the AP report “100 percent not true, adding that there was “no effort at all to utilize the National Guard to round up unauthorized immigrants.”

A DHS official described the document as a very early draft that was not seriously considered and never was brought to the secretary for approval.

The AP had sought comment from the White House beginning Thursday and DHS earlier Friday and had not received a response from either.

Governors in the 11 states would have had a choice whether to have their Guard troops participate, according to the memo, which bears the name of U.S. Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly, a retired four-star Marine general.

While National Guard personnel have been used to assist with immigration-related missions on the U.S.-Mexico border before, they have never been used as broadly nor as far north.

The memo was addressed to the then-acting heads of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and U.S. Customs and Border Protection. It would have served as

guidance to implement the wide-ranging executive order on immigration and border security that President Donald Trump signed Jan. 25. Such memos are routinely issued to supplement executive orders.

Also dated Jan. 25, the draft memo says participating troops would be authorized “to perform the functions of an immigration officer in relation to the investigation, apprehension and detention of aliens in the United States.” It describes how the troops would be activated under a revived state-federal partnership program, and states that personnel would be authorized to conduct searches and identify and arrest any unauthorized immigrants.

If implemented, the impact could have been significant. Nearly one-half of the 11.1 million people residing in the U.S. without authorization live in the 11 states, according to Pew Research Center estimates based on 2014 Census data.

Use of National Guard troops would greatly increase the number of immigrants targeted in one of Trump’s executive orders last month, which expanded the definition of who could be considered a criminal and therefore a potential target for deportation. That order also allows immigration agents to prioritize removing anyone who has “committed acts that constitute a chargeable criminal offense.”

Under current rules, even if the proposal had been implemented, there would not be immediate mass deportations. Those with existing deportation orders could be sent back to their countries of origin without additional court proceedings. But deportation orders generally would be needed for most other unauthorized immigrants.

The troops would not be nationalized, remaining under state control.

Spokespeople for the governors of nine of the states either declined to comment or said it was premature to discuss whether they would participate.

Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson said his state had not had any contact about the proposal, but added, “I would have concerns about the utilization of National Guard resources for immigration enforcement. I believe it would be too much of a strain on our National Guard personnel.”

Thornberry: Big US ground force in Syria unlikely

BY TRAVIS J. TRITTEN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The chairman of the House Armed Services Committee said Thursday that he doubts the U.S. will send a large-scale ground force to fight in the Syrian war after reports the Pentagon might consider the option.

Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, said he supports the current U.S. strategy that includes up to 500 special operators who are tasked with advising and assisting Kurdish and rebel forces against the Islamic State group.

The Pentagon is weighing the option of ground troops, according to multiple reports citing anonymous sources, after President Donald Trump ordered a review of its nearly 3-year-old strategy against the Islamic State group, which seized territory in war-torn Syria and neighboring Iraq in 2014 and since has sparked terrorist attacks abroad.

“I do not see the United States putting a large ground force to take and occupy territory in Syria,” Thornberry told reporters.

The U.S. already has some forces on the ground — and has suffered casualties in the fight, Thornberry said. The military suffered its first combat death in Syria on Thanksgiving, and at least four service-members have been killed in Iraq since 2014.

Any deployed ground forces also would be entering a complex civil war that not only involves the Islamic State group but a raft of other rebels, the conventional forces of Syrian President Bashar Assad’s regime, and the Russian military.

“I do believe this assist role is the right one for us there. Of course ... that’s a long way from saying I see the solution of Syria,” Thornberry said.

The Pentagon refused to confirm or deny reports it is considering a proposal to send ground troops — a possibility that is likely to raise controversy after more than 15 years of near constant military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

It would be “very speculative” to conclude that a proposal for ground troops will be given to the president, Pentagon officials said.

Tribal leader, ally died in US Yemen raid

Associated Press

CAIRO — The main figure killed in last month's U.S. raid in Yemen targeting al-Qaida was a tribal leader who was allied to the country's U.S.- and Saudi-backed president and had been enlisted to fight Yemen's Shiite rebels, according to military officials, tribal figures and relatives.

The government connections of tribal chief Sheikh Abdel-Raouf al-Dhahab raise further questions over the planning of a raid that turned into a heavy firefight with casualties on both sides.

One U.S. Navy SEAL was killed, six American soldiers were wounded and a military aircraft suffered a hard landing and had to be destroyed in the assault, which took place days after President Donald Trump's inauguration.

Survivors and witnesses say at least 25 Yemenis were killed, including 10 children and nine women, raising outrage in Yemen and prompting the government to ask Washington for a review of the Jan. 29 assault on the tiny village of Yakla.

The raid illustrated the murkiness in distinguishing al-Qaida in Yemen, where the terror group has built up ties of one degree or another with the country's many tribes — and has often used anger over civilians killed in American airstrikes to gain recruits.

Al-Qaida also has emerged as a de facto ally of the government of President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi and his backers Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates against the Shiite rebels in a grueling civil war that has wreaked devastation, has caused widespread hunger and has killed more than 10,000 since late 2014. The result has been a tolerance for the militants after several years of a government crackdown on them.

Low-level operatives

In Yakla, there was some al-Qaida presence. At least six of those killed in the raid were al-Qaida fighters, according to a list put out by the group's leader, though some witnesses said they arrived on the scene after the battle started. Also, a female Saudi al-Qaida militant who fled her homeland in 2013 was being sheltered in the home of a tribesman whose son also was a member, according to tribal leaders and officials.

But all appeared to be low-level operatives. Also among the dead was an elderly sheikh trying to win the release of a fellow tribesman abducted by the terror network.

A senior U.S. defense official said the assault was not targeting a particular individual and was geared toward — and suc-

ceeded in — capturing intelligence. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the operation.

U.S. Central Command said 14 al-Qaida militants were killed. It counted among them al-Dhahab and his brother, Sultan, calling them “top operational planners and weapons experts.”

But Yemenis in the village called the raid an intelligence failure. “If you want to hunt al-Qaida, you can find them in the surrounding mountains, not in this small village ... The Americans' information was wrong,” said Aziz Mabkhout, the village chief.

Parts of the al-Dhahab clan have long been connected to al-Qaida. But in a public ceremony aired on Yemeni TV in 2013, Abdel-Raouf, Sultan and another brother announced an accord with the governor of Bayda province to force al-Qaida out of the area.

Just before the raid, Abdel-Raouf was in the neighboring province of Marib, meeting with the military chief of staff in Hadi's government. The meeting was confirmed by al-Dhahab's top aide, Fahd al-Qasi, who accompanied him, and two military officials who witnessed or helped arrange the meeting. The two officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the meeting.

The al-Dhahab clan

During five days of talks with the military, al-Dhahab — who commands a force of some 800 tribal fighters — was given about 15 million Yemeni riyals (\$60,000) to pay his men in the fight against the rebels, al-Qasi and the two officials said. He returned home to Yakla, and the evening before the raid, al-Qasi distributed the money to the fighters.

Maj. Gen. Mohsen Khasrouf — head of the military's Morale Guidance unit, the equivalent of a spokesman's office — told Al-Arabiya TV that al-Dhahab was working with Hadi's government to retake the nearby city of Radaa from the rebels.

The al-Dhahab clan is a powerful force in Bayda province, originally made up of 18 brothers and half-brothers. The family had long been split in a struggle for leadership, with one part joining al-Qaida. At least three of the brothers were senior al-Qaida figures, two of them killed in U.S. drone strikes and a third, Tareq, killed in a family dispute. Giving al-Qaida further leverage in the family, one of the sisters was married to Anwar al-Awlaki, a Yemeni-American who was the branch's top propagandist until he was killed in a 2011 drone strike.

But Abdel-Raouf, who became the clan's leader in 2012 after Tareq's death, repeat-

edly denied belonging to al-Qaida. He was mistrusted by al-Qaida because he didn't swear allegiance to its leader and had links to the government, according to a relative and a prominent figure from another tribe in the area. They spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity for fear of trouble with the terror group.

Hadi's government spokesman, Rageh Badi, did not reply to the AP's request for comment. AP emails to the vice president's office also received no reply.

U.S. officials did not immediately reply to queries whether planners were aware of al-Dhahab's link to Hadi's government.

Tribes respond

Since al-Qaida's branch in Yemen began in 2007, it has sought to strengthen alliances with the country's tribes, using money, family connections and fear. Some tribes join it, some use it against rivals, some cooperate with it and some shun it. Some tribes split.

Complicating matters further, al-Qaida militants have been fighting the Shiite rebels since 2015 informally alongside pro-Hadi forces. They often operate closely with ultraconservative Islamist militias funded by Hadi allies Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. That has enabled them to move back into areas they previously were driven out of, including Bayda province.

The AP spoke to eight witnesses and survivors of the raid, along with several prominent local tribal figures.

According to their accounts, it began about 1:30 a.m. when U.S. special operations forces descended on Yakla, in a sparsely populated area of Bayda province. Fighters in the village opened fire, and a battle erupted, with aerial bombardment and firing from attack helicopters. Fighting lasted several hours and at least three houses were destroyed.

“Nothing survived, even the cows and the sheep were shot dead,” said Sheikh Ahmed al-Salami, who lived not far from al-Dhahab and was among the villagers who got out their personal weapons to fight back against the attackers.

The center of the raid appeared to be six houses belonging to al-Dhahab family and Abdullah Mabkhout al-Ameri, head of another prominent local family. One of al-Ameri's sons, Mohammed, an al-Qaida member, was home at the time of the raid, according to several villagers. Also staying in an annex to the house were the fugitive Saudi female jihadi, Arwa al-Baghdadi, her brother — also an al-Qaida militant — and his pregnant wife and their niece.

All but the niece were killed.

US military: Strike in Libya bore critical intel

Associated Press

MUNICH — Senior U.S. military officials say the massive airstrikes that killed more than 80 Islamic State militants in southern Libya last month generated critical computer data, documents and information from prisoner interrogations that the U.S. can use to track and target more fighters.

Marine Gen. Thomas Waldhauser, the head of U.S. Africa Command, told The Associated Press in an interview Friday that the U.S. got significant intelligence from the camps after the bombings, adding that “there’s some things we’re working on.” Waldhauser declined to go into detail about intelligence that was gathered.

But a senior U.S. military official described some of the information gathered and said that several Islamic State fighters who survived the Jan. 18th strikes were taken by Libyan militia forces and were interrogated.

The official said the intelligence collected at the Islamic State camps confirmed that the fighters had direct communication with the core Islamic State group in Syria and provided information about how they move through tunnels in the country. The official was not authorized to discuss the details publicly, so spoke on condition of anonymity.

“We did get some actionable intelligence and we continue to work with that and develop what we can from it,” Waldhauser told The Associated Press at the Munich Security Conference, which began Thursday. “We are watching, we are paying attention to where we can see numbers of them gathering and that is a focus to a large degree of our intelligence development.”

U.S. Air Force B-2 bombers attacked the Islamic State military camps in Libya’s lawless southern region, targeting fighters who former Defense Secretary Ash Carter said “were actively planning operations against our allies in Europe.” The senior U.S. military official said that none of the information appeared to suggest an imminent attack against the West.

In addition to the Libyan militia troops, there were special operations forces from the United Kingdom that took part in the intelligence collection, according to the military official. The official said that all of the Islamic State members at the camps were foreign fighters and that none was Libyan.

Waldhauser said the military had watched the camps since late last fall, but that the fighters move around southern Libya and don’t stay in any one place for long.

He called the strike a “devastating blow” to the group.

At security summit, Germany urges US to be ‘responsible’

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

MUNICH — German Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen urged the U.S. on Friday to keep a united front against Russia, to avoid “going over the heads” of allies, to refrain from torture and not to turn the war against terrorism into a battle against Islam.

“The world needs a globally committed, responsible America,” von der Leyen said at the start of the three-day Munich Security Conference.

Her comments, which highlight widespread concerns among Europeans about U.S. President Donald Trump’s overtures to Russian President Vladimir Putin and some of the president’s more provocative public declarations, came even as allies sought to address U.S. criticisms about a security free-rider.

Von der Leyen conceded that Europe, and Germany in particular, must do more to ease the security burden on the continent carried by the U.S.

More than 30 heads of state, military brass and diplomats have gathered in Munich to gauge the future direction of U.S. foreign policy under Trump and the sharp demands it is placing on allies to boost their respective militaries.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said in Berlin on Friday that her country was moving forward with a plan to elevate defense spending to the NATO-prescribed level of 2 percent of gross national product by 2024. The plan will not be accelerated to appease Trump, she said.

“We must do more here, no question, but the matters of development aid and crisis prevention are also important,” Merkel told reporters. She added that Germany had increased defense spending by 8 per-

cent in its 2017 budget.

U.S. Vice President Mike Pence will address the Munich conference on Saturday, offering a first glimpse for many European leaders into how Trump intends to deal with its allies.

The conference’s theme captures the unease across much of Europe, which has been jolted by the rise of Trump, and follows the release of the Munich security report “Post-Truth, Post-West, Post-Order?”

“Trump has made it obvious that established partnerships, alliances, rules, and protocols mean little to him,” wrote Munich Security Conference chairman, Wolfgang Ischinger, in an editorial ahead of the talks. “In his tweets, he rants about the media, attacks independent judges, targets individuals and companies, and belittles international organizations.”

On Friday, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis addressed the conference, and he echoed recent comments about the need for NATO members to step up their investments in defense to 2 percent of GNP.

“We are going to adapt the alliance, and now comes the hard part,” he said.

He said that allies must summon the political will to confront gaps in spending and must shape NATO to better deal with terrorism threats while still deterring a more assertive Russia.

Allies have been roiled by the Trump’s recent declaration that NATO is “obsolete,” sparking worries that America is losing interest in its support for the alliance.

“NATO cannot be taken for granted, not by the United States, nor us Europeans,” von der Leyen said. Regarding NATO’s Article 5 pledge that an attack on one requires a response from all 28 members, the German defense minister said: “This is priceless and not up for negotiation.”

Navy commander charged in ‘Fat Leonard’ bribery case

SAN DIEGO — A Navy commander is the 12th Navy official to be charged in a wide-ranging bribery case involving a Malaysian defense contractor nicknamed “Fat Leonard” and was part of a group of officers called the “Wolf Pack” who accepted the services of prostitutes and other perks in exchange for classified information.

Cmdr. Mario Herrera was accused in a complaint in San Diego federal court that was unsealed Thursday of diverting ships to financially lucrative ports for Leonard Glenn Francis in exchange for

the trips to fancy hotels where prostitutes were arranged to meet him, and extravagant dinners provided, including \$1,800 in steaks. Herrera could not be reached for comment.

According to the complaint, Herrera and other U.S. Navy 7th Fleet officers who helped Francis in exchange for the perks called themselves the “Band of Brothers” and the “Wolf Pack.”

A total of 17 people have been charged so far in the case that has taken down officials for about three years. Of them 12 are current or former Navy officials — 10 of whom have pleaded guilty.

From The Associated Press

Harward rejects Trump offer to be security adviser

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Vice Adm. Robert Harward has turned down an offer to be President Donald Trump's new national security adviser, the latest blow to a new administration struggling to find its footing.

Harward told The Associated Press that the Trump administration was "very accommodating to my needs, both professionally and personally."

"It's purely a personal issue," Harward said Thursday evening. "I'm in a unique position finally after being in the military for 40 years to enjoy some personal time."

Asked whether he had requested to bring in his own staff at the National Security Council, Harward said, "I think that's for the president to address."

Following Flynn's ouster, administration officials said his deputy, KT McFarland, was staying on at the National Security Council. McFarland is a former Fox News analyst.

Harward would have replaced retired Gen. Michael Flynn, who resigned at Trump's request Monday after revelations that he misled Vice President Mike Pence about discussing sanctions with Russia's ambassador to the U.S. during the transition. Trump said in a news conference Thursday that he was disappointed by how Flynn had treated Pence, but did not believe Flynn had done anything wrong by having the conversations.

Harward, a former Navy SEAL, served as deputy commander of U.S. Central Command under Gen. James Mattis, who is now defense secretary. Harward served on the National Security Council under President George W. Bush and commissioned the National Counter Terrorism Center.

President rips 'dishonest' media, says Russia a ruse

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The leaks are real. But the news about them is fake. The White House is a fine-tuned machine. Russia is a ruse.

For its stunning moments and memorable one-liners, Donald Trump's first solo news conference as president has no rivals in recent memory. For all the trappings of the White House and traditions of the forum, his performance was one of a swaggering, blustery campaigner, armed with grievances and primed to unload on his favorite targets.

In nearly an hour and a half at the podium, Trump bullied reporters, dismissed facts and then cracked a few caustic jokes — a combination that once made the candidate irresistible cable TV fodder. Now in office, he went even further, blaming the media for all but sinking his not-yet-launched attempt to "make a deal" with Moscow.

That matters, Trump said in one of his many improvisational asides, because he'd been briefed and "I can tell you ... nuclear holocaust would be like no other."

This was his and his aides' attempt to get the boss his groove back. Trump used the event to try to claw his young administration back from the brink after a defeat in court and the forced resignation of his top national security adviser.

He taunted reporters and waved away their attempts to fact-check him in real time. He (incorrectly) touted his Electoral College total and repeatedly blasted his November opponent — somehow mention-

ing Hillary Clinton more than anyone else in his defense of his administration's early days. He bragged that his White House is "a fine-tuned machine" and claimed "there has never been a presidency that has done so much in such a short period of time."

If only the news media would give him credit. Over and over, he accused the political press of being dishonest and suggested that any negative coverage of his administration was "fake news." He unloaded a torrent of grievances while positioning himself as the stand-in for the everyman, who, he declared, hates and distrusts reporters as much as he does.

"The press — the public doesn't believe you people anymore. Now, maybe I had something to do with that. I don't know. But they don't believe you," Trump charged. "But you've got to be at least a little bit fair, and that's why the public sees it. They see it. They see it's not fair. You take a look at some of your shows and you see the bias and the hatred."

The performance was vintage Trump, a throwback to the messy, zinger-filled news conferences he held during the early stages of his campaign. And, when combined with a rally slated for Saturday in Florida, it appeared to be the start of a one-two punch meant to re-energize a president whose White House in recent days has been buffeted by crisis and paralyzed by dysfunction.

Yet it was a far cry from the "buck stops here" mantra popularized by Harry Truman and other presidents who believed that the ultimate responsibility for any White House struggles lay with the president, himself. Trump was eager to assign blame

Body of N. Korea leader's slain brother unclaimed

Associated Press

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia — Days after his apparent assassination, Kim Jong Nam's body remained under guard in a Malaysian morgue Friday, with no one in his immediate family stepping forward on behalf of a man who lived in fear of his half brother, the ruler of North Korea.

South Korea was quick to accuse its enemies in North Korea of dispatching a hit squad to kill Kim Jong Nam at the airport in Kuala Lumpur, saying two female assassins poisoned him.

Although Kim Jong Nam is believed to have two sons and a daughter with two

women living in Beijing and Macau, police in Malaysia say none has claimed the body nor has provided DNA samples in the aftermath of what appeared to be a well-executed hit.

Investigators were still trying to piece together details of the case, and South Korea has not said how it concluded North Korea was behind the killing.

Malaysian police were questioning three suspects — two women and a man — and were waiting for autopsy results that could shed light on why Kim Jong Nam suddenly fell ill at the airport as he waited for a flight to Macau.

Dizzy and in pain, he told medical work-

ers at the airport he had been sprayed with a chemical. Within two hours, Malaysian officials said, he was dead.

Kim Jong Nam, who was 45 or 46, had lived in exile for years and was estranged from his younger half brother, the North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. He reportedly fell out of favor in 2001, when he was caught trying to enter Japan on a false passport to visit Tokyo Disneyland.

Malaysia said Friday it wants DNA samples from Kim Jong Nam's family as part of the postmortem procedure and that officials were not willing to hand the body over to the North Koreans.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Woman charged with assault with diaper

MT GREAT FALLS — A Great Falls woman was charged with assault on a minor after her 13-year-old daughter reported the woman held her down, rubbed a dirty diaper in her face and pushed her against a wall because she hadn't changed a 1-year-old's diaper.

The Great Falls Tribune reported Jessica Marie Roche, 34, was charged Tuesday in District Court. She did not enter a plea.

Charging documents said the girl told police she had been taking care of other children when Roche was away from the house. When Roche returned, the girl said her mother became angry that the 1-year-old's diaper hadn't been changed.

The girl told investigators her mother screamed at her and then assaulted her.

University student named best bagger

OH MEDINA — A University of Akron accounting student has been named the nation's top grocery bagger after claiming the Ohio title two years in a row.

The Medina Gazette reported Brady Long, 23, returned to Wadsworth with a \$10,000 prize after winning the National Grocers Association's Best Bagger championship.

Long packs up groceries at Buehler's Fresh Foods. He competed against nearly two dozen others during the bagging championship in Las Vegas, where they were judged on speed, technique and other factors, including style and attitude.

He said he'll use the prize money to help him replace his current vehicle, a 1996 van.

Zoo names cockroach after Tom Brady

GA ATLANTA — More than a week after the Falcons fell victim to the biggest comeback in Super Bowl history, an Atlanta zoo has named a cockroach after Patriots quarterback Tom Brady.

Zoo Atlanta says on its Facebook page that it had a bet with Rhode Island's Roger Williams Park Zoo that called for the loser to name a baby animal after the winning team's star quarterback. Both zoos figured the loser would be pretty bitter about the game, so they agreed the animal in question would be a Madagascar hissing cockroach.

The zoo introduced a whole family of cockroaches in a video Monday, including a tiny Tom Brady.

Brady and the Patriots came back from a 25-point deficit to defeat Atlanta 34-28 in overtime to win the team's fifth Super Bowl.

Bill would allow later closing times at bars

CA SACRAMENTO — Closing times at bars in California could go later if proposed legislation there gets passed.

The bill proposed Tuesday by state Sen. Scott Wiener, a Democrat who represents San Francisco, would let municipalities set their own last call times. The Los Angeles Times reported that communities could decide to go as late as 4 a.m.

Currently, the last call time across the state is 2 a.m.

Wiener's predecessor in the Legislature, former Sen. Mark Leno, tried in 2013 to give cities more flexibility in setting last call times. But his bill didn't get enough votes to move out of committee.

Woman threw rocks at jail to attract lover

CO PUEBLO — Police said a Colorado woman threw rocks at a local jail in an attempt to get the attention of her love interest on Valentine's Day.

Pueblo County deputies told the Pueblo Chieftain they responded to a report of suspicious activity at the county detention center just before midnight and found a window on the second floor had been broken.

Deputies said surveillance video showed someone throwing rocks at the building, and deputies later learned the person has a relationship with a jail inmate.

An arrest warrant for criminal mischief has been issued for a 38-year-old woman.

Conviction reversed after inmate's death

MD HAGERSTOWN — A Maryland appeals court reversed a man's rape conviction four days after he was found beaten to death in a state prison cell.

The Court of Special Appeals issued the ruling Wednesday in the case of Roger Lee Largent, 69. Maryland's second-highest court found Largent's jury conviction last year for second-degree rape was based on the testimony of a nurse who gave an unqualified expert opinion that a woman can be raped but show no physical signs of an assault.

Largent maintained the sex was consensual. He had been convicted of a third-degree sex offense in 1999 and was a registered sex offender.

Maryland State Police are investigating Largent's slaying Saturday at the maximum-security Western Correctional Institution.

Joey the pet squirrel thwarts a burglary

ID MERIDIAN — Police in southwest Idaho said an indoor pet, a squirrel named Joey, thwarted a burglary attempt.

The Meridian Police Department said a juvenile entered a home last week and told police after later being arrested that a squirrel attacked him when he tried to break into a gun safe.

Meridian Police officer Ashley Turner said the juvenile received scratch marks on his arm but no bites. The teen is believed to have entered three or four unlocked homes in the area.

Joey's owner, Adam Pearl, said no one can believe he has a squirrel that guards his house.

Joey has a nest in a kitchen cabinet. For his vigilance, Pearl gave his pet a reward: Whoppers, Joey's favorite candy.

Thimble voted out of Monopoly board game

NJ ATLANTIC CITY — You can pass "Go" and collect \$200 on the Monopoly board, but you soon won't be able to do it with the thimble game piece.

Voters rejected the thimble, a part of the game since being added to Monopoly in 1935. The move is part of a campaign to select the next generation of game pieces.

Hasbro Inc. is holding a worldwide contest to let people choose the eight tokens to be included in the next generation of the property acquisition game, based on the real streets of Atlantic City, N.J.

Winners will be announced March 19, and will be included in games hitting shelves this August.

From wire reports

On a mission to provide objective reporting to America's military, wherever they serve.
Read us online at www.stripes.com.

STARS AND STRIPES®

Crosby latest to NHL's 1,000-point club

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Sidney Crosby is the newest member of the NHL's 1,000-point club.

The Pittsburgh Penguins star became the 86th player in league history to reach 1,000 career points when he assisted on Chris Kunitz's goal 6:28 into the first period on Thursday night against Winnipeg.

Crosby's helper gave him 632 assists to go with 368 goals. The 29-year-old reached the milestone in 757 games, making him the 12th fastest to the mark.

The sellout crowd at PPG Paints Arena erupted when Crosby outworked Winnipeg's Blake Wheeler to get to a loose puck in the left circle then slid it over to Kunitz in the slot. Kunitz powered it into the wide open net to give Pittsburgh a 2-0 lead, and Crosby saluted the crowd during the next stoppage in play. Crosby is the third Penguin to reach 1,000 points with the franchise, joining Mario Lemieux and Jaromir Jagr.

Crosby later provided a match-winning exclamation mark, poking the puck over the goal line with 21 seconds left in overtime to give the Penguins a 4-3 victory.

"It's nice to win the game when you have a memorable night like this," Crosby said. "You want to finish it the right way."

The Canadian's milestone is not only testament to Crosby's brilliance but also something equally as important: longevity. It's something the two-time Stanley Cup champion, two-time Hart Trophy winner and two-time Olympic gold medalist does not take for granted.

A collision with Washington's David Steckel during the 2011 Winter Classic left Crosby concussed and brought the star's career to an abrupt halt. He missed the better part of two calendar years trying to recover, and the long days in solitude left him wondering if he'd ever return to the level that made him the face of the sport.

And Crosby wasn't the only one.

"I think there were a lot of question marks about the future and how his career would go from there," said Buffalo Sabres coach Dan Bylsma, who coached Crosby in Pittsburgh from 2009-14. "I think in pretty short order after that two-year period of time, he got back to being the player who I think has been great for all of us to see him be, which is the best player in the league. He's proven it again."

Emphatically. When he was diagnosed with another concussion last October, he pleaded patience rather than anxiousness. He sat out the first six games of the season but returned with a vengeance. He leads the league in goals and is on pace to surpass his personal best of 51 he put up in 2009-10.

"When you get major injuries like he had, to battle back, it's not easy," San Jose captain Joe Thornton said. "Concussions, you know, yeah, you don't know if you're going to come back or not."

The puck from his 1,000th point will eventually end up in the hands of Crosby's father Troy, the designated curator of his son's ever increasing cache of memorabilia. It's a decision they made together after Crosby admittedly did little to keep track of things when he piled up achievements at a ridiculous rate when he literally was Sid the Kid.

He's become more appreciative of them as they come. Even though he's still firmly in his prime at 29, he's well aware that nothing is guaranteed.

"I understand that when you get to those numbers as you get older, only so many cracks you have at certain ones like that," Crosby said last week.

Power-play goals help Blues win 6th straight

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Vladimir Tarasenko and Alexander Steen scored third-period power play goals to lift the streaking St. Louis Blues to a 4-3 win over the Vancouver Canucks on Thursday night.

Magnus Paajarvi and Jori Lehtera also scored, and Kevin Shattenkirk had three assists for the Blues, who won their sixth straight game. Jake Allen made 18 saves.

St. Louis improved to 7-1 since Mike Yeo took over as coach, which is the best start for a coach in Blues history.

Bo Horvat, Henrik Sedin and Brandon Sutter scored for the Canucks, who dropped their third game out of their last four. Jacob Markstrom made 17 saves.

Penguins 4, Jets 3 (OT): Sidney Crosby fed Chris Kunitz for a first-period goal against visiting Winnipeg and added an assist on Phil Kessel's game-

tying goal in the third, then put the winner past Connor Hellebuyck with 21 seconds left in overtime.

Crosby finished with three points to push his total 1,002. Evgeni Malkin also scored for Pittsburgh, while Marc-Andre Fleury stopped 44 shots for the Penguins, who improved to 6-0-2 since the All-Star break.

Islanders 4, Rangers 2: Andrew Ladd scored twice to lead the Islanders over their cross-town rivals.

Anders Lee and Nikolay Kulemin also scored, and Thomas Greiss stopped 25 shots to help the Islanders improve to 8-0-2 in their last 10 at home. John Tavares had two assists for his 12th multipoint game of the season.

Wild 3, Stars 1: Darcy Kuemper stopped 34 shots while Erik Haula had a goal and an assist as host Minnesota beat Dallas.

Ryan Suter and Jared Spurgeon also scored for the Western

Conference leaders. Minnesota hasn't lost consecutive games in more than two months and extended its point streak against the Stars to seven games.

Oilers 6, Flyers 3: Connor McDavid had a goal and two assists to regain the NHL scoring lead and help host Edmonton beat Philadelphia.

Matt Hendricks, Leon Draisaitl, Jordan Eberle, Ryan Nugent-Hopkins and Oscar Klefbom also scored for the Oilers, who have won two straight and three of four. Edmonton moved into a tie with Anaheim for second place in the Pacific Division.

Senators 3, Devils 0: Mike Condon made 21 saves in recording his fifth shutout of the season and Dion Phaneuf scored on a power play as visiting Ottawa beat New Jersey.

Erik Karlsson scored on a point shot that crawled into the net and Kyle Turris shot into an empty net in the final four minutes to give the Senators their

third win in four games.

Sabres 2, Avalanche 0: Sam Reinhart and Evander Kane scored and Robin Lehner made 23 saves as host Buffalo beat Colorado.

The Sabres moved within three points of Toronto for the final Eastern Conference wild-card spot. They have won consecutive games for the first time since a three-game winning streak from Jan. 20-24.

Coyotes 5, Kings 3: Brendan Perlini scored twice, Jordan Martinook added short-handed and empty-net goals in the third period and Mike Smith made 41 saves to lift visiting Arizona over Los Angeles.

Tobias Rieder scored his 13th goal of the season and Oliver Ekman-Larsson picked up a point for the fifth consecutive game with his sixth assist in that span, helping the Coyotes to their fourth win in their last six games.

Austria's Hirscher wins men's giant slalom

Associated Press

ST. MORITZ, Switzerland — After an incident involving a military airplane delayed the race, Marcel Hirscher ended his long wait to win a world championship title in giant slalom on Friday.

The race's decisive second run was pushed back 30 minutes after a monoplane in a Swiss Air Force formation display team's training exercise struck the cable of a moving overhead television camera.

The camera, for filming racers through the finish line, fell into the area where skiers stop. No one was hurt.

"Every day something unexpected can happen but I am sure a lot of people had a lot of luck today," Hirscher said.

After leading the first run, Hirscher raced through falling snow to hold off unheralded Austrian teammate Roland Leitinger by 0.25 seconds. Leif Kristian Haugen of Norway was another surprise medalist

in third, trailing Hirscher by 0.71.

Neither the 25-year-old Leitinger nor the 29-year-old Haugen has ever finished on the podium of a World Cup race.

Hirscher took silver in giant slalom at the past two world championships — part of Ted Ligety's streak of winning every gold medal in the discipline since the 2010 Olympics. The American ended his season early because of injury.

"I have waited six years for this victory," said Hirscher, who turns 28 next month. "I was really, really searching for this."

It seemed fitting that Hirscher should win a race where a low-flying aircraft was a distraction. Last season, the Austrian was almost struck during a World Cup slalom race by a camera-carrying drone that fell from the air and landed on the snow just behind him.

Hirscher was furious afterward, and later finished second

in that December 2015 race in Madonna di Campiglio, Italy.

The International Ski Federation quickly reacted by banning the use of drones at races it organizes.

On Friday, Swiss state broadcasters that owned the camera filmed it falling into the empty finish area from a scaffold behind the main grandstand.

"The pilot hit the cable, causing it to break and the camera fell into the finish area," FIS spokeswoman Jenny Wiedeke said in a statement. "The police are going to investigate this further."

The Swiss military team, made up of Pilatus PC-7 turbo trainers, was taking part in a second day of exercises over the course. The plane which struck the TV equipment later landed safely at nearby Samedan, police said at a news conference.

Fly-overs were canceled for Saturday and Sunday when mid-race displays were scheduled to entertain big crowds expected for the women's and

men's slalom races.

Damage to the camera was valued at \$266,000, race organizers said.

The giant slalom race resumed at 1:30 p.m. instead of the scheduled 1 p.m..

Chair lifts were stopped as a precaution after the incident and some racers were delayed inspecting the course. They were allowed a further 30 minutes to examine the second run gate-setting.

Hirscher's win was predicted by many, but Alexis Pinturault's failure to get a medal was a surprise.

Pinturault, who won three World Cup giant slaloms this season, was third in the morning but then dropped to finish seventh. The Frenchman was in tears while conducting some post-race interviews.

Hirscher, who also took silver in combined in St. Moritz, will be favored to win a third medal in Sunday's slalom.

Butler's free throws help propel Bulls past Celtics

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Jimmy Butler and Isaiah Thomas should have plenty to talk about when they see each other in New Orleans this weekend.

Butler made two free throws with 0.9 seconds left, sending the Chicago Bulls to a 104-103 victory over Thomas and the Boston Celtics on Thursday night.

Butler's clutch foul shots capped a memorable duel with fellow All-Star Thomas in the NBA's final game before the break. Butler and Thomas both finished with 29 points and seven assists.

Butler was touched on the right elbow by Marcus Smart on a turnaround jumper as the horn sounded, drawing a foul. Butler calmly patted his elbow and then walked toward the line while an incredulous Smart danced up the court in

disbelief.

"He got a piece of the elbow," Butler said. "People are going to say, 'Aw, he didn't foul him,' but he did. So at the end of the day they made the right call."

Said Thomas: "That's horrible when it costs you a game you should have won. That's a bad call."

After Butler's free throws, Al Horford air-balled a baseline jumper on the Celtics' last shot, giving Chicago (28-29) consecutive wins against Eastern Conference powers Toronto and Boston (37-20).

"I'm excited about these two wins over two very good teams," coach Fred Hoiberg said. "Hopefully, we can build off of these coming back off the break."

Bobby Portis had a season-high 19 points for the Bulls, who went 22-for-22 at the line. Robin Lopez had 15 points and eight rebounds, and Taj Gibson

finished with 12 points and nine rebounds.

"It's big for us. It's going to propel us to the second half of the season, which our team really needs," Portis said.

Thomas went 8-for-18 from the field in his 41st straight game with at least 20 points, breaking the team record set by John Havlicek during the 1971-72 season.

Wizards 111, Pacers 98: Otto Porter Jr. made six three-pointers, finished with 25 points and eight rebounds, and visiting Washington won its fourth straight.

The Wizards made nine three-pointers and led by as many as 19 points in the first half. The Pacers turned the ball over eight times in the first half, resulting in 15 points for the Wizards. Washington led the entire game.

Markieff Morris scored 21 points, Bradley Beal finished

with 19 and John Wall added 20 points and 12 assists for the Wizards.

Washington (34-21) is 18-5 since the beginning of January. The Wizards' starters outscored Indiana's 97-59.

Myles Turner finished with 17 points and nine rebounds for Indiana. Paul George scored 17 points, and Jeff Teague had six points, six rebounds and five assists for Indiana (29-28).

Indiana closed the deficit to single digits during the fourth quarter, but Washington pushed the lead back to 13, shutting the window of opportunity on the Pacers and sending them into the All-Star break sitting on a six-game losing streak — the longest of the season for the Pacers.

Washington tied its season high for three-pointers in a game with 15. The Wizards scored 100 points for the 22nd straight game.

Mich. extends winning streak, upsets Wis.

Associated Press

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — Michigan had a senior play well again to extend its winning streak.

It was Zak Irvin, not Derrick Walton, for a change.

Irvin broke out of a slump with 18 points and Moe Wagner scored 21 points, helping the Wolverines beat No. 11 Wisconsin 64-58 on Thursday night.

After scoring a total of 13 points in the previous four games, Irvin opened the game against the Badgers by sailing a three-pointer over the basket.

“The last two weeks, I’ve been encouraged by teammates, coaches, whenever I have a miss,” Irvin said. “To start off with an airball the way I did, I had my head down a little bit. But Coach (John Beilein) and the rest of the guys were there, ‘Keep shooting! Keep shooting!’ and it was falling late for me.”

The Wolverines (17-9, 7-6 Big Ten) have won three straight to boost their chances of making the NCAA Tournament, giving them the opportunity of possibly improving their seeding and chances of advancing.

“It’s not a bad time to be peaking,” Walton said. “The most important basketball is right now and the stakes are a lot higher. Guys are playing with so much more passion and it’s showing on the court.”

Walton scored five points on 1-for-8 shooting — ending a five-game streak with 20-plus points — and had eight assists and

five rebounds.

The Badgers (21-5, 10-3) have lost consecutive games for the first time this season, dropping them into a three-way tie atop the Big Ten standings with No. 16 Purdue and No. 23 Maryland with five games remaining in the regular season. Wisconsin was without senior point guard Bronson Koenig because of a calf strain in his left leg, and were forced to break up a starting lineup that began the first 25 games of the season together.

“We’re not peaking yet if you want to look at the bright side,” Ethan Happ said after scoring 22 points.

Big picture

Wisconsin: The Badgers clearly missed Koenig and need him to get healthy to help their chances of winning the Big Ten title and potentially making a run in the NCAA Tournament.

Freshman D’Mitrik Trice had nine points on 2-for-15 shooting, five rebounds and four assists in his first start and made one glaring mistake. Trice fouled Muhammad-Ali Abdur-Rahkman on a tiebreaking three-pointer with 7:51 left that gave Michigan the 11th and final lead change in a game with eight ties.

“Having Bronson would’ve been nice the last couple of minutes, we’re so used to playing with him,” guard Zak Showalter said. “But we got to think about our future, and his future. Now, we just have to take care of business the rest of the way and

hopefully win out in this conference and get a ring.”

Michigan: The Wolverines proved they can win without Walton having a great game, and that’s a key development. The senior point guard has been carrying the team lately, averaging 23 points in the previous five games.

“I’m just glad all the people were there to pick it up,” Beilein said.

Abdur-Rahkman scored 12 points, giving Michigan scoring from its backcourt without Walton’s usual production.

Up and down

Happ scored 18 points in the first half, making eight of nine shots, and could not be stopped in the lane by the Wolverines. After getting doubled often in the second half, Happ was held to four points and four shots. Likewise, Khalil Iverson was much more effective in the first half with eight of his 10 points.

Rare win

Beilein beat the Badgers for just the third time in 19 games.

“We haven’t been on the left side of the column too much against them,” Walton said. “I know Coach B was ecstatic.”

Beilein has lost to Wisconsin 16 times, more than any other opponent. He has 14 losses against Ohio State and Gannon.

No. 1 Gonzaga routs San Francisco 96-61

Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. — Nigel Williams-Goss scored 30 points as undefeated and No. 1 Gonzaga beat San Francisco 96-61 on Thursday night, extending the nation’s longest winning streak to 27 games.

Przemek Karnowski added 23 points and seven rebounds for Gonzaga (27-0, 15-0 West Coast), which is seeking to become the first team since Kentucky in 2015 to go undefeated in the regular season.

Chase Foster had 15 points and Matt McCarthy added 11 for San Francisco (18-10, 8-7). San Francisco has dropped 11 straight to Gonzaga and 28 in a row in Spokane dating to 1989.

Williams-Goss, a junior

guard, added six rebounds and seven assists as he torched the Dons for at least 30 points for the second time this season.

No. 5 Arizona 78, Washington State 59: Lauri Markkanen scored 19 points on 7-for-13 shooting and pulled down 11 rebounds to help the visiting Wildcats overcome an early deficit.

Parker Jackson-Cartwright added a game-high 20 points for the Wildcats and hit four of five from three-point range.

Arizona (24-3, 13-1 Pac-12) trailed for just over 10 minutes in the first half, but carried a 16-6 run into halftime, when it led by nine.

Washington State’s leading scorer, Josh Hawkinson, struggled against Arizona’s interior

size. He finished with seven points on 3-for-9 shooting, and struggled in both matchups against Arizona this season.

The Wildcats missed the defense of Kadeem Allen, who did not play due to a dislocated pinky.

Ike Iroegbu led the Cougars (11-15, 4-10) with 17 points.

No. 7 Oregon 79, Utah 61: Dillon Brooks scored 20 points and the host Ducks extended their home winning streak to 41 games.

Jordan Bell added 17 points for Oregon (23-4, 12-2 Pac-12), which wore new neon green uniforms that glowed under blacklights during player introductions.

Jayce Johnson had 14 points and 12 rebounds for Utah (17-

8, 8-6), playing without top scorer Kyle Kuzma because of a sprained ankle.

No. 22 Saint Mary’s 81, Loyola Marymount 48: Jock Landale had 16 points and 11 rebounds for the host Gaels.

Evan Fitzner had a season-high 13 points — all in the first half — and Calvin Hermanson added 11 to help Saint Mary’s (23-3, 13-2 West Coast Conference) to its eighth win in nine games.

Playing for the first time since losing to No. 1 Gonzaga last week, Saint Mary’s showed no lingering effects and led by as many as 38 points while extending its winning streak to 11 straight against Loyola Marymount.