

STARS AND STRIPES®

Monday, February 4, 2019

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

USAF names first female fighter pilot to command F-16 Demonstration Team

BY CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

The Air Force has named its first female commander of a single-aircraft demonstration team, as the service looks to leverage the anticipated popularity of an upcoming superhero movie featuring a female fighter pilot to spur recruitment.

Capt. Zoe “SiS” Kotnik was named pilot and commander of the Air Combat Command’s F-16 Viper Demonstration Team last week after completing a series of certification flights. The team showcases the F-16V Viper, the latest variant of the Fighting Falcon, at dozens of air shows each year.

In announcing Kotnik’s selection on Twitter, the team posted a video and photos framed and lettered like a comic panel.

“In that instant ... she knew she could fly her F-16 higher, further and faster than anyone else,” reads text that appears in the images.

The line is a clear nod to the “Captain Marvel” film, which premieres on March 8 and features Brie Larson in the role of the titular superhero whose alter ego, Carol Danvers, is an F-16 pilot in the Air Force. Air Force pilots, including Brig. Gen. Jeannie Leavitt, the service’s first female fighter pilot, assisted in the production.

A new trailer, which aired during the Super Bowl on Sunday, showed Larson’s character on the flight line walking beside fellow pilot Maria Rambeau, played by Lashana Lynch.

“About to show these boys how we do it,” Lynch says. “You ready?”

Larson’s reply, which is partly echoed throughout the 30-second spot: “Higher, further, faster, baby.”

In another nod to the movie,

the Air Force Recruiting Service included the hashtag #higherfurtherfaster in a post on Friday announcing that Leavitt, who heads the recruiting service, hosted dozens of female pilots for an event at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. Kotnik was among them.

“Every hero has an origin story,” said the post, which included a photo of the women on a tarmac in front of a formation of aircraft. “We asked over 80 female pilots to share theirs.”

Kotnik’s origin story started in Poynette, Wis., where she was born into a family of aviators. Her uncle was skydiver and air show hall of fame pilot Charlie Hillard, who in 1972 became the first American to win the World Aerobatic Championships. Her mother was a private pilot.

But Kotnik’s path to becoming a fighter pilot really began when she saw a NASA T-38 Talon supersonic jet trainer pull up at an air show, she told Live Airshow TV last fall. The pilot shut down the engines, popped the canopy and pulled off the flight helmet, revealing a female fighter pilot.

“It was at that moment that I realized, ‘Oh, my god, that’s exactly what I can do,’” Kotnik said.

After graduating from the Air Force Academy in 2011, Kotnik earned her wings in 2013 and learned to fly the F-16C. She’s since flown with the 35th Fighter Squadron at Kunsan Air Base, South Korea, and the 55th Fighter Squadron at Shaw Air Force Base, S.C., according to her official biography.

At Shaw, she flew missions supporting Operation Noble Eagle — the air defense mission to prevent another 9/11 — and served as an instructor pilot training new F-16 wingmen.

Trump: No plan for GIs to leave S. Korea

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — President Donald Trump said in an interview broadcast Sunday that he has “no plans” to withdraw U.S. forces from South Korea as he prepares for another summit with North Korea’s leader.

The president has frequently complained about the expense of maintaining servicemembers on the divided peninsula. Seoul and Washington are involved in a standoff over sharing the \$2 billion cost, raising concern the president may use that as an excuse to pull them out.

But Trump told CBS News the issue hasn’t come up.

When asked if he would keep U.S. troops in South Korea, Trump said: “Yeah. I mean we haven’t talked about anything else.”

“Maybe someday. I mean, who knows? But, you know, it’s very expensive to keep troops there. You do know that,” he added in the interview with “Face the Nation.” “We have 40,000 troops in South Korea. It’s very expensive, but I have no plans. I’ve never even discussed removing them.”

It’s not clear why he gave the number 40,000. Some 28,500 U.S. servicemembers are stationed in South Korea, although the military says that number fluctuates due to rotation and other factors.

He also reiterated that plans for a second summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un have been set and said he’ll announce the time and place either during his State of the Union address Tuesday “or shortly before.”

The visiting U.S. special envoy for North Korea, Stephen Biegun, discussed preliminary

summit plans with the South Korean national security adviser in Seoul on Monday, according to the presidential office.

Biegun was due to meet with his North Korean counterpart Tuesday in the truce village of Panmunjom, which straddles the heavily fortified border, South Korean media have reported. The U.S. and South Korea have been allies since they fought together in the 1950-53 Korean War, which ended in an armistice instead of a peace treaty. The two countries, however, have disagreed in recent months over the troop-funding issue as well as the approach to nuclear talks with North Korea. A five-year burden-sharing contract expired on Dec. 31 after negotiations stalled over Trump’s demand for the South to reportedly double its contribution.

Seoul paid about \$850 million last year to offset the cost of the daily upkeep of U.S. forces, including salaries of South Korean workers who provide support and construction costs.

U.S. Forces Korea said in its Strategic Digest that was about 41 percent of the cost.

The South also paid the bulk of the more than \$11 billion price tag for expanding Camp Humphreys as part of a long-delayed plan to relocate most Americans south of Seoul.

Officials from both sides say talks are ongoing and the issue has not affected operations.

Nuclear negotiations also have been stalled since Trump met with Kim on June 12 in Singapore. The leaders agreed to the general principle of denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula but not the details about how to do so.

US soldiers honored during Super Bowl

BY KIM GAMEL

Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — Dozens of American soldiers stationed in South Korea enjoyed a few seconds in the Super Bowl spotlight when they were featured in a live shot during the national anthem.

The camera zoomed in on about 100 members of the 2nd Infantry Division and other units as Gladys Knight belted out a powerful rendition of “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

“It was an absolute honor to represent the country,” said Maj. Jason Harrington, 36, a Patriots fan from Abington, Mass. “That three to five seconds that we had on national TV is special because it really

highlights the efforts, the sacrifice ... all those key buzzwords. It goes a long way.”

The Super Bowl traditionally honors the military, but it was the first time the 2nd ID appeared in the brief live shot before kickoff. The New England Patriots went on to beat the Los Angeles Rams 13-3.

Pvt. Searcy Storey, 22, who later put a Patriots shirt on over his fatigues, said it helped him feel less homesick since it was the first time he wasn’t able to watch the Super Bowl with his family near Fort Worth, Texas.

“It felt rewarding. It made me feel better about being away from my family,” he said.

Due to the time difference, the troops gathered before dawn on Monday to appear in

the live satellite feed from the 2nd ID headquarters building on Camp Humphreys, a sprawling Army garrison south of Seoul.

Many said they were motivated by the chance to be on TV as well as an offer of a day off in exchange for showing up.

A few South Korean soldiers also joined the crowd to represent the fact that 2nd ID is a combined division that includes servicemembers from the allied nation.

Pfc. Dionne Crawford, 19, of Wilson, N.C., was excited her family would see her on TV. “My brother told me to root for the Patriots,” she said before the game.

Pfc. Tom Johansen, 28, of Myrtle Beach, S.C., was hop-

ing the Rams would win since “they’re the underdogs” in the game.

Division commander Maj. Gen. Scott McKean also joked with sportscasters in an interview during pregame coverage on CBS. The two-star asked commentator Nate Burleson if the San Francisco 49ers would be able to compete next year with the Rams. Then he added a warning.

“Nate, before you answer that, remember we got lots of tanks and helicopters over here, so I just want to make sure you take that into your consideration,” he said, surrounded by soldiers, including a few wearing fan gear.

“Well, they’re going to win the Super Bowl since you put it like that,” Burleson responded.

Troops up before dawn to watch game at Bagram

BY PHILLIP WALTER
WELLMAN

Stars and Stripes

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan — As sounds of cheer erupted on the television screen, a group of about 20 American servicemembers stretched and yawned — and one awoke from sleep looking lost.

The New England Patriots had just defeated the Los Angeles Rams to win the 2019 Super Bowl, and the troops had been up since before dawn to watch the game.

The viewing party at the Pat Tillman Memorial USO, named for the former Arizona Cardinals safety and Army Ranger killed in Afghanistan in 2004, was adorned with football-shaped decorations. It was just one of several events held at the United States’ largest military base in Afghanistan to mark America’s most-watched televised sporting event.

The kickoff, 6:30 p.m. Sunday in Atlanta, was at 4 a.m. Monday here. Festivities, which included multiple watch parties,

raffles and buffet spreads full of familiar snacks from back home, began about an hour earlier.

“It’s not a big deal,” said Army Spc. Alyssa Johnson, a Rams fan, when asked about waking early for the game. “It’s for football and an easy sacrifice to make.”

Johnson was one of several dozen people at the base’s main Super Bowl party, held at a coalition recreation center. Like him, most attendees at that event seemed energized.

“I’ve been to some college parties, and this is up there with those,” said Johnson, standing in front of a large cake with the Rams’ and Patriots’ logos on it. An adjacent buffet included Super Bowl staples like nachos, mozzarella sticks and pizza.

Although he expected to be tired later in the day, Army Spc. Tyler Chmielecki also said it was worth waking up early to watch.

“I’m a big Patriots fan. My whole family is from the New England area, so to watch them play in another Super Bowl is a good thing to experience, even

if it’s at three in the morning,” he said. “I’ll just have to have a lot of coffee and energy drinks to keep me going for the rest of the day.”

The game was projected on two large screens in different rooms at the center. One showed an Armed Forces Network broadcast, which didn’t air Super Bowl commercials, long a highlight of the annual spectacle. Nearly everyone chose to watch a second version, streamed by the NFL, which included the ads.

“The commercials are half the reason why people want to come out,” said Don Baumgartner, Morale, Welfare and Recreation director at the base and the event’s organizer.

CBS was selling 30 seconds of commercial airtime for more than \$5 million, Bloomberg reported. A series of “Game of Thrones”-inspired Budweiser ads went over particularly well with the crowd, who couldn’t drink themselves while watching the game because of rules barring troops in Afghanistan from consuming alcohol.

Baumgartner was happy

with this year’s turnout and said most of the servicemembers were appreciative despite the early hour. “People like the atmosphere and like being able to watch the game with their battle buddies,” he said.

At halftime, Baumgartner drew the winners of a pair of door prizes, a Nintendo Switch and an Xbox One.

Army Spc. Charles Sila, a California native, had the first ticket number called and claimed his choice of video game console.

“Right before the raffle, my friends asked, ‘What do we want to win?’ and I said, ‘The Switch because I don’t have one of those and I want to play Mario Party,’” Sila said. “So I’m pretty pleased with the raffle. That was a good idea.”

Though not an official event, troops waiting for weather-delayed transport at Bagram’s helicopter passenger terminal also cheered as they watched the game on small screens in the waiting area, a much more spartan setting with metal chairs and fridges full of bottled water.

Taliban to take part in 'intra-Afghan' talks

Associated Press

ISLAMABAD — The Taliban said Monday they will participate in “intra-Afghan” talks in Moscow designed to bring together prominent Afghan figures, including former President Hamid Karzai, opposition figures and tribal elders — but no Kabul government officials.

The two-day meeting in the Russian capital, which starts Tuesday, is seen as another step in a process aimed at resolving Afghanistan’s 17-year war, one that has accelerated since the appointment last September of U.S. peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad.

Khalilzad has been holding separate negotiations with the Taliban even as he presses for a dialogue that would bring together all key Afghan players.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani’s office criticized the meeting in Moscow, saying that Afghan politicians attending the gathering were doing so “in order to gain power.” Ghani’s chief adviser, Fazel Fazly, tweeted that it was “regrettable.”

Suhail Shaheen, spokesman for the Taliban’s political office in the Gulf Arab state of Qatar,

confirmed the insurgents’ participation. A 10-member Taliban delegation would be led by Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai.

The Taliban have refused to talk to Ghani’s government, which they denounce as a U.S. puppet.

A statement released on Monday by Afghans attending the Moscow meeting described it as “the first step toward intra-Afghan dialogue.” Along with Karzai, the former president, many of the 38 delegates from Kabul have held prominent government positions. Two presidential hopefuls are among those going to Moscow, including Hanif Atmar, who resigned as Ghani’s security adviser last August, apparently over differences with the president.

Also on the list are powerful warlords-turned-politicians and former Taliban insurgents who reconciled with the Kabul administration.

The only woman on the list, lawmaker and activist Fawzia Koofi, has been an outspoken advocate for women’s rights and girls’ education. The Taliban ruled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001, imposing harsh forms of Islamic law limiting women’s education and rights.

Karzai tweeted he was traveling to Moscow with “a message of peace, unity, sovereignty and progress for all of us; the men, women and children of our beloved country.”

However, Abdullah Abdullah, the country’s chief executive, said the Afghan government should be at the center of any peace talks, adding that Kabul “would prefer the Moscow meeting had a different shape.”

Abdullah said that Taliban were the biggest obstacle to peace, but that if the Moscow meeting creates “an opening for real peace talks, it would still be a step forward.”

The Taliban have been staging near-daily attacks, inflicting heavy casualties on the embattled Afghan army and security forces.

The Moscow gathering is likely to further isolate Ghani, who has been irked by Khalilzad’s direct talks with the Taliban as well as the U.S. envoy’s successive rounds of talks in regional countries.

The Russian government has denied orchestrating the meeting. Monday’s statement from Kabul said the Council of Afghan Society, a Moscow-based organization of the Afghan di-

aspora, was behind it.

Russia’s Foreign Ministry said the meetings are an Afghan initiative aimed at laying the foundation for an eventual peace process.

“The Russian side welcomes this initiative of Afghanistan’s civil society and believes that a direct dialogue between Afghans can make a political dialogue in Afghanistan more inclusive and open the way for engaging armed opposition,” said the Russian statement.

“The planned meeting effectively implements the principle of a peace process led by the Afghans and owned by the Afghans, which has been approved by the international community.”

The statement did not address the absence of Afghan government representatives or Ghani’s criticism.

The Afghan statement issued by those attending the meeting said the participants would discuss a range of issues, from a cease-fire, supporting Khalilzad’s initiatives to further “intra-Afghan” talks and ways to ensure a “powerful and democratic central government” in Afghanistan.

Iraq rejects US plan to ‘watch Iran’ from military bases

The Washington Post

Iraqi President Barham Salih on Monday rejected a plan floated by President Donald Trump that calls for keeping U.S. forces in Iraq to “watch” neighboring Iran, saying the United States should not burden Iraq with its own “policy priorities.”

Trump’s comments on Sunday have added to mounting concerns among both opponents and supporters of an American troop presence in Iraq. Their fear is that the White House sees the country as a launch point to enforce Washington’s political goals in the region, rather than as a place to help Baghdad fight a persistent threat from Islamic State.

After Trump made an unannounced visit to an air base in western Iraq in December, some Iraqi lawmakers pledged to draft a bill calling for the expulsion of American forces altogether, while others

called for revising an agreement to significantly draw down the approximately 5,200 American troops in the country.

On Monday, several Iraqi officials and politicians said the effort to expel the U.S. forces is gaining momentum following Trump’s comments during a CBS interview.

Speaking at a forum in Baghdad on Monday, Salih said Washington has never sought permission to use Iraq-based forces to monitor Iran and expressed surprise at the idea.

“We will not allow this,” he said, adding that American forces are in Iraq only to assist in the fight against terrorism. “Iraq does not want to be a party or axis to any conflict between multiple countries.”

Salih also said it in Iraq’s “fundamental interest to develop good relations with our neighbors, including Iran.”

During a discussion of his administra-

tion’s plans to withdraw troops from Syria and reduce America’s military presence in Afghanistan, Trump said in a CBS interview on Sunday that the United States has “spent a fortune” building an “incredible” military base in Iraq.

“We might as well keep it. And one of the reasons I want to keep it is because I want to be looking a little bit at Iran because Iran is a real problem,” he said.

Asked if he intended to use the base to strike Iran, Trump said it would be used only to “watch.”

He appeared to be referring to al-Asad Air Base in western Iraq, where the majority of the American troops in the country are located.

Iraq’s government has been struggling to balance its relationships with Iran and the United States, its two biggest allies, as tensions between Tehran and Washington have risen under Trump’s administration.

Lawmakers scramble as deadline nears

Bloomberg

Congress has only a few days left to come up with an agreement on border security spending to prevent a government shutdown and may yet see the process upended once President Donald Trump delivers his State of the Union address on Tuesday.

Trump in recent days has repeatedly declared the negotiations a waste of time and said Feb. 1 that his speech to a joint session of Congress would reveal more of his own plans. He suggested that might include a politically and legally fraught emergency declaration to circumvent Congress to begin building a border wall.

While the government has

funding to keep operating until Feb. 15, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., has said the 17 Republicans and Democrats on a House-Senate conference committee need to wrap up their work by Friday to allow time to vote on any plan to resolve the stalemate. While staff members talked over the weekend and on Monday, real progress isn't expected until after party meetings on Tuesday.

When the talks began last week, Democrats offered no new money for border barriers, and Republicans were still seeking \$5.7 billion for a wall. Democrats suggested an openness to border fencing, but not the wall Trump made a centerpiece of his presidential campaign. For lawmakers in the

talks, Trump and Pelosi are proving the biggest obstacles to a compromise.

Some Republicans accused Democrats of being inflexible given that they'd supported funding for new fencing in the past.

"They are moving in the wrong direction by now saying zero funding," said Georgia Rep. Tom Graves, who serves on the conference committee. "If there's another shutdown, it lies at the feet of Nancy Pelosi."

Trump told reporters on Friday there's a "good chance" he'll declare a national emergency to bypass Congress and tap existing sources of money to build a wall if lawmakers don't give in to his demands.

He's suggested the declaration could come as early as his State of the Union speech and that another government shutdown to force the issue remained a possibility.

If lawmakers reach a deal, it could include Democrats agreeing to miles of new border fencing. It remains unclear if Trump would accept that offer.

Negotiators then would also need to sort out how to pay for the extra barriers, including whether to cut other programs or use budget gimmicks to make up the difference.

They'll also need to sort out other fiscal disputes such as whether to send more disaster aid to hurricane-battered Puerto Rico, an idea Trump has opposed.

Army reservist arrested, her husband suspected of murder

Associated Press

CONROE, Texas — An Army reservist is involved in the investigation of a double-homicide in Texas where her husband, who is facing murder charges, temporarily escaped from a prisoner transport van Sunday, according to authorities in Michigan and Texas.

Staff Sgt. Ginell McDonough, 37, was arrested at her home in Muskegon, Mich., on Jan. 9 for helping her husband hide out from authorities with his girlfriend, according to an arrest report from the Muskegon Police Department.

Her husband, Cedric Marks, is an MMA fighter suspected of killing two people, including an ex-girlfriend. He was captured Sunday after escaping from the prisoner transport van in Texas, authorities said. He was taken into custody after a nine-hour manhunt involving multiple law enforcement agencies, Montgomery County, Texas, sheriff's Lt. Scott Spencer said in a tweet Sunday.

Marks escaped during a stop at a McDonald's in Conroe about 40 miles north of Houston, Conroe police Lt. Dorcy

McGinnis said Sunday. McGinnis said murder warrants were issued Sunday for Marks in the killings of an ex-girlfriend, Jenna Scott, and a friend of hers, Michael Swearingin, who disappeared Jan. 4 and were found buried in a shallow grave in Clearview, Okla., on Jan. 15.

Maya Maxwell is charged with evidence tampering and is jailed in Bell County on \$150,000 bond. According to an arrest affidavit, she told detectives that she drove Swearingin's vehicle to Austin, Texas, in an attempt to hide it from investigators. It was found abandoned in the city Jan. 6.

McDonough, who is also the mother of two of Marks' children, is jailed in Muskegon County, Mich., on an obstruction of justice charge. She is accused of allowing Marks and Maxwell to stay in her home between Jan. 5 and Jan. 9.

McDonough is with the Reserve's 180th Transportation Company, based out of Muskegon. Her service record states her military service dates to 2001 with stints in the regular Army and Navy.

Power restored to NYC jail

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Power was restored Sunday night at a federal detention center in New York City where inmates had been living largely without heat or electricity for the past week, according to a statement from the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

Protesters have gathered outside the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn in recent days following news reports that those housed there have largely been without heat or power for the past week and also haven't been able to communicate with lawyers or loved ones. Outdoor temperatures have been well below freezing on some recent days, though Sunday was warmer.

In its statement, the agency said it was "working to restore the facility to normal operations."

Earlier Sunday, some demonstrators attempted to enter the facility, and witnesses said guards drove them back with pushes, shoves and pepper spray. A reporter and photographer for The Associated Press were at the facility when a woman, whose son is being detained, tried to get into the jail.

On Sunday, an inmate was able to call through the window

of his cell, which faces out to the street, to his mother below. The woman, Yvonne Murchison, was crying and upset and tried to get into the facility, where visits have been stopped.

She was followed by activists and media into the lobby, where visitors have to pass through metal detectors.

Witnesses said officers used significant force to push the people out, with some of those attempting to come in being pushed to the ground. The AP photographer felt some type of spray and began to have trouble breathing. Those affected were seen washing out their eyes with water or milk.

The Bureau of Prisons has acknowledged that the jail "experienced a partial power outage due to a fire in the switch gear room."

The bureau had said a new electrical panel is being installed by an outside contractor, and work was expected to be completed by Monday. It wasn't clear if that work was completed Sunday night with the restoration of power. The agency insisted that inmates had hot water for showers and sinks and were getting medications as needed.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man who bit officer's thumb is convicted

TN KNOXVILLE—Prosecutors said a Bloods gang member who claimed to be a “sovereign citizen” was convicted of biting off the end of a police officer’s thumb.

On Friday, Knox County District Attorney General Charme Allen announced that a jury convicted Alexander Ray Johnson, 30, of aggravated assault, punishable by three to six years in prison, and two assault counts.

Prosecutors said a Knoxville officer stopped Johnson in June 2017 for speeding and for having a fake license plate that claimed a right to travel as a “Sovereign Hebrew Israelite.” Sovereign citizens deny the legitimacy of government authority. Prosecutors said Johnson wouldn’t get out or provide his license and argued about whether speeding was a crime.

They said Johnson fought off officers while they tried taking him into custody and bit backup officer Trey Lane’s thumb.

Officials: Stop leaving excrement on islands

FL VERO BEACH—State officials said visitors defecating on a group of small islands near Florida’s east coast have become a problem.

Treasure Coast Newspapers reported that the Florida Department of Environmental Protection is asking kayakers, picnickers and anglers to stop leaving human waste on the dozens of spoil islands in the Indian River Lagoon.

Environmental specialist Emily Dark said the islands are made up of sand and limestone and they lack the proper soil to effectively break down human waste. The waste can create a serious health hazard on the islands’ shores and an even big-

ger problem when rain causes it to drain into the lagoon.

The islands don’t have trash cans or restrooms, so visitors are responsible for taking away anything they bring.

Driver due in jail for DUI crashes into store

IL ZION—Authorities said a driver who hit a police car and then crashed her SUV into a northern Illinois drug store was supposed to begin serving a jail sentence for DUI the next day.

WLS-TV Chicago reported that the 57-year-old woman may face felony charges for the Friday night crash. They said she hit a police car near a CVS store in Zion before driving into the store. Tow truck driver Roger Whitmoore said the SUV stopped about 35 feet inside the store. Officials said no one in the store or the squad car was injured.

The woman, who police have not identified, was set to begin an 80-day jail sentence Saturday for driving under the influence.

Plane returns to gate 3 times for 3 issues

CA LOS ANGELES—Hawaiian Airlines said a flight bound for Maui returned to the gate at Los Angeles International Airport three times for three separate problems before finally being canceled.

Spokesman Alex Da Silva said Flight 33 took off and landed again twice on Saturday. A third time, the jetliner pushed back from the gate and then came back.

Da Silva said each return was “due to separate and unrelated faults with different systems.” He didn’t elaborate.

The more than 200 passengers were given hotel rooms and placed on other flights.

Historic home, inn now belongs to bank

MS NATCHEZ — A southwest Mississippi historic home and inn now belongs to a local bank.

The Natchez Democrat reported no one Friday met the \$4.7 million minimum bid set by the bank to buy Dunleith Historic Inn and The Castle Restaurant.

Natchez-based United Mississippi Bank foreclosed after former owner Michael Worley defaulted on \$7.3 million in debt. Worley declared personal bankruptcy.

United Mississippi CEO Adrian Sandel said the bank intends to sell the house through other avenues.

Dunleith was built in 1856 and has been a bed and breakfast since 1976. It’s among the most recognized antebellum structures in Natchez.

Dunleith General Manager John Holyoak says the inn and restaurant remain open.

3 plead guilty in theft of hundreds of guns

MO SPRINGFIELD — Three more Texas men have recently pleaded guilty to stealing 654 firearms from United Parcel Service trailers in Springfield.

Raynord Hunt, of Dallas, pleaded guilty Friday to charges in a federal indictment. Eric White, of Arlington, Texas, and Derrick White, also of Dallas, pleaded guilty to the same charges in January.

Frank McChriston and Keith Lowe, both of Dallas, and Quinton Haywood, of Glenn Heights, Texas, earlier pleaded guilty to the same charges.

All six men admitted they worked together to steal cargo that was being shipped from Beretta USA in Maryland to Missouri in October 2017. The

guns were en route to Bass Pro Shops in Springfield.

Man severely burned in e-cigarette explosion

NY MAMARONECK — A New York man suffered severe burns after he said an e-cigarette battery exploded in his pants pocket.

Jacob Dudhnath, 27, said he had just arrived at work Jan. 28 in Mamaroneck when the battery burst into flames. He said he began rolling on the ground, and his co-worker, Kevin Carrelli, said he burned his hands trying to rip the pants off.

Dudhnath was taken to Westchester Medical Center with first- and second-degree burns to his left leg. He said he may need skin grafts in the future.

Appeals court: Judge exceeded authority

IN INDIANAPOLIS — The Indiana appeals court said a judge exceeded his authority by doubling a woman’s prison sentence to six years after she failed to surrender in a timely manner to start her term.

Porter Superior Judge Roger Bradford initially sentenced Hakimah Qualls, 36, of Gary to three years in prison. She was charged with escape, battery and driving while intoxicated.

The Times of Northwest Indiana reported that Bradford ordered her to report to jail last March, but she requested more time to get her affairs in order. Bradford granted that request.

But when Qualls’ attorney sought even more time, she was sentenced to six years in prison.

In a 3-0 decision Thursday, the appeals court said the judge was wrong to increase Qualls’ original sentence.

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®

Pats win sixth title in throwback style

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Graying but still gritty, Tom Brady, Bill Belichick and the Patriots came to the Super Bowl intending to stave off, for at least one more game, the inevitable onslaught of the NFL's future.

Job well done.

Pro football never looked flatter, older and more stuck in the days of the VCR than it did Sunday.

In a Super Bowl only New England could love, the Patriots won their sixth title by lumbering their way to a 13-3 victory over the Los Angeles Rams — that young, brash, high-flying team with the 33-year-old coach and the 24-year-old quarterback who were, we thought, changing football before our very eyes.

If only we could've kept them open.

Among the Super Bowl records set: Fewest points by both teams (16); fewest points by the winning team (13); fewest combined points through three quarters (6); most consecutive drives ending with a punt (8 by the Rams); longest punt (65 yards). The halftime show with Maroon 5 offered no relief — roundly ripped, including by an Associated Press reviewer who called it “Empty. Boring. Basic. Sleepy.”

He could have said the same about the game. But give credit where it's due.

The defense designed by Belichick turned Rams quarterback Jared Goff into

a jittery mess. He completed 19 of 38 passes for 229 yards, with an assortment of rushed throws, misread coverages and, in the tiny windows in which LA showed any sign of life, a pair of terrible passes.

One, trailing 3-0 in the third quarter, was late and high to wide-open Brandin Cooks in the end zone; the other, trailing 10-3 with 4:17 left in the fourth quarter, was high under pressure for an easy interception by Patriots cornerback Stephon Gilmore that essentially ended the game.

“I know I definitely have a lot to learn from this one,” said Rams coach Sean McVay, who, at 33, is exactly half the age of Belichick.

McVay has been the flavor of the month in the copycat NFL. Other teams have hired away three of his assistant coaches over the last two years, as the league tries to catch up with his newfangled offense that cracked 30 points in 13 games this season.

On Sunday, it managed one 53-yard field goal from Greg Zuerlein and didn't take a snap inside the New England 20.

Gilmore's interception came minutes after Brady engineered the game's lone touchdown drive.

It was five plays and included four straight completions: 18 yards to Rob Gronkowski, 13 yards to Julian Edelman, seven yards to backup running back Rex

Burkhead, then a 29-yard teardrop placed perfectly into the arms of Gronkowski, who was double-covered. Sony Michel ran it in from 2 yards for the touchdown with 7 minutes left.

“We couldn't get points on the board for one reason or another,” Brady said, “but in the end, it feels a lot better than last year, when we did get some points on the board.”

Last year, the Patriots fell 41-33 to Philly in a back-and-forth thriller that essentially featured one good defensive play: a sack and strip on Brady by Eagles defensive end Brandon Graham with the clock running down.

The year before, the Patriots scored 31 points in the second half and overtime for a riveting 34-28 comeback win over Atlanta and title No. 5.

Then, this.

On a day when New England held LA running back Todd Gurley to 35 yards, when LA couldn't muster a drive longer than five plays for nearly three quarters, and when LA's Johnny Hekker (eight punts, 46.3 yard average) was his team's most effective player, a 10-point lead at the end felt like a million.

“It's a beautiful thing, man,” said New England cornerback Jason McCourty.

And a game only the Patriots could love.

Befuddled QB Goff can't spark Rams' offense

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Jared Goff trudged to the Los Angeles Rams' bench, his face betraying confusion and despair while the Patriots celebrated their interception behind him.

Sean McVay left the sideline and leaned into his ear. The coach didn't say much, but he encouraged his quarterback to learn from a disastrous night in the Super Bowl.

McVay and Goff are likely to be together for many more years, and they hope they'll remember their embarrassing 13-3 loss Sunday as a springboard to the future, not the crushing flop that it felt like immediately afterward.

Goff went 19-for-38 for 229 yards with a key fourth-quarter interception, yet even those pe-

destrian numbers don't reflect his full array of overlooked receivers, inaccurate throws and inability to adjust to the Patriots' defense.

“It's the toughest loss I ever had,” Goff said. “It kills. It's terrible. It's a game I wish I would have played better. I wish I could have a million plays back.”

Goff played a large role in the Rams' defeat, yet almost nothing went right for a team that has been frequently brilliant with the ball in its hands.

With just 260 total yards, just six first downs in the first three quarters and a season-high nine punts, the Rams barely resembled a McVay-coached offense while matching the lowest-scoring performance in Super Bowl history.

Los Angeles has led the

league in points per game over the past two seasons, yet the Rams became just the second team in NFL history to fail to score a touchdown in the Super Bowl.

All of the Rams' recent success came to a weird anticlimax at Mercedes-Benz Stadium with their lowest-scoring performance in 36 games under the 33-year-old head coach.

“I'm pretty numb right now, but definitely I got outcoached,” McVay said. “I didn't do nearly a good enough job for our football team. ... This one is going to stick with you. It just stings in your gut.”

Though Goff's teammates and coaches refused to blame him, Los Angeles' 24-year-old quarterback had one of the rougher performances in Super Bowl history. Along with his 19

incompletions, he was sacked four times, committed a key false start in the fourth quarter and finished with a 57.9 passer rating.

Goff has grown from a shaky No. 1 pick into a two-time Pro Bowl selection under McVay, and his best games have been outstanding. But his lows are frequently disheartening — and this game appeared to be among his worst.

Goff had only nine completions in the first three quarters before getting 10 more in the fourth while the Rams' rally fell short.

“We were moving the ball well at times, but we just couldn't get that one play,” Goff said. “We know what type of offense we have, and to not be able to show that, it's tough.”

Brady, Belichick not slowing down

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Tom Brady quickly made it clear that winning a record sixth Super Bowl title won't change his mind about playing at least another year.

As long as No. 12 is still going, New England's dynasty won't crumble.

"Doesn't change anything," Brady said moments after the Patriots beat the Los Angeles Rams 13-3 on Sunday. "I can't wait to spend some time with my family, my kids and my wife. Couldn't do it without their support. It's been a great year."

The Patriots have long defied odds and continue re-writing history by sustaining their success for two decades. Brady and coach Bill Belichick are 6-3 in Super Bowls since 2001. They have won 10 straight AFC East titles and reached eight conference titles games in a row. They've posted a winning record in 18 consecutive seasons, reaching the playoffs 16 times, winning 16 division titles and nine AFC championships.

It's an unprecedented run, and they're not done yet.

The Patriots were counted out in 2014 after a 41-14 loss to Kansas City on Monday Night Football dropped their record to 2-2. All they've done since is win three of the last five Super Bowls. Each time it appears they may be slipping, the Patriots come back strong and find a way to overcome any turmoil.

Belichick and Brady were supposedly at odds last year and their relationship was reportedly nearing a breaking point.

One of the first people to embrace Brady after the game was Belichick, wrapping his arms around his quarterback and Super Bowl MVP Julian Edelman amid a sea of confetti and a swarm of cameras.

"Coach makes it a challenging football environment, the pressure is always on, and for moments like this, you have to rise to the occasion," Brady said.

Brady hasn't wavered from his stated desire to play until he's 45. He was ordinary much of the game against the Rams but delivered in the clutch in the fourth quarter. Overall, he had an excellent season at age 41 and was spectacular in the conference title win at Kansas City.

Brady shows little sign of slowing down thanks to his rigorous training schedule and nutrition program. And thanks to a great team Belichick re-assembles around him each season, Brady doesn't have to win every game with his arm.

The Patriots reinvented themselves this season, adding a downhill running game that gave the offense more balance. Rookie Sony Michel ran for 931 yards and six touchdowns in the regular season, and 336 yards and six more TDs in the playoffs. He can be even better next season.

"I'm so proud of him," Patriots center David Andrews said of his fellow Georgia Bulldog Michel. "He faced a lot of adversity at the beginning with an injury, and he battled through people calling him a bust. And I knew when he got a shot, he'd cut it loose. We started finding our identity throughout the year."

Then the defense dominated in the biggest game, holding the league's second-highest scoring offense to only a field goal.

"I don't think we care about what people had to say," cornerback Jason McCourty said. "We just knew what we were capable of, and we still had a chance to win the Super Bowl. It doesn't matter how many people doubted us."

Edelman named MVP

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Julian Edelman was forced to watch only as a spectator as his disappointed New England Patriots teammates trudged off the field a year ago as Super Bowl losers.

Catch after catch in this one, Tom Brady's favorite wide receiver helped make them winners again.

"It's pretty surreal," Edelman said, shaking his head. "Tough times don't last, tough people do. I preach that, and, I guess you have to live to it."

Edelman certainly did Sunday night, earning Super Bowl MVP honors with 10 receptions for 141 yards while helping lift the Patriots to a 13-3 victory over the Los Angeles Rams.

"My name was called," he said. "I was asked to make a couple plays and we were able to do that."

Edelman and Brady made one final connection — at midfield with confetti flying around them. They embraced for several moments — eyes filled with the tears of champions.

"The hug was just two Bay Area boys that love football, love to compete and are living out our dreams," Edelman said before taking a second to clarify one small detail.

"I think he held me," the bushy-bearded Edelman said with a big grin. "I didn't hold him."

It was an incredibly satisfying ending to a big-time comeback season for Edelman, a guy considered by Brady to be like a little brother — some teammates even jokingly say they have a "bromance" — and widely regarded as one of the greatest slot receivers in league history.

And, he was at it again against the Rams.

Reliable and steady. All night long.

"He's a fighter, man, that kid," Brady said. "I'm just so proud of him. He's been an incredible player for this team in the playoffs and he just cemented himself, again, in the history of the NFL for what his accomplishments are."

Even when things weren't working early for the Patriots, Edelman kept the offense going and the clock rolling as a safety

valve for Brady. Eight of his catches were for first downs, including a 13-yard grab during the go-ahead touchdown drive with 7 minutes left in the game.

"Julian always gives us those kinds of plays," coach Bill Belichick said. "Tough plays, tough catches, catch-and-run plays, breaking tackles for a few extra yards. He did a tremendous job."

It has been a long journey back to this point for Edelman, who missed all of last season after tearing a knee ligament in New England's third preseason game.

What he did in this Super Bowl was exactly what the Patriots' offense was missing in last year's 41-33 loss to Philadelphia.

"I mean, injuries are psychologically so hard for an athlete because you don't get to do what you love to do," Edelman said. "When your team's going out there and playing in the Super Bowl and you don't get to help or you were not a factor, it was definitely very tough."

Edelman was forced to sit out the first four games of this season for violating the NFL's policy on performance enhancers.

And, then, it was uncertain as to whether the 32-year-old receiver would be as productive and effective as he had been throughout his career with the Patriots.

Turned out, he was as good as ever.

Not bad for the one-time quarterback at Kent State who became the right-hand man for arguably the NFL's greatest signal-caller.

"Oh, man, I am so proud of Jules," fellow receiver Chris Hogan said. "Where he has been and what he's had to battle and what he has had to overcome, I'm really proud of him."

Edelman finished the regular season with 74 catches and a team-high 850 receiving yards with six touchdowns. He kept it going through New England's first two playoffs games, hauling in 16 catches for a team-high 247 yards.

Edelman tied Dallas' Michael Irvin for the second-most 100-yard receiving games in the postseason with six, just two behind Jerry Rice's NFL record.

NHL roundup

Bruins top Caps for first time since 2014

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Tuukka Rask made 24 saves, David Krejci scored and the Boston Bruins beat the Washington Capitals 1-0 on Sunday to snap a 14-game skid against the defending Stanley Cup champions.

Boston beat Washington for the first time since March 29, 2014.

Rask earned his 253rd victory to take over first place on the Bruins' career list.

Braden Holtby made 37 saves for Washington. He was helpless to stop Krejci's shot on a one-timer after a tic-tac-toe puck movement and a cross-ice pass from Torey Krug midway through the second.

Fed up by mental mistakes, Capitals coach Todd Reirden used ice time as a weapon to punish players. He benched Evgeny Kuznetsov and Dmitrij Jaskin for much of the first period after each took a penalty and Andre Burakovsky for the first few minutes of the second for a defensive-zone turnover that almost led to a goal.

Canadiens 4, Oilers 3 (OT): Jonathan Drouin scored at 58 seconds of overtime to lift host Montreal past Edmonton.

Drouin scored seconds after Canadiens goalie Carey Price made back-to-back saves on Leon Draisaitl and Darnell Nurse.

Flames 4, Hurricanes 3: Derek Ryan, Elias Lindholm and Noah Hanifin scored in their first game back in Carolina, and Calgary won in coach Bill Peters' return to Raleigh.

Peters resigned as Carolina's coach last offseason and took over in Calgary. Shortly after, the Flames acquired Lindholm and Hanifin in a trade, and Ryan signed after three seasons in Carolina.

Top 25 roundup

Gillespie carries No. 14 Villanova past Georgetown

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Villanova had reminders everywhere of just how successful it's been in recent seasons: two national championship trophies were displayed for photos and former great Jalen Brunson was honored in a pre-game ceremony.

Collin Gillespie and Jermaine Samuels gave the Wildcats a glimpse of just how great the future could be for the program.

Gillespie hit six three-pointers and scored a career-high 30 points, Samuels had 16 rebounds and Eric Paschall had 24 points to keep No. 14 Villanova unbeaten in the Big East with a 77-65 victory over Georgetown on Sunday.

The Wildcats (18-4) have won 10 straight games and are 9-0 in the conference for the first time since 2009-10.

"I want to see how far we can take this ride," coach Jay Wright said.

The Wildcats got rolling late at their off-campus home, the Wells Fargo Center, where they are 32-3 since 2012-13 — and their win percentage boosted by six straight wins over the Hoyas in Philadelphia.

Phil Booth — who missed 10 of his first 12 shots — scored on a driving layup, then buried a three to snap a tie and give Villanova a 58-53 lead with 5:41 left. Villanova, which was called for four fouls on one possession late in the game, got a Gillespie bucket to stretch the lead and hold off the Hoyas (14-8, 4-5).

The Wildcats were again a two-scorer show. Booth, who was leading Villanova this sea-

son with 18.7 points, mostly sat this one out until crunch time. He missed his first six three-pointers while Paschall had some surprising help from Gillespie.

After Paschal converted a three-point play to give the Wildcats a 46-43 lead, he had combined with Gillespie to score 39 of their points. Gillespie, a 6-foot-3 sophomore guard, had flashes of scoring bursts this season. He scored a career-high 21 in a loss to Penn and 19 in a loss to Furman. But in a Big East battle, Gillespie was clutch in a win.

"Just playing with confidence," Gillespie said.

Gillespie made 6 of 11 threes and was 10-for-12 from the free-throw line to show he can be a scoring factor when needed in the stretch run.

"We just gave him too much airspace and he was able to knock down all those threes," Georgetown coach Patrick Ewing said.

No. 17 Purdue 73, Minnesota 63: Carsen Edwards scored 15 of his 17 points in the second half to lead No. 17 Purdue over Minnesota.

Trevion Williams added 16 points and Matt Haarms had 15 points and eight rebounds for the Boilermakers (16-6, 9-2 Big Ten). Purdue moved into a three-way tie with Michigan and Michigan State for the conference lead.

Amir Coffey scored 22 points, Daniel Oturu had 19 points and nine rebounds off the bench, and Jordan Murphy contributed 10 points and 10 rebounds for the Golden Gophers (16-6, 6-5).

NBA roundup

Irving leads Celtics to win over Thunder

Associated Press

BOSTON — Eight days after letting a win slip away against the Golden State Warriors, the Celtics were able to finish the job against another tough Western Conference opponent.

Kyrie Irving had 30 points and 11 assists as Boston overcame big games from Oklahoma City stars Paul George and Russell Westbrook to snap the Thunder's seven-game win streak in a 134-129 thriller on Sunday.

Boston has won four straight since a 115-111 home loss to the Warriors on Jan. 26 and has won nine of its last 10 games overall.

Marcus Morris had 19 points, Marcus Smart added 18 and seven assists and Daniel Theis had 14 off the Celtics bench.

George scored 37 points and Russell Westbrook notched his sixth straight triple-double and 19th of the season with 22 points, 16 assists and 12 rebounds.

Oklahoma City suffered its first loss since a 138-128 overtime setback against the Los Angeles Lakers on Jan. 17.

Raptors 121, Clippers 103: Kawhi Leonard scored 18 points, Serge Ibaka had 16 points and 12 rebounds and Toronto beat Los Angeles for its 10th victory in its last 11 home games.

Ibaka has a career-best six straight double-doubles, Toronto's longest streak since Chris Bosh had eight in November 2009.

Grizzlies 96, Knicks 84: Mike Conley scored 25 points, Marc Gasol had 24 and Memphis beat New York to snap a nine-game road losing streak.

Conley added eight rebounds and seven assists after missing a game because of left knee soreness. Gasol also had nine rebounds. Kevin Knox scored 17 points for New York. The Knicks have lost 13 straight overall and 14 in a row at Madison Square Garden.