

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Mattis appoints 2 to Pentagon posts

BY TARA COPP  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Rear Adm. Craig Faller and retired Rear Adm. Kevin Sweeney were appointed senior military adviser and chief of staff, respectively, at the Pentagon, by Defense Secretary James Mattis on Monday.

“Mattis hit the ground running,” said Navy Capt. Jeff Davis, a Pentagon spokesman.

Mattis actually had begun his tenure Saturday, after the Senate had confirmed his nomination as defense secretary Friday afternoon. He spent four hours at the Pentagon on Saturday and met with Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and tended to some administrative details, such as completing ethics and security forms, getting an initial intelligence briefing and meeting his staff, Davis told reporters. He also submitted a

urine sample for a drug test, as all Defense Department employees must do, Davis said.

In his first words to the Defense Department, Mattis told civilian and uniformed personnel that “together with the intelligence community, we are the sentinels and guardians of our nation. We need only look to you, the uniformed and civilian members of the department and your families, to see the fundamental unity of our country.”

Mattis’ senior military adviser, Faller, served as the commanding officer of the destroyer USS Stethem and the cruiser USS Shiloh, and as commander of Carrier Strike Group 3. He has deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan and served as assistant to U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Central Command commanders, and later as director of operations for Central Command.

Sweeney’s at-sea assignments include time as the commander of Destroyer Squadron 13 and executive officer in the USS Ar-

leigh Burke, and as commander of the USS Cole as the ship was restored and returned to the fleet. Sweeney was assigned three times to Washington jobs, including on the staffs of the chief of naval operations, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and as the executive assistant to the undersecretary of the Navy. He also served at U.S. Joint Forces Command and U.S. Central Command.

On Monday, Mattis had a call with the Canadian minister of national defense, Davis said.

Later Monday, he was expected to meet with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, including Dunford, Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Paul Selva, Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Robert Neller, Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. David Goldfein, Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Mark Milley and Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson.

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## Trump moves to pull US out of trade agreement

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump moved to pull the United States out of the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership trade pact Monday, dealing a quick blow to Barack Obama’s legacy as the new chief executive began fulfilling campaign promises in his first full week in office.

“Great thing for the American worker that we just did,” Trump said in brief remarks as he signed a notice in the Oval Office.

The president also signed memorandums freezing most federal government hiring, though he noted an exception for the military, and reinstating a ban on providing federal money to international groups that perform abortions or provide information on the option. The regulation, known as the “Mexico City Policy,” has been a political volleyball, instituted by Republican administrations and rescinded by Democratic ones since 1984.

Following a tumultuous first weekend in office — consumed by Trump’s criticism of the media’s inauguration coverage and his spokesman’s angry, inaccurate tirade

against journalists — the president was seeking to refocus on the sweeping, yet often vague, promises he made as a candidate. He campaigned as a fierce opponent of multilateral trade agreements, particularly the 12-nation Pacific Rim deal.

The deal was the cornerstone of Obama’s attempt to counter China’s influence in Asia. The Obama administration labored for years to finalize TPP. But Obama’s own Democratic Party was skeptical of the pact, and the former president never sent it to Congress for ratification.

As Trump pressed forward with executive actions, a legal watchdog group filed a lawsuit alleging he is violating the so-called emoluments clause in the Constitution by allowing his business to accept payments from foreign governments. The liberal-funded watchdog group Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics says the clause prohibits Trump from receiving money from diplomats for stays at his hotels or from foreign governments for leases of office space in his buildings.

Asked about the suit, Trump said it was

“totally without merit.”

The president was spending much of the day reaching out to lawmakers and others with a stake in his economic policies. Congressional leaders from both parties were attending an evening reception at the White House. The president also was scheduled to meet with union leaders and workers.

He began the day huddling with business leaders. He warned that he would impose a “substantial border tax” on companies that move their manufacturing out of the United States. He also promised tax advantages to companies that produce products domestically.

“All you have to do is stay,” he said during a meeting in the White House’s Roosevelt Room.

Tesla CEO Elon Musk and Marillyn Hewson of Lockheed Martin were among the executives who attended the meeting. The gathering kicked off a jam-packed day for the new president, including an evening reception with lawmakers from both parties and a sit-down with union leaders.

# Fierce foe of US military bases on Okinawa jailed for 3 months

*The Washington Post*

TOKYO — One of the most vocal opponents of U.S. military construction on Okinawa has been held in detention for more than three months on relatively minor charges, triggering accusations that the Japanese government is trying to silence him.

Hiroji Yamashiro, 64, who led protests against new U.S. Marine Corps facilities in the island prefecture, was arrested Oct. 17 and has been behind bars ever since.

“I can’t help but think this smells like a political judgment, not a judicial one,” Yamashiro wrote from his prison cell in Naha in response to questions from *The Washington Post* that were passed to him through his attorney.

“This is an unjust and illegal

detention, and I don’t think it should be allowed to happen. It’s probably related to the current situation of the base issue in Okinawa,” he wrote.

In Japan, suspects can be held for 23 days before legal authorities must either indict or release them. Their attorney is not allowed to attend interrogations conducted during this time.

Yamashiro was arrested on suspicion of cutting a wire fence around a Marine Corps helipad construction site in a forest. Three days later, prosecutors added another charge: interfering with public officers’ duties and causing bodily injury. They alleged that Yamashiro grabbed a civil servant from the Okinawa Defense Bureau and shook him, bruising his arm and hurting his neck, on Aug. 25.

Then, in late November, prosecutors added a third charge: obstruction, accusing Yamashiro of putting concrete blocks onto the road in front of the site at Henoko, where a new Marine Corps air station is being built, a full 10 months earlier.

Officials from the Okinawa prefectural police, the Naha local court and the U.S. Marine Corps in Okinawa declined to comment on Yamashiro’s case. But an Okinawa police representative has denied any political motivation.

“The police handled it appropriately in line with specific facts and based on laws and evidence, and we have no intention to put pressure on anti-base protesters,” he said.

## Pilots land helicopter on road on Okinawa

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE  
AND CHIYOMI SUMIDA

*Stars and Stripes*

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — A Marine Corps AH-1Z attack helicopter made a precautionary landing on Ikei Island, Okinawa, late last week after pilots received a warning indication in the cockpit.

The helicopter, from Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 267, landed on an “isolated” single-lane farm road at about 7:30 p.m. Friday, Marine officials said in a statement.

The pilots acted in accordance with standard operating procedures that dictated they land as soon as possible, the statement said.

No one was in the area when the helicopter landed, an Okinawa Defense Bureau spokesman said, and there were no injuries or damages.

The landing site was about 500 yards away from a resort hotel.

Military aircraft emergencies and mishaps are met with opposition in Okinawa. Protests erupted last month after an MV-22 Osprey crashed offshore near Camp Schwab.

Following Friday’s incident, Koichiro Nakajima, director of the Okinawa Defense Bureau, met with Kiichiro Jahana, executive director of the Okinawa Governor’s Office, and Toshio Shimabukuro, mayor of Uruma, where Ikei Island is located, to apologize for the incident. Nakajima insisted oil that had spilled from the aircraft during maintenance had been cleaned up.

“What on Earth is going on with aircraft maintenance of the military?” Shimabukuro asked. “There is a long way to go to ease the anxiety of residents (over the safety of military aircraft).”

## Army plans to quietly deactivate LRS companies

BY ALEX HORTON

*Stars and Stripes*

SAN ANTONIO — The Army will quietly deactivate its three long-range surveillance companies in the active-duty force in the remaining days of January, along with four National Guard companies in 2018, the Army said.

The nearly 100 soldiers in each of three active-duty companies attached to three Corps commands at Fort Hood in Texas, Fort Bragg in North Carolina and Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington will be reassigned to other units at those posts, said Lt. Col. Christina Kretchman, an Army spokeswoman.

Army National Guard units in Nebraska, Georgia, Indiana and Alabama will fold up their long-range surveillance companies and reassign those soldiers in August 2018, Kretchman said.

Stars and Stripes first reported in July that senior leaders decided to deactivate the companies through an evaluation in the Total Army Analysis, a force structure program used to balance the composition of the force with strategy and resources.

Computer models were used to conclude long-range surveillance companies were not in demand by ground commanders.

Defense analysts have said Army commanders have an aversion to risk and a growing preference to use technology such as satellites and drones for reconnaissance rather than insert small teams of soldiers.

Long-range surveillance companies in the Army comprise 15 six-man teams led by a staff sergeant. The teams specialize in navigating forward positions to monitor enemy movement and to gather intelligence for commanders.

The tasking of infantry soldiers gathering intelligence in small, self-sufficient teams has been a part of Army doctrine since before the American Revolution, when British reconnaissance troops raided enemy garrisons and harassed patrols in the French and Indian Wars.

Soldiers in long-range surveillance companies have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, tracing their lineage through Cold War Europe, Vietnam and the famous Alamo Scouts, who liberated prisoner of war camps during World War II.

An unceremonious end to long-range surveillance companies comes amid a buildup of thousands of U.S. troops and hardware in Europe not seen since the Cold War and the transition to President Donald Trump, whose rhetoric has called for less engagement in the region and a stronger, more robust military.

## Storms leave 19 dead across South

Associated Press

ALBANY, Ga. — Residents in Georgia, Mississippi and South Carolina who were trying to pick up the pieces left behind by a powerful storm system that tore across the Deep South over the weekend, killing 19 people, including 15 in south Georgia. Rescuers were searching Monday for survivors.

Dougherty County Coroner Michael Fowler said four people died Sunday in the county that includes Albany. Some 60 miles away, Coroner Tim Purvis in Georgia's Cook County confirmed seven people died at the mobile home park in Adel, where about half of the 40 homes were leveled.

In South Carolina, the National Weather Service has confirmed two tornadoes struck over the weekend, injuring one woman who was trapped in a damaged mobile home near Blackville. The weather service says a tornado touched down about 3:45 p.m. Saturday. The other occurred in Orangeburg County a few minutes later.

Patrick Marsh of the Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Okla., said 39 possible tornadoes were reported across the Southeast from early Saturday into Sunday evening — none immediately confirmed. Of that, 30 were reported in Georgia, four in Mississippi, and one each in Louisiana and South Carolina.

Jenny Bullard, 19, said she and her parents, Jeff and Carla, are glad to have escaped without major injury after an apparent tornado battered their home in Cook County, causing walls to collapse. They are a farming family living not far from where the mobile homes were destroyed.

The middle section of their brick house was ripped off the slab. A piano was blown out of the house.

The young woman went back through the debris for family photos and other belongings.

"All this stuff can be replaced," she said. "We can't replace each other. We're extremely lucky. My dad is lucky to be alive."

## 2 arrested in Texas mall shooting

Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — Two suspects were in custody Monday after a robbery in a San Antonio shopping mall ended in a shooting that left one man dead and several other people injured, police said.

Police Chief William McManus said the two suspects robbed a jewelry store at the Rolling Oaks Mall on Sunday afternoon. After the two men fled the store, a man described by McManus as a "good Samaritan" tried to stop them.

One of the robbers fatally shot the man, McManus said. A second individual, who was carrying a licensed concealed handgun, then shot and wounded one robber.

The second suspect, who initially fled the scene, was apprehended Sunday night after a car

crash in nearby Converse, police said in a statement early Monday. Two weapons were recovered from the suspect.

McManus called the fatal shooting "absolutely senseless." The victim's name was not immediately released by authorities.

The second robber fired his weapon as he fled the mall, injuring a man and a woman. They, along with the wounded robber, were taken to a hospital, said San Antonio Fire Chief Charles Hood.

Two other people — a woman who complained of chest pains and a pregnant woman who had labor pains — were also taken to hospitals, Hood said.

Authorities have released no details on the conditions of the injured bystanders, but police said the wounded suspect was in critical condition.

## Intense storms, flooding pound S. Calif.

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The tail end of a punishing winter storm system lashed California with thunderstorms, hail and severe winds Monday after breaking rainfall records, washing out roads and whipping up enormous waves. At least four people died, three were missing and several others were rescued from raging floodwaters during three storms in four days.

Rescuers were set to resume a search for an 18-year-old woman whose car plunged into a rushing creek after a collision southeast of San Francisco. Alameda County Sheriff's spokesman Sgt. Ray Kelly said recovery efforts were hampered Sunday by dangerous conditions.

A thunderstorm brought pounding hail northwest of Los Angeles in Santa Barbara County, where a tornado warning was briefly issued. No tornadoes were reported but wind gusts topped 60 mph.

Flood watches and warnings remained in place for much of Southern California, a day after nearly 4 inches of rain fell south of Los Angeles, inundating roadways, toppling trees and raising concerns about damaging mudslides.

Nervous residents moved their cars to higher ground at a mobile home community in Or-

ange County's Seal Beach after heavy rains filled a parking lot to the height of a fire hydrant.

Commuters faced a messy drive to work, with rainfall expected to ease slightly but not taper off until Tuesday. Motorists were urged to use caution on mountain passes where heavy snow was falling.

Long Beach Airport received 3.87 inches of rain by 5 p.m. Sunday, breaking the all-time daily record for rainfall. Los Angeles Airport got 2.78 inches, another single-day record.

California has been swamped during a wet winter that has brought plenty of rain and snow after years of drought.

Along coastal San Diego, two women were swept into the ocean by a large wave Saturday in Sunset Cliffs. Both were pulled from the water after a treacherous rescue operation, but one of the women, a 23-year-old, later died at a hospital, San Diego Fire-Rescue Capt. Joe Amador said.

A motorist in the Los Angeles County city of Pomona died after losing control and smashing into a telephone pole amid heavy rains, according to police.

Firefighters in San Bernardino County staged a dramatic swift-water rescue of a couple whose pickup truck was trapped in surging water west

of the Cajon Pass.

TV footage showed rescue crews sending a raft, which was anchored to a firetruck, into rushing brown water so the trapped couple could climb aboard from the car's passenger window.

Traffic was diverted off interstates 110 and 710 south of downtown Los Angeles because of water flowing across lanes. Many motorists were forced to abandon their submerged cars.

Hundreds of homes remained evacuated near wildfire burn areas in Santa Barbara, Los Angeles and Orange counties. Potential debris flows could restrict access for emergency responders, officials said.

Farther north, officials warned of a "high avalanche danger" at all elevations of the Sierra Nevada because of heavy snowfall.

In Mendocino County, an oak toppled onto an apartment in Ukiah Saturday, crushing the building and killing a woman in her bed, fire officials told The (Santa Rosa, Calif.) Press Democrat newspaper.

A historic World War I-era ship called the S.S. Palo Alto and docked near Santa Cruz was torn apart by massive waves Saturday.

The Bay Area was also under a flash flood watch through Monday.

# Israeli PM to meet with Trump in Feb.

Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Israel's prime minister on Sunday accepted an invitation to visit the White House next month in hopes of forging a "common vision" for the region with President Donald Trump that could include expanded settlement construction on occupied territories and a tougher policy toward Iran.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced his plans to head to Washington in early February hours after delaying a vote on an explosive proposal to annex one of the West Bank's largest settlements, apparently to coordinate his policy toward the Palestinians with the new administration.

The move put on hold legislation that threatens to unleash fresh violence in the region. It also may have marked Trump's first presidential foray into Mid-

dle East diplomacy.

After eight years of frosty relations with President Barack Obama, Netanyahu has welcomed Trump's election as an opportunity to strengthen ties between the two allies. Israeli media reported that Netanyahu was gearing up plans to expand settlement construction in the occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem.

Late Sunday, the two men held what Netanyahu's office described as a "very warm conversation" by phone. It said they discussed the international nuclear deal with Iran, which both men have harshly criticized, and the Palestinian issue.

The White House said Trump told Netanyahu that peace with the Palestinians "can only be negotiated directly between the two parties" and that the U.S. will work closely with Israel on that goal.

Trump affirmed his "unprec-

edented commitment to Israel's security" and his administration's focus on countering terrorism, the White House added.

With Trump signaling a more tolerant approach toward the settlement movement, Israel's nationalist right now believes it has an ally in the White House, and Israeli hard-line leaders make no secret they will push for aggressive action in the West Bank.

Education Minister Naftali Bennett, leader of the pro-settlement Jewish Home Party, has been pushing Netanyahu to abandon the idea of a Palestinian state and to annex the Maaleh Adumim settlement.

But after convening his Security Cabinet on Sunday, Netanyahu said his Cabinet ministers, including Bennett, had decided "unanimously" to delay action on the annexation plan until he goes to Washington.

In order to placate Bennett, Is-

raeli media reports said Netanyahu had promised the ministers to clear the way for expanded settlement construction in east Jerusalem and in major West Bank settlement "blocs" that Israel hopes to keep under a future peace deal. He was quoted as saying his "vision" is to place all settlements under Israeli sovereignty.

The Palestinians seek all of the West Bank and east Jerusalem — areas captured by Israel in the 1967 Mideast war — for a future state. The Palestinians and the international community consider all settlements illegal, and unilaterally making Maaleh Adumim part of Israel would deal a powerful blow to hopes for a two-state solution.

While Trump has not expressed an opinion on the annexation, he has signaled a softer approach toward the settlement movement than any of his predecessors.

## Gambia's Jammeh said to have drained coffers

Associated Press

BANJUL, Gambia — Exiled Gambian ruler Yahya Jammeh stole millions of dollars in his final weeks in power, plundering the country's state coffers and shipping luxury vehicles by cargo plane, a special adviser for the new president said Sunday.

Gambai Moral Congress leader Mai Ahmad Fatty told journalists in neighboring Senegal that already they have determined Jammeh made off with more than \$11.4 million during a two-week period alone.

"The Gambia is in financial distress. The coffers are virtually empty. That is a state of fact," Fatty said. "It has been confirmed by technicians in the ministry of finance and the Central Bank of the Gambia."

Fatty also confirmed that a Chadian cargo plane had transported luxury goods out of the

country on Jammeh's behalf in his final hours in power, including an unknown number of vehicles.

Fatty said officials with the new government "regret the situation" and would stop any additional belongings of Jammeh from leaving Gambia. It appeared, though, that the major damage had been done, leaving Gambia with little recourse to recoup the funds.

Jammeh, who ruled this impoverished West African nation for more than 22 years, went into exile late Saturday under mounting international pressure. He is now in Equatorial Guinea, home to Africa's longest-serving ruler.

Gambia's new president, Adama Barrow, who defeated Jammeh in December elections, remained in Senegal for safety reasons after being inaugurated at Gambia's embassy there Thursday. He said he would come home "soon."

## First avalanche survivors leave hospital in Italy

Associated Press

FARINDOLA, Italy — The first human survivors of an avalanche in central Italy were released from the hospital Monday as questions intensified into whether Italian authorities underestimated the risks facing the snowbound resort in the hours before a deadly avalanche.

Meanwhile, emergency crews digging into the Hotel Rigopiano were cheered by the discovery of three Abruzzo sheepdog puppies that had survived for days under tons of snow — giving them new hope for the 22 people still missing in the disaster.

Five days after up to 60,000 tons of snow, rocks and uprooted trees plowed into the Hotel Rigopiano, rescue crews were still digging by hand or with shovels and chainsaws in hopes of finding alive some of the 22 people still buried. An excavator reached the site to help speed up the search.

Firefighter spokesman Fabio German said the three puppies

showed that conditions under the snow could still support life. Emergency crews have been hoping that the missing may have found air pockets under the debris, and that the snow itself had insulated them from the frigid temperatures.

Nine people have been rescued from the Hotel Rigopiano and seven people have died. The first survivors were released Monday from a hospital in the nearby city of Pescara.

The investigation intensified, meanwhile, into whether local government officials underestimated the threat facing the hotel, which was already covered with 6 feet of snow, had no phone service and had dwindling gas supplies when a series of earthquakes rocked central Italy on Jan. 18. Italian newspapers Monday reproduced what they said was an email sent by the hotel owner to local and provincial authorities that afternoon asking for help because "the situation has become worrisome."

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### 'Limbo Queen' slips under airport bench

**PA** PHILADELPHIA — A record-setting limbo dancer gave Philadelphia airport passengers some free entertainment this week when she scooted under a bench at a terminal.

Shemika Charles, who goes by "The Limbo Queen," had a layover in Philadelphia on her way to a scheduled performance at a basketball game in Wisconsin. She said on Twitter she "had to get loose" and decided to have a little fun. She posted video of herself successfully dancing through the tiny opening between the bottom of the bench and the floor.

Charles set the current Guinness World Record mark for lowest limbo by a female when she passed under a bar just 8.5 inches off the ground in 2010.

### Dairy to pay \$160K over manure in water

**IA** SIOUX CITY — A northwestern Iowa dairy has settled a federal lawsuit and promises action to prevent future manure discharges into nearby streams.

Prosecutors also said Thursday that Meadowvale Dairy, of Rock Valley, has agreed to pay a \$160,000 civil penalty. The proposed consent decree is subject to a 30-day public comment period and approval by the federal court.

The lawsuit filed last February alleges that since 2001, Iowa has cited Meadowvale a dozen times for failures to maintain adequate storage for effluent. The complaint says Meadowvale operates waste systems for two interconnected feeding operations for a total of about 10,000 head of cattle. It says wastewater from two of Meadowvale's facilities entered two tributaries of the Big Sioux

River in violation of the dairy's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits.

### Raccoons recovering after inadvertent ride

**CA** OAKLAND — Baby raccoons that inadvertently hitched a cross-country ride to Northern California are recovering at the Oakland Zoo.

Animal care authorities said Tuesday that in September a man unknowingly had transported the raccoons from Florida in a moving truck.

The truck had been burglarized while in Florida, allowing a pregnant raccoon to enter through a broken window; she later gave birth. The man discovered the raccoons while unloading his truck. Five of six baby raccoons survived but were near death after being without food or water for days.

Wildlife education center WildCare nursed the raccoons to health, but found they could not release the animals into the wild. The Oakland Zoo is caring for the raccoons until they can be placed at a sanctuary or another zoo.

### Man owes more than \$56K in tolls, fees

**NJ** TEANECK — Transit police say they've arrested a New Jersey man who avoided paying tolls nearly 900 times and owes more than \$56,000 in unpaid tolls and fees.

Port Authority of New York and New Jersey police say an officer stopped Alesandel Rodriguez's car Friday morning after it failed to post a payment in an EZ-Pass lane on the George Washington Bridge in Fort Lee. Authorities said the car was missing front and rear license plates, and a temporary New York tag inside the vehicle had expired.

Further investigation found the Teaneck man's EZ-Pass accounts were revoked, showing 888 violations and about \$56,240 in outstanding fees. Authorities also learned there was a warrant for his arrest.

Rodriguez was charged with theft of service.

### 3-week-old baby giraffe dies at zoo

**UT** SALT LAKE CITY — Utah's Hogle Zoo is mourning the death of a 3-week-old baby giraffe.

The zoo said Friday the female calf was born small, grew slowly and died despite intensive medical therapy.

Director of Animal Health Dr. Nancy Carpenter said the baby was noticeably underdeveloped at birth and her growth stalled even though she was nursing. She said mother Kipenzi had milk, but it's not yet clear if her supply was short or the baby wasn't able to nurse effectively.

Staff tried to bolster the baby's health with IV fluids, tube feeding and vitamins, but the baby died Wednesday.

### Man gets prison over failed bank robbery

**NJ** WINSLOW TOWNSHIP — A man who brandished a power drill during a failed attempt to rob a bank is now headed to state prison.

Camden County prosecutors said Raymond McNeil, 42, of Sicklerville, received a 20-year sentence on Friday. McNeil was convicted on armed robbery and weapons charges stemming from the November 2014 robbery at a Wells Fargo bank branch in Winslow Township.

Prosecutors said McNeil demanded money while brandishing a power drill at a bank teller. But he soon fled the bank on foot without getting any

cash. He later was found in an abandoned house across the street from the bank.

### GPS device in money helps track suspect

**PA** PILLOW — Police say a quick-thinking bank teller at a central Pennsylvania helped them catch a robbery suspect by tossing a GPS device into the money sack he took.

Jacob Snyder, 25, of Coal Township, is set to be arraigned Friday on robbery and other charges in the heist at the BB&T Bank in Pillow.

Police said Snyder robbed the bank about 11:15 a.m. Jan. 17 then drove away, but police were able to track him because of the GPS device. He was arrested after a short chase.

### Ex-UPS worker guilty of cocaine trafficking

**MA** BOSTON — Prosecutors say a former worker at UPS Inc. has admitted in federal court to his role in a drug trafficking organization that shipped cocaine from Puerto Rico to Massachusetts.

The Boston Globe reported Jorge Carrasquillo-Ortiz, 41, of Toa Baja, Puerto Rico, pleaded guilty in Boston this week to attempted distribution of 500 grams of cocaine. He faces up to four decades in prison and a \$5 million fine when he's sentenced in April. Prosecutors said Carrasquillo-Ortiz received \$1,200 for each kilogram of cocaine that he shipped.

A cooperating witness in June 2016 arranged to have a shipment of fake cocaine delivered to Carrasquillo-Ortiz in Puerto Rico. Authorities said Carrasquillo-Ortiz slipped the package through UPS security. It then was loaded onto a UPS plane and was sent to Massachusetts.

From wire reports

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# Pats rout Steelers, earn Super Bowl bid

Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — This was supposed to be the year New England's stranglehold on the AFC could be loosened.

Yet after starting the season without their biggest star, the Patriots find themselves in a familiar place: with a chance to earn a Super Bowl title.

A week after showing flecks of vulnerability in its divisional-round win over Houston, New England put together the kind of dominant performance that has come to define the Bill Belichick and Tom Brady era, earning a 36-17 AFC championship game win over Pittsburgh on Sunday.

Now the Pats will face the Atlanta Falcons with a chance to earn their fifth Super Bowl victory.

"Yeah, it was a good day. I mean, we're going to the Super Bowl, man," Brady said. "You've got to be happy now."

This wasn't supposed to happen. Not this time.

Not in the shadows of Brady's four-game "Deflategate" suspension to start the season. And certainly not after his favorite target Rob Gronkowski was lost in December to season-ending back surgery.

Sunday's performance was yet another entry on the résumé for the 39-year-old Brady as maybe the best quarterback ever.

He connected on 32 of 42 passes for 384 yards and three touchdowns — extending his NFL record with his 11th 300-yard postseason passing game. It was also Brady's ninth postseason game with three passing touchdowns, tying Joe Montana

for the most ever.

The Patriots hold a 4-1 playoff series lead with the Steelers, including winning all three matchups in AFC championship games following wins with Brady at Pittsburgh in 2005 and 2002.

To his teammates, that's the Brady they've come to expect.

"Anytime you're on the field with No. 12, it's special. You never take that for granted. He's the greatest," said receiver Chris Hogan — the recipient of two of Brady's touchdowns.

Brady couldn't fully articulate the moment afterward.

"It hasn't sunk in yet," Brady said. "We've looked, every week it's kind of been one day at a time and one game at a time. I haven't even said those words (Super Bowl) yet. Well, I said them after the game, but not at all this week or now. It's unbelievable."

Belichick has avoided commenting on "Deflategate," deflecting questions in his typically austere manner on the heels of earning what will be his seventh appearance in a Super Bowl — a record for a head coach.

"It's a special year because it's a special team and it's a special group in the way they've worked together," Belichick said. "But there are always challenges that we'll have to overcome and whatever those are, they are."

**Rare air:** New England's ninth Super Bowl berth is the most ever, breaking a tie with Pittsburgh, Dallas and Denver with eight apiece.

The Patriots are now 6-1 in conference

championship games played at home and 9-4 overall. Their lone AFC title game loss at home was to Baltimore in 2013 in Ray Lewis' final game against the Patriots.

**Self-inflicted wounds:** It's anyone's guess how long 38-year-old Steelers linebacker James Harrison will play beyond this season.

What he is sure of is his team's lack of execution, and not their lack of defensive toughness, led to their first loss in nine games.

"They out-executed us," Harrison said. "They did not out-physical us, they did not push us around, they out-executed us. They sped up the tempo and did what they had to do to win."

**Where is Roger?:** Still bitter over Brady's "Deflategate" suspension, New England fans taunted NFL commissioner Roger Goodell with a chant of "Where is Roger?" Goodell, who attended the NFC title game in Atlanta on Sunday, has not come to a Patriots home game since the Jan. 18, 2015, AFC championship that started the scandal that led to Brady's four-game suspension.

Brady declined to comment on the chant or admit to having any special revenge motive. After accepting the Lamar Hunt Trophy, owner Bob Kraft said, "For a number of reasons, all of you in this stadium understand how big this win was."

Patriots tight end Martellus Bennett called out the commissioner in the locker room after the game.

"Where is he? He's like Waldo right now," Bennett said. "He doesn't want to come here. I don't know where he's at."

# Falcons dominate Packers for NFC title

Associated Press

ATLANTA — While the raucous beats of "Welcome To Atlanta" blared through the Georgia Dome, the Falcons partied like it was 1999.

How appropriate.

That was the last time they made it to the Super Bowl.

Matt Ryan and Julio Jones teamed up for another dynamic performance, leading the Falcons to the big game for only the second time in franchise history with a 44-21 rout of the Green Bay Packers in the NFC championship game Sunday.

The Falcons led 24-0 at half-time and tacked on another touchdown early in the second half, essentially turning the dome into the world's larg-

est dance club for the rest of its final game, the deafening crowd relishing a shot at only the second major sports championship in Atlanta's history.

"I'm sure the city won't sleep tonight, including myself," said Jonathan Babineaux, the team's longest-tenured player.

The Falcons (13-5) advanced to the Feb. 5 title game in Houston, where they will face Tom Brady and the New England Patriots. They blew out Pittsburgh 36-17 for the AFC championship, earning their record ninth trip to the Super Bowl.

The Patriots opened as a three-point favorite over the neophyte Falcons, whose only other Super Bowl appearance came 18 years ago. They lost

to Denver in John Elway's final game.

Ryan threw for 392 yards and four touchdowns, not to mention his first rushing score since 2012 on a 14-yard run in which he pump-faked a defender and tumbled into the end zone.

"We've worked hard to get to this point," Ryan said. "But the challenge is still in front of us."

In an interesting twist, the Falcons' last victory over the Patriots was a resounding 41-10 triumph in 1998, a game that signaled the emergence of the Super Bowl-bound "Dirty Birds."

Since then, New England has won four straight over the Falcons, most recently in 2013.

The Patriots will have their hands full with Jones, who

hauled in nine catches for 180 yards and two touchdowns despite sitting out most of the week of practice with a lingering toe injury.

He had a 5-yard catch for a touchdown with just 3 seconds left in the first half, giving the Falcons a 24-0 lead.

But Jones showed all his talents on Atlanta's second offensive snap of the second half. He shook off LaDarius Gunter's attempt to grab him on a cut toward the sideline, hauled in the pass from Ryan, broke Gunter's diving attempt at tackle, and defiantly knocked away Damarious Randall's with a brutal stiff-arm for a 73-yard touchdown that finished off the Packers (12-7).

# Nadal into 30th Slam quarterfinal

Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Rafael Nadal beat sixth-seeded Gael Monfils in four sets Monday to reach the quarterfinals of a Grand Slam tournament for the 30th time, prompting talk of a potential Australian Open final against Roger Federer.

The veterans have a long way to go to get there.

For the 30-year-old Nadal, his first priority is against No. 3-seeded Milos Raonic.

With No. 1-ranked Andy Murray and No. 2 Novak Djokovic — the two most consistent performers in the last six years at Melbourne Park — upset in the first week, Wimbledon finalist Raonic is the highest-ranked player in the draw.

He advanced to the last eight here for third straight year with a 7-6 (6), 3-6, 6-4, 6-1 win over No. 13 Roberto Bautista Agut.

Nadal is the only major winner still in contention on the bottom half of the draw, although he hasn't added to his tally of 14 majors since capturing the French Open in 2014.

Federer, in the top half of the draw, plays Mischa Zverev on Tuesday, and would have to beat him and either Stan Wawrinka or Jo-Wilfried Tsonga — the other quarterfinalists playing Tuesday — to advance to the final.

Nadal's 6-3, 6-3, 4-6, 6-4 win over U.S. Open semifinalist Monfils in the fourth round was his first over a top 10 player at a Grand Slam since that run to his last title at Roland Garros. It also ended a four-match streak against top 10 players.

Nadal last progressed this far at the 2015 French Open. He hasn't won an Australian title since 2009.

Raonic hit 33 aces and 75 winners but had nine double-faults and 55 unforced errors, and seemed to get on a roll after spiking his racket into the court in frustration in the ninth game of the third set.

The Canadian is conscious he is the highest-ranked player still in the draw, but also of what lies ahead.

"It sort of crosses your mind," Raonic said. "But it's very insignificant because there's a lot for me to even get past that point where it would have been to play potentially against those guys."

In the other quarter, No. 15 Grigor Dimitrov closed with an ace to hold off No. 117 wildcard entry Denis Istomin 2-6, 7-6 (2), 6-2, 6-1. He will next play No. 11 David Goffin, a 5-7, 7-6 (4), 6-2, 6-2 winner over No. 8 Dominic Thiem.

Serena Williams kept her bid for an Open-era record 23rd major title on track with a 7-5, 6-4 win over No. 16-seeded Barbora Strycova to reach the quarterfinals here for the 11th time.

Despite four service breaks — two in the first four games — and 46 unforced errors, and with the fluky net cord and the off-balance, scrunched-shouldered backhand that bounced flatly and clinched her the first set on her eighth set point, she ground down Strycova.

"It's good to know I have a Plan B, or Option 2. I wasn't serving my greatest today, also she was putting a lot of returns in there," said Williams, who had a first-serve percentage of 45, and made four double-faults. "It was really good for me to almost lose that so I know my other game is going pretty good, too."

Next up, she'll face 2016 semifinalist Johanna Konta, who beat Ekaterina Makarova 6-1, 6-4.

Mirjana Lucic-Baroni reached the semifinals at Wimbledon in 1999 as a 17-year-old and, after a long, difficult time off the tour, she has returned to the quarterfinals of a major for the first time since.

She beat U.S. qualifier Jennifer Brady 6-4, 6-2 and will next play U.S. Open finalist Karolina Pliskova, a 6-3, 6-3 winner over Daria Gavrilova.

## No. 22 Xavier halts skid with victory over Hoyas

Associated Press

CINCINNATI — As the first half wound down, point guard Edmond Sumner headed to the end of the Xavier bench, sat down and winced. His left shoulder was hurting so bad.

Not bad enough to keep him from frustrating the Hoyas again.

Sumner led a second-half surge that swept No. 22 Xavier to an 86-75 victory over Georgetown on Sunday, ending the Musketeers' longest losing streak in three years.

Xavier (14-5, 4-3) had dropped three straight — all against ranked Big East teams. On Sunday, the Musketeers allowed a 12-point lead to slip away in the second half before their injured point guard frustrated the Hoyas (10-10, 1-6) for the second time this season. Sumner had a career-high 28 points in an 81-76 win at Georgetown on Dec. 31.

Sumner wore a support on his injured left shoulder and had trouble shooting layups with his left hand, leaving him in pain when he tried. Sumner made a pull-up jumper, a three-point play and a pair of free throws during a 12-3 run that put Xavier in control 70-61. He finished with 14 points.

"I mean, he's as tough as nails," coach Chris Mack said. "He was really locked into what I was asking him to do. He's banged up. He's playing through it."

Xavier hasn't lost four in a row since the 1999-2000 season and was relieved to end its three-game slide.

"In this whole process, we've been saying, 'Let's get back to our winning ways, let's get back to what we do best,'" said guard Malcolm Bernard, who had 12 points. "So I would say this feels really good, for sure."

Trevon Bluiett led Xavier with 24 points. J.P. Macura added 20.

Rodney Pryor scored 23 for Georgetown, which lost for the sixth time in seven games. The Hoyas understood why they

lost this one.

"Fouling and rebounding, those two areas," coach John Thompson III said.

The Musketeers repeatedly drew fouls by driving to the basket and went 36-for-49 from the line. Georgetown was 11-for-14. Xavier also dominated the boards 35-21, allowing the Hoyas only one offensive rebound.

Xavier dropped from 15th to 22nd last week after road losses to Villanova and Butler. A home loss to Creighton on Monday put Xavier in danger of dropping out of the Top 25.

**Big picture: Georgetown:** Junior guard L.J. Peak scored 21 points and had six rebounds in the loss to Xavier on Dec. 31, keeping the Hoyas in the game with clutch shots down the stretch. The Musketeers clamped down in the rematch — he was only 3 of 12 for 12 points.

**Xavier:** Free throws again were an issue early. Missed free throws were a major factor in the Musketeers' 72-67 loss to Creighton on Monday, when they went only 16 of 29 from the line. They were only 12 of 19 from the line in the first half, which ended with Xavier up 34-33.

**Shoe issues:** Macura's 20 points were his most since the last game against Georgetown, when he had 23. Macura had to leave the game for a few minutes because of a problem with one of his shoes. He wound up wearing Bernard's shoes the rest of the way.

"My shoe was like flat, like something popped, like an air bubble or something," Macura said. "It felt really, really weird. I used Malcolm's spare pair."

**No Davis:** It was the Musketeers' first game since senior guard Myles Davis left the team. He was suspended for the first semester while a court case was settled. He was reinstated and played in the last three games — failing to make a field goal — before ending his career on Friday.

# Mavericks hand Lakers worst loss ever

Associated Press

DALLAS — Dirk Nowitzki and the Dallas Mavericks had something to prove on Sunday following two straight tough losses.

Coming off a three-point effort in an overtime loss on Friday, Nowitzki scored all 13 of his points in the first half and Dallas gave the Los Angeles Lakers the worst loss in their history, 122-73.

“We didn’t show up to play,” Lakers coach Luke Walton said. “It’s embarrassing for us as a team and for us as an organization. The effort just wasn’t there tonight, which I don’t understand.”

The 49-point defeat just edged Los Angeles’ two previous worst losses at 48 points, most recently 123-75 at Utah on March 28, 2016.

The Mavericks’ winning margin was the third-largest in their history.

It was Dallas’ 13th straight win over the Lakers, who have lost six of their last seven games overall.

After a season-best three-

game winning streak, the Mavericks had blown a nine-point halftime lead at Miami on Thursday and lost to Utah on Friday.

Nowitzki was 1-for-13 against the Jazz, including a missed three-pointer that would have tied the game in overtime.

“I looked sluggish the other night on that back-to-back,” Nowitzki said, “but took a day off yesterday, didn’t do anything. Felt a lot better today.”

The game was close for 10 minutes, with Dallas leading 23-22 before the Mavericks scored the next 15 points to blow it open. Nowitzki had seven points during the run. He played just 20 minutes.

Justin Anderson led seven Mavericks in double figures with a game-high 19 points in 16 minutes, his most playing time since Dec. 27.

The Mavericks led 67-33 at the half and never looked back. They both scored their most points and allowed the fewest in a half and a game this season. The 34-point halftime lead was the third-largest in franchise history.

The Lakers scored their fewest points in a quarter, a first half and a game.

“What’s deflating is that we didn’t guard anybody tonight,” Lakers forward Julius Randle said.

**Warriors 118, Magic 98:** Stephen Curry and Klay Thompson each hit seven three-pointers and visiting Golden State beat Orlando to win its seventh straight game.

Tied at the half, the Warriors woke up from West Coast time in the second half to pull away. This was the first Eastern time zone noon tip for them since 1995, when they lost by 34 points in Orlando.

**Timberwolves 111, Nuggets 108:** Karl-Anthony Towns had 32 points, 12 rebounds and seven assists and hit the go-ahead shot with 42.5 seconds to play to lead host Minnesota over Denver.

Towns hit 13 of 19 shots and also had four blocks and Andrew Wiggins scored 24 points in Minnesota’s fourth straight home win.

Shabazz Muhammad scored 20 points off the bench and the

Wolves rallied from nine points down midway through the fourth quarter for the win.

Kris Dunn had 10 points and nine assists for the Wolves while starting for Ricky Rubio, who missed the game to attend his grandmother’s funeral.

**Suns 115, Raptors 103:** Eric Bledsoe scored a career-high 40 points and had 13 assists and visiting Phoenix handed Toronto its third straight loss.

Bledsoe was 11-for-17 from the floor, including 4-for-7 from three-point range, and Devin Booker added 20 points as the Suns won their second straight road game following Saturday’s win at New York. The victory also completed a season sweep of the Raptors and improved Phoenix to 11-6 against Eastern Conference teams this season.

DeMar DeRozan had 22 points for Toronto and Jonas Valanciunas added 16 points and 12 rebounds for his 17th double-double of the season.

Toronto has lost three straight for the first time since Nov. 6-10, 2015.

# Flyers snap road drought against Islanders

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The Philadelphia Flyers desperately needed a victory, especially on the road, and they got it thanks to their captain.

Claude Giroux scored at 3:20 of overtime as the Flyers rallied to beat the Islanders 3-2 Sunday night to end New York’s three-game winning streak. It was Philadelphia’s first road win since Dec. 14 at Colorado, ending a nine-game losing streak (0-7-2) away from home.

Giroux’s 11th goal of the season came on pass from defenseman Shayne Gostibehere from behind the net, giving the Flyers the morale-building victory win after trailing 2-0. Philadelphia was 3-9-3 in its previous 15 since a 10-game winning streak.

“No question we needed a win,” Flyers coach Dave Haksol said. “I don’t think guys were getting too far off center but probably the biggest thing was the outlook we had, coming in and playing focused.”

Wayne Simmonds scored late in the second period to pull the Flyers within one and Ivan Provorov tied it early in the third. Steve Mason finished with 36 saves.

“We were playing well and had a lot of chances and they weren’t going in,” Giroux said. “When Wayne got that goal, it was a relief on the bench. I never saw such a celebration for a first goal.”

Nick Leddy and Alan Quine scored for New York, and Thomas Greiss stopped 44 shots.

**Rangers 1, Red Wings 0 (OT):** J.T. Miller scored at 1:56 of overtime to lift visiting New York over Detroit.

Henrik Lundqvist made 21 saves for his second shutout of the season and 61st of his career. The Rangers managed only 19 shots in a game that featured few memorable chances by either team.

**Blackhawks 4, Canucks 2:** Jonathan Toews scored the tiebreaking goal with 1:18 remaining and host Chicago got its

third straight victory.

Toews, who also had three assists, connected from the left circle after Richard Panik’s shot from right wing went wide and caromed off the back boards. Toews fired before Vancouver goalie Ryan Miller could move across the crease.

**Predators 4, Wild 2:** Filip Forsberg scored twice, including the tiebreaking goal in the third, and Nashville rallied from two goals down to beat host Minnesota.

Forsberg took a pretty feed from Ryan Ellis and one-timed it from the left circle past Darcy Kuemper with 6:36 left to put Nashville up 3-2.

**Penguins 5, Bruins 1:** Conor Sheary scored two goals, Sidney Crosby added his league-leading 28th and host Pittsburgh won its fourth straight.

**Blue Jackets 7, Senators 6 (OT):** Cam Atkinson’s second goal of the game at 1:09 of overtime lifted Columbus past host Ottawa.