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DOD blames 'human error' for gag order

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In an abrupt reversal, the U.S. military on Tuesday said it made a mistake when it ordered an independent federal auditor to stop providing the public with information about U.S. war efforts in Afghanistan that help to measure how the 16-year-old stalemated war is going.

Just hours after the report was publicly released, the U.S.-led NATO coalition in Afghanistan issued a statement blaming "human error" for the order, and provided a few segments of the data that have been restricted. The newly released information revealed that 44 percent of Afghanistan is contested or under the control of insurgents.

Other previously available information on the size, attrition and performance of the Afghan forces continue to be unavailable.

President Donald Trump has announced a new Afghanistan strategy aimed at breaking a battlefield stalemate by accelerating Afghan-led operations against the Taliban and other

insurgent groups in the country. On Monday, Trump railed against the recent string of attacks in Afghanistan, and ruled out any U.S. discussions with the Taliban as part of the effort to seek peace talks between the Afghan government and the insurgents.

The auditing agency, established by Congress and known as the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, or SIGAR, revealed the new gag order in a three-month assessment of conditions in Afghanistan released overnight.

The restrictions seemed to contradict previous Pentagon assertions that it was striving to be more transparent about the U.S. war campaigns across Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan.

In response to the release of the report, Navy Capt. Tom Gresback, coalition spokesman, said Tuesday that about 56 percent of the country's 407 districts are under Afghan government control, 30 percent are contested and 14 percent are under insurgent control.

"It was NOT the intent of

Resolute Support to withhold or classify information which was available in prior reports," Gresback said in an email. "A human error in labeling occurred."

Late last year, a Pentagon report said the Afghan government has control or influence over 60 percent of the population, while insurgents had control or influence over approximately 10 percent of the population, with the remainder contested.

In November, Gen. John Nicholson told Pentagon reporters that about 64 percent of the population was controlled by the government, 24 percent live in contested areas, and the Taliban control the remaining 12 percent. Neither the Pentagon nor Nicholson details the number of districts held by each side, so it is difficult to compare that with the population figures released by Gresback.

Over the years, the SIGAR auditing effort has revealed many dubious practices by the U.S., including instances of contractor fraud. Since January 2016 it had published data on the number of governing districts con-

trolled by Kabul, the number controlled by the Taliban, and the number that are contested.

John F. Sopko, head of the auditing organization, expressed disappointment that the Pentagon initially had forbidden release of the data on relative control of the governing districts.

"The number of districts controlled or influenced by the Afghan government had been one of the last remaining publicly available indicators for members of Congress — many of whose staff do not have access to the classified annexes to SIGAR reports — and for the American public of how the 16-year-long U.S. effort to secure Afghanistan is faring," he added.

Sopko wrote that, historically, the number of districts controlled or influenced by the government has been falling since his office began reporting on it, while the number controlled or influenced by the insurgents has been rising — "a fact that should cause even more concern about its disappearance from public disclosure and discussion."

Many DOD properties vulnerable to climate-related damage

BY WYATT OLSON

Stars and Stripes

More than half of 3,500 Defense Department properties experienced climate-related damage in 2014-15, according to a DOD survey sent to Congress on Friday.

This first-ever comprehensive site survey of climate vulnerabilities focused on the negative effects that severe weather — including storm-surge flooding, extreme temperatures, wind and drought — had on those properties.

Prepared by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, the survey, which includes events beginning in September 2014, found that drought had the broadest impact, with 782 properties reporting damage.

Closely following were 763 sites with wind damage and 706 sites reporting flooding that was unrelated to storm surge.

Extreme cold and heat affected 351 sites, while wildfire impacted 210.

Just under half the surveyed

sites — 1,684 — reported no effects.

The sites surveyed included airfield operations, piers, training ranges, headquarters buildings, information systems sites, fuel sites, wastewater facilities, historical/cultural spots, emergency services, housing and others.

Among the site types reporting one or more climate effects were airfield operations, wastewater systems and training ranges.

"As I look at the conclusions here, it's important to recognize

the breadth of the installation enterprise that's affected by some climate factor," said John Conger, a senior policy adviser with the Center for Climate and Security, a Washington-based think tank.

"Even if you're not on the coast, you're still going to be affected. It demonstrates the breadth of the impact, if not the severity," he said.

The survey was initiated while Conger was the acting assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment, a position he left in late 2015.

Russian jet buzzes US plane

By JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — A Russian fighter jet flew within 5 feet of a U.S. Navy reconnaissance plane over the Black Sea on Monday, marking another close encounter that American military officials contend increases the risk of midair collisions.

A Russian SU-27 crossed directly into the flight path of a Navy EP-3 and forced the U.S. aircraft to fly through a wake of turbulence behind the Russian fighter, according to U.S. Naval Forces Europe.

“The duration of the intercept lasted two hours and 40 minutes,” said Capt. Pamela Kunze, NAVEUR spokeswoman. “Unsafe actions increase the risk of miscalculation and midair collisions.”

Such encounters have been an ongoing concern for the U.S. military, which has faced a series of provocative intercepts by

Russian aircraft in the past few years.

In November, a Russian fighter crossed within 50 feet of a U.S. surveillance aircraft flying over the Black Sea, blasting its afterburners and forcing the American aircraft into a stream of turbulence that caused the plane to tilt into a 15-degree roll.

Navy surveillance aircraft routinely fly out of an air station in Sigonella, Sicily. Many of the aircraft are specialized in anti-submarine warfare and electronic support measures.

Russian submarine activity in the Black and Mediterranean seas has intensified in recent years, according to the U.S. military.

Still, Russian and NATO military aircraft routinely interact during routine intercepts around the Baltic states and the Black Sea. In most cases, they happen without incident as aircraft follow a set of air safety protocols.

“The Russian military is within its right to operate within international airspace, but they must behave within international standards set to ensure safety and prevent incidents,” Kunze said.

U.S. and NATO officials have complained the Russians engage in unpredictable maneuvers that include flying without transponders turned on.

In June, a Russian fighter flew toward a U.S. Air Force surveillance plane over the Baltic Sea with a “high rate of closure speed and poor control of the aircraft,” U.S. European Command said at the time. Last year, a Russian fighter barrel-rolled over the top of an Air Force RC-135 flying in international airspace, a maneuver that the military said put the U.S. crew at risk.

The Navy said its aircraft was operating in international airspace and in accordance with international law when Monday’s intercept occurred.

Army warns troops over vaping oils

The Fayetteville (N.C.) Observer

The U.S. Army Public Health Center has issued a warning to users of e-cigarettes and other vaping products after approximately 60 troops in North Carolina experienced serious medical issues.

A public health alert was issued by the center Monday. According to officials, soldiers from Fort Bragg and Marines from Camp Lejeune have reported adverse health effects believed to be caused by vaping products that are marketed as containing cannabidiol, or CBD, oil.

Womack Army Medical Center on Fort Bragg and the Naval Medical Center at Camp Lejeune have treated dozens of troops, according to the alert. Officials did not specify numbers for each hospital, nor did they release the time span during which the troops were treated.

The service members reported headaches, nausea, vomiting, palpitations, dilated pupils, dizziness, disorientation, agitation and seizures, officials said. Those are all symptoms associated with synthetic cannabinoids.

“Complications from the seizures may have resulted in significant neurologic damage in one soldier and falls/accidents resulting from seizures are blamed for the deaths of two Marines,” officials said.

The Army Public Health Center, which is based at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland, said four additional public cases have been reported in North Carolina and 33 cases have been reported in Utah.

They attribute the adverse health effects to man-made chemicals that are meant to replicate those found in marijuana. Army regulations prohibit soldiers from using such products.

The alert cautioned troops to make sure that vaping products they purchase do not contain CBD oil, THC or synthetic cannabinoids.

Fitness device policies reviewed

By COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Pentagon officials could adjust policies governing the use of wearable electronics, such as fitness tracking wristbands, after an interactive map was published online that could reveal sensitive information about servicemembers in war zones, a spokesman said Monday.

The Pentagon is reviewing the use of wireless technology, including fitness bands such as Fitbits and smartphones, in an effort to ensure servicemembers are not endangered by information collected by gadgets that could be made public, said Army Col. Rob Manning, a Pentagon spokesman. The review follows the publishing of a global heat map over the weekend by GPS tracking company Strava. The map shows regular routes used by some 27 million people

around the world, according to the company.

In unpopulated areas — such as in areas American troops operate in Syria and Afghanistan — Strava’s map appears to show the outlines of known U.S. military posts and reveals routes Americans use to exercise on the posts or move between bases.

Manning said Monday he was unaware of the data revealing any sensitive or classified information. He said the Pentagon had not asked Strava to remove any of the data it published. He also said he was unaware of any security breaches occurring in recent days that could be attributed to the published information. He said the Pentagon was not considering the data an immediate force protection issue. He could not immediately say how long a review of policies might take.

“The rapid development of technology requires constant refinement of policies and procedures to enhance force protection and operational security,” Manning said. “[Defense Department] personnel are advised to emplace strict privacy settings on wireless technologies and applications.”

The exact policies governing the use of wearable fitness trackers by uniformed servicemembers vary slightly from service to service. The Navy, for example, has allowed their use since at least 2015, but the service’s policy specifies they are authorized only if their GPS systems are “receive-only,” meaning they do not transmit their GPS information.

Manning said such wireless devices are also prohibited at certain Defense Department sites, at likely sensitive locations and during “specific activities.”

Futenma barracks to get \$14M renovation

BY TYLER HLAVAC
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The Navy is spending \$14 million to renovate an Okinawa barracks that is below fire and safety codes.

The work will upgrade the 35-year-old, four-story quarters for single, enlisted servicemembers at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, Naval Facilities Engineering Command said in a statement. The contract was awarded to Nippo Corp.

“This whole building renovation effort will provide our Marines with an updated, comfortable and safe facility,” Lt. Cmdr. Luke Cowley, facilities engineering and acquisition division director at Camp Butler, said in the statement.

The work includes remodeling the building to include an exercise area, kitchenette, entertainment room and study room.

A 2014 Inspector General report found multiple health and safety issues at Futenma housing units, including “hazardous electrical power service drops and broken light fixtures in shower areas” and “significant mold growth in living quarters due to inadequate mitigation of condensation and moisture intrusion.” The report said one building had “significant structural damage which presented a danger to building occupants of falling concrete debris and possible structural collapse.”

A photo in the report showed the concrete on the underside of a walkway beginning to separate.

Navy officials could not confirm whether the building being renovated is the one referenced in the IG report. The Futenma barracks will be brought up to standard by summer 2019, said Navy spokesman James Johnson.

“Marines will have an updated, comfortable and safe facility, fully compliant with anti-terrorism force protection, fire suppression, accessibility, heating and airflow, energy, and environmental code requirements,” he said.

Taliban, ISIS competing for credit in stepped-up violence

Associated Press

ISLAMABAD — Islamic State and the Taliban are competing to take credit for a horrific spike in violence in Afghanistan over the last month, and analysts say both insurgent groups are growing in strength as security forces wither under their relentless attacks and a feuding government struggles to win over citizens.

Still, the two insurgent groups embrace different agendas and are at war with each other as well as the Afghan government, analysts say.

Recent large-scale attacks, which have included both suicide bombings and small-arms fire, have left nearly 200 people dead and hundreds more wounded. Insurgents have targeted seemingly heavily secure areas in the heart of the Afghan capital, including an Afghan military academy Monday and a hotel, owned by the government and frequented by foreigners, earlier this month. Using an ambulance to hide their deadly cargo, insurgents slipped passed checkpoints in Kabul’s heavily fortified center Saturday to kill more than 100 people. They also targeted an international aid organization in eastern Jalalabad and a Shiite cultural center in Kabul.

Afghan Security Forces seem powerless against the onslaught.

Insurgents share the same goal of delegitimizing the governments they are fighting against,

said Andrew Wilder, vice president of Asia programs at the U.S. Institute of Peace. However, in Afghanistan the similarity between ISIS and the Taliban ends there. Beyond toppling the Afghan government, ISIS and the Taliban have divergent goals, and where the Taliban are seen as possible negotiation partners in a search for peace, ISIS is not.

“The Taliban and ISIS are clearly competitors in the Afghan arena,” said Thomas Ruttig, whose Afghan Analysts network has deep knowledge of the country and has conducted nationwide studies into myriad issues confounding the country, including ISIS and the Taliban.

“The Taliban I see as ‘national Islamists’ while ISIS is ‘Internationalist,’” he said, dismissing reports of collaboration between the two insurgent groups, attributing them to rumors and bickering in northern Afghanistan within the Taliban.

The strongest fighting force within the Taliban is the Haqqani network, which has been blamed for the most audacious attacks in Kabul. The Haqqani network has historical ties to Pakistan’s powerful ISI spy agency, and both the United States and Afghanistan accuse Pakistan of providing sanctuary for Taliban fighters, a claim Islamabad denies. Pakistan in turn has blamed some of the most horrific attacks in Pakistan on ISIS affiliate insurgents in Afghanistan, accusing Kabul of allowing them space to plot their attacks.

Emergency worker thought threat on Hawaii was real

Associated Press

A Hawaii employee who mistakenly sent an alert warning of an incoming ballistic missile earlier this month, creating a panic across the state, thought an actual attack was imminent, the Federal Communications Commission said Tuesday.

Hawaii has been testing alert capabilities, and the employee for the state Emergency Management Agency mistook a drill for a real warning about a missile threat. He responded by sending the alert without sign-off from a supervisor at a time when there are fears over the threat of nuclear-tipped missiles from North Korea.

“There were no procedures in

place to prevent a single person from mistakenly sending a missile alert” in Hawaii, said James Wiley, a cybersecurity and communications reliability staffer at the FCC. There was no requirement to double-check with a colleague or get a supervisor’s approval, he said.

In addition, software at Hawaii’s emergency agency used the same prompts for both test and actual alerts, and it generally used prepared text that made it easy for a staffer to click through the alerting process without focusing enough on the text of the warning that would be sent.

The worker, whose name has not been released, has refused to talk to the FCC, but federal reg-

ulators got information from his written statement that state officials provided. The employee still works at the state Emergency Management Agency but has been reassigned to a job without access to the warning system.

The alert was sent to cell-phones, TV and radio stations in Hawaii on Jan. 13, leading people to fear the state was under nuclear attack. It took 38 minutes for officials to send an alert retracting the warning because Hawaii did not have a standardized system for sending such corrections, the FCC said.

The federal agency, which regulates the nation’s airwaves and sets standards for such emergency alerts, criticized the state’s delay in correcting it.

US releases 'Putin list' of flourishing Russian bigwigs

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration late Monday released a long-awaited list of 114 Russian politicians and 96 “oligarchs” who have flourished under President Vladimir Putin, fulfilling a demand by Congress that the U.S. punish Moscow for interfering in the 2016 U.S. election.

The political list is the entire presidential administration, as listed on the Kremlin website, and the Russian Cabinet, while the oligarchs list is a carbon copy of the top of Forbes magazine’s Russian billionaires list. The publication of the so-called “Putin list” angered and dismayed many in Moscow.

Yet the administration paired that move with a surprising announcement that it had decided not to punish anybody — for now — under new sanctions retaliating for the election meddling. Some U.S. lawmakers accused President Donald Trump of giving Russia a free pass, fueling further questions about whether the president is unwilling to confront Moscow.

The idea of the seven-page, unclassified document, as envisioned by Congress, is to name-and-shame those believed to be benefiting from Putin’s tenure, just as the United States works to isolate his government diplomatically and economically.

Being on the list doesn’t trigger any U.S. sanctions on the individuals, although more than a dozen already are targeted under earlier sanctions.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev is among the 114 senior political figures in Russia’s government who made the list, along with 42 of Putin’s aides, Cabinet ministers such as Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and top officials in Russia’s leading spy agencies, the FSB and GRU. The CEOs of major state-owned companies, including energy giant Rosneft and Sberbank, also are on the list.

So are 96 wealthy Russians deemed “oligarchs” by the Treasury Department, which said each is believed to have assets totaling \$1 billion or more. Some are the most famous of wealthy Russians, among them tycoons Roman Abramovich and Mikhail Prokhorov, who challenged Putin in the 2012 election. Aluminum magnate Oleg Deripaska, a figure in the Russia investigation over his ties to former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort, is included.

More names, including those of less senior politicians or businesspeople worth less than \$1 billion, are on a classified version of the list being provided to Congress, officials said. Drawing on U.S. intelligence, Treasury also finalized a list of at least partially state-owned firms in Russia, but that list, too, was classified and sent only to Congress.

US House panel votes to release classified memo

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Brushing aside opposition from the Justice Department, Republicans on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence voted to release a classified memo that purports to show improper use of surveillance by the FBI and the Justice Department in the Russia investigation.

The four-page memo has become a political flashpoint, with President Donald Trump and many Republicans pushing for its release and suggesting that some in the Justice Department and FBI have conspired against the president.

The memo was written by Republicans on the committee, led by chairman Rep. Devin Nunes, of California, a close Trump ally who has become a fierce critic of the FBI and the Justice Department. Special counsel Robert Mueller is investigating Russian meddling in the 2016 election and whether Trump’s campaign was involved.

Republicans have said the memo reveals grave concerns about abuses of the government surveillance powers in the Russia investigation. Democrats have called it a selectively edited group of GOP talking points that attempt to distract from the committee’s own investigation into Russian meddling.

The vote Monday to release the memo is

an unprecedented move by the committee, which typically goes out of its way to protect classified information in the interest of protecting intelligence sources and methods. The memo was delivered by courier to the White House on Monday evening. Trump now has five days to object to its release by the committee.

White House counselor Kellyanne Conway told “Fox & Friends” that the memo will be reviewed Tuesday. The White House said late Monday that Trump would meet with his national security team and White House counsel to discuss the memo in the coming days.

Republicans said they are confident the release won’t harm national security. They also said they would not release the underlying intelligence that informed the memo.

“You’ll see for yourself that it’s not necessary,” said Texas Republican Rep. Mike Conaway, who’s leading the House’s Russia investigation.

But Rep. Adam Schiff, of California, the ranking Democrat on the committee, said the panel had “crossed a deeply regrettable line.”

“Today, this committee voted to put the president’s personal interests, perhaps their own political interest, above the national interest,” he said, noting that the memo’s release could compromise intelligence sources and methods.

Hackers bring ATM ‘jackpotting’ to US

The Washington Post

Hackers able to make ATMs spit cash like winning slot machines are now operating inside the United States, marking the arrival of “jackpotting” attacks after widespread heists in Europe and Asia, according to security news website Krebs on Security.

Thieves have used skimming devices on ATM machines to steal debit card information, but “jackpotting” augurs more sophisticated technological challenges that American financial firms will face in coming years.

“This is the first instance of jackpotting in the United States,” said digital security reporter Brian Krebs, a former Washington Post reporter. “It’s safe to assume that these are here to stay at this point.”

On his website, Krebs reported Saturday that the Secret Service has warned financial institutions about “jackpotting” attacks in the past few days, though specifics have

not been revealed. He cited an alert sent by ATM maker NCR Corp. to its customers:

“This represents the first confirmed cases of losses due to logical attacks in the U.S.,” the alert read. “This should be treated as a call to action to take appropriate steps to protect their ATMs against these forms of attack and mitigate any consequences.”

Krebs reported that criminal gangs are targeting Diebold Nixdorf machines — the stand-alone kind you might see in a drive-through or pharmacy. He shared the ATM giant’s security notice. It described similar attacks in Mexico, in which criminals used a modified endoscope to access a port inside the machines and install malware.

Hackers have also been reported to remotely infect ATMs or completely swap out their hard drives. The Secret Service could not be immediately reached for comment about the nature of the reported U.S. attacks.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Couple married 70 years renews vows

MA UXBRIDGE — A Massachusetts couple finally got the church wedding they always wanted, 70 years after first tying the knot.

The Telegram & Gazette reported that Edward Gouin, 90, and Lena Gouin, 89, renewed their vows Saturday at the Roman Catholic Church of the Good Shepherd in Uxbridge thanks to some careful planning by their family.

Because Edward is Catholic and Lena is Congregationalist, a wedding in a church was barred when they were first married. Instead, they were wed in a church rectory.

"Today, it can happen," said Edward, a World War II veteran.

Deputy politely asks runaway horse to stop

FL HUDSON — A Florida deputy was caught on video politely pursuing a four-legged suspect on a busy road.

Pasco County Sheriff's Cpl. Art Madden last week spotted a chestnut-and-white horse galloping in and out of traffic on a road north of Tampa. Rolling down his law enforcement vehicle's window, he asked the animal to "please stop." He also made kissy noises, to no avail.

According to authorities, he was able to herd the animal into a nearby housing development, and the mare finally came to a stop. Madden exited his cruiser and approached, only to have her run off again.

The horse eventually stopped a second time, and Madden threw his arms around her neck. The horse's owner, who had reported the animal missing, arrived and took it away unharmed.

Boy survives tip of screw lodged in skull

MD SALISBURY — A Maryland seventh-grader survived after the tip of a 6-inch-long metal screw got lodged in his skull.

The Daily Times of Salisbury reported Darius Foreman was building a treehouse at his aunt's house when he fell from a branch. A wooden plank with a screw sticking out of it slammed onto his head.

Two cousins ran for help. Foreman's mother found him wandering around the yard with a board stuck to his head, the screw penetrating his skull.

Foreman required neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. He was released from the hospital on Jan. 25, his 13th birthday.

Official: Fire caused by man thawing pipe

ME BANGOR — Fire officials in Maine said a tenant attempting to thaw a frozen pipe with an open flame caused a house fire.

Fire crews were called to the scene in Bangor early Saturday to find the house full of heavy smoke. Bangor Assistant Fire Chief Matt Costello told WABI-TV that one of the tenants in the building was attempting to thaw out a frozen pipe with an open flame and set fire to the basement.

Costello said crews were delayed because the tenant did not immediately call 911, instead attempting to extinguish the fire himself.

Small plane makes landing on freeway

CA COSTA MESA — The pilot of a small plane

that made a nighttime emergency landing on a Southern California freeway said that as soon as the engine died he knew he'd never make it to a nearby airport.

"I saw an opening on the highway and I went for it right away," Israel Slod said after safely guiding the single-engine Beech G33 onto State Route 55 in Costa Mesa on Sunday night.

Fire Capt. Chris Coates said it was a "complete miracle" that traffic was light and the plane didn't hit any cars or cause a collision. No injuries were reported.

Zoo staff searching for missing Pallas' cat

UT SALT LAKE CITY — A Salt Lake City zoo is searching for a 10-month-old Pallas' cat that went missing from his outdoor exhibit.

Hogle Zoo officials said the young Pallas' cat named Mushu is smaller than most domestic cats and is not dangerous.

Staff discovered he was missing Sunday morning. They believe he is still within the zoo grounds.

According to a statement from the zoo, Pallas' cats are "extremely elusive" and tend to be difficult to spot.

Staff members have laid out live box traps, and searchers are using a thermal imaging camera that detects heat to locate Mushu.

Hogle Zoo spokeswoman Erica Hansen said it's important that they find him because Pallas' cats are a threatened species.

Police probe theft of 4K antique lighters

TX AMARILLO — Amarillo police are investigating a burglary in which

thieves lifted about 4,000 antique lighters.

An Amarillo police statement said officers responded to a burglary at a house on Jan. 18. Investigators said the owner reported the theft of his flint butane lighter collection.

Cpl. Jeb Hilton said that no one has been arrested in the theft of what the officer called a "valuable" and "very expensive" collection. Hilton declined to say how much the lighters are worth amid the investigation.

Puerto Rican man runs backward in race

FL MIAMI — A Puerto Rican man ran the Miami Half-Marathon backward to draw attention to the plight of Puerto Rico, which is struggling to recover after Hurricane Maria.

WPLG Local 10 reported that Jorge Cruz, 34, finished the 13.1-mile route in 1 hour, 47 minutes and 12 seconds Sunday. Out of the more than 14,000 runners competing in the half-marathon, Cruz placed 1,361st.

Clock ticking for winning ticket holders

MD BALTIMORE — Maryland lottery officials said the clock is ticking for three Powerball players to claim their \$50,000 prizes.

Officials said winning tickets from drawings on Aug. 5, Aug. 12 and Aug. 19 of last year have yet to be claimed.

Players have 182 days from the day of the drawing to claim their prizes, meaning the winning tickets will all expire by mid-February.

The tickets were sold at Glen Burnie Mobil in Glen Burnie, a Wegman's grocery store in Frederick and a Giant grocery store in Catonsville.

From wire reports

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Backup QBs' history giving Eagles hopes

Associated Press

Soon after Carson Wentz went down with a season-ending knee injury and Philadelphia's Super Bowl hopes were placed on backup Nick Foles' right arm, Jeff Hostetler's phone lit up.

Out of all the quarterbacks who have gone from holding clipboards to begin the season to Super Bowl starter to end it, Hostetler's path might have been most similar to Foles' journey. It provides some hope to the Eagles heading into Sunday's title game against five-time Super Bowl winner Tom Brady and the New England Patriots.

"When it happened, all of a sudden my phone starts ringing off the hook," Hostetler said. "When you really start to look at it, this is probably out of all the times it's happened since I played, this may be the most similar when you get to all the nuts and bolts about it."

Hostetler had started just two games in almost seven full seasons for the Giants when Phil Simms injured his foot in Week 14. After starting that season with 10 straight wins, the Giants lost three out of four and were mostly written off as a contender when Simms got hurt.

There was a similar mood in Philadelphia when MVP con-

tender Wentz got hurt in Los Angeles in a win that improved the Eagles to 11-2, but left them with a backup quarterback running the show.

"Everyone had jumped off the bandwagon," Hostetler recalled. "We were completely shot as a team. That was the outside looking in. Inside where we were at, we just rallied the wagons. It was us versus the world. We just rallied around each other and it showed. I had a team similar to Philly. They've rallied around each other and nobody gives them a chance. When nobody gives you a chance and you're a close-knit team that has been through adversity, look out, you can be dangerous."

Hostetler said he had gained confidence by being thrown in late in a win against Dallas early in the season, and then leading a comeback against the Cardinals after Simms got injured in Game 6.

But by the time he stepped in for Simms in December, Hostetler had thrown 93 passes since entering the NFL in 1984. Hostetler managed to lead the Giants to two wins to end the regular season, a lopsided playoff opener over Chicago, then upsets over two-time defending champion San Francisco in the NFC title game (15-13 on five

field goals) and Buffalo (20-19) in the Super Bowl.

"There were lots of things that were said, lots of negative things," Hostetler said. "That fed me because none of those guys had seen me play. I never had the opportunity. It wasn't like I had gone out there and failed and that's why I was a backup. I was a backup because we didn't have free agency and I was behind a guy who was playing really well who hadn't gotten hurt."

Foles is the 14th quarterback to start the Super Bowl after not holding that role for the season opener, including Brady (2016) and Ben Roethlisberger (2010), who were suspended to start those seasons. The others fall into a few categories.

There were those who seized the job early in the season such as Jake Delhomme did for Carolina when he replaced Rodney Peete at halftime of the 2003 season opener; Brady when he stepped in for an injured Drew Bledsoe in Week 3 in 2001; and Joe Kapp, who replaced Gary Cuozzo for Minnesota in the second game in 1969.

Then there were teams looking for a midseason jolt that turned into Super Bowl wins. Roger Staubach shared time with Craig Morton in 1971 before taking over for good mid-

way through the year to launch a Hall of Fame career with his first Super Bowl win. Three years later, Terry Bradshaw began the season on the bench behind Joe Gilliam before taking over as starter in Week 7, then winning the first of four Super Bowl titles. Trent Dilfer then stepped in for Tony Banks midway through the 2000 season for Baltimore, lost his first start and then won 11 in a row behind a dominant defense.

There were three other cases of injuries leading to changes before the stretch run, with Vince Ferragamo replacing Pat Haden for the Rams in 1979; Jim Plunkett stepping in for Dan Pastorini the following year in Oakland; and Colin Kaepernick doing the same in San Francisco after Alex Smith had a concussion in 2012.

But of all those quarterbacks, only Hostetler, Foles and Washington's Doug Williams made it to the Super Bowl with as few as two regular-season starts that season. Williams made his starts early in the year before stepping in for Jay Schroeder in the season finale and sparking a comeback victory over Minnesota, leading to coach Joe Gibbs' decision to make a change for the playoffs.

Teams tackle silly, serious on media night

Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Tom Brady wore a black wool stocking cap and a big smile. Bill Belichick sported a full suit.

The guy in the shark costume, well, he was just trying to not wear out his welcome.

The New England Patriots were the first team on stage Monday at Super Bowl opening night, the kickoff to the week of buildup to the big game. They gathered at Xcel Energy Center, the hockey rink and home of the NHL's Minnesota Wild, for their first on-site media obligation after landing in Minneapolis in the afternoon.

The Philadelphia Eagles, whose charter flight arrived Sunday, had the second half of the NFL's annual assembly of hundreds of reporters, camera operators and just-

for-fun "journalists" surrounding players and coaches with a ticketed crowd looking on from the seats.

Brady led his team out of the tunnel in the set made to resemble a giant glacier in honor of the host state's wintry climate. Swarmed by a 12-deep pack of media at his podium in advance of his eighth career Super Bowl, Brady was asked often about his family ties to the area and his desire to keep his children from criticism and scrutiny. He fielded a query about his most attractive teammate, nodding to Danny Amendola, Julian Edelman and Rob Gronkowski.

As the Patriots filed out, Belichick met his Eagles counterpart, Doug Pederson, for a handshake and a photo op that produced a jarring juxtaposition of their wardrobe selections. Pederson had on a white polo

shirt with jeans and a cap.

Belichick even flashed some smiles during his interview session, including questions from former figure skating star and lifelong Patriots fan Nancy Kerrigan. Working the room as a special correspondent for "Inside Edition," Kerrigan later asked Amendola about his favorite Super Bowl party food.

"Nachos," Amendola quickly responded.

Every player and coach on the team is required to be present, so they don't get fined, as Marshawn Lynch reminded the football world during his appearance with the Seattle Seahawks three years ago. That includes the injured players not in concussion protocol.

"Can we go home now, coach?" one player playfully yelled to Belichick as he walked by his podium.

Pistons land five-time All-Star Griffin

Associated Press

The Detroit Pistons shook up their struggling roster in dramatic fashion, acquiring star forward Blake Griffin in a trade with the Los Angeles Clippers.

The Pistons announced the deal early Tuesday morning. Detroit sent forward Tobias Harris, guard Avery Bradley and center Boban Marjanovic to Los Angeles, with the Clippers also receiving draft picks. Detroit also acquired forward Brice Johnson and center Willie Reed in the deal.

“We are serious about winning, and this is a major move to improve our team,” Pistons owner Tom Gores said in a statement. “Blake Griffin is one of the NBA’s elite players, and when you get an opportunity to add that kind of talent, you take it.”

Griffin is averaging 22.6 points, 7.9 rebounds and 5.4 assists in 33 games this season, but the Clippers have been plagued by injuries and are ninth in the Western Conference standings.

Detroit is scuffling as well. The Pistons have lost eight straight heading into Tuesday night’s game against Cleveland.

The 28-year-old Griffin has been the face of the Clippers, and last July, he agreed to a \$171 million, five-year deal, ending a brief flirtation with free agency. He told his teammates, coach Doc Rivers and owner Steve Ballmer, “I want my legacy to be a Clipper.”

The deal didn’t include a no-trade clause.

The addition of Griffin gives Detroit’s frontcourt another standout alongside Andre Drummond, but it also represents a clear change in course from the roster the Pistons had assembled. Detroit acquired Bradley in a trade with Boston last offseason, but he’s in the final season of his contract. Harris has been impressive for the Pistons this season, shooting a career-best 41 percent from three-point range.

“The move is not without risk. We gave up a lot to get him, including Tobias Harris — one of the hardest-working, highest-character players I know — and two high-quality young men in Avery Bradley and Boban Marjanovic,” Gores said. “But we are very excited to bring Blake Griffin to Detroit. He is a great fit for our team and will bring a combination of toughness and athleticism that will elevate our

team and excite our fans.”

Detroit’s season was looking promising until a late-December injury to point guard Reggie Jackson. The Pistons have stumbled while he’s been out with a sprained right ankle, and the team is facing the prospect of missing the playoffs in its first season at its new downtown arena.

Detroit’s next six games are at home, so the Pistons will have a chance to turn this season around — and an opportunity to build for a future with both Griffin and Drummond.

“His presence will help us offensively and his size gives us another rebounder and weapon in the paint,” said Stan Van Gundy, Detroit’s coach and team president. “Willie Reed and Brice Johnson are two young players that give us size and depth.”

For the Clippers, moving Griffin continues a makeover of a franchise that has never made it past the second round of the playoffs.

The Clippers traded All-Star point guard Chris Paul to Houston last summer. He had been credited with bringing respectability to the team that was once the laughingstock of the league. Without Paul,

Los Angeles won its first four games to open the season, and then lost nine of its next 11. The team was one game above .500 going into Tuesday night’s game against Portland.

Paul’s replacement, Patrick Beverley, has missed the entire season after right knee surgery. Also missing time have been DeAndre Jordan, Danilo Gallinari, Austin Rivers and Milos Teodosic.

Los Angeles receives a protected first-round draft choice and a second-round pick from the Pistons.

The Clippers drafted Griffin first overall out of Oklahoma in 2009. As a rookie, he was an All-Star, won the slam dunk contest and was named NBA Rookie of the Year.

He has averaged 21.6 points, 9.3 rebounds and 4.2 assists in his career.

Even before the Pistons announced the deal, there was plenty of reaction on social media Monday night. Harris had a message on his accounts thanking Detroit for its support.

Griffin’s Twitter account had its own message with no words — just an image of actor Will Smith with a surprised expression on his face.

Wall to miss 6-8 weeks after knee surgery

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Washington Wizards point guard John Wall will have arthroscopic surgery on his left knee on Wednesday and could miss much of the rest of the regular season.

The Wizards announced Tuesday that Wall would have the operation in Cleveland and that a timeline for his return would be determined afterward.

A person with direct knowledge of the injury said Wall could miss six to eight weeks. That person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the team did not release any estimate of the length of Wall’s absence. Washington’s last regular-season game is on April 11.

“It just proves that he wasn’t the John that we know,” backup guard Tomas Satoransky said. “His knee was bothering him all season long.”

This is the latest knee problem for the No. 1 overall pick in the 2010 NBA draft out of Kentucky. Wall had surgery on both of his knees before last season.

Coach Scott Brooks delivered Tuesday’s news to other players at a shootaround.

“The message is we just need guys to step up and take their game up a level. It’s going to be tough without our best player,” forward Markieff Morris said.

“By the time he comes back, we’ll be in the playoff push,” Morris said, “or just getting ready for the playoffs.”

Wall is second on the Wizards in scoring this season, averaging 19.4 points, and is second in the league with 9.3 assists per game. In July, he agreed to a \$170 million, four-year contract extension that starts with next season.

He was selected last week to participate in his fifth NBA All-Star Game but now is

expected to miss that event in Los Angeles next month.

The timing of the surgery gives Wizards President Ernie Grunfeld a chance to find a new point guard before the NBA trading deadline, which is Feb. 8.

In the meantime, reserves Satoransky and Tim Frazier figure to get additional playing time.

“We cannot panic about it,” Satoransky said about the prospect of losing Wall for a lengthy absence.

“John is the main guy, so it’s always tough to cover your main guy when he goes down,” said Satoransky, who is averaging five points and 2.6 assists this season. “It’s very challenging. Obviously, I like challenges, but it will (mean) a lot of responsibility.”

The Wizards entered Tuesday, when they were scheduled to host Oklahoma City, tied for fifth in the Eastern Conference.

NBA roundup

Bucks win 4th in row since firing Kidd

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Giannis Antetokounmpo had 31 points and 18 rebounds, Matthew Delavedova scored all 10 of his points in the fourth quarter and the Milwaukee Bucks beat the Philadelphia 76ers 107-85 on Monday night for their fourth straight win since firing coach Jason Kidd.

Antetokounmpo picked up his 22nd double-double of the season to lead the Bucks, who tightened up their defense after allowing the Sixers to score 22 of their first 26 points in the paint.

Antetokounmpo then asserted himself in the lane, and Philadelphia was hard-pressed to contain the athletic 6-foot-11 forward with All-Star center Joel Embiid sitting out the game for rest.

Dario Saric had 19 points to lead the cold-shooting Sixers, who were 2-for-26 from three-point range a night after going

11-for-29 in a loss at Oklahoma City. Ben Simmons added 16 points.

Celtics 111, Nuggets 110: Kyrie Irving scored 10 of his 27 points in the fourth quarter, Jaylen Brown hit a go-ahead three-pointer with 34 seconds remaining and the struggling Celtics edged the Nuggets.

Denver had a chance to win in dramatic fashion at the end but Torrey Craig's tip-in of Will Barton's long attempt from three-point range was too late.

Irving finished 11-for-17 from the field to lead the Celtics to just their second win in seven games. Jayson Tatum added 20 points and Marcus Morris had 14 off the bench.

Boston blew a 20-point lead and trailed heading into the final period. Then the Celtics couldn't hold onto a six-point advantage in the final two minutes as the Nuggets tied the game at 108 with 43 seconds to go.

Hawks 105, Timberwolves

100: Kent Bazemore scored 22 points, including a tiebreaking three-pointer with 2:09 remaining, and the host Hawks rallied after trailing by 11 in the third quarter to beat the Timberwolves.

Bazemore's clutch three gave Atlanta a 99-96 lead it did not relinquish. He added a blocked shot following a steal by Minnesota's Jeff Teague and another basket to stretch the lead back to three.

Pacers 105, Hornets 96: Victor Oladipo scored 25 points, Myles Turner added 22 and the host Pacers pulled away late for a victory over the Hornets.

The Pacers have won two in a row and four of five.

Kemba Walker finished with 23 points and a trio of three-pointers to lead the Hornets, who have lost two straight and four of six.

Grizzlies 120, Suns 109: Tyreke Evans scored 27 points, Wayne Selden added 17 points and the Grizzlies sent visiting

Phoenix to its fifth straight loss.

Deyonta Davis and Marc Gasol both scored 12 points for Memphis, Gasol also grabbed 10 rebounds. Davis missed only one of his six shots on the night, part of the Grizzlies shooting 57 percent for the game.

T.J. Warren led the Suns with 24 points on 10 of 18 shooting, while Josh Jackson scored 20 points.

Heat 95, Mavericks 88: Hassan Whiteside had 25 points and 14 rebounds as the Heat completed another season series sweep of the host Mavericks.

The Heat never trailed after Goran Dragic had a steal that led to Tyler Johnson's tiebreaking three-pointer to make it 38-35 just under 4½ minutes left in the first half. Their lead went to double-digits again after Whiteside had consecutive baskets midway through the third quarter.

Top 25 roundup

Trent leads No. Blue Devils past Notre Dame

Associated Press

DURHAM, N.C. — Freshman Gary Trent Jr. had 22 points and tied a season high with 10 rebounds, and No. 4 Duke beat Notre Dame 88-66 on Monday night.

Grayson Allen scored 18 points, and Wendell Carter Jr. finished with 17 to help the Blue Devils (19-3, 7-3 Atlantic Coast Conference), who shot nearly 55 percent after halftime.

They overcame a rare off night — by his high standards, anyway — from star freshman Marvin Bagley III and bounced back from a two-point loss to No. 4 Virginia. Duke has yet to lose consecutive games this season.

T.J. Gibbs scored 22 points and John Mooney added 14 with a career-high four 3-pointers for the injury-riddled Fighting Irish (13-9, 3-6), who have lost six straight.

No. 7 Kansas 70, Kansas State 56: Svi Mykhailiuk had 22 points to lead four Kansas players in double-figures, and the seventh-ranked Jayhawks beat host Kansas State to retain sole possession of the Big 12 lead.

Devonte Graham added 16 points and Malik Newman had 13 for the Jayhawks (18-4, 7-2), who celebrated the Kansas Day holiday with their seventh straight victory over their biggest conference rival.

It was the first time in four meetings that the outcome was decided by more than three points.

Dean Wade had 20 points and eight rebounds, and Xavier Sneed scored 10 for the Wildcats (16-6, 5-4), who had their four-game winning streak snapped. Leading scorer Barry Brown was held to nine points — about half his season average — on 4-of-16 shooting and 0-for-4 from the three-point arc.

No. 24 Michigan 58, Northwestern 47: Charles Matthews scored 14 points, and No. 24 Michigan outlasted visiting Northwestern.

The Wolverines (18-6, 7-4 Big Ten) labored through an

ugly first half but still led 21-19 after 20 minutes. They ended up shooting just 42 percent from the field and 7-for-25 from three-point range, but Northwestern (13-10, 4-6) couldn't take advantage.

Scottie Lindsey scored 15 points for the Wildcats, but no other Northwestern player had more than nine.

Michigan was coming off an exciting 92-88 loss at Purdue on Thursday night, but this game wasn't at all similar to that one. The Wolverines trailed 14-5 at the midpoint of the first half, and the Wildcats led 19-11 after a dunk by Lindsey with 7:06 remaining.