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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Exercise delayed for Olympics

BY COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The United States and South Korea will delay a large-scale military exercise on the Korean Peninsula until the Winter Olympics have been completed next month, a Pentagon spokesman said Thursday.

President Donald Trump and South Korean President Moon Jae-in agreed during a phone call Thursday to hold off on the nations' largest annual military exercise until after the Olympic Games in South Korea have ended, said Army Col. Rob Manning, a Pentagon spokesman. The Games are scheduled to be held Feb. 9-25 in Pyeongchang, which is about 100 miles east of Seoul.

Moon requested the delay in November, he told NBC News last month, saying such an agreement could help ease tensions with North Korea and ensure a safe Olympics.

"The Department of Defense supports the president's decision and what is in the

best interest of the [Republic of Korea]-U.S. alliance," Manning said Thursday.

North Korean leaders have previously stated they consider large-scale exercises such as Foal Eagle, which is typically held in late February through April, as rehearsal exercises for an invasion. The North often responds to the war games with provocative actions, including missile launches.

The U.S. and South Korea insist the exercises are only meant as preparation to defend South Korea in the event of an attack.

Foal Eagle traditionally has been one of the world's largest annual military exercises. Last year, the eight-week exercise included more than 30,000 American troops and some 300,000 South Koreans participating in a series of ground, air, naval and special operations exercises, the Pentagon said.

The start date for this year's version of Foal Eagle had not been announced previously. Manning on Thursday declined to say when the exercise would

begin or how many troops would participate.

Trump's agreement to withhold military exercises during the Olympics came as North and South Korea reopened communications channels that had been closed for two years.

In a New Year's address to his country, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un proposed holding inter-Korean talks with the South, which led the two nations on Wednesday to reopen a dialogue channel along the demilitarized zone for the first time since December 2015.

Trump, in a tweet on Thursday, took credit for the expected dialogue.

"With all of the failed 'experts' weighing in, does anybody really believe that talks and dialogue would be going on between North and South Korea right now if I wasn't firm, strong and willing to commit our total 'might' against the North," Trump wrote on Twitter. "Fools, but talks are a good thing!"

Afghan police killed in blast

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghanistan's Interior Ministry spokesman says a suicide bomber killed six policemen after exploding his device amid a group of security officials monitoring protests by shopkeepers in eastern Kabul.

Najib Danish added that another 14 policemen were wounded in Thursday evening's bombing.

Wahid Mujro, a spokesman for the Health Ministry, said 15 wounded were treated at Kabul hospitals.

In a statement Thursday, President Ashraf Ghani called the attack "inhumane" and against the tenets of Islam.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility.

Earlier on Thursday, three members of the Afghan security forces were shot and killed in western Farah province.

Mohammad Naser Mehri, spokesman for the provincial governor, said the attack unfolded when a group of Taliban fighters stopped a bus traveling in the Bala Buluk district Thursday.

First Navy Jack flies to honor sailors killed in collisions

BY LEON COOK

Stars and Stripes

A banner often regarded as the Navy's first flag will fly all year long at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, in honor of 17 sailors killed in a pair of Pacific collisions last year.

Sailors raised the First Navy Jack — featuring a rattlesnake, 13 red-and-white stripes and the "Don't Tread On Me" motto — Monday at base headquarters to renew a "culture of tradition and resolve" in wake of the tragedies, a Navy statement said.

The banner, whose design is derived from a jack used by the Continental Navy during the Revolutionary War, will fly at

the base directly beneath the American flag throughout 2018.

"Here in Pearl Harbor, we rose to the challenge 76 years ago, as 'Remember Pearl Harbor' sharpened our warfighting culture," Rear Adm. Brian Fort, the commander of Navy Region Hawaii and Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific, said in the statement. "In the wake of 9/11, when our culture was tested, we rose to the challenge once more ... we returned to our First Navy Jack, 'Don't Tread on Me,' on the jack staffs of all Navy warships as a historic reminder of the nation's and Navy's origins and our will to persevere and triumph."

In June, a collision between the guided-missile destroyer USS Fitzgerald and a

cargo ship killed seven sailors off the coast of mainland Japan. Two months later, the USS John S. McCain ran into an oil tanker east of Singapore, killing 10 more. The Navy has blamed the incidents on tired crews who hadn't received the necessary training due to constant deployments.

"2017 was a challenging year for the Navy," Command Master Chief Allen Keller of Pearl Harbor-Hickam said in the statement. "We as an installation will fly the First Navy Jack as a reminder to every airman, sailor, civilian and family member to get back to basics, honor our country and remember our history."

Family sues AF, DOD over mass shooting

The Dallas Morning News

AUSTIN, Texas — Another victim of the Sutherland Springs church shooting has filed a claim against the U.S. Air Force and a separate claim against the Department of Defense for failing to report the gunman's convictions to an FBI national database.

Margarette Vidal was shot twice, in the knee and next to her spine, when Devin Kelley killed 26 people at First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs and injured at least 20 more on Nov. 5. She's been through several surgeries since then and has not yet been released from care, alternating between a surgical hospital and a rehabilitation hospital, said her attorney, Jamal Alsaffar.

Kelley was court-martialed

and was convicted of domestic violence in 2012 for beating his first wife and assaulting his stepson. He then was confined for 12 months and received a bad-conduct discharge, but the Air Force did not send information about Kelley's criminal record to the FBI's national database. If the conviction had been reported, it would have prevented him from legally possessing a firearm.

Vidal and her children, Monica Shabbir Vidal and Robert Vidal, sued the Air Force and the Department of Defense on Nov. 20 for not reporting Kelley's history, a news release from Austin firm National Trial Law stated.

"As a direct and proximate cause of the Government's negligence, Kelley was able to purchase the firearms used to

shoot and seriously injure Margarette Vidal," the news release read.

Vidal's claim makes the fourth against the federal government accusing the Air Force and Department of Defense for negligence. She is the first to file a separate claim against the Department of Defense.

Vidal and her family want their claims to make the community safer and not to let the government sweep its problems under the rug, Alsaffar said. The two claims the Vidals filed will hold not only the Air Force accountable, but also will question the Department of Defense, as the agency overseeing the Air Force, as well.

The Holcombe family lost nine people to the mass shooting and sued the Air Force on Nov. 28. The Ramsey family

sued the next day; mother and wife Therese Ramsey Rodriguez was killed in the shooting.

The Ward family also filed claims against the Air Force, WOAI reported in December. The family filed on behalf of Ryland Ward, 5, who spent the holidays recovering at the hospital, and his sisters Brook and Emily and stepmother Joann, who were killed.

Deanna Staton and Michael Johnson lost their parents, Dennis and Sara Johnson, to the mass shooting. The Johnson family told *The Dallas Morning News* in November they planned to file two wrongful-death claims, one each on behalf of Dennis and Sara's estates, and six more survivor claims for each of the children the couple left behind.

AF eliminates evals for some

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

The Air Force is tossing out formal performance evaluations for its least experienced airmen.

The service announced Thursday that Enlisted Performance Reports are no longer required for all active-duty airmen until they reach the rank of senior airman or have served for 36 months, regardless of grade. For reservists, EPRs will be required for senior airmen and above. The change is effective immediately.

The move is part of a larger effort by Air Force senior leaders to reduce the administrative burden on airmen and to give them more time to focus on the mission, officials said.

"While the Air Force values the contributions of all enlisted personnel, the requirement to document performance in a formal evaluation prior to the grade of senior airman is not necessary," Lt. Gen. Gina Grosso, the deputy chief of staff for Manpower, Personnel and Services, said in a statement.

The removal of EPRs before promotion to senior airman will give airmen more time to learn primary skills and duties before their performance is documented formally.

Under the policy change, commanders still have the option to document substan-

dard performance for airmen first class and below after the 20-month-in-service mark.

The Air Force didn't say how many evaluation reports the policy change would eliminate.

Thursday's announcement brings to fruition a plan that Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Kaleth Wright had talked about last fall at the Air Force Association's annual conference. Wright said at the time that he was working with senior leadership and the Air Force Personnel Center to reduce the burden enlisted performance reports have on schedules, particularly in the maintenance squadrons, according to *Air Force Magazine*.

The Air Force uses EPRs to evaluate the performance of enlisted personnel both on and off duty, typically on an annual basis. A report, normally written by the member's supervisor with input from other unit leaders, often is time-consuming and cumbersome.

Under the change, each active-duty airmen will receive their initial evaluation upon reaching their first March 31 static close-out date after either promotion to senior airman, or after completion of a minimum of 36 months of time in service, regardless of grade, whichever occurs first, officials said.

Enlisted reservists will receive their initial evaluations as senior airmen.

DA: Navy vet's fatal shooting justified

Associated Press

SANTA ANA, Calif. — Investigators determined the fatal police shooting of a homeless Navy veteran outside a Southern California convenience store was justified, the Orange County District Attorney's office said Wednesday.

Video shows Dillan Tabares, 27, confronting the officer and punching him, then reaching for his duty belt as the two struggled before seven shots were fired, the office said. Tabares was pronounced dead shortly after the September morning shooting outside a Huntington Beach convenience store.

County prosecutors released a nearly 13 minute-video that includes footage from bystanders' cellphones and officers' body-worn cameras. Huntington Beach police officer Eric Esparza, who fired the shots, can be heard telling another officer who arrived to assist him that Tabares had tried to grab his gun.

Investigators said Tabares' DNA was later found on the grip of the Esparza's pistol and his flashlight, which he appears to have snatched during the tussle.

It is not clear what prompted Esparza to shoot Tabares in the first place.

In video, ISIS calls for attacks on Hamas

The Washington Post

JERUSALEM — Islamic State's branch in Egypt's Sinai peninsula has taken a simmering dispute with the Palestinian Hamas group, based in nearby Gaza, to new levels in a 22-minute video calling on its followers to attack the group and executing what it said was a collaborator.

It's an escalation that analysts say has the potential to destabilize an already fragile security situation in Gaza, the Palestinian enclave that Hamas has controlled for the past decade.

"Never surrender to them. Use explosives, silenced pistols and sticky bombs. Bomb their courts and their security loca-

tions, for these are the pillars of tyranny that prop up its throne," said the knife-wielding narrator, according to a translation distributed by the SITE Intelligence Group that monitors extremist websites.

The video cited Hamas' crackdown on jihadi groups in Gaza and their failure to prevent the U.S. declaration of Jerusalem as Israel's capital as reasons for attacking the group. It begins with a video clip of President Donald Trump's announcement on Jerusalem last month.

The confrontation between the two militant groups has been building for more than a year as Hamas has cracked down on ISIS supporters in Gaza and tightened its border with the Sinai in an attempt to

repair relations with Egypt.

While considered a terrorist group by Israel and the U.S., Hamas has been trying to mend ties with neighboring Egypt and the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank, and analysts say it has tried to avoid direct confrontation with Israel in recent years. The ISIS branch in Sinai has a more radical approach and carried out a recent attack on an Egyptian mosque that killed more than 300 people. In the video, it criticized Hamas for "following in the footsteps of the disbelieving West."

Also in the video, the man accused of collaborating with Hamas' military wing is executed by another who is described as a former member who has repented.

Aide: Trump 'furious,' 'disgusted' by Bannon claims

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump launched a scathing attack on former top adviser Steve Bannon, responding to a new book that portrays Trump as an undisciplined man-child who didn't actually want to win the White House and quotes Bannon as calling his son's contact with a Russian lawyer "treasonous."

Hitting back via a formal White House statement rather than a more-typical Twitter volley, Trump insisted Bannon had little to do with his victorious campaign and "has nothing to do with me or my Presidency."

"When he was fired, he not only lost his job, he lost his mind," Trump said Wednesday.

It was a blistering attack against the man who helped deliver the presidency to Trump. It was spurred by an unflattering new book by writer Michael Wolff that paints Trump as a leader who doesn't understand the weight of the presidency and spends his evenings eating cheeseburgers in bed, watching television and talking on the phone to old friends.

Later Wednesday, Trump attorney Charles Harder threatened legal action against Bannon over "disparaging statements and in some cases outright defamatory

statements."

Harder sent a letter to Bannon saying the former Trump aide violated confidentiality agreements by speaking with Wolff. The letter demanded Bannon "cease and desist" any further disclosure of confidential information. Bannon did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The Washington Post is reporting the president's lawyers also have served legal notice to Wolff and the president of the book's publisher to "cease and desist from any further publication, release or dissemination of the book."

White House aides were blindsided when early excerpts from "Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House" were published online by New York magazine and other media outlets ahead of the Jan. 9 publication date.

The release left Trump "furious" and "disgusted," said White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders, who complained that the book contained "outrageous" and "completely false claims against the president, his administration and his family."

Asked what specifically had prompted the president's fury with Bannon, she said, "I would certainly think that going after the president's son in an absolutely outrageous and unprecedented way is probably not the

best way to curry favor with anybody."

In the book, an advance copy of which was provided to The Associated Press, Bannon is quoted as describing a June 2016 meeting at Trump Tower between Donald Trump Jr., Trump campaign aides and a Russian lawyer as "treasonous" and "unpatriotic." The meeting has become a focus of federal and congressional investigators.

Bannon also told Wolff the investigations into potential collusion between Russia and Trump campaign officials likely would focus on money laundering.

"They're going to crack Don Junior like an egg on national TV," Bannon was quoted as saying in one section that was first reported by The Guardian.

A spokeswoman for Bannon did not immediately respond to a request for a comment. The younger Trump lashed out in a series of tweets, including one that said Andrew Breitbart, the founder of the Breitbart News site that Bannon now runs, "would be ashamed of the division and lies Steve Bannon is spreading!"

Bannon, who was forced out of his White House job last summer, was not surprised nor particularly bothered by the blowback, according to a person familiar with his thinking but not authorized to speak publicly

on the matter. That person said Bannon vowed Wednesday to continue his war on the Republican establishment and also predicted that, after a cooling-off period, he'd continue to speak with Trump, who likes to maintain contact with former advisers even after he fires and sometimes disparages them.

CNN reported Bannon said on his satellite radio program Wednesday night that Trump was a "great man" after the president had blasted Bannon earlier in the day.

Sanders said Bannon and Trump last spoke in the first part of last month.

The Breitbart News head has told associates that he believes Trump has been ill-served by some of his closest allies, including the president's eldest son and Jared Kushner, his son-in-law. Bannon believes they have exposed Trump to the Russia probe that could topple his presidency and that Trump would be able to accomplish more without them.

In the book, Bannon also speaks critically of Trump's daughter and White House adviser, Ivanka, calling her "dumb as a brick."

"A little marketing savvy and has a look but as far as understanding actually how the world works and what politics is and what it means — nothing," he is quoted saying.

Winter grips huge swath of the US

Associated Press

HARTFORD, Conn. — A massive winter storm swept from the Carolinas to Maine on Thursday, dumping snow along the coast and bringing strong winds that will usher in possible record-breaking cold.

Up to 18 inches of snow was expected in eastern New England. Blizzard warnings and states of emergency were in effect, schools and government offices closed for the day, thousands of flights were canceled and motorists were warned to be careful as conditions worsened. Shelters were open as officials worried about power outages leaving people without any heat.

North Carolina authorities said two people died during the storm when their pickup ran off a snow-covered road and overturned into a creek Wednesday night in Moore County, which wasn't expected to get any snow. The North Carolina Highway Patrol responded to 700 collisions and 300 other calls for service during the storm.

In New Jersey, Orlando Igmtat's car got stuck in a snowbank along the Garden State Parkway in Tinton Falls on Thursday morning as he drove to work at Verizon. He had to wait a half-hour for a tow truck to pull him out.

"I just skidded on the road and then stopped me here so I can't move right now anymore," he said. "I didn't expect it (the storm) was going to be a heavy one. That's why I went to work today. I'm going to stay in a hotel tonight."

Ankle-deep snow and wind gusts approaching 50 mph covered Maryland's Ocean City Boardwalk.

Eastern Massachusetts and most of Rhode Island were bracing for as much as 18 inches of snow, with snow falling at a rate of 3 inches per hour possible. The National Weather Service warned of wind gusts hitting near 70 mph.

The Eversource electric utility said more than 5,500 homes and businesses were without power at midmorning Thursday in Provincetown, Mass., on the outermost tip of Cape Cod, which was being lashed with hurricane-force wind gusts.

The massive storm began two days ago in the Gulf of Mexico, first hitting the Florida Panhandle. It has prompted thousands of canceled flights, shuttered schools and businesses and sparked fears of coastal flooding and power outages.

Manafort challenges Mueller's mandate in Russia probe suit

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's former campaign chairman is suing Special Counsel Robert Mueller and the Justice Department, saying prosecutors had overstepped their bounds by charging him for conduct that he says is unrelated to Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.

The lawsuit by Paul Manafort, filed in federal court in Washington on Wednesday, is the most direct challenge to date to Mueller's legal authority and the scope of his mandate as special counsel. It comes amid Republican allegations of partisan bias among members of Mueller's team, which for months has been investigating whether the Trump campaign coordinated with Russia to influence the outcome of the U.S. election.

The lawsuit also takes aim at Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, who is overseeing Mueller's investigation and recently said he was satisfied that the former FBI director was staying within the scope of his authority.

Manafort was indicted in October on charges, including money-laundering conspiracy, related to his lobbying work on behalf of a Russia-friendly Ukrainian political

party. He has pleaded not guilty. He is one of four Trump associates — including former national security adviser Michael Flynn — to be charged so far in Mueller's investigation.

In his complaint, Manafort alleges that the investigation into "decade-old business dealings" is "completely unmoored" from the mandate Mueller was given when he was named in May to probe possible ties between the Kremlin and the Trump campaign. He argues that a paragraph in Rosenstein's order appointing Mueller, which allows him to pursue new matters he comes across during his investigation, is too broad to be permitted under the regulation that governs special counsels.

"The Special Counsel's investigation and indictment resulted from a violation of numerous DOJ policies and procedures and otherwise far exceeds any lawful authority to investigate links between individuals associated with the Trump campaign and the Russian government," the lawsuit claims.

The lawsuit asks a judge to set aside all actions brought against Manafort by the special counsel's office and to issue an order narrowing the scope of Mueller's investigation to only matters explicitly laid out in the appointment order.

Sessions rescinds marijuana policy

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Attorney General Jeff Sessions is rescinding the Obama-era policy that had paved the way for legalized marijuana to flourish in states across the country. Sessions will instead let federal prosecutors where pot is legal decide how aggressively to enforce federal marijuana law, according to a memo released Thursday.

The move by President Donald Trump's attorney general is likely to add confusion about whether it's OK to grow, buy or use marijuana in states where pot is legal, since long-standing federal law prohibits it. It comes days after pot shops opened in California, launching what is expected to become the world's largest market for legal recreational marijuana and as polls show a solid majority of Americans believe the drug should be legal.

While Sessions has been carrying out a Justice Department agenda that follows Trump's top priorities on such issues as immigration and opioids, the changes to pot policy reflect his own concerns. Trump's personal views on marijuana remain largely unknown.

Sessions, who has assailed marijuana as comparable to heroin and has blamed it for

spikes in violence, had been expected to ramp up enforcement. Pot advocates argue that legalizing the drug eliminates the need for a black market and likely would reduce violence because criminals no longer would control the marijuana trade.

The Obama administration in 2013 announced it would not stand in the way of states that legalize marijuana, so long as officials acted to keep it from migrating to places where it remained outlawed and out of the hands of criminal gangs and children. Sessions is rescinding that memo, written by then-Deputy Attorney General James M. Cole, which had cleared up some of the uncertainty about how the federal government would respond as states began allowing sales for recreational and medical purposes.

Eight states and the District of Columbia have legalized marijuana for recreational use, and California's sales alone are projected to bring in \$1 billion annually in tax revenue within several years.

Sessions' policy will let U.S. attorneys across the country decide what kinds of federal resources to devote to marijuana enforcement based on what they see as priorities in their districts.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

72 dogs removed from alleged hoarder

MO MALDEN — A southeast Missouri animal rescue group removed 72 dogs from a home in the town of Malden.

The Southeast Missourian reported that 34 dogs were removed Tuesday by the group Mac's Mission, days after around three dozen dogs were taken from the same alleged hoarder.

Seventy of the dogs have been turned over to the Humane Society of Southeast Missouri. Most of the removed dogs are Yorkshire terriers or Yorkie mixes.

World War II vet, 93, sworn in as mayor

NJ TINTON FALLS — A 93-year-old World War II veteran is the new leader of a New Jersey shore town.

Vito Perillo was sworn in Tuesday night as mayor of Tinton Falls. The Republican had won the seat in November when he upset an incumbent who was seeking a second term in the nonpartisan municipal race.

The U.S. Navy veteran decided to run following a pair of whistleblower lawsuits involving the police department that cost the borough a reported \$1.1 million in settlements. Gerald Turning, whom Perillo defeated in the election, was the borough police chief from 2004 to 2011 and also was the borough administrator from 2010 to 2014.

Armed robbery nets assailant only \$5

NC ASHEVILLE — A North Carolina man is accused of robbing another man of \$5 at gunpoint.

The Asheville Citizen-Times reported Tristin Marquese Maewether, 21, was arrested Dec. 29 in connection with the Nov. 26 incident.

According to arrest warrants, Maewether is charged with conspiring with another man to commit robbery and breaking into an Asheville apartment with the intent to terrorize an occupant. He is accused of threatening to use a revolver while taking the \$5 from the victim, leading to a robbery with a dangerous weapon charge.

Dozens of dead ducks dumped on roadside

WA ABERDEEN — Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife police say they're searching for a suspect after three bags of dead ducks were possibly disposed of illegally near Aberdeen.

KING-TV reported Tuesday that the bags were dumped on State Route 12, about 9 miles east of Aberdeen.

Police said all the ducks were shot but it's unclear if they were harvested legally.

The three bags contained a total of 28 ducks. Eight were hen Mallards, 18 were Drake Mallards and there were two smaller birds. Officers believe the birds died over Christmas weekend.

Wasting wildlife is a gross misdemeanor offense punishable up to a year in jail and a \$5,000 fine.

Giant star snatched from atop city tree

ID BOISE — Police are investigating after a giant star at the top of Boise's official Christmas tree vanished on New Year's Day.

Downtown Boise Association Executive Director Lynn High-

tower said the theft was reported to police Tuesday morning after a video surfaced.

KTVB-TV reported that Darrin Walton was staying in a nearby hotel and shot video at 3 a.m. Monday after noticing movement. Lighted branches on the 30-foot tree sway as someone climbs to the top and the white light of the star goes dark.

New Year's revelers leave tons of trash

NV LAS VEGAS — Street sweepers picked up between 10 and 12 tons of trash left behind by New Year's Eve revelers on the Las Vegas Strip.

Clark County spokesman Erik Pappa said 26 street sweepers from the county and the Nevada Department of Transportation were used in the cleanup effort Monday.

An estimated 330,000 people traveled from all over the U.S. and beyond to Las Vegas to ring in 2018.

Historical society digitizes WWII letters

MO COLUMBIA — Volunteers are carefully transcribing thousands of letters that World War II soldiers sent home for the State Historical Society of Missouri's digital collection.

The Columbia Missourian reported that the effort to compile the letters began in 1945 with W. Francis English, the then-head of the history department at the University of Missouri.

English reached out to a radio host asking for help in collecting soldiers' letters written to family members and friends, and within weeks more than 3,000 people sent submissions.

The first letters were tran-

scribed and digitized in August 2016, with the effort continuing since. The society has so far published nearly 900 folders online.

Faneuil Hall closed for renovations

MA BOSTON — Boston's historic Faneuil Hall is closed for some much-needed repairs.

Officials said the 275-year-old building closed Monday for renovations that include upgraded elevator services and improved heating and cooling.

It is expected to remain closed until the spring.

The closure applies to the historic meeting space as well as the retail space on the lower floor.

Quincy Market as well as the North and South markets will remain open.

Joker the dog survives eight-day adventure

FL DANIA BEACH — Joker the dog had one heckuva Christmas adventure.

Joker's owner, Summer Burgos, flew him to Florida on Dec. 21 to live with family while she trains in the Navy. As soon as Burgos' mother-in-law opened the crate at the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, the 2-year-old Cane Corso bolted past her. For eight days, in a strange city, Joker roamed the streets.

On Christmas Eve, the Sun Sentinel reported that Joker was spotted near some shops in Fort Lauderdale. A few days later, a group of neighbors in Dania Beach finally rescued Joker — about 4 miles from the airport.

Using information from his tags, they got in touch with Burgos.

From wire reports

STARS AND STRIPES

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Tennell continues rise at US nationals

Associated Press

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Rising star Bradie Tennell continued her breakout season by winning the women's short program Wednesday night at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships.

Tennell saved the best short program of her career for the most important event. With takeoffs and landings so soft a butterfly would be envious, her 2-minute, 40-second program floated by. She scored 73.79 points.

Tennell was third at Skate America just months after finishing seventh in world juniors. She was ninth in the U.S. Championships a year ago, so her rise has been quick at a time when many of her peers have been faltering.

Mirai Nagasu, the 2008 U.S. champion and a 2010 Olympian who was passed over for the team four years ago, finished second, .7 behind Tennell. Defending champion Karen Chen, who has had a poor campaign, reversed that as the final skater and was third.

The top three skaters at nationals won't necessarily make the Olympic team for Pyeongchang. The federation uses a system that takes into account more than one event.

But Tennell, Nagasu and Chen clearly

were the standouts on opening night.

"I'd say the biggest feeling right now is pride," Tennell said. "I'm very proud of how far I've come this year, overcoming my injuries and just the technical aspect of things."

Earlier in the day, 1998 Olympic champion Tara Lipinski pegged Tennell as the skater to watch.

"Bradie has not missed one jump," Lipinski said. "She has the mental strength that maybe seems to be lacking in some of these ladies."

Had Nagasu landed her triple axel — she's one of the few women who tries the 3½-rotation jump — she almost certainly would be on top. But she stepped forward out of it.

The rest of her routine was spot-on, and the 24-year-old Nagasu was thrilled with her performance.

"This is my dream and what I have been trying for," she said. "And when you work for something for so long, it means so much, and when you are expected to deliver at that moment, it is hard."

"I was so nervous and I fight against my nerves. I feel so good; it takes so much to go out there and to still be here, it takes a lot. I'm happy I'm still out there fighting."

The presumptive favorite at nationals was three-time champion Ashley Wagner, the

2016 world silver medalist. The 26-year-old Wagner has been fighting it for most of the season, though, and her short program was riddled with errors.

Wagner messed up the second part of her combination jump, losing balance, and while her program was lively and seductive, the judges weren't impressed. She stood fifth heading into Friday night's free skate.

"I think that the great thing about nationals is that this is some really fair judging," Wagner said, "and I shouldn't get rewarded for things that aren't there."

"I'm happy and for me I'm a long-program skater and that's where I make my money. I'm not too far behind and I know what I need to do going into Friday."

Chen certainly is in good position for the Olympic team; the games begin on Feb. 9. Her season has been a huge disappointment, but Chen was smooth and graceful for 69.48 points.

"I was extremely nervous. The short program is something I always put a great deal of pressure on myself because you want to put yourself in good position," she said. "To be able to skate a close-to-clean performance, I am extremely happy with that, and it was a solid base for Friday."

Just behind Chen was Angela Wang with 67.00 points.

Davis earns spot for fourth Olympics

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Warming up before the 1,000 meters, doubt was creeping into Shani Davis' mind.

The two-time Olympic speed skating champion in the event even went so far as thinking what would happen if he didn't qualify for his fourth games.

At age 35, Davis is surrounded by young, fast competitors. When he made his first Olympic long-track speed skating team in 2006, he never trifled with uncertainty.

"You should never try to think negative, but I want to cover all aspects and I want to be realistic," he said. "I went out there and fought like it was the last race of my career."

It wasn't.

Davis finished second behind Joey Mantia and will go for a third career 1,000 gold in South Korea next month.

Mantia won the 1,000 at the U.S. trials in 1 minute, 9.15 seconds Wednesday night. The former inline skater from Florida finished 15th in the event four years ago in Sochi.

Skating in the third-to-last pairing, Davis clocked 1:09.23. Mitch Whitmore was third at 1:09.32 to grab the third Olympic berth.

Davis is the world record holder in the 1,000, and won the event at the 2006 and 2010 Olympics. He was eighth in Sochi, where the Americans were shut out of medals. Davis was an alternate on the 2002 Olympic team, but didn't compete in Salt Lake City.

"I look forward to going up," Davis said. "I know that there's some things I can correct."

On the women's side, Heather Bergsma won the 1,000, with Brittany Bowe finishing second to join her longtime rival on the

Olympic team.

Bergsma was timed in 1:14.82 to make her third Olympic team. She has yet to win a medal.

"I'm happy to have the first one out of the way," she said. "It was a tough one, for sure."

Bowe was clocked in 1:15.52. The former college basketball point guard overcame walking pneumonia last fall during the World Cup season.

"A big relief," she said. "Nobody has an easy ride."

Bergsma married Dutch speedskater Jorrit Bergsma in 2015 and relocated to the Netherlands, ending the training and roommate situation she and Bowe had shared.

"I definitely want to be back on that stage with her battling, a couple hundredths, tenths," Bowe said. "I don't like to see my time that far behind, but it is what it is."

Mia Manganello finished

third at 1:18.23, but because she hasn't met the Olympic qualifying time of 1:18.00, she cannot qualify to compete in South Korea. A U.S. Speedskating spokesman said the governing body's rules state an athlete must meet the time standard by the end of Olympic trials, which contradicted earlier information provided by Chris Needham, chairman of the organization's long track task force.

As a result, fourth-place finisher Jerica Tandiman will be nominated for the Olympic team, but won't necessarily skate the 1,000 in Pyeongchang. The U.S. is qualifying team spots for the Olympics and can determine who skates which events later.

Manganello missed qualifying in the 3,000 on Tuesday when she finished second. The U.S. only has one spot in that event for the Olympics.

NHL roundup

Red Wings down Senators in overtime

Associated Press

DETROIT — With record speed, the Detroit Red Wings finally won in overtime.

Andreas Athanasiou scored 6 seconds into the extra period to give Detroit a 2-1 victory over the Ottawa Senators on Wednesday night. The goal tied an NHL record for fastest overtime goal in the regular season. The Red Wings improved to 1-6 in games decided in overtime, although they have won three shootouts.

"I think we're just playing good hockey right now, trying to make the most of what I get," Athanasiou said. "Anytime I get a chance I'm trying to make something happen. Anytime I can help the team out it's definitely a good feeling."

Detroit has won three in a row for the first time this

season.

Athanasiou scored twice and also had a penalty shot stopped in the third period. Dylan Larkin took the opening faceoff in overtime and, after the puck went forward a bit, both Athanasiou and Ottawa standout Erik Karlsson reached for it.

Athanasiou was able to control it and skated in behind Karlsson on a breakaway. He beat goalie Craig Anderson with a backhand high to the glove side.

"The puck was bouncing a little bit and I kind of saw Karlsson's stick on the left side of me, so I figured I'd go to the backhand again and try to get it up over his pad and fortunately it worked out," Athanasiou said.

The most recent player to score 6 seconds into overtime in the regular season was

Washington's Alex Ovechkin on Dec. 15, 2006, at Atlanta.

Ryan Dzingel scored for the Senators, who lost for the 18th time in 22 games.

The Red Wings opened the scoring in the first period after a clever play by Anthony Mantha. The Detroit forward was in front of the net when he shot the puck backward through his legs, forcing Anderson to make a save. Athanasiou put away the rebound to make it 1-0.

Blackhawks 5, Rangers 2: Patrick Sharp broke a tie early in the third period and visiting Chicago beat New York.

Nick Schmaltz, Vinnie Hinostroza, Jonathan Toews and Patrick Kane also scored, and Jeff Glass made 23 saves. The 32-year-old Glass made his third straight start with Corey Crawford on injured reserve.

Nick Holden and Mika

Zibanejad scored for New York in the Rangers' second regulation loss at home since Nov. 28.

Sharp, a three-time Cup winner with Chicago who returned this season after spending the previous two years in Dallas, scored at 2:24 of the third when his wrist shot sailed past goalie Henrik Lundqvist's glove. Toews and Kane had empty-net goals in the final minute.

Hinostroza opened the scoring with 3:51 left in the first period. After an offensive zone faceoff win, Toews retrieved a loose puck in the corner and slipped a backhand pass to Hinostroza.

The Rangers tied it two minutes later when Nick Holden fired a slap shot from the right point past Glass.

Zibanejad tied it on a one-timer with 7:28 to go in the period.

UCLA's Rosen, USC's Darnold declare for NFL Draft

Associated Press

Within 30 minutes of one another, UCLA quarterback Josh Rosen and Southern California quarterback Sam Darnold announced they will enter the NFL Draft.

Darnold and Rosen grew up on opposite sides of the Los Angeles area's sprawling suburbs, and now they'll be linked as top quarterback prospects in the same draft.

Joining Rosen and Darnold in announcing NFL intentions Wednesday was Oklahoma offensive tackle Orlando Brown, another possible top-10 pick.

Rosen's decision was no surprise. He has started for UCLA since his freshman season, though injuries cost him most of his sophomore year and this season he did not play in the Bruins' Cactus Bowl loss against Kansas State because he was being treated for a concussion.

He passed for 9,301 yards

with 59 touchdown passes and 26 interceptions in his college career, but UCLA never even so much as won a bowl game during his time there. He was close to fired UCLA coach Jim Mora, but Rosen said he discussed his decision with new Bruins coach Chip Kelly. After playing for three offensive coordinators in three seasons at UCLA he decided to move on. In his statement, Rosen said attending UCLA was "the best decision of my life." He also promises his mother that he'll return to Westwood to finish his degree.

"Over the last three years, UCLA has helped me grow as an athlete, a scholar and a member of the community," Rosen added. "I have made some mistakes along the way; however, I am grateful that I made those mistakes backed by such a supportive and positive university, so that I could learn from them and better myself."

There was more uncertain-

ty about Darnold. He was a third-year sophomore this past season after sitting out as a redshirt as a freshman.

Darnold took over as the Trojans' starting quarterback four games into last season as a redshirt freshman. He won the Rose Bowl in his first season with a record 453-yard, five-touchdown performance against Penn State, and he led the Trojans to their first Pac-12 championship since 2008 this season. He passed for 7,229 yards with 57 touchdown passes and 22 interceptions in 27 games.

In his announcement video, the quarterback praised USC coach Clay Helton, who was the Trojans' quarterbacks coach when Darnold arrived on campus in 2015 before taking over as head coach during that redshirt season.

"I cannot thank you enough for believing in a kid from San Clemente High School with such little game tape, and for

giving me the opportunity and chance to start at such an incredible university," Darnold said.

Brown is the son of the late former NFL player Orlando Brown, who was nicknamed Zeus and played for the Baltimore Ravens. The younger Brown is 6-foot-8 and 345 pounds, and an All-American this season.

Auburn cornerback Carlton Davis, linebacker Jeff Holland and tailback Kamryn Pettway announced they are skipping their senior seasons to enter the NFL Draft. That comes a day after Tigers star tailback Kerryon Johnson declared his plans to turn pro.

Also, Washington State defensive tackle Hercules Mata'afa, and Florida State tight end Ryan Izzo said they are passing up their final college seasons to enter the draft. Michigan defensive lineman Chase Winovich said he's staying with the Wolverines for another year.

NBA roundup

Warriors escape Mavs on late 3-pointer

Associated Press

DALLAS — The Dallas Mavericks were left shaking their heads at Stephen Curry's shot-making ability — and how they let him get one last great look at the basket.

Curry's long 3-pointer with three seconds to play allowed the Golden State Warriors to escape with a 125-122 win over the Mavericks on Wednesday night after blowing a double-digit lead in the final four minutes.

On their final possession, the Warriors gave Curry the inbounds pass. A crossover dribble and a screen from Draymond Green were all he needed to get a clean look from 28 feet, which hit nothing but net. Dallas, with a foul to give, didn't take it.

"Too open of a look for a game-winner for the greatest shooter in the game," longtime Mavericks star Dirk Nowitzki said.

Curry finished with 32 points and has 70 in two games since returning from an ankle injury. Golden State's "Big Four" combined for 100 points, and the Warriors needed every one of

them against a Mavericks team that had won four straight.

"Draymond set a great screen," Curry said. "I caught Yogi (Ferrell) by surprise and was able to get to my spot and knock it down. I have confidence to take the shot and make it and finish the game."

Kevin Durant and Klay Thompson had 25 points each, and Green added 18 to go with 10 rebounds.

Wesley Matthews led the Mavericks with 22 points, including seven 3-pointers, and Dwight Powell tied his career high with 21.

Dallas, playing from behind most of the game, wouldn't go away despite trailing 114-102 with 4:32 left. Three turnovers by the Warriors and some cold shooting, combined with a sudden hot streak by the Mavs, enabled Dallas to tie the score at 120 on Harrison Barnes' jumper with 39.9 seconds to play.

"I was smiling at the idea that we could be completely brain dead out there," Golden State coach Steve Kerr said. "All I could do was laugh. It was like grade-school stuff the last few minutes."

Thunder 133, Lakers 96: Russell Westbrook had 20 points and 12 assists in a successful return home, and rookie Terrance Ferguson scored all 24 of his points in the second half of his first career start as Oklahoma City handed host Los Angeles its eighth consecutive defeat.

76ers 112, Spurs 106: Joel Embiid shook off a sprained right hand that nearly kept him out of the lineup to score 21 points, grab 11 rebounds and lead host Philadelphia past San Antonio.

Rockets 116, Magic 98: Gerald Green scored 27 points, Clint Capela had 21 points and eight rebounds and Houston got by without NBA scoring leader James Harden, routing host Orlando.

Wizards 121, Knicks 103: Bradley Beal scored 27 points, John Wall added 25 with nine assists and host Washington beat New York.

Heat 111, Pistons 104: Kelly Olynyk scored 25 points, including a big layup with 39 seconds left, and Goran Dragic added 24 as host Miami held off Detroit.

Nets 98, Timberwolves 97: Spencer Dinwiddie made the go-ahead jumper with 9.7 seconds left and tied his career high with 26 points, leading host Brooklyn.

Raptors 124, Bulls 115: DeMar DeRozan had 35 points and Delon Wright set career highs with 25 points and 13 rebounds as Toronto beat host Chicago.

Bucks 122, Pacers 101: Giannis Antetokounmpo had 31 points and 10 rebounds, Khris Middleton added 27 points and host Milwaukee pulled away.

Pelicans 108, Jazz 98: Anthony Davis had 29 points and 15 rebounds to lead visiting New Orleans past Utah.

Nuggets 134, Suns 111: Gary Harris scored 28 of his 36 points in the first half and host Denver used a big third quarter to beat Phoenix.

Celtics 102, Cavaliers 88: Terry Rozier scored 20 points in 20 minutes, stealing the spotlight from LeBron James, Kyrie Irving and Isaiah Thomas in a rematch of the Eastern Conference finals and leading host Boston Celtics to a victory over Cleveland.

College basketball roundup

Young leads No. 7 Oklahoma to rout of Oklahoma St.

Associated Press

NORMAN, Okla. — Trae Young fell one rebound short of a triple-double to help No. 7 Oklahoma defeat Oklahoma State 109-89 on Wednesday night.

Young, the nation's leader in scoring and assists, finished with 27 points, 10 assists and nine rebounds. In just his 13th career game, the freshman became the first Oklahoma player to score at least 20 points in 12 straight games.

Freshman forward Brady Manek scored a season-high 28

points and Kameron McGusty added 15 for Oklahoma (12-1, 2-0 Big 12), which won its 10th straight.

It was the first time Oklahoma scored at least 100 points against Oklahoma State since 1990. The Sooners, who entered the night leading the nation in scoring, shot 54 percent from the field to improve on their 94.7-point average.

Thomas Dziagwa scored a career-high 19 points and Jeffrey Carroll added 15 points and 10 rebounds for Oklahoma State (10-4, 0-2).

No. 8 Virginia 78, Virginia Tech 52: De'Andre Hunter scored 14 points and the visiting Cavaliers put the defensive clamps on the Hokies.

No. 24 Florida State 81, No. 12 North Carolina 80: Braian Angola scored 20 points and C.J. Walker added 18 for the host Seminoles.

No. 13 Purdue 82, Rutgers 51: Isaac Haas scored 14 points and Dakota Mathias finished with 13 for the Boilermakers.

Georgia Tech 64, No. 15 Miami 54: Josh Okogie scored a season-high 30 points and

Jose Alvarado added 12 points for the host Yellow Jackets.

No. 17 Kentucky 74, LSU 71: P.J. Washington scored 14 of his 18 points in the second half for the visiting Wildcats.

No. 25 Clemson 74, Boston College 70: Donte Grantham scored 23 points and grabbed 14 rebounds, and Marcquise Reed hit two key free throws for the visiting Tigers in their first game in the national rankings in nearly eight years.

Reed finished with 17 points for Clemson (13-1, 2-0 Atlantic Coast Conference).