

STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Local intelligence key to Mosul battle

Associated Press

MOSUL, Iraq — When Islamic State militants in Mosul discovered that Ahmed's brother had served in the army, they went to his house, pulled him into the street, and shot him dead as his parents watched.

Now, it was time for revenge, and after two years of ferrying the extremists around as a taxi driver, Ahmed had plenty of information to offer special forces at a command post in an apartment in eastern Mosul on Friday.

"They're in this church, and only God knows what goes on in there," he told intelligence officers, pointing out map coordinates during a half-hour session.

They met in a living room used to receive residents just a few blocks away from the battle, some seeking help, others being questioned, while the unlucky ones faced interrogation or stern reprimands for various infractions. Ahmed asked his

full name be withheld for fear of reprisals.

With heavy weapons less useful in the dense, urban alleyways of Iraq's second-largest city, local intelligence is growing in value.

Special forces on the front lines are beefing up efforts to win civilians' trust, passing out food and medicine and gleaning real-time information about the extremists they are fighting in pitched, house-to-house combat.

In doing so, officers are also taking on classic counterinsurgency roles, becoming actors of local governance, addressing grievances and dispensing swift battlefield justice.

The offensive to free Mosul of Islamic State militants is now in its second month, and progress has slowed as troops try to avoid mass civilian casualties that could give the impression the Shiite-heavy military was riding roughshod over the city's majority Sunnis.

While tens of thousands of civilians have fled the fighting, more than a million remain in their homes — some following official requests by the government to stay there, others preferring the risk of crossfire to spending the winter as an anonymous number in cold displacement camps.

In the Bakr neighborhood, parts of which are still contested, civilians lined the streets. Smiling children waved and greeted the troops while younger men and elders watched convoys of Humvees pass with an air of skepticism.

Automatic rifle fire and heavy machine guns blasted all day from both sides, while mortars lobbed shells across neighborhoods, the city's relentless soundtrack. In the dusty wasteland to the east, a family pushed a relative's body on a cart back toward an aid station.

Part of the intelligence-gathering is rough — in the Samah neighborhood, soldiers arrested at least two suspect-

ed Islamic State militants, wrapped T-shirts over their heads and beat them in the street as they dragged them off. Not every combatant shares the government's optimism that sectarian reconciliation can happen here. "Why do you speak to them? They're all (Islamic State)," one soldier said of civilians leaving homes to visit relatives farther from the crossfire.

But the softer approach, as advancing forces have learned countless times in modern warfare, can yield more value, and keeping civilians on one's side has become a major part of operations for Iraq's special forces, known officially as the Counter Terrorism Forces.

Speaking in the Bakr apartment, Lt. Col. Ali Hussein said his forces have strict orders to take care of civilians to win the peace, but that they went a bit further, buying medicine for the old and infirm.

Syrian army advance threatens to cleave eastern Aleppo

Associated Press

BEIRUT — Syrian government forces advanced deep into eastern Aleppo on Sunday amid a swift collapse of rebel defenses inside the divided northern city, threatening to cleave the opposition's enclave between its northern and southern parts.

The advance into the city's Sakhour neighborhood brings the military within about a half-mile of commanding a corridor in eastern Aleppo for the first time since rebels swept into the city in 2012, according to Syrian state media and an external monitoring group.

Residents in the east of the city expressed distress

among opposition circles on social media and in messaging groups.

"The situation in besieged Aleppo (is) very very bad, thousands of eastern residents are moving to the western side of the city," said Khaled Khatib, a photographer for the Syrian Civil Defense search-and-rescue group.

"Aleppo is going to die," he posted on Twitter.

Syrian state media reported government forces seized the Jabal Badro neighborhood and entered Sakhour on Sunday after taking control of the Masaken Hanano neighborhood Saturday.

Syrian state TV broadcast

a video Saturday showing a teary reunion between a soldier and his family after nearly five years apart, according to the report. It said the family had been trapped in Masaken Hanano.

The Lebanese Al-Manar TV channel reported from the neighborhood Sunday morning, showing workers and soldiers clearing debris against a backdrop of bombed-out buildings on both sides of a wide avenue. Al-Manar is operated by Hezbollah, the Lebanese militant group aligned with the Syrian government.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which monitors the war

through local contacts, also reported the advance. It said some 1,700 civilians had fled to areas under government control.

The government's push, reportedly backed by thousands of Shiite militia fighters from Lebanon, Iraq, and Iran, and at times by the Russian air force, has laid waste to Aleppo's eastern neighborhoods.

Aleppo used to be Syria's largest city and commerce capital before its neighborhoods were devastated by the country's more than five-year-long civil war.

An estimated quarter-million people are trapped in wretched conditions in the city's rebel-held eastern districts.

Trump says it's 'sad' Clinton is joining effort to force recount

Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — President-elect Donald Trump said Sunday it's "sad" Hillary Clinton is joining an effort to force recounts of votes from the Nov. 8 election in up to three crucial states.

Trump tweeted part of Clinton's concession speech, when she told supporters they must accept that "Donald Trump is going to be our president," and snippets from her debate remarks, when she assailed the Republican nominee for refusing to say in advance that he would accept the Election Day verdict.

And it came on top of his saying it was a "scam" that Green Party nominee Jill Stein was revisiting the vote count in Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania. Trump won Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, and as of Wednesday, held a lead of almost 11,000 votes in Michigan, with the results awaiting state certification Monday.

Clinton leads the national popular vote by close to 2 million votes, but Trump won 290

electoral votes to Clinton's 232, not counting Michigan. It takes 270 to win the presidency, and the three states in question could tip the electoral balance to Clinton in the remote event that all flipped to her in recounts.

Wisconsin officials said Friday they were moving forward with the first presidential recount in state history. Clinton joined the effort Saturday, with her campaign attorney Marc Elias saying, "We intend to participate in order to ensure the process proceeds in a manner that is fair to all sides."

Elias said Clinton would take the same approach in Pennsylvania and Michigan if Stein were to follow through with recount requests in those states.

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, a Clinton rival during the Democratic primary turned ally during the general election, defended the recount effort, telling CNN that leaders in both parties commonly request them. "No one expects there to be profound change, but there's nothing wrong with going through the process," he

said.

He also suggested he would support a change to the nation's electoral college system, which allowed Trump to win the presidency despite lagging in the popular vote.

"We have one candidate who got 2 million more votes than the other candidate and she is not going to be sworn in as president," Sander said. "And I think on the surface that's a little bit weird."

Trump had been paying little if any attention to the recount push by Stein, who has raised millions of dollars for the effort since drawing a mere 1 percent of the vote nationally. But Clinton's stance changed his tune.

"Hillary Clinton conceded the election when she called me just prior to the victory speech and after the results were in," Trump tweeted on Sunday. "Nothing will change."

He quoted from her concession speech — "We owe him an open mind and the chance to lead" — and he concluded: "So much time and money will be spent — same result! Sad."

1 dead, 9 injured in La. shooting

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — One man was killed, nine people were injured and witnesses said others ran in panic during an early Sunday shooting in New Orleans' French Quarter, a bustling tourist destination packed with bright lights, bars and live music.

Police Superintendent Michael Harrison said officers responded about 1:30 a.m. Sunday to the shooting at the intersection of Iberville and Bourbon streets.

The shooting victims were two women and eight men, ranging in age from 20 to 37, he said. One man died at a hospital.

Harrison said police do not know what motivated the shooting, but one male victim was among two men arrested on firearms charges.

Harrison said the shooting happened despite an increased police presence for the Bayou Classic football game between Southern and Grambling universities. He said officers were nearby, heard the shots and ran toward them.

Glean Williams, who was selling hats and other items at a table a block away from the shooting, told NOLA.com/The Times-Picayune that people ran into doorways and hotels, or hid behind palm trees decorated with Christmas lights along nearby Canal Street.

"It was panic," said Williams, 24. "Everybody started running. People getting run over, stepped on, knocked over."

Harrison asked that anyone who witnessed the shooting call police so "we can hold those accountable who committed this heinous crime and prosecute them to the fullest extent of the law."

Threatening letters sent to 3 mosques

Los Angeles Times

The Council on American-Islamic Relations called for increased police protection of local mosques after letters that threatened the genocide of Muslims and praised President-elect Donald Trump were sent to several California mosques last week.

The letters were sent to the Islamic Center of Long Beach and the Islamic Center of Claremont, CAIR's greater Los Angeles chapter said in a statement. An identical letter was sent to the Evergreen Islamic

Center in San Jose, according to CAIR's San Francisco Bay Area chapter. The handwritten letter, which appeared to have been photocopied, was addressed to "the children of Satan" and called Muslims a "vile and filthy people."

"Your day of reckoning has arrived," the letter states, according to CAIR-LA. "There's a new sheriff in town — President Donald Trump. He's going to cleanse America and make it shine again. And, he's going to start with you Muslims."

The letter, signed only by "Americans for a Better Way,"

said Trump was "going to do to you Muslims what Hitler did to the Jews."

Both the Los Angeles and Bay Area chapters of CAIR have called for increased cooperation with law enforcement agencies to protect mosques.

"This hate campaign targeting California houses of worship must be investigated as an act of religious intimidation, and our state's leaders should speak out against growing anti-Muslim bigotry that leads to such incidents," Hussam Ayloush, executive director of CAIR-LA, said in a statement.

General uses POW experience in teaching

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

During Operation Desert Storm, then-Capt. Russell Sanborn had just pounded Iraqi military targets with gravity bombs in the southern Kuwaiti desert. Then a missile struck his AV-8B Harrier, forcing him to parachute into the same area, where the angry enemy waited.

During 26 days in captivity, the Marine endured brutal beatings, unsanitary conditions and food shortages.

Now a major general commanding the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing at Camp Foster, Okinawa, Sanborn uses his experiences as a POW to teach Marines the tenets of the military Code of Conduct and resiliency in all aspects of life.

"Everybody's interested in a dramatic story, if that's what you want to call this," he said during a recent interview. "So what I try to do is tie it into Professional Military Education on our Code of Conduct," which lays out the obligations and responsibilities of U.S. troops in captivity.

Sanborn's training has become a hit with Marines and sailors in Okinawa, known as the "tip of the spear" for its proximity to China, Russia and North Korea.

"I put up the slides — here is Code 1; here is Code 2. We talk about what that code means, and then I relate it to my experience," he said. "How did I personally apply that code? Or what did I think about with that code? And I give them the warts and all."

After receiving his wings in October 1988, Sanborn was sent to Saudi Arabia in 1990 after Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. There, he was promoted to captain before Desert Storm began Jan. 17, 1991.

"I'm a brand new captain; I'd never been in combat," he said. "It was exhilarating, challenging. But that's what we were trained to do; that's what we all signed up to do."

Sanborn flew 16 successful missions in his Harrier before

'After I listened to [Sanborn's], it helped me put things in perspective. Now when my Marines come to me with issues, I know I can give them an example from within their chain of command of a Marine being faced with extreme hardship and finding the strength to pull through.'

1st Lt. Richard Blair

Consumable Management Division officer in charge

Feb. 9, 1991, when one of its wings was blown off. With the burning aircraft spinning out of control, Sanborn ejected.

"In my parachute I did a 360-degree spin," he said. "It was just flat, brown desert. I'm under an orange-and-white parachute; I'm wearing a green flight suit. I had just dropped six 500-pound bombs on something down there, so they knew I was coming."

Sanborn said his training took over. He tried to reach his wingman, but the survival radio didn't work; neither did his emergency transponder. All he had was a pistol and 15 rounds.

The Marine aviator was picked up about 20 minutes later by a dozen AK-47-toting Iraqi soldiers.

Sanborn said he considered shooting it out. He also thought about saving the last round for himself.

Survival Evasion Resistance and Escape School "told me, 'You're worth more alive than dead,'" he said. He prepared for life as a prisoner of war.

Sanborn was first taken to the unit's headquarters in southern Kuwait, where he was blindfolded and thrown into the back of a pickup truck. His final destination was Rashid prison in the heart of Baghdad, some 400 miles away. His captors allowed troops to use their fists, feet and rifles to take out their frustrations on him at each stop along the way.

Professional interrogations in Baghdad were particularly violent. He said his captors beat him so brutally they ruptured both of his eardrums. In following the Code of Conduct, which instructs servicemembers to

"resist by all means available," he said he took pleasure in making the guards angry, even if it meant a beating.

"They'd say, 'Don't make any noise,'" he said. "So I had a tin plate that they would serve rice in sometimes, and I would tap that thing on the cement floor and then they would come busting in the door. ... They'd throw you up against the wall; they'd kick you; they'd punch you; they'd threaten you. They would tell you, 'No whistling,' and I'd be whistling. After a while it's like, 'Wow, this is really starting to hurt.' But I just received a lot of psychological value going, 'Man, I just pissed them off.'"

In keeping with the code's instruction to "evade answering further questions to the utmost of my ability," Sanborn said he became a great actor. He pretended their blows hurt a lot more than they did. During one beating, he acted somewhat incapacitated, in too much pain to continue. The interrogation was suspended.

He was released and returned home to his family March 6, 1991.

Sanborn said he returned to duty with few psychological scars from his time as a POW. He went to Iraq twice during the second Persian Gulf War as he steadily climbed the Marine Corps aviation ranks. He also deployed to Afghanistan.

Now in Okinawa, Sanborn's lessons are reaching a new audience, and they are having an impact. He has delivered lectures on how he used the Code of Conduct during his captivity at several Professional Military Education classes.

"The PME taught me that no matter what, no matter how hard you have it, you always stick to the Code of Conduct," Gunnery Sgt. Lamont Finney said. "You have to remember that life can be worse, but that you can endure."

"After I listened to the commanding general's class, it helped me put things in perspective," said 1st Lt. Richard Blair, Consumable Management Division officer in charge. "Now when my Marines come to me with issues, I know I can give them an example from within their chain of command of a Marine being faced with extreme hardship and finding the strength to pull through."

Sanborn doesn't dwell on his time as a POW but said he will draw on it if it will help others, especially when it comes to preventing suicide.

"You might have financial difficulties ... you might be having marital trouble. Every person has these risk factors, and at that point in time, that's a real problem to them, and sometimes Marines and sailors get overwhelmed by it," Sanborn said.

"They focus in ... and their answer is, 'I'm going to kill myself.' What I learned from this experience is that it's all relative," he said. "Right now, you've got to be able to see the future. There is a brighter future. So don't hold it in. Break through that stigma. I know you think what you're suffering from is bad. Trust me, I had 26 days of suffering, but there was light at the end of the tunnel. ... We've got a lot of support out there."

Cubans look to future with hope, doubts

Associated Press

HAVANA — His words and image had filled schoolbooks, airwaves and newspapers since before many of them were born. Now, Cubans must face life without Fidel Castro, the leader who guided their island to both greater social equality and years of economic ruin.

Across a hushed capital, people wept in the streets on Saturday as news of the 90-year-old revolutionary's death spread. While many mourned, others privately expressed hope that Castro's passing will allow Cuba to move faster toward a more open, prosperous future under his younger brother, President Raul Castro.

Both brothers led bands of bearded rebels out of the eastern Sierra Maestra mountains to create a communist government 90 miles from the United States. But since taking over from his ailing brother in 2006, Raul Castro, 85, has allowed an explosion of private enterprise and, last year, restored diplomatic relations with Washington.

"Raul wants to do business, that's it. Fidel was still holed up in the Sierra Maestra," said Belkis Bejarano, 65, a homemaker in

central Havana.

In his twilight years, Fidel Castro largely refrained from offering his opinions publicly on domestic issues, lending tacit backing to his brother's free-market reforms. But the older Castro surged back onto the public stage twice this year — critiquing President Barack Obama's historic March visit to Cuba and proclaiming in April that communism was "a great step forward in the fight against colonialism and its inseparable companion, imperialism."

A symbol of resistance

Ailing and without any overt political power, Castro became for some a symbol of resistance to his younger sibling's diplomatic and economic openings. For many other Cubans, however, he was fading into history, increasingly removed from the passions that long cast him as either messianic savior or maniacal strongman.

On Saturday, many Cubans on the island described Castro as a towering figure who brought Cuba free health care, education and true independence from the United States while saddling the country with

an ossified political and economic system that has left streets and buildings crumbling and young, educated elites fleeing in search of greater prosperity abroad.

"Fidel was a father for everyone in my generation," said Jorge Luis Hernandez, 45, an electrician. "I hope that we keep moving forward because we are truly a great, strong, intelligent people. There are a lot of transformations, a lot of changes, but I think that the revolution will keep on in the same way and always keep moving forward."

In 2013, Raul Castro announced that he would step aside by the time his current presidential term ends in 2018, and for the first time he named an heir-apparent not from the Castros' revolutionary generation — Miguel Diaz-Canel, 56.

Castro's death "puts a sharper focus on the mortality of the entire first generation of this revolution," said Philip Peters, a Cuba analyst and business consultant, "and brings into sharper focus the absence of a group of potential leaders that's ready to take over and politically connected to the public."

Life in DMZ village comes with trade-offs

BY KIM GAMEL

Stars and Stripes

TAESONG-DONG, South Korea — The residents of this hamlet don't pay taxes or perform the military service mandatory for men elsewhere. They have a competitive school and some of the best farmland in South Korea.

The trade-off? They live in the Demilitarized Zone, with North Korea less than a mile away, so there's the threat of invasion across the world's most heavily fortified border. And you can forget about ordering pizza.

Villagers interviewed during a rare media tour last Tuesday said they recognize the danger but feel safe living in one of the most guarded areas anywhere.

"Outsiders think this village might be dangerous or there might be tension, but residents don't feel that because soldiers are guarding the buildings," Mayor Kim Dong-ku said. "And they guard us whenever we go to work the farmland."

Taesong-dong — which the U.S. military calls Freedom

Village — and its North Korean counterpart, Kijong-dong, dubbed Propaganda Village, are an embodiment of the one-upmanship that has characterized the conflict between the two countries since the 1950-53 Korean War ended in an armistice instead of a peace treaty.

When South Korea erected a 323-foot flagpole in the village in the 1980s, North Korea built one that's 525 feet tall. The Koreans also trade propaganda broadcasts that have provoked violence.

Both villages are in the DMZ, an area about 160 miles long and 2½ miles wide marked by barbed wire and dotted with land mines. A key difference is that the North Korean side is believed to be largely vacant — a Potemkin village that exists mainly to look pretty and broadcast propaganda and socialist songs that provide a constant soundtrack in Taesong-dong.

"It's very loud," Kim said, although the volume Tuesday was muted by wind. "The residents hear it but don't pay attention."

With a population of just over

200, Freedom Village residency is limited to descendants of the original inhabitants or to women who marry men who live there. Men are not allowed to marry into the community because the government doesn't want people to exploit the military service exemption, Kim said.

Residents can come and go, but they have an 11 p.m. curfew and must be present in the village for at least eight months of the year. The mayor said one of the biggest inconveniences is that they can't receive pizza deliveries or online mail orders.

The trade-off for the bleak conditions is a tax-free income; free accommodation; land for rice paddies, red peppers, ginseng and other crops; and an elementary school with nearly as many teachers as students.

Koo Hyun Jin, a teacher at Taesong Elementary School, she said it's essential to keep the village running.

"We can see the North Korean flag from here," she said. "This village is a peace village. This school must be here as a symbol of peace."

Swiss reject speedier nuclear energy exit

BERLIN — Swiss voters rejected a plan to force their government to accelerate the country's exit from nuclear energy in a referendum Sunday, turning down an initiative that would have seen the last plant shut in 2029.

A majority of cantons (states) voted against the plan. Under Switzerland's direct-democracy system, proposals need a majority of both cantons and votes to pass.

The plan promoted by the Green party would have meant closing three of Switzerland's five nuclear plants next year, with the last shutting in 2029.

After the Fukushima nuclear disaster in Japan, the Swiss government adopted a gradualist approach toward transitioning the country to renewable energy by 2050. It said nuclear plants should continue to operate as long as they are deemed safe, but didn't set a precise timetable. The government said it needs time to switch to other sources such as wind, solar and biomass energy.

From The Associated Press

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Sensors measure 'fan quakes' at games

OH COLUMBUS — Ohio State and Miami University professors have teamed up with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to devise the "FanQuakes Magnitude Scale," and have planted sensors around Ohio Stadium this year to measure the seismic activity created by fans.

The scale converts the shaking coming from fans into the perceived magnitude of an earthquake.

So far this season, the biggest quake came after Curtis Samuel's touchdown catch at the beginning of the second half against Nebraska. The shaking lasted more than two minutes and reached a FanQuake Magnitude of 5.2.

The project was conceived as a way to help students understand concepts in geology, according to a statement from Ohio State.

Woman on beach finds dead soldier's bracelet

OR PORTLAND — A woman walking on the beach in Cape Cod, Mass., found a memorial bracelet in the sand that was engraved with the name of a Portland soldier who was killed in action in Afghanistan in 2014.

KATU-TV reported Friday that Liz Maloney-Triplett returned the bracelet to John Pelham's family after an internet search turned up his name.

Now the Gold Star family is wondering where the bracelet came from, who owned it and how it wound up in Cape Cod.

The family said the memorial bracelets are typically engraved with the soldier's name and information and given to members of the fallen soldier's battalion. Pelham's family said the style of this bracelet is

slightly different, making it all the more mysterious.

Boy calls 911 to invite police to Thanksgiving

FL DEFUNIAKSPRINGS — While his mother was preparing food in the kitchen, a 5-year-old Florida boy called 911 to invite law enforcement officers over for Thanksgiving dinner.

Monica Webster, of the Walton County Sheriff's Office, told the News Herald that with all the bad calls they receive, this was a happy call. But young Billy Nolin's family had no idea he'd invited guests to dinner.

Landi McCormick said she was cooking when Billy's grandfather noticed him talking to someone on an old cellphone. McCormick said she reprimanded Bill when he admitted calling 911. He was crying when Deputy Dannon Byrd drove up.

She said the deputy thanked Billy for his kind invitation, then reminded him he should only use 911 for emergencies. The deputies gave Billy a sheriff's badge.

Airport gets OK for outdoor dog bathroom

IA DES MOINES — Officials have used some outside-the-terminal thinking to avoid having to build an estimated \$100,000 indoor service dog bathroom at the Des Moines International Airport.

Airport officials had revealed earlier this year that a "service animal relief area" would be built in a boarding area to comply with an update of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973. But the airport has found an alternative — a grass area just outside the terminal, the Des Moines Register reported.

Airport board members had been unhappy about the indoor option, noting that the artificial

turf-covered room would not only have been expensive, but also would have required the removal of about 10 seats.

The airport spent only about \$4,000 to build the grassy area.

Conflict brewing over Civil War art

MN ST. PAUL — A proposal to remove Civil War paintings in the Minnesota State Capitol has sparked a heated debate.

Gov. Mark Dayton has called for removing the four historic paintings, saying the Governor's Residence Room should be filled with art that better depicts the state's history, the St. Paul Pioneer Press reported.

The Minnesota Historical Society said they wanted feedback from the state Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board and the Capitol Preservation Commission before voting.

The board voted 5-3 to recommend that the battle scenes not be returned to the room when the \$310 million renovation is finished in January.

The planning board did not specify whether the Civil War paintings should be displayed elsewhere in the Capitol or be removed from the building.

Purple Heart returned to soldier's family

NY OSWEGO — A long-lost military honor awarded to a New York soldier wounded during World War I is being returned to his family.

Zachariah Fike, founder of Vermont-based Purple Hearts Reunited, said Oswego native William Shepard was a private in the Army's 4th Infantry Division when he was wounded while fighting in France in 1918.

Fike said his organization bought Shepard's Lady of Columbia Wound Certificate from a collector selling the item on-

line. The certificate allowed wounded WWI veterans to receive a Purple Heart when the U.S. military officially created the medal in 1932.

Shepard's nephew, Joseph Kelley, of Oswego, was to receive his uncle's certificate and a replacement Purple Heart.

Prisons say bye to food loaf punishment

PA HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania state inmates are no longer being punished with the baked brown slabs known as food loaves.

The Department of Corrections has stopped giving the food loaves to inmates in restricted housing who misbehave with their food. Pennlive.com reported the department began replacing the food loaves late last month with bagged meals.

The department's executive deputy secretary, Shirley Moore Smeal, said officials are trying to humanize the handling of dangerous inmates.

The loaf was a combination of beans, rice, raw potatoes, carrots, cabbage and oatmeal.

Big rig crash shuts down Vegas monorail

NV LAS VEGAS — A tractor-trailer rig crashed into a power box near the Las Vegas Strip, causing a fire that sent up a plume of black smoke, shut down the city's monorail and stranded a handful of people in elevators in a nearby high-rise.

Clark County Fire Chief Greg Cassell said there no injuries from the Saturday afternoon incident.

Cassell said firefighters rescued six people who were stranded in four elevator cars in the Signature Towers due to a loss of power. Elevator service was later restored.

From wire reports

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STARS AND STRIPES®

Spurs keep up winning ways

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — LaMarcus Aldridge scored 24 points while Tony Parker added 20 as the San Antonio Spurs beat the Washington Wizards 112-100 on Saturday night for their ninth straight victory.

The Spurs (14-3) swept a three-game road swing and are a perfect 10-0 away from home.

Kawhi Leonard scored 19 for San Antonio, which shot 53.3 percent (40 of 75) from the field. The Spurs led by 10 at halftime and as many as 19 in the second half.

Bradley Beal led Washington (5-10) with 25 points and John Wall scored 21 as all five starters finished in double figures. Marcin Gortat had 10 points and 10 rebounds.

Thunder 106, Pistons 88:

Russell Westbrook recorded his second straight triple-double and NBA-best seventh of the season with 17 points, 15 assists and 13 rebounds as host Oklahoma City beat Detroit.

Westbrook shot just 8 for 22 from the field after scoring at least 30 points for eight straight games.

Warriors 115, Timberwolves 102: Stephen Curry had 34 points, eight rebounds and six assists as Golden State overcame the absence of do-everything Draymond Green to beat visiting Minnesota.

Curry shot 13 for 19 with four three-pointers, while Kevin Durant added 28 points, 10 rebounds, five assists and a career-high six blocked shots. Klay Thompson scored 23 points with four threes to go with six rebounds for Golden State.

Hornets 107, Knicks 102: Kemba Walker scored 28 points and Jeremy Lamb added 18 points and a career-high 17 rebounds as host Charlotte snapped a four-game losing streak.

The Hornets (9-7) avenged an overtime loss to the Knicks on Friday night at Madison Square Garden in which Carmelo Anthony hit the go-ahead jumper with 3.1 seconds left and finished with 35 points.

Grizzlies 110, Heat 107: Marc Gasol scored a season-high 28 points and Mike Conley had 11 of his 21 in the final 3:06 as Memphis beat visiting Miami.

Dion Waiters scored a season-high 28 for Miami, which got 15 points and 12 rebounds from Hassan Whiteside, and 15 points from Josh Richardson.

Allen exits early in Duke win

Associated Press

DURHAM, N.C. — Grayson Allen showed what he's capable of when healthy — and then went down with the latest in a run of injuries for No. 6 Duke.

Allen scored all 21 of his points in the first half, then injured a toe late in Duke's 93-58 rout of Appalachian State on Saturday.

Allen, who has been playing through a right foot injury suffered in last week's loss to No. 5 Kansas, appeared to tweak that foot or ankle when he went down while going for a rebound with about 12 minutes to play and Duke leading by 35.

No. 7 Virginia 63, Providence 52: At Niceville, Fla., London Perrantes and Darius Thompson scored 11 points each and Virginia beat Providence to win the Emerald Coast Classic on Saturday night.

No. 9 Xavier 64, Northern Iowa 42: At Cincinnati, J.P. Macura scored 18 points, and Xavier's defense dug in during a dominant first half.

No. 12 Creighton 82, Loyola, Md. 52: Justin Patton made all eight of his shots and scored 14 of his 17 points in the second half, and host Creighton shot 74 percent after halftime.

No. 17 Purdue 79, NJIT 68: Caleb Swanigan had 22 points and 13 rebounds, and freshman guard Carsen Edwards added 19 points for the host Boilermakers.

South Carolina 64, No. 18 Syracuse 50: At New York, Sindarius Thornwell scored 16 points and South Carolina never trailed in its victory in the Brooklyn Hoops Holiday Invitational at Barclays Center.

No. 25 Michigan 64, Mount St. Mary's 47: Zak Irvin scored 14 points, Derrick Walton added 12 and the host Wolverines pulled away late in the first half.

Maryland 69, Kansas State 68: At New York, Melo Trimble converted a layup with 6.6 seconds remaining as the Terrapins survived a stiff challenge in the Barclays Center Classic Championship game.

Kings get past Chicago in OT

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Jeff Carter scored his 10th goal of the season 1:06 into overtime, and the Los Angeles Kings beat the Chicago Blackhawks 2-1 on Saturday night for their season-best fifth consecutive victory.

Alec Martinez scored and Peter Budaj stopped 18 shots for the Kings, who persevered through a back-and-forth game between Western Conference contenders for their third straight win over Chicago at Staples Center.

After Los Angeles failed to score on a power play stretching into overtime, Carter fired a wrist shot past Scott Darling for his fifth goal in five games. Carter also had an early assist, giving him 19 points in 22 games.

Patrick Kane scored and Darling stopped 27 shots in his first loss for the Blackhawks, who finished their seven-game circus road trip at 3-3-1.

Ducks 3, Sharks 2: Ryan Getzlaf had a goal and an assist,

and visiting Anaheim snapped a three-game skid.

Ryan Garbutt and Rickard Rakell also scored for the Ducks, and Jonathan Bernier had 21 saves.

Canadiens 2, Red Wings 1 (OT): Alex Galchenyuk scored at 3:37 of overtime, lifting NHL-leading Montreal to the road win.

Carey Price stopped 32 shots for Montreal.

Penguins 4, Devils 3 (SO): Sidney Crosby tied it with 14 seconds left in regulation and Kris Letang scored the only goal in a shootout, lifting host Pittsburgh past New Jersey.

Crosby pounced on a loose puck and fired it by Keith Kinkaid for his NHL-leading 15th goal.

Blues 4, Wild 3 (SO): Jaden Schwartz had two goals in the third period, David Peron scored the only goal in a shootout and host St. Louis beat Minnesota.

Canucks 3, Avalanche 2 (SO): Jacob Markstrom had 32

saves and made three consecutive stops in a shootout, helping Vancouver get the road win.

Markstrom denied Nathan MacKinnon, Mikko Rantanen and Matt Duchene in the tiebreaker, and Markus Granlund converted his shootout opportunity for the Canucks.

Maple Leafs 4, Capitals 2: Mitch Marner set up a pair of goals, Auston Matthews scored for the second straight game and host Toronto beat Washington to end a three-game losing streak.

Panthers 2, Blue Jackets 1 (SO): Aleksander Barkov scored the shootout winner, lifting host Florida past Columbus.

Barkov backhanded the puck high over Sergei Bobrovsky for the only goal in the tiebreaker. Florida's Roberto Luongo stopped all three shots he faced.

Senators 2, Hurricanes 1: Kyle Turris scored his team-leading 10th goal to help host Ottawa beat Carolina.

Buckeyes edge Wolverines

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The play was 29 Lead, and it will go down in history as how Ohio State beat Michigan in one of the greatest games ever played by the Big Ten's most storied rivals.

That's pretty much all Buckeyes coach Urban Meyer wanted to talk about. Everything else about the second-ranked Buckeyes' 30-27 victory over the third-ranked Wolverines on Saturday was almost too overwhelming for Meyer to sort out so soon after what he called an instant classic.

Curtis Samuel swept in for a 15-yard touchdown on 29 Lead left after Ohio State barely converted a fourth-and-1 in the second overtime. The biggest crowd ever to watch a game in the Horseshoe then began spilling onto the field in a scarlet-covered celebration that included a stirring sing-a-long to "Sweet Caroline."

"I remember that Neil Diamond song," Meyer said about the scene, but he couldn't recall much else. "Weird life, man."

Very much so because it was not quite clear what else Ohio State (11-1, 8-1 Big Ten, No. 2 CFP) has won.

It won't be the Big Ten. No. 8 Penn State beat Michigan State 45-12 in State College, Pennsylvania, to clinch the East Division and a spot in

the conference title game next week against No. 5 Wisconsin.

Still, the Buckeyes added to a resume that already impressed the College Football Playoff selection committee.

The 113th meeting of Ohio State and Michigan became the first to go to overtime. It was filled with drama, thrills and controversy. Michigan went away feeling dejected and cheated.

Facing fourth-and-1 from the 16 in the second overtime and trailing by three, Meyer decided not to try a potential game-tying field goal with Tyler Durbin, who had already missed two short ones in regulation.

Ohio State quarterback J.T. Barrett kept it on fourth down and slammed into the back of his blocker, A.J. Alexander, right at the line. The first-down call stood on review.

"That was not a first down," said Michigan's Jim Harbaugh. Bo Schembechler, Harbaugh added, "I'm bitterly disappointed with the officiating today."

On the next play, Samuel, who had made a swerving, change-of-direction run to set up the fourth-and-1, raced through a lane and skipped into the end zone for the win.

"Been a part of some crazy football games here," Barrett said. "That one was No. 1."

Wisconsin raises Ax once again

Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — A fourth-quarter flourish erased memories of a jittery first half for No. 5 Wisconsin against Minnesota.

The latest installment of the most-played rivalry in major college football ended with a familiar scene: the Badgers triumphantly holding up Paul Bunyan's Ax.

Corey Clement ran for two fourth-quarter touchdowns and a big-play defense pitched a second-half shutout in a 31-17 win over the Golden Gophers to keep the trophy for a 13th straight season.

Wisconsin (10-2, 7-2 Big Ten, No. 6 CFP) turned in a stalwart defensive effort in the second half after getting outplayed early and falling behind by 10 points at halftime.

"In the fourth quarter we just kind of just locked in," cornerback Sojourn Shelton said after the ceremonial chopping down of the goal posts with the ax. "You know what, no more. The rest speaks for itself."

The comeback served as the exclamation point for an already big weekend. The Badgers wrapped up the Big Ten West and a trip to this Saturday's league title game after Nebraska lost to Iowa on Friday night.

The Badgers will face Penn State in Indianapolis.

"Tomorrow we'll push the reset button and get ready to play Penn State," coach Paul Chryst said. "This team has done a great job of playing in the moment."

Mitch Leidner threw four interceptions in the second half for Minnesota (8-4, 5-4). The protection around him crumbled as the Badgers mixed up their defensive pressures.

"I'm pretty (angry.) I don't know how else to describe it," Leidner said. He finished 9 of 26 for 158 yards with a touchdown.

Penn State blows out Spartans

Associated Press

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. — Trace McSorley has gotten used to seeing extra defenders crowding the line of scrimmage this season and he's become adept at taking advantage of it.

With another defense selling out to stop star running back Saquon Barkley, McSorley completed 17 of 23 passes for 376 yards and four touchdowns to lead No. 8 Penn State to a 45-12 victory over Michigan State and the Big Ten East title Saturday.

Penn State (10-2, 8-1 Big Ten, No. 7 CFP) edged No. 2 Ohio State for the East title, setting up a conference championship game against West winner Wisconsin this Saturday in Indianapolis. The Nittany Lions beat the Buckeyes 24-20 at home Oct. 22.

"It's almost like pick your poison," McSorley said. "We've got so many weapons outside, if you want to try to load the box to stop Saquon and our run

game, we've got enough weapons outside and if you want to try and stop that, we've got one of the best running backs in the country. He's going to do what he does."

But Barkley couldn't get going and eventually left the game with a right leg injury.

The Spartans (3-9, 1-8) stacked the line of scrimmage and held Barkley to 9 yards in the first half on nine carries. Meanwhile, Michael Geiger kicked four field goals, the last giving Michigan State a 12-10 halftime lead.

McSorley, who set a school record for total offense in a season (3,348), and his speedy, physical receivers took over in the third quarter. The shifty, dual-threat quarterback threw deep touchdown passes on three straight drives to cue Penn State's 35-0 second half.

"Disappointing outcome to a disappointing season," Michigan State coach Mark Dantonio said. "Thought we played very

well in the first half, especially the first quarter, came out and established ourselves early on but drove down the field four straight times and had to settle for field goals."

McSorley found Chris Godwin down the sideline for 34 yards on Penn State's first second-half possession and followed it with a 45-yarder to Mike Gesicki. Godwin got loose down the middle minutes later and McSorley hit him in stride for 59 yards to give Penn State a 31-12 lead.

Andre Robinson added a 14-yard touchdown run and caught a 40-yard pass from McSorley to complete the scoring in the fourth quarter, and Barkley scored on a 1-yard run in the second. Barkley left in the third quarter and did not return.

Tyler Davis added a second-quarter field goal for Penn State, which won its eighth straight game.

Navy rolls into AAC title game

Associated Press

DALLAS — Will Worth has become a dual threat in Navy's triple-option offense.

While the Midshipmen still stay mainly on the ground, Worth accounted for four touchdowns while becoming the first Navy quarterback with more than 100 yards rushing and 100 yards passing in three consecutive games in a 75-31 victory at SMU on Saturday.

"That's been Will. He's been solid this whole year," coach Ken Niumatalolo said. "I'm running out of things to say about the kid. Week after week after week he continues to raise up to the challenge and perform well."

Worth ran 15 times for 107 yards and three touchdowns, increasing his FBS-leading total to 25 rushing scores while playing only three quarters. The senior completed five of seven passes for 104 yards and the go-ahead TD just before halftime.

The Midshipmen (9-2, 7-1, No. 25 CFP), who had already

clinched the American Athletic Conference West Division title, will host Temple (9-3, 7-1) in the conference championship game on Saturday.

"This is exactly where we wanted to be. The entire off-season, this is what we worked for," Worth said. "We feel great, just got to keep things rolling right now."

SMU (5-7, 3-5) missed a chance to become bowl eligible in its regular-season finale amid rumors coach Chad Morris is a candidate to become Baylor's new coach. The Mustangs are 7-17 in two seasons under Morris, who took over after a 1-11 season.

Navy has won four games in a row, and has consecutive 60-point games for the first time since 1917.

Temple won 37-10 over East Carolina on Saturday night to match South Florida for the AAC East lead. The Owls advanced to the title game on the head-to-head tiebreaker because they beat USF last month.

After Navy's first lost fumble in five games led to a touchdown

that put SMU up 24-21 late in the first half, the Midshipmen responded with 47 unanswered points.

Worth's 8-yard TD pass to Jamir Tillman with 6 seconds left in the first half put the Midshipmen ahead to stay. They scored twice in less than a minute right after halftime, on 255-pound fullback Shawn White's 50-yard run and Justin North's 25-yard interception return.

"Proud of the way our team's fighting right now," Niumatalolo said. "I just feel like we're still improving as a football team and I like where we're at this point in the season."

The Midshipmen, still in contention for a Cotton Bowl berth if they win the AAC title game, had a season-high 496 yards rushing and averaged 10.3 yards per carry, with six players rushing for TDs. It was a record 37th victory for the senior class, which still has three more games to play. They had matched last year's seniors, who had tied the 36 wins by the Class of 1909.

No. 1 Tide race past Auburn

Associated Press

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — Alabama's defense still seems to have a wall erected at the goal line, and Jalen Hurts remains unflappable enough to shrug off mistakes.

The combination has been good enough every time so far.

Hurts rebounded from two early interceptions to pass for 286 yards and the top-ranked Crimson Tide's defense did the rest in a 30-12 victory Saturday over No. 16 Auburn to finish an undefeated regular season.

"We have bigger goals in mind," tight end O.J. Howard said.

The Tide (12-0, 8-0 Southeastern Conference, No. 1 CFP) led just 13-9 at halftime, dominating the stat sheet but only taking over the scoreboard in the second half. The defense pushed its string of quarters without allowing a touchdown to 14-plus and shut down the league's top running game.

Auburn (8-4, 5-3, No. 15) failed to muster much offense for the second straight SEC game. This time the Tigers were playing without injured quarterback Sean White and unable to reach the end zone despite starting several drives in Alabama territory.

"We had some really, really challenging field position situations in this game, and our players responded really well to it," Alabama coach Nick Saban said.

Hurts displayed the same poise in overcoming two first-half interceptions that has helped him lead the Tide into the SEC championship game. He completed 27-of-36 mostly short and mid-range passes and threw for two touchdowns. Alabama has won three straight Iron Bowls for the first time since 1990-92.

Hurts also ran for 37 yards and a touchdown, leading two straight touchdown drives in the third quarter to all but put the game away after a mistake-filled first half.

Watson tosses 6 TDs in Clemson win

Associated Press

CLEMSON, S.C. — Clemson quarterback Deshaun Watson knew when the fourth-ranked Tigers' work was done against South Carolina — and shared that with the huge, appreciative crowd at Death Valley.

Watson, playing his final home game, threw his third TD pass of the opening quarter for a 21-0 lead Saturday night, then placed his hands together and leaned his head against them as if to say, "Nighty night."

The Gamecocks never woke up after that in Clemson's 56-7 domination, the team's largest margin of victory in the rivalry since a 51-0 win in 1900.

Watson tied his career high with six touchdowns passes, three to Mike Williams in Clemson's latest step toward the College Football Playoff.

"Offensively, those guys have

had some incredible games in Death Valley," Clemson co-offensive coordinator Jeff Scott said. "We challenged them, 'Hey, let's make this last one the best one.'"

It be hard to find another that meant as much to the Tigers (11-1, No. 4 CFP), who only need to defeat Virginia Tech in the Atlantic Coast Conference championship game next Saturday night to lock up a playoff spot.

Watson pledged before he came he'd never lose to the Gamecocks (6-6) and leaves 3-0, the junior heading to the NFL after this season.

Watson finished with 347 yards and matched the six TDs he threw in his first college start against North Carolina in 2014. He also likely crept a bit closer in the Heisman Trophy race to Louisville quarterback Lamar Jackson, whose team

lost for a second straight week.

Watson and the Tigers also wiped out memories of their last Death Valley game, a stunning, 43-42 loss to underdog Pitt — Clemson's first home loss in more than three years.

Watson and Williams got things going with a 34-yard TD catch. Then Williams' dragged South Carolina's Jamarcus King on his for several yards during a 19-yard scoring catch. By the time Jordan Leggett scored on a wide open 11-yard grab, Clemson was in front to stay and Gamecocks defenders were yelling at each other.

Wayne Gallman rushed for 112 yards and a touchdown. Williams caught six passes for 100 yards.

Clemson's defense held the Gamecocks to 62 yards in the first half and posted its biggest margin of victory in the series since a 51-0 win in 1900.