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2 lawmakers: Defense hike not enough

BY TRAVIS J. TRITTEN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Republican chairmen of the Senate and House armed services committees said Monday that President Donald Trump's proposal to boost defense spending by \$54 billion for fiscal year 2018 is not enough.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, are pushing for a \$640 billion base defense budget and said the \$603 billion proposal unveiled by the White House will not reverse the decline in recent years in spending and military readiness.

The White House released a spending cap-busting, top-line figure following pledges by Trump for a major defense buildup but declined to provide details of how the additional

money will be used.

It plans to release a fully detailed defense budget in May and that must be passed by Congress.

"With a world on fire, America cannot secure peace through strength with just 3 percent more than President [Barack] Obama's budget. We can and must do better," McCain said in a statement.

McCain said the Trump proposal is an increase of \$18.5 billion over an estimate of needed military funding for 2018 made by the Obama administration.

The Obama-era spending "left our military underfunded, undersized and unready to confront threats to our national security," he said.

Thornberry said defense funding fell 20 percent under Obama while security threats around the world proliferated.

"While we cannot repair all of the damage done by those cuts in a single year, we can and should do more than this level of funding will allow," Thornberry said in a statement about the Trump increase.

Falling defense funding has occurred partly from the drawdown of costly ground wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and from caps on federal spending — often referred to as sequestration — which were passed by Congress in 2011 to reduce public debt.

The caps, which are set to keep defense spending at \$549 billion in 2018, have forced down the budget even as the military remains busy around the world, leading the Pentagon to warn about severe maintenance and training shortfalls.

Trump has called for a major increase in defense spending,

but the plan still faces financial and political hurdles on Capitol Hill. Any increase in the spending caps will likely require a deal with Democrats.

Mick Mulvaney, director of the White House Office of Management and Budget, said Monday the increase will come from cutting spending from other areas of the federal budget, such as foreign aid.

Larger decisions of paring back much more expensive programs, such as entitlements like Medicare, will come in the future, he said.

Democrats are likely to strongly oppose big cuts to entitlements and other areas of the federal budget to benefit defense. In past years, they have demanded that any increase in the budget caps for the military be accompanied with increases to domestic programs.

Retired generals oppose proposed cuts to foreign aid

The Washington Post

Now is not the time to slash U.S. foreign aid, more than 120 retired generals and admirals said Monday in a letter to lawmakers, while citing past comments from Defense Secretary Jim Mattis to buttress their case.

The letter was released by the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition, which includes business executives, foreign policy experts and retired senior military officials, as the Trump administration signaled that it will slash international spending while boosting funding for the U.S. military.

"The State Department, USAID (U.S. Agency for International Development), Millennium Challenge Corporation, Peace Corps and other development agencies are critical to preventing conflict and

reducing the need to put our men and women in uniform in harm's way," the letter said. "As Secretary James Mattis said while Commander of U.S. Central Command, 'If you don't fully fund the State Department, then I need to buy more ammunition.'"

The letter added that while the military will "lead the fight against terrorism on the battlefield," it needs strong partners to combat issues that drive extremism, including insecurity, injustice, hopelessness and lack of opportunity.

"We urge you to ensure that resources for the International Affairs Budget keep pace with the growing global threats and opportunities we face," the letter concluded. "Now is not the time to retreat."

The letter was addressed to Speaker of the House Paul

Ryan, R-Wis.; Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky.; House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif.; and Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer, D-N.Y. It was released as administration officials said Trump will announce Tuesday a 10 percent boost in military spending, with a corresponding cut to other federal agencies. Foreign aid, in particular, is expected to face significant budget cuts as Trump follows through on his agenda.

The quote from Mattis cited in the letter came in March 2013 during a hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee a few months before he retired from the Marine Corps. It came in response to a question from Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Miss., who inquired whether the U.S. international development budget was helpful to the United

States, and has often been used since by advocates for "soft power."

"Yes, sir," Mattis said at the time. "I would start with the State Department budget. Frankly, they need to be as fully funded as Congress believes appropriate, because if you don't fund the State Department fully, then I need to buy more ammunition, ultimately. So I think it's a cost-benefit ratio. The more we put into the State Department's diplomacy, hopefully, the less we have to put into a military budget as we deal with the outcome of apparent American withdrawal from the international scene."

Many of the officers who signed the letter retired within the past few years, and some led U.S. forces in combat. They include Marine Gen. John Allen and Army Gen. Pete Chiarelli.

Navy IDs sailor shot at Oceana

The (Norfolk, Va.) Virginian-Pilot

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. — A sailor who crashed through Gate 2 of Oceana Naval Air Station late Friday made it all the way to the hangar for the squadron he worked for before he was shot and killed by a master at arms, U.S. Navy Fleet Forces Command said Sunday night.

Seaman Robert Colton Wright enlisted in the Navy in May 2016 and was assigned to Strike Fighter Squadron 81, based at Oceana, since Dec. 27, according to a Navy biography. He worked as an information systems technician for the squadron, which flies F/A-18E Super Hornets, according to the unit's website.

Wright's death occurred after a string of events that began with a hit-and-run about a mile from Oceana just before 10 p.m. Friday. Virginia Beach police responded and were given a vehicle description by the victim. No injuries were reported.

Police said they canvassed the area and found damage at Oceana's Gate 2 near London Bridge Road, at least a mile from the scene of the accident. The gate, which sits far off the main road, was closed and unmanned at the time, a Navy official has said.

Beach police "made access" to the base, according to a news release on the department's website. A petty officer on watch inside Hangar 111, home of VFA 81, called base security to report someone "yelling and causing damage in squadron hallways," the Navy said.

Wright, of Colorado, refused to show his hands and moved aggressively toward the responding master at arms officials, one of whom fired one shot, the Navy said. Wright was taken to Sentara Virginia Beach General Hospital, where he later died.

Wright's black Dodge pickup was heavily damaged, a Navy official said.

3 separate military probes into Yemen raid underway

BY TARA COPP
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Three separate military investigations are underway into a raid in Yemen that led to the death of a Navy SEAL, though it could be months before any of them provide insight into what might have gone wrong.

White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer said Monday that all three reviews will be conducted by the Department of Defense.

During the Jan. 29 raid, which was launched just a week after President Donald Trump took office, Senior Chief Petty Officer William "Ryan" Owens was killed, four other U.S. servicemembers were injured and a \$75 million Osprey was lost. Owens' father on Sunday questioned in an interview with the Miami Herald whether the raid had been necessary and demanded the incident be investigated.

Navy Capt. Jeff Davis, a Pentagon spokesman, said Monday that the three investigations include a 15-6, which is an in-depth but informal military investigation routinely launched after a significant security incident, a civilian casualty assessment and an aviation mishap investigation.

U.S. Central Command is overseeing the 15-6

and civilian casualty assessment, and both are ongoing, said Andy Stephens, a Central Command spokesman.

Whether a 15-6 is launched is not dependent upon whether there was loss of life. For example, there was a 15-6 conducted after the October 2015 airstrike against the Doctors Without Borders hospital in Kunduz, Afghanistan, where an estimated 40 civilians were killed when U.S. gunships mistook the hospital for an insurgent-controlled building. There was also a 15-6 initiated when the Army's Dugway Proving Ground inadvertently shipped small samples of anthrax in May 2015 to labs across the United States and overseas.

Central Command has also initiated a civilian casualty assessment on the Yemen strike in response to reports that dozens of civilians were killed as a result of the raid. If the reports of civilian casualties are determined to be credible, the military will conduct a more in-depth review.

The aviation mishap investigation will look at what led to the loss of the Marine Corps Osprey. The aircraft had to be left behind and destroyed after it made a hard landing. The mishap investigations have also typically taken months to complete.

Bergdahl's lawyers seek overturn of ruling

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Lawyers for accused deserter Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl asked an appellate court on Monday to overturn a military judge's decision not to dismiss the court-martial against the soldier over repeated, negative comments made by President Donald Trump.

During his presidential campaign, Trump made comments that included calling Bergdahl a "dirty, rotten, no good traitor" and make it impossible for the soldier to receive a fair trial because the public could perceive that anyone involved in the case, including jurors, were influenced by the opinions of their commander in chief, Bergdahl's attorneys wrote in an appeal to the United States Army Court of Criminal Ap-

peals. The attorneys added the appellate court should vacate the decision handed down Friday by Army Col. Jeffery R. Nance, the judge overseeing Bergdahl's court-martial and dismiss the case entirely or limit its outcome to no punishment.

"Justice cannot be done and public confidence in military justice cannot be maintained under these circumstances," Bergdahl's chief attorney, Eugene Fidell wrote in the appeal. "... President Trump's repeated public vilification of Sgt. Bergdahl must be explicitly acknowledged as apparent [unlawful command influence] and decisive remedial action taken."

Nance declined to throw out the case in his decision Friday.

In their appeal, Bergdahl's attorneys rejected Nance's

declaration that thorough questioning of potential jurors to determine if they had been influenced by Trump's statements would maintain the integrity of the case.

It is the second decision by Nance that Bergdahl's attorneys have sought to have overturned by a higher court. Last fall, they appealed to two appellate courts to have the soldier's court-martial dismissed after Nance declined to throw out the case over comments made by Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz.

Bergdahl's trial is scheduled to begin April 18 but is likely to be pushed back, Nance has said.

The soldier has yet to enter a plea to charges of "misbehavior before the enemy by endangering the safety of a command, unit or place" and "desertion with intent to shirk important or hazardous duty."

MRAPs sent to 8th Army in South Korea

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — The Army is sending more than 100 Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles to South Korea to boost troop protection capabilities as tensions rise on the divided peninsula.

The decision is a reversal after a 2012 feasibility study found that MRAPs — famous for saving countless lives from roadside bombs in Iraq and Afghanistan — weren't suitable for maneuver battalions in South Korea.

The 8th Army says it began fielding MRAPs and smaller versions known as M-ATVs in late December and was on track to complete the deployment to multiple locations by the end of February.

The armored vehicles, with their V-shaped hulls, will provide soldiers "a more durable battle proven armor configuration and provide improved crew survivability" as they maneuver "over the most grueling terrain," 8th Army spokeswoman Lt. Col. Catina Barnes-Ricks told Stars and Stripes in an email Friday.

"All Eighth Army units throughout Korea will receive the MRAPs," she added.

The vehicles are arriving in time for joint U.S.-South Korean war games due to begin this month, although the military didn't offer specifics about how they would be used. North Korea, which is extremely sensitive to the addition of any military equipment on the peninsula, criticized the planned 2012 arrival of the MRAPs, which are designed to deflect the force of an explosion.

"These vehicles capable of protecting troops aboard from mines or explosives are aimed at safely crossing the Military Demarcation Line before mounting an all-out attack on [North Korea] once they kick off a war against it," a report in the official Rodong Sinmun newspaper said at the time.

North and South Korea are divided by the so-called Demilitarized Zone, a strip of land about 160 miles long and 2.5 miles

wide. The area is dotted with tens of thousands of land mines and lined with barbed wire.

Military tensions have spiked since last year when Pyongyang conducted two underground nuclear explosions and test-fired some two dozen ballistic missiles.

South Korean officials also have pointed to an increase in the number of defectors from the North as a sign of potential instability within Kim Jong Un's regime.

MRAPs would be invaluable for potential counteroffensive operations, said Park Hwe-rhak, head of the graduate school of politics and leadership at Kookmin University in Seoul.

"The military needs to prepare for the worst-case scenario," said Park, a retired South Korean army colonel. "There are many kind of land mines in that area so if we want to make some kind of military operations along the DMZ we need a kind of mine-resistance maneuver vehicle."

The 2nd Infantry Division, which is based near the border with North Korea, tested the use of MRAPs in 2012 but found that the vehicles were "not suitable for maneuver battalions" in Korea and decided not to add them to their fleet "in the foreseeable future."

However, decisions about changes to the fleet of vehicles are made by the Department of the Army and requirements are often reassessed, Barnes-Ricks said.

The 8th Army had "identified an enduring requirement for MRAPs," she said, adding that the vehicles are ideal for providing protected mission command and transportation platforms.

"Battlefield dynamics have changed in Korea and modernization has changed how the Army fights in the field," she said. "MRAPs are an additive to our existing armored vehicles and provide enhanced capabilities and protection for [the 8th Army] on different terrain in the Korean Peninsula."

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Marines have new weapon in Pacific

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION FUTENMA, Okinawa — The next time Marines hit a Pacific beach, they will have the most advanced attack helicopter in the world at their backs.

Eight AH-1Z Vipers began arriving at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma in late November to permanently replace the service's aging fleet of AH-1W Super Cobras, Marine officials said, and more are on the way.

Though they have made sporadic appearances in the region over the past few years, this is the Vipers' first permanent deployment to the Pacific.

The Viper is faster, more powerful and more survivable than its predecessor, said Marine Corps pilots who spoke with Stars and Stripes.

It can also carry more fuel, more weapons and ammunition, and can identify and engage targets from farther away.

According to manufacturer Bell Helicopter Textron Inc., it is the only attack helicopter in the world with a fully integrat-

ed air-to-air missile capability.

Most of the Super Cobras have left Okinawa, Marine officials said. The transition will be completed around May.

"When it comes to the switch from the Whiskey [the Super Cobra] to the Z, I tell people all the time, it's like cheating," said Lt. Col. John Livingston, commanding officer of Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 267. "This aircraft is so much more capable."

Typical Viper roles include escort duty during reconnaissance missions or destruction of enemy tanks and armored personnel carriers. They also have specific weapons for enemy personnel.

The helicopter is integral to the Marine Corps' focus on amphibious operations and flexibility in different environments, Marine officials said.

The Viper is coated to fight corrosion and operates with two engines for overwater flight.

The Marine Corps uses Vipers primarily for close-air support, including in seaborne assaults; the Army uses its attack helicopters more as a separate maneuver element, like a tank, and generally from land.

Keeping Marines connected

BY TYLER HLAVAC
Stars and Stripes

The Marine Corps' latest suicide-prevention effort aims to help organize unit reunions so Marines can stay in touch with their battle buddies.

Year of the Reunion, a website launched by the service last week, gives servicemembers and veterans the tools to plan these get-togethers, and Commandant Gen. Robert Neller is encouraging Marines to participate.

The site — www.usmc-mccs.org/reunion/ — includes a timeline for organizing events, com-

munication tips and updates. It also lists upcoming reunions; offers tips for give-aways; and allows organizers to post photos from their events.

Dozens of reunions have been listed on the site. A recent post shows photos from a 10-year reunion for 1st Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment's 2006 deployment to Fallujah, Iraq.

Neller, who told National Public Radio last year that reunions help Marines transition from combat and prevent them from taking their own lives, said Year of the Reunion would help organizers collaborate and avoid planning and execution pitfalls.

Divided GOP awaits clarity from Trump

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Divided congressional Republicans are hoping for clarity from President Donald Trump on key issues like health care when he delivers his first speech to a joint meeting of Congress. It comes as Republicans are discovering, a month into Trump's administration, how difficult it will be to make good on their many promises now that they control Washington in full.

The GOP's long-stated plans to repeal the Affordable Care Act, former President Barack Obama's health care law, and replace it with something better are running into major difficulties even before legislation is officially released. After a week of raucous town hall meetings, Republicans are back in Washington and key conservatives have begun to denounce House leadership plans based on a leaked draft and reports that the bill would cost more than expected

while covering fewer people.

An influential conservative, GOP Rep. Mark Walker, of North Carolina, who chairs the Republican Study Committee, released a statement warning, "There are serious problems with what appears to be our current path to repeal and replace Obamacare."

And three key conservative senators — Mike Lee, of Utah; Rand Paul, of Kentucky; and Ted Cruz, of Texas — added their voices in opposition, announcing that they will oppose "Obamacare Lite" and "accept nothing less than full repeal of Obamacare."

House Speaker Paul Ryan downplayed the divisions, insisting in an interview Tuesday that Congress is on track with a plan that will lower costs and improve quality. Ryan said the nation doesn't need Trump to come up with all the specifics.

"I see him as more of a chairman, as a president, much like many successful presidents have been, where he gets people

around him who are detailed people who can execute those plans," Ryan told NBC's "Today" show Tuesday.

But several other House Republicans said they would like to hear Trump sketch a clear vision, or better yet an endorsement of their plan, when he addresses Congress on Tuesday night.

Unlike for the inauguration, Democrats plan to attend the speech, with women in the House wearing white to honor the suffrage movement and also to "stand in solidarity with the women of our nation."

Health care is far from the only issue dividing Republicans. Plans to overhaul the tax code have Republicans tied in knots while Trump's promised increases in infrastructure spending promise to provoke major clashes with deficit hawks.

A government funding deadline looms two months away and must be met to keep the government from shutting down. Senior

lawmakers were busy throwing cold water on Trump's budget proposal, which was made public in broad outlines on Monday. The budget envisions a \$54 billion surge in U.S. military spending while slashing domestic programs and foreign aid.

For defense hawks, Trump's Pentagon spending didn't go far enough. Sen. John McCain, of Arizona, complained that Trump's plans represented just a small increase over Obama's recent Pentagon wish list.

Trump's budget would leave large deficits intact while sparing Social Security and Medicare, the entitlements that make up an enormous and growing share of the federal budget.

That puts Trump in direct conflict with Ryan and other leading Republicans who have long advocated reforming entitlement programs to put them on a more sustainable footing and get deficits under control.

AG Sessions believes violence surrounds pot

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department will try to adopt "responsible policies" for enforcement of federal anti-marijuana laws, Attorney General Jeff Sessions said, adding that he believes violence surrounds sales and use of the drug in the U.S.

In a meeting with reporters Monday, Sessions said the department was reviewing an Obama administration Justice Department memo that gave states flexibility in passing marijuana laws.

"Experts are telling me there's more violence around marijuana than one would think," he said.

The comments were in keeping with remarks last week from White House spokesman Sean Spicer, who said the Justice Department would step up enforcement of federal law against recreational marijuana. Sessions stopped short of saying what he

would do, but said he doesn't think America will be a better place with "more people smoking pot."

Eight states and the District of Columbia have legalized marijuana for recreational use. The Justice Department has several options available should it decide to enforce the federal law, including filing lawsuits on the grounds that state laws regulating pot are unconstitutional because they are pre-empted by federal law.

Studies have found no correlation between legalization of marijuana and violent crime rates. But law enforcement officials in states such as Colorado say drug traffickers have taken advantage of lax marijuana laws to hide in plain sight, illegally growing and shipping the drug across state lines.

Pot advocates say officials have exaggerated the problem.

SpaceX to fly 2 paying citizens around moon

Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES — When the first astronauts traveled to the moon, they were experienced military fliers riding NASA rockets and capsules, backed by the U.S. government.

Forty-five years after the last Apollo moon mission, in what would be a first, SpaceX plans to fly two private citizens around the moon atop one of the company's own rockets. And, SpaceX said, the cost will be paid out of the astronauts' own pockets.

In typical fashion, SpaceX's audacious billionaire founder and Chief Executive Elon Musk provided few details about the expedition. Musk wouldn't say who will make the flight in late 2018, how much it will cost in total or how much the astronauts are paying.

He did say the two individuals had come to him and asked if SpaceX would set up the flight and

that they are "nobody from Hollywood." They've put down their deposits and will start fitness tests and training later this year.

The moon flight is the most ambitious yet for the nascent private space industry. Other rich tech entrepreneurs with projects include Richard Branson, whose start-up Virgin Galactic has been taking reservations for its sub-orbital space flights at \$250,000 a pop, and Amazon.com Inc. founder Jeff Bezos, whose Blue Origin company also plans sub-orbital flights.

Musk's plan faces abundant hurdles. For one, the rocket that will lift the crewed capsule, SpaceX's Falcon Heavy, hasn't flown yet. The rocket, which is more powerful than the ones used by SpaceX to deliver satellites into orbit, is set to launch for the first time this summer. On SpaceX's website, the cost of a Falcon Heavy launch next year starts at \$90 million.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Woman accused of throwing knives at kids

WA TACOMA — A Washington state woman has been charged with assault after prosecutors say she threw knives at two children who lived across the hall from her in a Lakewood apartment complex.

The News Tribune reported Monday that the 35-year-old woman pleaded not guilty to the charges and was ordered to undergo a psychiatric evaluation.

The children in the Thursday attack, ages 10 and 15, were able to escape and call for help.

Court documents say the suspect kicked in the door to the children's apartment and tried to force her way inside but the older child was able to push her out.

The suspect later came out of her home armed with knives and allegedly began throwing them.

Attendant in fake bomb threat signs plea deal

ND BISMARCK — A flight attendant accused of making bogus bomb threats on two Skywest flights in 2015 has signed a plea deal to avoid trial, but it could send him to prison for decades.

Justin Cox-Sever, 23, of Tempe, Ariz., is accused of calling in fake bomb threats on a flight from Charlottesville, Va., to Chicago and on a flight from Minneapolis to Dickinson, N.D.

Both flights made emergency landings. No one was hurt.

The plea agreement calls for Cox-Sever to plead guilty to four of the five charges against him related to interfering with an aircraft.

Prosecutors will drop a fifth count, reducing the potential maximum prison sentence

from 70 years to 50 years.

The plea deal still needs the approval of a federal judge.

Search on for person missing after crash

VT PLAINFIELD — Crews searched Plainfield's Great Brook and the Winooski River on Monday for a Vermont woman who disappeared following a crash and is believed to have ended up in the water.

Police said Krystal Bailey, 29, of Barre, was a passenger in a car that went out of control and hit a guardrail Saturday night.

Rescue crews saw the driver and Bailey walk away from the scene after the crash. The driver was located a short time later on the bank of the brook. Police did not say how Bailey might have ended up in the river, but "all evidence lends to the belief Bailey was unable to exit the river."

The driver was charged with driving under the influence of alcohol.

Cops: Drunk mom used girl's breath to start car

PA QUINCY — Police say a Pennsylvania woman had her 8-year-old daughter blow into an ignition device meant to prevent the woman from driving while drunk shortly before she crashed and was again charged with drunken driving.

Angela Daywalt, 36, of Waynesboro, was charged with drunken driving, corruption of minors and other charges for crashing about 11 p.m. on Feb. 13 with her daughter in the car.

Troopers from the Chambersburg barracks announced the arrest Monday. They said Daywalt left the scene of the

crash and went home after a witness says Daywalt urged her daughter to blow into the ignition interlock.

The devices are used to keep people with past DUI convictions from driving while intoxicated.

Shelter dog trained to be arson investigator

NY BUFFALO — A dog rescued from an Albany-area animal shelter is being trained to help in arson investigations in Buffalo.

The 1½-year-old Labrador mix will train for about eight weeks at the New York State Fire Training Academy in Montour Falls before going to work for the Erie County Sheriff's Department.

The dog, named Axe, will work with the fire investigations unit to detect accelerants.

The department's previous K9, Blaze, retired at the end of 2016.

Retired officer arrested; grenades found in home

MI DETROIT — A retired Detroit police officer was arrested after reports of numerous shots being fired around his home, where authorities said they found grenades and other weapons.

Authorities said the man, who was on the force for about 20 years and has been retired for eight, was apprehended early Monday. Police said officers went to the man's home, where he had barricaded himself.

Police said he fled and drove off in his car but officers stopped him nearby. He's accused of drunken driving.

Commander Elvin Barren said a search of the retired officer's home turned up grenades, grenade launchers and other weapons. The bomb squad was called to do a complete search.

6th-grader wins state's Google doodle contest

RI JOHNSTON — A Johnston sixth-grader won the state's Google doodle contest and will compete against students nationwide to win a \$30,000 college scholarship and a \$50,000 grant for his school.

The Providence Journal reported Wilson El Hage, from Nicholas E. Ferri Middle School, beat out thousands to become Rhode Island's winner in the ninth annual "Doodle 4 Google" competition.

Students redesigned Google's logo with the theme "What I see for the future."

The boy's design, "The Travel Watch," asks: "Do you want to travel into the future, see Mars or Venus? Or do you prefer to go back into the prehistoric times? The time travel watch can take you anywhere, so why not!"

A public vote will determine the five finalists.

The winning design will go live March 31.

Pet turtle safe and warm after rescue

CO VAIL — A pet turtle is safe and warm after being rescued by firefighters following a crash on Vail Pass.

Eagle County Paramedic Services said that after all the people hurt in the crash on Interstate 70 had been treated and taken to the hospital Sunday, one of the youngest patients said he had lost his pet turtle, which is named Turtle.

Firefighters began searching for Turtle but when they found it, the animal was frozen. They put it in the sun for 30 minutes and say it sprang back to life. Turtle was then reunited with its owner.

From wire reports

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Reporting
World, National
and Military News

Air Force WR balances NFL prep with studies

Associated Press

CENTENNIAL, Colo. — Except for the few who already have donned cap and gown, most of the 330 prospects heading to the NFL Combine next week have put their pursuits of a college degree on hold so they can focus on their football futures.

They've traded campus life for high-tech gyms where they're trimming milliseconds off their 40-yard dashes and three-cone drills and facing mock interviews to prepare for the grilling from general managers in Indianapolis. Then, they retreat to their condos to rest, relax and recuperate while wolfing down meals managed to the calorie through meal services arranged by their agents.

Not Jalen Robinette.

The Air Force cadet and NFL hopeful who led the nation in yards per catch last year is carrying six courses while working out with ex-Stanford star Christian McCaffrey and 27 other pro football hopefuls at the Landow Performance training facility in suburban Denver.

"I'm a 23-year-old student in the dorm room," said Robinette, who makes the roughly 100-mile round-trip commute from the Air Force Academy six days a week, hitting the books in the morning and the weights in the afternoon.

"My plate is still full, but I'm enjoying it," Robinette said. "I stay pretty busy. I've always looked at the big picture, which is pretty much why I came to the academy."

His rigorous course load includes military strategic studies, "Power to Influence in Organizations" and "Critical Decisions in Space," which delves into the first moon landing in 1969 and the Challenger space shuttle explosion in 1986.

"We actually dive into the recent history and get to talk about the choices and the decisions behind that, why we weren't ready to launch with the Challenger. New information that's recently been declassified. It's really interesting," Robinette said. "... It's really cool."

It's all part of an education that's preparing him to be a leader whether on the battle field or the football field.

At a shade under 6-foot-4 and just shy of 220 pounds, Robinette reminds some scouts of Denver Broncos star receiver Demaryius Thomas, who came out of Georgia Tech's triple option offense.

Robinette's hallmarks are similar to Thomas': he has a propensity for big plays, he has great hands, his concentration on contested balls is splendid and his run blocking is superb.

Despite averaging less than three catches a game, he drew enough notice to become the first Falcons receiver invited to the East-West Shrine Game, Senior Bowl and NFL Combine.

Robinette caught just 35 passes his senior season but they covered 959 yards for an NCAA-best 27.4-yard average, and he had six touchdown receptions. Over his four seasons for the Falcons, he caught 120

passes for 2,697 yards and 18 touchdowns.

A former high school quarterback, he also threw six passes, completing three — all for touchdowns.

He knows he could have gone to another school and put up bigger numbers like Clemson's Mike Williams or Western Michigan's Corey Davis. But he said he's never once regretted choosing Air Force, not even when he caught just 16 passes his freshman year.

"I knew I was in the right place despite the stats," said Robinette, who sports an Air Force lightning bolt tattoo on his left bicep. "I've never been huge on stats. I just like to play."

And he won't have to wait two years to play in the pros, either, like former Air Force and current Atlanta Falcons lineman Ben Garland had to do.

After Navy standout QB Keenan Reynolds was drafted by the Baltimore Ravens last year, the U.S. Department of Defense changed its policy for service academy athletes who are offered the opportunity to play professionally. Now, they can receive reserve appointments upon graduation and start their pro careers immediately rather than having to serving two years of active duty first.

"That's just an opportunity you can't pass up," Robinette said. "The academy, it's rigorous and we require a certain type of person. It's not for everyone. But just having the opportunity to play football after that, it's dessert. It's icing on the cake."

Steelers give WR Brown \$72M, tag RB Bell

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH— Pittsburgh Steelers general manager Kevin Colbert stressed earlier this month one of the team's biggest goals during the offseason was to make wide receiver Antonio Brown and running back Le'Veon Bell vital parts of the organization "for life."

Done and well, on its way to being done.

The Steelers signed Brown to a new five-year contract on Monday, following through on a promise the club made last summer to take care of the perennial All-Pro as soon as he had just one season left on the six-year deal he signed in 2012.

The team also placed an exclusive rights franchise tag on Bell, opening the negotiating

window to reach a long-term agreement with him by the start of training camp.

Brown's new contract runs through 2021 and will pay him over \$72 million and makes him one of the highest paid non-quarterbacks in the league. Brown celebrated by posting a picture of himself with agent Drew Rosenhaus then later added another one with his signature phrase "Business is Boomin'."

The 28-year-old Brown is one of just two players in NFL history to catch at least 100 passes in four consecutive seasons, including 106 receptions for 1,284 yards and 12 touchdowns for the Steelers in 2016 as the team won the AFC North and made it all the way to the AFC championship game before falling to

New England.

The new contract more than doubles the six-year, \$42 million contract Brown signed in 2012, one that turned into one of the better bargains in the NFL when Brown morphed from sixth-round flyer to star.

His high profile hasn't come without the occasional pit-fall. He drew a strong rebuke from coach Mike Tomlin after livestreaming from the locker room following Pittsburgh's playoff victory over Kansas City, a violation of the league's social media policy.

Brown apologized for the misstep. Colbert and team president Art Rooney II have no concerns about Brown's occasional eccentricities becoming an issue going forward.

Rooney called them "little

annoyances, with the emphasis on little" shortly after the AFC title game loss to New England.

The same goes for Bell, who could have become a free agent next month, but instead will work with the team on a new contract before the July 15 cut-off after the team used the exclusive rights franchise tag.

If Pittsburgh can't sign Bell to a new deal by the middle of July, he will make the average salary of the top five running backs in the league in 2017.

While Bell has been productive when available, he's been suspended twice for violating the league's substance abuse policy and was unable to finish Pittsburgh's final game of the season in each of the past three years because of injuries.

Caps get Shattenkirk for playoff push

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — With their championship window in danger of closing, the Washington Capitals made a strong move Monday to try to win the Stanley Cup this spring by acquiring defenseman Kevin Shattenkirk in a trade with the St. Louis Blues.

Shattenkirk is a pending unrestricted free agent, but was considered the top rental player available ahead of the NHL's Wednesday trade deadline.

Washington traded a 2017 first-round pick, forward Zach Sanford, a conditional 2019 draft pick and minor league forward Brad Malone to St. Louis for Shattenkirk

and goaltender Pheonix Copley.

The 28-year-old right-handed-shooting defenseman gives the Capitals one of the strongest, deepest blue lines in the league with Shattenkirk, Matt Niskanen, Karl Alzner, John Carlson, Dmitry Orlov, Brooks Orpik, Nate Schmidt and Taylor Chorney. Shattenkirk has 42 points on 11 goals and 31 assists this season and 66 goals and 218 assists in 471 NHL games.

"We felt it was important to acquire another defenseman to strengthen and add depth to our blue line," Capitals general manager Brian MacLellan said in a statement. "Kevin is a skilled, puck-moving de-

fenseman who we think will help our team at even strength and on the power play."

The New Rochelle, N.Y., native counts \$4.25 million against the salary cap this season. The Blues retained 39 percent of his salary as part of the trade to make the numbers work under the Capitals' cap.

Shattenkirk, a power-play specialist who can also eat big minutes, adds depth and offense to Washington's defense. In addition to the 2017 first-round pick, the Blues get a 2019 second-round pick if the Capitals sign Shattenkirk for next season or reach the Eastern Conference final with him playing at least half of their playoff games.

Wild are hit with 2 cases of the mumps

Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. — The Minnesota Wild came back from their five-day bye with a most unwelcome visitor: the mumps.

Forwards Zach Parise and Jason Pominville were diagnosed with the highly contagious disease and must miss at least three games.

Assistant coach Scott Stevens was also stricken, coach Bruce Boudreau said after the Wild beat Los Angeles 5-4 in overtime on Monday night.

Two seasons ago, when Boudreau was the coach for Anaheim, both the Wild and the Ducks were hit hard by mumps as it made its way around the NHL. The Wild had five defensemen get the virus that time, with absences ranging from one game to roughly three weeks.

"What can you do? You just sit there and go, 'Here we go,'" Boudreau said.

The Wild confirmed the cases of Parise and Pominville shortly before the game against the Kings. The veteran wings were placed in isolation for a five-day period, meaning they'll at least miss games Tuesday at Winnipeg and Thursday at Columbus. The Wild said players and staff were recently provided with a measles-mumps-rubella vaccination, as they were early in the

2014-15 season when the virus last made its way through.

"It's a lot for one team in a few years," right wing Mikael Granlund said.

Granlund's winning goal triggered a raucous celebration on the ice, with plenty of gloves touching the faces of teammates.

"If someone had it in that pile, then we all got it so we'll see it what happens," center Eric Staal said.

Vancouver played Saturday night without five players because of confirmed mumps or symptoms associated with the virus. The Wild played there a little more than three weeks ago. Symptoms such as swollen glands and jaws and fatigue and fever can take a while to appear after infection.

Pominville had at least one point in 14 of his past 16 games since Jan. 19, leading the NHL with 16 assists during that span. Parise had begun to play more effectively and productively, too, after a sluggish, substandard start to his season.

With Parise and Pominville out, forwards Martin Hanzal and Ryan White made their well-timed debuts after being acquired Sunday in a swap with Arizona. They'd never been traded before.

Minnesota tops LA in OT

Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. — The Minnesota Wild have once again snuffed out a potential losing streak before it started.

This win might have been their best response yet.

Mikael Granlund zoomed between two defenders to find open ice and wrap the winning shot around Los Angeles goalie Jonathan Quick with a right-left move just 12 seconds into overtime, giving the Wild a 5-4 victory over the Kings on Monday night.

Granlund's career-high 20th goal gave the Wild a 15-3-2 record following a loss. They've dropped consecutive games in regulation only once all season, on Nov. 1 and 5. This was the Wild's 15th comeback win. They answered all four goals by the Kings: Nick Shore, Tanner Pearson, Jake Muzzin and Marian Gaborik.

"Everybody knows we can do it, and it's not a big deal if we go down," Granlund said. "Obviously we'd like to lead the game, but sometimes it's like that."

Jason Zucker's spinning wrist shot midway through the third period tied the game for the Wild, who also had goals from Nino Niederreiter, Jordan Schroeder and Ryan White in his debut. White and Martin Hanzal were acquired in a trade with Arizona the night before. They arrived at the arena after a long flight and

physical exams less than two hours before the puck drop.

Tyler Graovac also hustled to Minnesota from AHL affiliate Iowa and played his third game in three nights.

Wild coach Bruce Boudreau joked about rolling a dice to make his lines. He had "three minutes" to go over the offense and defense with Hanzal and White.

Canadiens 4, Devils 3 (OT): Alex Galchenyuk scored on a power play at 2:54 of overtime as Montreal rallied from a two-goal third-period deficit to beat host New Jersey.

Max Pacioretty scored twice in the final 11:23 of regulation to tie the game and Alexander Radulov added a goal for the Canadiens, who won consecutive games for the first time since early January.

Lightning 5, Senators 1: Nikita Kucherov scored three power-play goals in the second period to help host Tampa Bay keep its fading playoff hopes alive with victory over Ottawa.

Kucherov had the second hat trick of his career and added an assist in the third period. Jonathan Drouin assisted all three of his goals and Victor Hedman assisted on two.

A day after trading goaltender Ben Bishop to Los Angeles and just hours after trading forward Brian Boyle to Toronto, the Lightning improved to 6-1-2 over their past nine games.

Durant takes up slack for misfiring Curry

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Kevin Durant had 27 points in his return to the lineup, and the Golden State Warriors overcame the worst three-point shooting performance of Stephen Curry's career in a 119-108 victory over the Philadelphia 76ers on Monday night.

Curry was 0-for-11 from three-point range. That topped his previous worst outing without making a three when he went 0-for-10 on Nov. 4 against the Lakers. The two-time reigning MVP entered leading the league by a wide margin with 231 three-pointers this season.

"On a night like tonight where Steph doesn't have it going, we have a lot of other guys who can score and make plays," coach Steve Kerr said. "A lot of them came through."

Curry still had 19 points, making seven of 12 two-point attempts and all five of his free-throws.

"I forgot to adjust to the thickness of the air," Curry joked, adding that "it happens, but you have to find other ways to impact the game."

Klay Thompson scored 21 points and Draymond Green had 14 points, 11 assists, six re-

bounds and five steals for the Warriors, who opened a five-game East Coast trip by winning their fourth straight and boosting their NBA-best record to 50-9. Durant returned after missing a game with a right hand injury.

"There are games where the shots just aren't falling," Green said. "It was a good effort by everybody to chip in. Sometimes it has to be a complete team effort, and tonight it was."

Dario Saric had 21 points for Philadelphia, which once again played without big man Joel Embiid. The 76ers announced earlier Monday that Embiid would be out indefinitely after experiencing swelling and soreness in his left knee following recent practices.

Cavaliers 102, Bucks 95: LeBron James returned from a bout with strep throat and scored 24 points, Kyrie Irving added 25 and host Cleveland held off Milwaukee.

James missed Saturday's loss to Chicago — the Cavs fell to 0-4 this season without their superstar — and was listed as questionable before arriving at Quicken Loans Arena. He looked fit from the start, delivering an early dunk and adding one in the fourth that he

capped by screaming, "That's and one!" at Milwaukee's John Henson, who fouled him.

James' dunk triggered an 11-0 run that helped put away the Bucks, who were within 86-85 midway through the fourth.

Raptors 92, Knicks 91: DeMar DeRozan made a turnaround jumper with 1.9 seconds remaining, finishing with 37 points and leading visiting Toronto over New York.

The Raptors won their fourth in a row, doing it with DeRozan and defense after learning earlier in the day that All-Star Kyle Lowry will have right wrist surgery that could sideline him the rest of the regular season.

Carmelo Anthony scored 24 points for the Knicks but finished a 9-for-26 night when he missed a long jumper as time expired.

Hawks 114, Celtics 98: Dennis Schroder had 21 points to help Atlanta snap a three-game losing streak with a chippy win at Boston.

Paul Millsap and Dwight Howard each added 17 points. The Hawks led by 13 entering the fourth quarter and increased the edge to 24 despite playing the final 16 minutes without Howard, who was ejected in the third quarter

after receiving his second technical foul.

Pacers 117, Rockets 108: Jeff Teague scored 25 points and visiting Indiana overcame a huge first-half deficit and withstood a late rally by Houston.

C.J. Miles made a three-pointer with 40.8 seconds left to make it 113-108, and Teague made a pair of free throws after that to put the game out of reach.

Timberwolves 102, Kings 88: Karl-Anthony Towns had 29 points and 17 rebounds, Andrew Wiggins scored 27 points and visiting Minnesota beat Sacramento.

Ricky Rubio had nine points and 11 assists to help the Timberwolves move within one game of the Kings as both teams try to catch Denver for the eighth spot in the West.

Mavericks 96, Heat 89: Seth Curry scored 29 points, Harrison Barnes added 24 and host Dallas handed Miami its third loss in 19 games.

Goran Dragic scored 24 points for the Heat, who went scoreless over the final 4:37 as a three-game winning streak ended.

Virginia surprises No. 5 North Carolina, wins 53-43

Associated Press

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. — Virginia coach Tony Bennett took the blame for a poor approach in No. 23 Virginia's 24-point loss at No. 5 North Carolina nine days ago.

On Monday night, he gave his team the credit for making a new approach work in a 53-43 victory against the Tar Heels.

Kyle Guy scored 17 points, London Perrantes had 13 and the Cavaliers used a small lineup to neutralize the Tar Heels' size advantage. It produced the lowest-scoring game for North Carolina in Roy Williams' 14 years as coach, and the lowest overall since 1979.

"We made a commitment about three weeks ago or two weeks ago that we're just going to be a better defensive team by the end of the year," said Bennett, whose team

had already ranked as the stingiest scoring defense in the country much of the year. "We just have to be."

Against the Tar Heels, the smaller, quicker lineup forced 12 first-half turnovers and freshmen sharpshooters Guy and Ty Jerome gave Perrantes the offensive lift Virginia needed, hitting all four of the Cavaliers' first-half three-pointers as they took a 27-23 lead into the locker room.

The Tar Heels (25-6, 13-4) got within 40-39 with 9:26 left, but Perrantes made back-to-back threes, rousing the crowd at John Paul Jones Arena to deafening levels. When Jack Salt added a putback that lingered on the rim, then dropped, the outcome seemed certain.

No. 1 Kansas 73, Oklahoma 63: Frank Mason III scored 23 points in his final game at Allen Fieldhouse, Devonte Gra-

ham hit a series of key three-pointers in the second half and the Jayhawks rallied from a 10-point deficit to beat Oklahoma.

No. 11 Baylor 71, No. 10 West Virginia 62: Johnathan Motley scored 19 of his 23 points after halftime and the Bears won their home finale.

Baylor (24-6, 11-6 Big 12) avenged a 21-point loss at West Virginia on Jan. 10, which came after Baylor had won its first 15 games and reached No. 1 in the AP Top 25 for the first time in school history.

Virginia Tech 66, No. 25 Miami 61: Ty Outlaw scored a career-high 24 points to lead the host Hokies over Miami.

Outlaw, who was averaging 5.0 points per game, set a school record with eight three-pointers for the Hokies (21-8, 10-7 Atlantic Coast Conference), who won their third straight game and fifth in the last six.