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Trump touts future weapons in speech

BY COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The United States will invest heavily in studying new technologies capable of defending the U.S. mainland against all current and future missile threats, including advanced hypersonic missiles under development by competing countries, President Donald Trump said Thursday in a speech at the Pentagon.

Trump, visiting the Defense Department headquarters to unveil his administration's review of America's multi-layered shield against missile threats, called out Iran as developing ballistic missiles capable of reaching the U.S. mainland while avoiding the names of other countries that already possess the ability, including North Korea, Russia and China.

Their arsenals are getting bigger and stronger," Trump said of those nations to a large, mostly uniformed military audience. "And we are getting bigger and stronger in every way. They are increasing their lethal strike capabilities, and ... I will accept nothing less for our nation than the most effective, cutting-edge missile defense systems."

Pentagon's Missile Defense Review report, ordered by Trump in the early days of his presidency, was delayed more than one year due to changes in its scope and concerns by some officials that it could damage ongoing nuclear negotiations with North Korea, defense officials said.

It is the first official review of America's missile defense posture since 2010 and looks at the U.S. ability to defend it-

self against ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and hypersonic missiles, which are capable of traveling in excess of Mach 5 and are being developed in Russia and China.

The president announced he would seek a large investment in missile defense capabilities in his fiscal year 2020 budget proposal expected to be released next month. However, Trump did not say precisely how much money he wanted to fund new weapons systems and research into potential future programs, including space-based sensors and interceptors, studies of which are ordered in the report.

Trump did announce Thursday that the United States will add 20 new ground-based interceptors to Fort Greely in Alaska. The Missile Defense Review calls for adding at least

40 more of those anti-ballistic missile systems.

The United States' layered anti-missile system includes land-, sea-, and space-based elements that detect, track and target incoming missiles and is capable of defending against a limited attack using intercontinental ballistic missiles, weapons that can travel more than 3,400 miles. But America still relies primarily on diplomacy and deterrence to dissuade attacks by more modern weapons under development by nations such as Russia and China, defense officials have said.

"Effective deterrence is the preferred strategy to prevent missiles attack ... however, a broader approach is required to address the increasingly complex missile threat environment," reads a summary of the report released Thursday.

Fitzgerald collision followed incident that wasn't reviewed

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS

Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — A serious review of a near miss by the USS Fitzgerald in May 2017 might have prevented a collision five weeks later that killed 17 sailors, according to a leaked naval investigation reported by a military newspaper.

The Navy Times this week published a series of articles on the Navy's internal report of the Fitzgerald's collision with an oil tanker near Singapore on June 17, 2017.

The Navy report, in part, criticized the failure to review the near miss, which happened May 10, 2017, near Sasebo, Japan.

Much of the Navy investiga-

tion centered on the earlier incident, according to the Navy Times.

The internal report described a junior officer becoming "confused by the surface contact picture" of ships near the Fitzgerald and calling the guided-missile destroyer's then-commanding officer, Cmdr. Robert Shu, to the bridge, according to the newspaper.

Shu steered the destroyer behind a merchant vessel and left the bridge, according to the Navy Times. As the Fitzgerald passed by the merchant vessel's stern, another ship was detected on the opposite side.

The report said an officer on duty "sounded five short blasts and ordered all back full emergency to avoid collision" and a

potential crash was averted, according to the Navy Times. Shu was not on the bridge when the incident occurred.

In the Fitzgerald's fatal collision five weeks later, Cmdr. Bryce Benson — who took over for Shu on May 13, 2017 — was also absent from the bridge but, unlike in the close call near Sasebo, no one sounded the blasts to alert surrounding ships, according to the post-collision report.

Rear Adm. Brian Fort, who investigated the fatal collision, wrote in the internal report that a critical self-review after the incident could have helped prevent the fatal crash, according to the Navy Times.

"Had the [commanding officer] and [executive officer] cri-

tiqued the near-collision, they may have identified the root causes [of the fatal Fitzgerald collision] uncovered by this investigation," Fort said in the report, according to the newspaper.

Cmdr. J. Dorsey, Navy assistant chief of information pointed to a paragraph describing the Fitzgerald's lack of self-review described in the combined Fitzgerald and USS John S. McCain post-collision report.

"The command leadership did not foster a culture of critical self-assessment," the report said. "Following a near-collision in mid-May, leadership made no effort to determine the root causes and take corrective actions in order to improve the ship's performance."

Wasp drills with Japan in the East China Sea

BY CHRISTIAN LOPEZ
Stars and Stripes

The USS Wasp recently spent two days sailing with a Japanese amphibious ship in the East China Sea to test their ability to communicate and maneuver together.

The Jan. 12-13 “cooperative deployment” involved vessels of the Sasebo-based Wasp Amphibious Ready Group — including the USS Ashland and USS Green Bay — and the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force amphibious transport dock JS Kunisaki, a Navy statement said.

The East China Sea is home to the uninhabited Senkaku islands, which have long been a point of contention between Japan and China. The resource-rich chain between Okinawa and Taiwan is claimed by Japan, Taiwan and China.

“We understood each other’s radio calls very clearly, and they were very quick with their responses,” Petty Officer 1st Class Jose Gonzales, Amphibious Squadron 11’s navigation assessor, said in the statement.

During the event, Capt. Jim McGovern, the squadron’s commodore, also toured the Kunisaki and met with its crew, according to the statement.

The exercise follows mobilization of China’s DF-26, an anti-ship ballistic missile, after a freedom-of-navigation mission by the guided-missile destroyer USS McCampbell on Jan. 7 near the Paracel Islands in the South China Sea. Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson visited China from Jan. 13-16 to express the importance of “professional interaction at sea” amid the growing tensions and met with Vice Adm. Shen Jinlong, commander of the People’s Liberation Army Navy, according to a Navy statement released Tuesday.

Killing of 4 Americans puts spotlight on US’ Syria policy

The Washington Post

The four Americans killed in Manbij, Syria, on Wednesday — two soldiers, a Defense Department civilian and a military contractor — matched the largest number of deaths from hostile fire in an incident overseas since Donald Trump became president.

The killings, in a suicide explosion claimed by Islamic State, came less than a month after Trump declared the militants defeated and ordered that the 2,000 U.S. troops in Syria be withdrawn. Since then, the administration’s strategy has been thrown into confusion, as Trump’s defense secretary, Jim Mattis, resigned in protest. The announced pace of withdrawal has varied, and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has sought aid from Arab allies. New conditions have been set for the U.S. departure, even as the president has said he is determined that the troops leave

sooner rather than later.

Other powers have rushed to fill the coming void, including Turkey, Russia and the government of Iranian-backed Syrian President Bashar Assad.

Manbij, wrested from the militants by U.S.-backed Syrian Kurdish fighters and American airpower in 2016, is a nexus of the interests and conflicts of the players in Syria. As various interests squabbled in recent months over political and military control of the town, which is 25 miles south of the Turkish border, ISIS was the one actor that appeared to have been eliminated from the contest. Instead, the bombing showed that it is likely to remain a force to be reckoned with in Syria for the foreseeable future.

Though the attack seemed to belie Trump’s claims about the militants’ defeat, those who have supported the U.S. withdrawal said it proved he is right to claim a win on his own terms

and get out.

“I stand with the president in putting #AmericaFirst, bringing our troops home and declaring victory,” Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., said in a Twitter post as he headed for the White House to see Trump. After they spoke, Paul issued a statement saying he had “never been prouder” of the president, who “stood up for a strong America and steadfastly opposed foreign wars.”

But others said the bombing deaths — which included Manbij residents and Syrian Kurdish fighters — were a direct result of a foolish and abrupt departure announcement, and had made the case for staying.

“From the beginning, I thought the president was wrong” in ordering the withdrawal, said Sen. Jack Reed, of Rhode Island, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee. “It was a strategic mistake for the whole region.”

Coasties in Bahrain feel pain of shutdown

BY JOSHUA KARSTEN
Stars and Stripes

BAHRAIN — Like their colleagues back home, hundreds of Coast Guard members in Bahrain are working without pay due to the partial government shutdown. What’s different is the “Coasties” out here face a potential adversary nearby in Iran.

In sharp contrast to the service’s tasks back home, the contingent based in Bahrain is at the center of growing tensions between Washington and Tehran, which is furious over President Donald Trump’s decision to pull out of an international agreement on Iran’s nuclear program and re-impose sanctions on that country. The Coast

Guard was first deployed to the Persian Gulf in 2002 and now has a permanent presence as it helps bolster naval power at the request of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command.

The force is there “because of our unique skillsets and expertise,” said Capt. J. Paul Gregg, the unit’s commodore. These include maritime interdiction, training foreign forces, port security and preventing smuggling.

But, while operating tactically under the Navy, the Coast Guard still falls under the Department of Homeland Security and its members here are among the service’s 42,000 officers and enlisted personnel who, along with some 800,000 federal workers, are having to

make ends meet as best they can for the past several days.

“The U.S. Coast Guard has been proactively communicating the impacts of the lapse in appropriations across the service,” Gregg said of the shutdown. “As a unit, we have been proactive in sharing those communications, and working with our people on an individual level to help them both plan and seek assistance if needed, as the lapse in appropriations continues.”

“I mean, it sucks,” a Coast Guardsman on base told Stars and Stripes, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivities surrounding the shutdown. Still, he remained optimistic that he would get his money “sooner or later.”

DOD developing plan for vetting recruits

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon, citing terrorism and espionage fears, is developing a plan to scrutinize prospective recruits with foreign ties, including some U.S. citizens, after a related effort targeting thousands of green-card holders was blocked by a federal judge last year.

The new policy, still in development, will be distributed to the military services by no later than Feb. 15, according to two defense officials and several Defense Department memos obtained by *The Washington Post*. The officials spoke on the condition of anonymity due to the issue's sensitivity.

The new vetting would likely screen thousands of recruits per year who have what the Pentagon considers "foreign nexus" risks, including Americans who marry a foreign spouse and who have family members with dual citizenship, the memos said. Anyone identified for the screening would not be allowed to attend recruit training until they are cleared, a process that could take days for some but drag on much longer for others.

One draft document, labeled

"predecisional," has circulated in recent weeks among senior officials and others who oversee recruiting. It is attributed to Joseph Kernan, the undersecretary of defense for intelligence, and James Stewart, who performs the duties of undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, a post President Donald Trump has left without a permanent political appointee since Robert Wilkie left it to run the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"One primary concern associated with qualifying for these positions relates to the potential counterintelligence or terrorism risks," the memo says. "... The Department must implement expanded foreign vetting and screening protocols to identify and mitigate the foreign nexus risks."

Among the people who could be targets of the foreign-nexus screening are people who have foreign contacts, foreign citizenship, dual citizenship, a birthplace outside the United States if born to foreign parents, family members who are not U.S. citizens, and immediate family members who have dual citizenship, according to one of the memos.

New enlistees receive athletic shoes for free

BY MARTIN EGNASH
Stars and Stripes

They're American-made and they're free, at least to the basic training recruits who this month began receiving military-issued athletic shoes at no monetary cost — there's no accounting for blood, sweat and tears.

Previously, servicemembers were required to pay for running shoes, either out-of-pocket or with cash allowances, the Defense Logistics Agency said Tuesday. It announced that it had begun delivering the athletic footwear under a provision of the 2017 military funding bill requiring the Pentagon to provide the made-in-the-USA sneakers for free.

Under the mandate, more than 250,000 recruits from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and Air Force each year are expected to receive new kicks made by one of three American companies.

The Air Force was the first to receive theirs, which nearly 900 recruits began donning at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas, on Jan. 2. The other branches are scheduled to begin receiving the new trainers later this year.

In the past, having troops buy their own shoes allowed the De-

fense Department to sidestep the Berry Amendment, a 1941 federal law requiring DOD to "buy American" as much as possible for uniform items and certain other goods. The effort to change that practice kicked off a 2016 fight in Congress, but it was eventually pushed through.

Most of the world's running shoes are made in Asia or contain some components manufactured overseas.

Boston-based New Balance Athletics, which introduced a Berry Amendment-compliant shoe in 2014, had long lobbied the government to follow that law and seemed most likely to benefit from the 2017 mandate, but there wasn't a single shoe-in when it came time for DLA to select manufacturers.

In the end, three American companies were awarded contracts, each with an 18-month base term and an optional second 18-month term.

The first contract, valued at an estimated \$34 million, went to San Antonio Shoes in Texas.

Puerto Rico-based Propper International got the second contract.

And New Balance was tapped to provide 128,750 pairs at first and a possible 120,000 after that, for a total of up to \$17 million.

Army to ramp up rotations to combat training centers

BY JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTT GART, Germany — The Army is planning to boost the pace of rotations to its combat training centers in the United States and Germany, going from 20 this year to 32 in 2020 as the service emphasizes higher end combat skills.

Gen. Mark Milley, Army chief of staff, said on Wednesday that a push is underway to send more units to the National Training Center in Fort Irwin, Calif., and a similar center in Hohenfels, Germany. The

effort coincides with a strategy centered on gearing up for "high intensity conflict against a strategic global competitor," Milley told an Association of the U.S. Army conference in Washington.

As an Army "we are on the mend," Milley said. "Our near competitors, our adversaries, however have capitalized on the last 17 years to advance their own position."

Since 2001, the Army's main focus has been on battling insurgencies and conducting counterterrorism missions. As a result the combat skills need-

ed to fight a more sophisticated foe have atrophied, analysts claim.

A more assertive Russia and China, two countries that have invested heavily in military modernization efforts, has forced a shift in the military's focus to "great power competition."

The Army's main challenge, is to prepare to fight "on the high end and on the low end" at the same time, Milley said.

This year, all operational units, including those in Europe and the Pacific, will be filled at 100 percent manning, Milley

said. Next year, it will increase to 105 percent manning.

In recent years, many units have been manned at levels of about 85 percent. By boosting it to 100 percent or more, units are better able to cope if some soldiers become non-deployable for any reason.

Training also will intensify as the Army prepares units to face adversaries with skills unseen on the battlefields in Afghanistan and Iraq, such as opponents capable of conducting electronic warfare, firing missiles, and mounting assaults by air and sea.

GOP dismisses postponing State of Union

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A grand Washington ritual became a potential casualty of the partial government shutdown as House Speaker Nancy Pelosi asked President Donald Trump to postpone his Jan. 29 State of the Union speech. She cited concerns about whether the hobbled government can provide adequate security, but Republicans cast her move as a ploy to deny Trump the stage.

In a letter to Trump, Pelosi said that with both the Secret Service and the Homeland Security Department entangled in the shutdown, the president should speak to Congress another time or he should deliver the address in writing.

Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen denied anyone's safety is compromised, saying Wednesday that both agencies "are fully prepared to support and

secure the State of the Union."

GOP allies accused Pelosi of playing politics, with Republican Rep. Steve Scalise tweeting that Democrats are "only interested in obstructing @realDonaldTrump, not governing."

Pelosi, who issued the customary invitation to Trump weeks ago, hit the president in a vulnerable place, as he delights in taking his message to the public and has been preparing for the address for weeks.

The uncertainty surrounding the speech also underscored the unraveling of ceremonial norms and niceties in Trump's Washington, with the shutdown in its fourth week, the White House and Democrats in a stalemate and the impasse draining the finances of hundreds of thousands of federal employees.

Pelosi left unclear what would happen if Trump insisted on coming despite the wel-

come mat being pulled away. It takes a joint resolution of the House and Congress to extend the official invitation and set the stage.

"We'll have to have a security evaluation, but that would mean diverting resources," she told reporters when asked how she would respond if Trump still intended to come. "I don't know how that could happen."

During an Oval Office visit, Sen. Rand Paul said they discussed the shutdown but the president did not offer any reaction to Pelosi's suggestion to put off the speech.

Paul suggested on Twitter on Thursday that Trump deliver the address in the Senate, where Republicans hold a majority, which would be an unusual move.

As he weighs a response to Pelosi, Trump could not go forward with a State of the Union address in Congress without her blessing.

FBI: Man wanted to attack White House with rocket

Associated Press

ATLANTA — A Georgia man who traded his car for an antitank rocket, guns and explosives in a plot to storm the White House is under arrest, authorities said.

Hasher Jallal Taheb, 21, of Cumming, was arrested in an FBI sting operation Wednesday and is charged with attempting to damage or destroy a building owned by the United States using fire or an explosive, U.S. Attorney Byung J. "BJay" Pak said.

The FBI set up the sting after a local law enforcement agency said in March that it got a tip from someone who said Taheb had become radicalized, changed his name and planned to travel abroad, according to an FBI agent's affidavit filed in court. A confidential FBI source and an undercover agent both made contact with Taheb after he advertised his vehicle for sale in August.

Special Agent Chris Hacker, who oversees the FBI office in Atlanta, said they believe Taheb was acting on his own.

The affidavit says Taheb told the FBI source in October that he planned to travel abroad for

"hijra," which the agent wrote refers to traveling to territory controlled by Islamic State. Because he didn't have a passport, he couldn't travel abroad and told the FBI source that he wanted to carry out an attack in the U.S. against the White House and the Statue of Liberty.

He later mentioned other sites he'd also like to target, including the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial and a specific synagogue, the affidavit says.

He met with the undercover agent and the FBI source multiple times last month and was also in frequent contact using an encrypted messaging application, the affidavit says.

During one meeting with the agent and the source, Taheb "advised that if they were to go to another country, they would be one of many, but if they stayed in the United States, they could do more damage," the affidavit says. Taheb "explained that jihad was an obligation, that he wanted to do as much damage as possible, and that he expected to be a 'martyr,' meaning he expected to die during the attack."

Cohen admits he hired IT firm to rig polls for Trump

The Washington Post

Michael Cohen, President Donald Trump's former lawyer and fixer, did not dispute a report Thursday that he hired a technology company to help rig online polls in his boss' favor ahead of the 2016 presidential campaign and said what he did was at Trump's direction.

Cohen responded on Twitter to a Wall Street Journal story that said Cohen had promised to pay \$50,000 to a small firm run by the chief information officer at Liberty University in Virginia, where evangelical leader and Trump supporter Jerry Falwell Jr. is president.

"As for the @WSJ article on poll rigging, what I did was at the direction of and for the sole benefit of @realDonaldTrump @POTUS," Cohen wrote. "I truly regret my blind loyalty to a man who doesn't deserve it."

According to the Journal article, John Gauger, who owns RedFinch Solutions, showed up at Trump Tower in New York in early 2015 expecting to collect \$50,000 for his firm's work. Instead, Cohen presented a blue Walmart bag containing \$12,000 to \$13,000 in cash and

a boxing glove that Cohen said had been worn by a Brazilian mixed-martial arts fighter, Gauger told the Journal. (Cohen denied to the Journal that he had paid cash.)

Gauger told the Journal that he never got the rest of what he claimed he was owed. But Cohen in early 2017 received a \$50,000 reimbursement from Trump and his company for the RedFinch work, the Journal reported.

Cohen also has said he helped arrange payments at Trump's direction to silence women who claimed to have had affairs with Trump.

Former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, a personal lawyer for Trump, told the Journal that the RedFinch reimbursement showed that Cohen — who has since had a falling out with Trump — is a thief.

Cohen has pleaded guilty to campaign-finance violations, tax evasion, lying to Congress and other charges unrelated to the RedFinch payment. He was sentenced last month to three years in prison, and is scheduled to testify before Congress next month before he begins his sentence.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man accused of luring victim via dating app

IL ST. CHARLES — A suburban Chicago man faces charges accusing him of robbing someone he lured through a dating app.

The Kane County state's attorney's office said in a Tuesday statement that Steven L. Ward Jr., 19, of Elgin, stole his victim's cellphone after saying he was armed and displaying a BB pistol. The statement doesn't identify the dating app used to arrange the meeting for Jan. 9.

Ward is charged with felony robbery and, if convicted, could face 15 years in prison. Ward appeared in Kane County bond court last week and the judge set his bail at \$50,000. Tuesday's statement said Ward remains jailed.

Big cabbage brings college cash for child

MS MOSS POINT — An elementary school student in has earned a \$1,000 scholarship for growing a massive cabbage.

Rayne Byron told WLOX-TV that she planted the cabbage in a tire and just kept fertilizing and watering the plant. The cabbage finally weighed in at 23 pounds. That's about 10 times larger than many cabbages.

Rayne is a student at East Central Upper Elementary in Moss Point. She was the Mississippi winner in the Bonnie Plants Cabbage Program, which encourages third-graders to grow the plants.

Chocolate spill creates sweet mess on highway

AZ FLAGSTAFF — Authorities in northern Arizona had a sweet hot mess on their hands after a tank

trucker's trailer detached from the truck and rolled on its side on slick pavement, spilling a river of liquid chocolate onto westbound lanes of Interstate 40.

The Arizona Daily Sun reported the wreck Monday about 11 miles east of Flagstaff required cleanup crews to pour most of the 40,000 gallons of chocolate into the highway median to lighten the tanker so it could be towed away.

Police: Woman posing for photo kills boyfriend

TX AUSTIN — Investigators said a woman is facing manslaughter charges after accidentally shooting her boyfriend when she pointed a rifle at him while posing for a photo.

Travis County jail records indicated Autumn King, 20, was being held Tuesday on a \$200,000 bond.

Austin police said the shooting occurred Dec. 23 at the couple's home. Investigators alleged that King said she aimed the rifle at her boyfriend, Eric Charles Allen, 26, as he held her cellphone and prepared to take a photo to post online. King said she accidentally fired.

Police, FBI hunt for stolen Choate sculpture

NJ CHERRY HILL — A New Jersey police department is seeking the public's help in finding a 1930s sculpture that was stolen from an apartment in November.

The Courier Post reported the Cherry Hill Police Department announced Tuesday they're seeking a marble, unfinished bust of a Sudanese woman by the late sculptor Nathaniel Choate.

The department said the FBI has joined the investigation. They said the sculp-

ture has "cultural heritage significance."

Choate was a well-known American painter and sculptor who died in New York in 1965 at 65. Choate often showcased his work at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia and at the National Academy of Design in New York. The artist's travels to Greece, Morocco and Sudan strongly influenced his work.

Girl's leg broken in room-cleaning dispute

MO CARTHAGE — Court records said a man broke his 5-year-old daughter's leg after becoming enraged that she hadn't cleaned her room.

Lance Breeding, 27, of Carthage, is jailed on \$50,000 bond on charges of felony child abuse. No attorney is listed for him in online court records.

The Joplin Globe reported that his daughter was taken Friday to a hospital with a broken femur and extensive bruising. Charging documents said he told an officer that he spanked the girl because she hadn't cleaned her room. He later found that her room still wasn't clean and said he pushed her "gently," causing her to hit a dresser.

Toddler OK after tumbling from vehicle

MN MANKATO — Authorities in Minnesota said a 2-year-old child is OK after tumbling from the back seat of a moving vehicle while still strapped in a car seat.

Dash camera video captured the moment the car seat and toddler rolled out of the vehicle, which was turning a corner on a street in Mankato and kept going Monday. Chad Cheddar Mock was driving behind the car, stopped his vehicle and ran

to the child's aid.

Police: Man steals gas, kills gas station worker

NY HEMPSTEAD — Police said a driver hit and killed a gas station employee on Long Island while attempting to flee without paying for \$22 in gas.

Nassau police said Cemal Dagdeviren, 59, of Levittown, was struck Monday morning at a Pit Stop in South Hempstead.

Detective Lt. Stephen Fitzpatrick said Dagdeviren tried to stop the vehicle from leaving, but the male driver intentionally ran him over. Dagdeviren was pronounced dead at a nearby hospital.

Police said the vehicle fled the scene, and it had no plate or registration. Officials have released surveillance footage of the vehicle and suspected driver, who they said tried to pay with a fake credit card before fleeing.

Eagle rescued from Sitka power pole

AK SITKA — Officials said an eagle is recovering after it became stranded on a power pole in downtown Sitka.

The Daily Sitka Sentinel reported the male eagle was taken to the Alaska Raptor Center after electric department linemen rescued it from the pole Sunday.

Center avian director Jen Cedarleaf said the raptor has been named Zappa and appears to be doing fine.

She said Zappa does not have any broken bones, but it's too early to tell if he was injured from contact with the power line.

Cedarleaf said Zappa is at least 5 years old, with a wingspan of about 6.5 feet.

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USAF vet Heinricher assembles all-female sports car race team

Associated Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Every racing series in the world is full of wealthy enthusiasts with ideas that sound too good to be true. Expensive promises to fund life-changing opportunities are usually broken before cars even make it to the track.

Jackie Heinricher has defied those odds and turned an outlandish idea into one of the most highly anticipated debuts in racing.

She has put together an all-female team of drivers that will debut later this month at the Rolex 24 at Daytona, one of the most prestigious endurance races in the world. Her vision became a reality because she found a commercial sponsor with Caterpillar, landed a partner in Meyer Shank Racing and signed up top racers — all of whom wanted to be part of the unique project.

“I am scared, a little bit,” British driver Katherine Legge said. “I am scared that it will be gimmicky and we won’t be taken seriously. That’s why we have the drivers we have, that’s why we are going with a professional team, that’s why we made sure we had everything to do it right.”

Heinricher is an Air Force veteran, scientist and founder of her own biotech company, Booshoot Technology, based in Sun Valley, Idaho. She is also the female equivalent of a “gentleman racer” in the world of exotic cars, which means she pays her own way for the right to race against professionals on the top circuits in the world. Heinricher found that racing was the same as the STEM field in that women are an anomaly. There just weren’t many female role models to follow.

Heinricher is a racing fan who often rooted for the female drivers, and just as the drivers themselves grew frustrated with their inability to advance in American racing, Heinricher grew tired of seeing the women

leave the U.S. for opportunities in Europe.

“I started having this vision to bring these top women professionals together to race a season together,” Heinricher said.

Then she had to sell it, to drivers and sponsors. Sports car racing is one of the few series that requires multiple driver lineups, and Heinricher’s attempt to field an all-female team in a world-renowned series is unprecedented.

“I’ve watched many of these things fall flat on their faces, go out in the press without any substance,” she said. “I started talking with drivers and I was always very transparent that I had to accomplish the money side. There was skepticism. They were like, ‘Who is this crazy gentleman driver woman? What does she want from us?’”

Legge has been part of enough crummy deals to be wary of hair-brained ideas. Legge was part of Lotus’ noncompetitive return to IndyCar, she was a centerpiece in the lineup for the weird DeltaWing sports car project and the driver for an Indianapolis 500 team that was going to be composed entirely of women. It never happened.

Legge knew of Heinricher’s idea for two years and agreed to be part of it because, for once, it looked as if the pieces were in place for something to actually come together.

Legge was already part of Meyer Shank Racing, and her Acura team won twice last season and finished second overall in IMSA’s GTD class. When Heinricher landed Caterpillar as sponsor for her vision, she was able to take it to Legge and the Meyer Shank team.

Then came signing the rest of the lineup. The roster for the twice-round-the-clock endurance race at Daytona is Legge, the full-time driver of the car, along with:

■ **Simona de Silvestro.** A former IndyCar driver who has been a Formula One test driver, the “Swiss Missile”

most recently competed in the Virgin Australia Supercars Championship.

■ **Bia Figueiredo.** She raced as Ana Beatriz in IndyCar because it was easier to pronounce, and the Brazilian is the only woman to have won races at that series’ second level.

■ **Christina Nielsen.** A two-time IMSA class champion, the Danish driver was brought in to complete the Rolex lineup because Heinricher injured her back in a crash testing the car in December.

The lineup has more combined experience and success than Danica Patrick, the most well-known female racer of this generation. And the group views it as a chance to further opportunities for women.

“Being the only girl you are given a hall pass. It’s, ‘Katherine is OK or Danica is OK,’ and you are taken as an independent person in a sea of women and they still make fun of woman drivers, but you are different somehow,” Legge explained. “And I am like, ‘No, that is not true. We can if we are given the opportunity to prove that we can do it.’”

“There aren’t that many girls coming up through the ranks. Give girls positive role models that aren’t just stripping off and posing on the front of a car. You go to a race track and you see ‘Grid Girls’ and very rarely do you see engineers, people working behind the scenes, working on race cars. If you are a parent, and you have a kid who wants to be in racing, I wanted to show that that’s not the only way you can do it.”

The team is slated to run the entire IMSA schedule, and Figueiredo posted the fastest lap in class during a qualifying session earlier this month. That proved the car is no joke, and the lineup goes into the Jan. 26-27 season-opening race determined to prove they can compete with their male counterparts.

Lowry holds onto lead in Abu Dhabi

Associated Press

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates — Shane Lowry of Ireland recovered from two early bogeys Thursday by hitting enough good shots for a 2-under 70, giving him a one-shot lead going into the weekend at the Abu Dhabi Championship.

Louis Oosthuizen and Richard Sterne of South Africa each shot 68 and were one shot behind.

Lowry, who began the first European Tour event of the year with a 62, made bogey on the par-5 second hole and was happy to escape with a bogey on the next one. That settled him down, and while he played the par 5s in 1 over for the round, he had three birdies on the par 3s for the second straight day.

“I hit some really rocky shots, didn’t feel too confident, but I made a great up-and-down on the third hole for bogey, and I think that kind of kick-started me,” Lowry said. “I pretty much was hitting the ball decent after that for the rest of the day. Gave myself a lot of chances. I didn’t convert as many as I would have liked, but I’m pretty happy to shoot 70, and to be in the lead going into the weekend is always nice.”

Lowry was at 12-under 132.

Lee Westwood, who ended a four-year victory drought on the European Tour in November, had a 68 and was two shots back.

Three-time major champion Brooks Koepka, who has a chance to return to No. 1 in the world this week, bogeyed the 18th hole for a 70 and was five shots behind. Dustin Johnson had a 71 and was eight shots behind. Another shot back was Tommy Fleetwood, who is going for a third straight title in Abu Dhabi. Fleetwood had to make an 8-foot birdie on his last hole for a 72 to make the cut on the number.

Sterne, meanwhile, has yet to make a bogey for the opening 36 holes.

Top-seed Halep rallies at Aussie Open

Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Push Simona Halep to the brink, and she summons her best.

The Australian Open's top-seeded woman got all she could handle from 20-year-old American Sofia Kenin in the second round before taking the last four games to emerge with a 6-3, 6-7 (5), 6-4 victory that took 2½ hours Thursday.

"Well, I have no idea how I won this tonight," said Halep, the reigning French Open champion. "It's so tough to explain what happened on court."

A year ago at Melbourne Park, Halep was a point from being eliminated in two matches but came back each time en route to reaching the final. In the first round this year, she was down a set and a break before turning things around. And this time, against a hard-hitting Kenin, Halep trailed 4-2 in the third set and managed to not cede another game.

And that was despite getting what she described as "a little bit injured" in the second set, something that seemed clear from the way she wasn't always able to run with her usual verve.

"Hopefully," said Halep, whose No. 1 ranking is up for grabs during the Australian Open, "next round I play better."

That third-round matchup will be quite intriguing, because it'll be against seven-time Grand Slam champion and former No. 1 Venus Williams. And the winner of that could face Williams' younger sister, 23-time major champ Serena, in the fourth round.

Venus won a three-setter that finished a little before Halep's did — and in much

more emphatic fashion. Pushed to that deciding set by getting broken to end the second, Venus ran away with the win down the stretch, defeating Alize Cornet 6-3, 4-6, 6-0.

So what was the difference in the lopsided third set?

"She was just putting more intensity than me. She was hitting harder, deeper," Cornet said. "I had a little less energy than in the second set and she took advantage of it and really raised her level."

The 38-year-old Venus, unseeded at a major for the first time in five years, was the runner-up in Australia to Serena in 2003 and 2017.

Serena advanced to the third round by beating 2014 Wimbledon finalist Eugenie Bouchard 6-2, 6-2, reeling off the last five games and 16 of the final 20 points. That match was followed in Rod Laver Arena by No. 1 Novak Djokovic's 6-3, 7-5, 6-4 victory over Jo-Wilfried Tsonga in a rematch of the 2008 final at Melbourne Park.

That one ended in the wee hours of Friday, just after two-time major champion Garbine Muguruza and Johanna Konta got going at 12:30 a.m. in what is believed to be the latest-starting match in tournament history. Muguruza eventually won 6-4, 6-7 (3), 7-5 at 3:12 a.m.

Other winners in the women's draw included reigning U.S. Open champion Naomi Osaka, past U.S. Open runners-up Karolina Pliskova and Madison Keys, No. 27-seeded Camila Giorgi and No. 28 Hsieh Su-Wei.

In men's action, Stan Wawrinka was up a set and just two points away from taking the second against Milos Raonic. Couldn't

do it.

About an hour later, 2014 champion Wawrinka was a single point from grabbing the third set. Denied again.

And another hour after that, Wawrinka was two points from seizing the fourth to force a fifth. Nope, not on this afternoon.

Wawrinka kept coming oh-so-close, and Raonic kept hanging in there and toughing out the most important moments along the way to a 6-7 (4), 7-6 (6), 7-6 (11), 7-6 (5) victory that put the 16th-seeded Canadian into the third round.

"I missed a few little points," Wawrinka said, "that could have changed the match." So true.

"It feels like 4 hours passed by in about 15 minutes. ... The adrenaline takes over," said Raonic, the runner-up at Wimbledon in 2016. "I was very fortunate to stay alive in that fourth set."

They were interrupted for about a half-hour while the roof at Rod Laver Arena was shut because of rain at 4-all in the third set.

Raonic thought that helped him quite a bit.

"I do a little bit better indoors than outdoors," he said, "so thank you for raining up there."

In other men's action on Day 4, No. 4 seed Alexander Zverev won in five sets and 2014 U.S. Open runner-up Kei Nishikori withstood 59 aces from 39-year-old Ivo Karlovic en route to a 6-3, 7-6 (6), 5-7, 5-7, 7-6 (7) victory, but No. 7 Dominic Thiem retired from his match in the third set after dropping the first two, and 2018 Australian Open semifinalist Hyeon Chung lost to Pierre-Hugues Herbert 6-2, 1-6, 6-2, 6-4.

Top 25 roundup

Cyclones hand No. 8 Red Raiders first Big 12 loss

Associated Press

LUBBOCK, Texas — Marial Shayok scored 20 points, Michael Jacobson had 14 points and 10 rebounds, and Iowa State beat No. 8 Texas Tech 68-64 on Wednesday night to hand the Red Raiders their first Big 12 loss.

The Cyclones (13-4, 3-2 Big 12) stopped a two-game slide following a 17-point win over No. 7 Kansas that gave them a 2-0 start in conference play. Iowa State matched its win total

from last season, the school's lowest in 16 years.

The Red Raiders (15-2, 4-1) were the last team without a conference loss and missed on a chance for their first 5-0 start in the Big 12, going back to 1996-97.

No. 14 Auburn 85, Texas A&M 66: Bryce Brown scored all but two of his 22 points in the first half and the visiting Tigers routed the Aggies.

Kansas State 74, No. 20 Oklahoma 61: Barry Brown

scored 25 points and Dean Wade added 20 to help the Wildcats beat the host Sooners.

It was Kansas State's second straight road win over a ranked team — the Wildcats won at Iowa State last Saturday. It was also Wade's second game back since missing six in a row with a torn tendon in his right foot.

No. 21 Houston 69, SMU 58: Corey Davis Jr. scored 20 points and Armoni Brooks added 19 with five three-pointers as the Cougars led through-

out against the host Mustangs.

Houston coach Kelvin Sampson got his 600th career win in 30 seasons, and his 100th victory in five seasons with the Cougars. Sampson (600-319 overall) previously coached at Indiana, Oklahoma, Washington State and Montana Tech.

No. 23 Iowa 89, Penn State 82: Luka Garza matched a season high with 22 points and grabbed 12 rebounds as the visiting Hawkeyes shook off the Nittany Lions.

NBA roundup

Brooklyn spoils Harden's 58-point night

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Spencer Dinwiddie scored 25 of his 33 points in the fourth quarter and overtime and the Brooklyn Nets spoiled James Harden's 58-point night with a 145-142 victory over the Houston Rockets on Wednesday.

Harden had his second straight season high after scoring 57 in a victory over Memphis on Monday night, but was only 5-for-19 from three-point range. The Rockets shot an NBA-record 70 threes, making just 23.

Harden has scored at least 30 points in 18 straight games and has reached 40 in nine of the last 12. He was 16 of 34 overall from the field, made 21 of 23 free throws and had 10 rebounds and six assists.

Dinwiddie forced overtime, making three three-pointers in the last 30 seconds of regulation. In the extra period, he hit the go-ahead basket with 28 seconds left.

Houston had a chance to tie it at the buzzer, but Gerald

Green's shot clanged off the rim. After Houston blew an 11-point lead, Harden's three-point attempt bounced off the rim to send it to overtime.

Warriors 147, Pelicans 140: Stephen Curry scored 41 points with nine three-pointers to become the first player in NBA history to make eight or more threes in three straight games, and host Golden State held off the New Orleans for its sixth straight win.

Pelicans star Anthony Davis went down hard beneath the Warriors basket with 2:22 left but was able to walk off after a few minutes and quickly returned. Davis had 30 points, 18 rebounds, seven assists and three blocks in nearly 41 minutes for New Orleans, coming off a 46-point and 16-rebound gem Monday night despite starting 0-for-5 with just four points in the first quarter.

Celtics 117, Raptors 108: Kyrie Irving hit a foul-line fadeaway to give Boston the lead, then made a 31-foot three-pointer to finish with 27 points

and lead the host Celtics past Toronto.

Returning after missing the last game with a bruised right leg, Irving had 10 points and six of his career-high 18 assist in the fourth quarter — including passes to set up Boston's last three baskets in a game-ending 17-4 run. Al Horford scored 24 points to help Boston rebound from three straight road losses.

Spurs 105, Mavericks 101: Davis Bertans hit a go-ahead three-pointer with 1:41 left and San Antonio overcame a 19-point first-half deficit to win at Dallas.

Bertans finished with 12 points. Marco Belinelli led the Spurs with 17.

Bucks 111, Grizzlies 101: Giannis Antetokounmpo had 27 points and 11 rebounds and Milwaukee had a 19-0 third-quarter run to win at Memphis.

Eric Bledsoe added 16 points to help the Bucks to their third straight victory and 14th in 17 games. Omri Casspi led Memphis with 17 points. The

Grizzlies have lost nine of 10 games.

Pistons 120, Magic 115 (OT): Blake Griffin scored 30 points and Andre Drummond added 14 points and 21 rebounds to help host Detroit outlast Orlando.

The Pistons won for the third time in 11 games.

Trail Blazers 129, Cavaliers 112: Jusuf Nurkic had 10 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists for his first career triple-double and host Portland topped Cleveland.

Damian Lillard had 33 points to lead all scorers, and CJ McCollum had 19 points as Portland snapped a two-game losing streak.

Jazz 129, Clippers 109: Donovan Mitchell scored 28 points and Utah won at Los Angeles for its first five-game winning streak of the season.

Jae Crowder added 23 points, Rudy Gobert had 23 points and 22 rebounds and Kyle Korver had 19 points for the Jazz, who had six players in double figures.

NHL roundup

Couturier's hat trick helps power Flyers past Bruins

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Sean Couturier had a hat trick, Carter Hart stopped 39 shots and the Philadelphia Flyers beat the Boston Bruins 4-3 on Wednesday night.

Couturier scored twice within 90 seconds in the second period and sealed the win with his 19th goal late in the third for his first career regular-season hat trick (two in the playoffs). He gave the Flyers hat tricks in consecutive games after James van Riemsdyk kicked it off in Monday's win.

The Flyers entered in 30th place in the NHL and got a rare comeback victory in front

of another sparse crowd at the Wells Fargo Center. The fans that showed up caught a slice of franchise history: Claude Giroux got his 500th career assist and joined Hall of Famer Bobby Clarke (852) as the only Flyers to hit that milestone.

Hart, the 20-year-old rookie goalie, had another solid game as he tries to meet the hype that surrounded his call-up last month. Hart may not get the Flyers to the playoffs, but he at least helped them win consecutive games for the first time since Dec. 18-20.

Coyotes 6, Sharks 3: Christian Fischer had a goal and an assist, Richard Panik scored his team's 12th short-handed

goal of the season and host Arizona snapped San Jose's seven-game winning streak.

Oliver Ekman-Larsson, Lawson Crouse, Alex Galchenyuk and Josh Archibald also scored for the Coyotes, the last two coming after the Sharks pulled goalie Aaron Dell in the final two minutes.

Sabres 4, Flames 3 (OT): Jack Eichel scored at 1:10 of overtime to lift visiting Buffalo past Calgary.

Seconds after putting a backhand off the post, the Buffalo captain beat goalie Dave Ritich with a low shot to the glove side.

Senators 5, Avalanche 2: Matt Duchene had two goals

and an assist against his former club and host Ottawa beat Colorado for its first home victory since Dec. 17.

Duchene returned after missing three games for the birth of his first son.

Oilers 3, Canucks 2 (SO): Alex Chiasson scored in the fifth round of a shootout to give visiting Edmonton a victory over Vancouver.

Jujhar Khaira and Connor McDavid scored in the first period for the Oilers, who won consecutive games for the first time since early December. Mikko Koskinen stopped 20 shots before denying all five Canucks attempts in the tiebreaker.