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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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DEA: Fentanyl, heroin remain top drug threat

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration said drug overdose deaths hit the highest level ever recorded in the United States last year.

A DEA report obtained by The Associated Press shows heroin, fentanyl and other opioids continue to be the highest drug threat in the nation. The National Drug Threat Assessment was released Friday.

U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar said last month that overdose deaths were rising very slowly and were beginning to level off. But he cautioned it is too soon to declare victory. Preliminary figures show about 72,000 people died in 2017 from drug overdoses across the U.S.

The report said federal officials are concerned that methamphetamine and cocaine are being seen at much higher levels in areas that haven't historically been hot spots for those drugs. The DEA is also worried that people are exploiting marijuana legalization to traffic cannabis into the illicit market or to states that don't have medicinal or so-called recreational use marijuana laws, according to the report.

President Donald Trump has declared the U.S. opioid crisis a "public health emergency" and just last week pledged to put an "extremely big dent" in drug addiction.

Fatal heroin overdoses rose nationwide between 2015 and 2016, with a nearly 25 percent increase in the Northeast and more than 22 percent in the South. Most of the heroin sold in the U.S. is being trafficked from Mexico, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers seize the most heroin along the Mexico border, the report said.

Fentanyl and other related opioids, which tend to be cheaper and much more potent than heroin, remain one of the biggest concerns for federal drug agents. The DEA has said China is a main source of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids that have been flooding the U.S. China has pushed back against the characterization, and U.S. officials have stressed they work closely with their Chinese counterparts to stem the flow.

Legislation Trump signed last week will add treatment options and force the U.S. Postal Service to screen overseas packages for fentanyl.

Security on the line

As troops arrive at the US-Mexico border, experts question whether mission advances Mattis' goals

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Jim Mattis has left no doubt that his top priority as leader of the military is making it more "lethal" — better at war and more prepared for it — and yet nothing about the military's new mission at the U.S.-Mexico border advances that goal. Some argue it detracts from it.

The troops going to the border areas of Texas, Arizona and California are a small fraction of the military's roughly 1.3 million active-duty members, and the mission is set to last only 45 days. But many question the wisdom of drawing even several thousand away from training for their key purpose: to win wars.

James Stavridis, a retired Navy admiral and former head of the U.S. Southern Command, said the troops should be preparing for combat and other missions, "not monitoring a peaceful border" for the arrival of a migrant caravan of several thousand people on foot, still about 900 miles away.

"It sends a terrible signal to Latin America and the Caribbean as we unnecessarily militarize our border," Stavridis, who also served as the top NATO commander, said Thursday. "It places U.S. troops who are fundamentally untrained for the mission of border security and border enforcement into an area of operations, which could cause incidents of a negative character. If we need more border patrol agents, hire them."

The first 100 or so active-duty troops arrived at the border on Thursday, making an initial assessment at the McAllen, Texas, crossing. Overall, there are about 2,600 troops at staging bases in the region.

David Lapan, a retired Marine colonel who is a former spokesman for the chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the Department of Homeland Security, said that taking troops away from training and from their families to play a supporting role in border security is unwise.

"It just doesn't make any sense," said Lapan, now a vice president of communications at the Bipartisan Policy Center.

"This caravan, this group of poor people, including a lot of women and children, doesn't pose a threat — not a national security threat."

In line with the Pentagon's national security strategy, Mattis has been focused on improving the combat readiness of a military worn down by the recent years of congressionally imposed budget cuts and the grind of 17 years of war in Afghanistan. This includes reorienting training from that required for the smaller wars the U.S. has fought since 9/11 to a "great power" struggle with Russia and China.

That context may explain why the Pentagon itself seemed caught off-guard by President Donald Trump's abrupt order to dispatch active-duty troops; the Customs and Border Protection, which requested Pentagon help, has struggled to define details of the mission and explain its scope.

"That this is a security threat is preposterous and not supported by the evidence," said Derek Chollet, former Pentagon senior policy adviser. "If you're sitting in the Pentagon and worried about implementation of the national defense strategy and worried about the threats from China and Russia, this is not at the top of your list."

"This is another version of the parade," Chollet said, referring to Trump's demand earlier this year — eventually withdrawn — that the military spend millions to stage a parade in Washington. "... Trump was frustrated in his effort to build a physical wall on the border, now he's trying to build a human wall by using the U.S. military."

Mattis has rejected assertions that the military is being leveraged by the White House as a political stunt in advance of the midterm elections. "We don't do stunts," he said Wednesday, but neither has he argued that sending active-duty soldiers to help secure the border is his preference.

Gen. Terrence O'Shaughnessy, who as head of U.S. Northern Command is commanding the military operation, dubbed Operation Faithful Patriot, has argued that the caravan is a potential threat, although he has not fully defined that.

White House reimposes sanctions on Iran

Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration announced plans Friday to reimpose sanctions aimed at crippling Iran's shipping, banking and oil industries in an aggressive move that has roiled relations with U.S. allies.

The sanctions will go into effect Monday, a day before the midterm elections and six months after President Donald Trump withdrew from the landmark Iran nuclear deal because, he said, it did not block Iran's other "malign" activities.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told reporters on a conference call that the new sanctions are aimed at "depriving revenue Iran uses to spread death and destruction."

Unlike the global coalition that forced Iran to abandon its nascent nuclear program in 2015, the Trump administration has struggled to enlist international support for its push to choke off Iran's daily export of 1 million barrels of crude oil, an amount already shrunk by previous U.S. sanctions.

Over the last six months, U.S. officials have lobbied allies and other countries that import Iranian oil to shift to other sources before the sanctions hit, and have threatened to punish those that do not comply. But they have achieved only partial success.

About 20 countries have agreed to honor the embargo but some of the biggest consumers of Iranian oil, including China and Turkey, have not taken steps to reduce imports of Iranian crude, U.S. officials said.

The Trump administration has acknowledged that some countries are unable or unwilling to eliminate their reliance on Iranian oil, and the State Department will grant sanctions waivers to some governments or companies.

"Our goal remains to get to zero oil purchases from Iran as quickly as possible," said Robert Palladino, a State Department spokesman. "But we are prepared to work with countries that are reducing their imports on a case-by-case basis."

Palladino said an internal review is seeking to identify countries eligible for "significant reduction exemptions." Allies from Iraq to India have sought the waivers.

The nuclear deal was negotiated with Iran by the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, plus Germany, and all except the United States want to keep the 2015 accord intact — and to find ways to sidestep the U.S. sanctions.

Some have proposed setting up private mechanisms to trade with Iran without entering the global financial network that Trump officials will try to block. The administration has told European companies

that anyone caught doing business in Iran will be barred from operating in the United States.

The Trump administration claims its efforts have helped push Iran into a worsening economic crisis and a plunge in the national currency. Critics said the oil sanctions will further undermine the economy.

"Trump is showing his disdain for the Iranian people through these sanctions," Trita Parsi, founder of the National Iranian American Council, a nonprofit organization in Washington that advocated in support of the nuclear deal. "They will bear the brunt of this escalation, not the Iranian government. Iranian hospitals are already starting to report medical shortages as a result of financial sanctions that make banks reluctant to handle Iranian transactions."

Trump announced in May that he was withdrawing from the Iran nuclear deal, calling it fatally flawed because it did not address Iran's production of short- and medium-range ballistic missiles and its support for militant groups in Lebanon, Yemen, Iraq and Syria.

The White House argues that the effects of the oil sanctions will be so severe that Iranian rulers will be forced to reopen negotiations and ultimately will relinquish their missiles and give up their "malign" activities in the Middle East.

Taliban infighting in Afghanistan kills 40

BY J.P. LAWRENCE
Stars and Stripes

HERAT, Afghanistan — Infighting between factions killed 40 Taliban fighters in October in the western province of Herat and is part of the reason a militant group is seeking peace talks, government officials said Friday.

Over the last three years, armed clashes between rival Taliban groups in the region have left hundreds dead, said Jailani Farhad, spokesman for the provincial governor.

The faction pursuing peace talks is led by Mullah Mohammad Rasoul, who split from the main insurgent command with about 1,000 fighters in 2015. The split occurred after the revelation that senior Taliban commanders had covered up the death of the group's leader, Mullah Omar, for almost two years.

Meanwhile, the faction fighting the Rasoul group has been accused by the U.S. of

taking money from Iran, the Taliban's traditional enemy.

The breakaway Rasoul group also has pledged to protect a massive government pipeline project in western Afghanistan. One of its commanders even encouraged people to vote in the country's parliamentary elections last month, Farhad said. This stance puts the group in opposition to the main Taliban, which is opposed to the elections.

Government officials in Herat said their security forces are not targeting the Rasoul-led Taliban faction in night raids. A New York Times report said the group has operated with the tacit support of the Afghan government, and last year accepted cash and intelligence from Kabul for their fight against other Taliban factions.

"The provincial government's stance is clear," Farhad said. "We have an open door for reconciliation and peace with any group."

The Rasoul group has fought in at least 60 clashes between the summer of 2015 and December 2017 with a Taliban faction known as the Quetta Shura, according to research by West Point's Combating Terrorism Center.

The breakaway group expected other disaffected Taliban would join, but no new groups seem to be signing on, said Thomas Ruttig, co-director of the Afghanistan Analysts Network.

The group suffered a further blow in 2016 when Pakistani authorities said they arrested Rasoul.

The group's rivals, the mainline Taliban, are led by a commander recently placed on a U.S. government blacklist. The blacklist also includes two Iranian military officers accused by the U.S. to be supporting the Taliban in western border provinces such as Herat.

Tehran, which has historically opposed the Taliban, denies those claims.

HUD: Number of homeless vets declined in '18

By NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — On the night of Jan. 24, 2018, volunteers across the country counted 37,878 veterans living on the streets or in transitional housing and shelters — a decrease of 2,142, or 5.4 percent, from those counted in January 2017.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development released Thursday the results of its annual point-in-time count of the country's homeless. The decline in veteran homelessness comes one year after the department reported the first increase in a decade.

The number of homeless veterans declined in 34 states last year. For female veterans, homelessness went down by 10 percent, from 3,571 veterans counted in 2017 to 3,219 in January.

More than 4,000 veterans found homes

in 2017 using the HUD-VASH program, in which veterans receive housing vouchers from HUD and case management and clinical services from the VA.

"The reduction in homelessness among veterans announced today shows that the strategies we are using to help the most vulnerable veterans become stably housed are working," Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie said in a statement. "This is good news for all veterans."

While HUD and the VA considered the reduction a win, Kathryn Monet, chief executive officer of the nonprofit National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, argued that national leaders aren't giving enough attention to the issue.

"What we're hearing from communities is that as homelessness fell off the secretary's priority list with the change of [presidential] administration, it's becom-

ing more challenging to motivate people to do the work," Monet said.

Former Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki established a goal in 2010 of ending veteran homelessness by 2015. The deadline came and went, but advocacy credited the initiative with boosting attention and resources that led to 36,209 fewer homeless veterans in the past eight years. Though VA leaders since Shinseki have said they're committed to fixing the problem, advocates have become concerned the agency is letting up.

"Funding is going well; nothing has been taken away. People are still plowing away at evidenced-based practices," Monet said. "But I think where communities are struggling is local and national leadership."

In 2014, former first lady Michelle Obama and Jill Biden created the Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness.

East Coast faces storm threat as South recovers

Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Forecasters said most of the East Coast was at risk for severe weather Friday, with winds as strong as 60 mph, isolated tornadoes and heavy rain possible as the Gulf Coast recovered from storms blamed for two deaths.

Waves of weather moving in from the Gulf of Mexico at daybreak brought rain and lightning to parts of the Florida Panhandle struck last month by Hurricane Michael, and the threat was supposed to spread to the north and east through the day.

"I think people are not wanting to see more wind and rain," said Mayor Margo Anderson of hurricane-tossed Lynn Haven, Fla. "It puts everyone on edge. It's frightening."

The Storm Prediction Center said there was a risk for severe thunderstorms along a line running from Florida's west coast to southern New Hampshire in New England. About 64 million people in cities including Washington, Philadelphia and New York live in the path.

At least two deaths along

the Gulf Coast were blamed on storms that hit Wednesday night and Thursday. At least 12 tornadoes had been confirmed in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, with the damage surveys expected to continue Friday.

Panama City spokeswoman Caitlin Lawrence said the storm system moving east through the Florida Panhandle on Thursday was the second significant rainfall the area has had since Michael hit Oct. 10.

"We did have one really rainy and windy day last week," she said.

Officials are concerned about heavy rain and any structures that have already been damaged, as well as loose tree limbs toppled by strong wind or rain, Lawrence said. Hundreds of homes protected only by tarps were particularly vulnerable.

The Storm Prediction Center reported downed trees and utility lines from eastern Texas to northwest Alabama. The Southeastern storms left nearly 110,000 homes and businesses without electricity at the height, and both weather-related deaths occurred in wrecks.

Pipe bomb suspect agrees to NY transfer and no bail

Associated Press

MIAMI — Pipe bomb suspect Cesar Sayoc will not seek immediate release on bail and agreed Friday to be transferred from Miami to New York to face charges of sending explosive devices to prominent Democrats, critics of President Donald Trump and media outlets.

Attorneys for Sayoc said Friday in Miami federal court that it's better if his lawyers in New York can take the case as soon as possible. They could still seek a bail hearing in New York, but prosecutors say he should remain jailed, given the magnitude of the charges and the strong evidence against him.

The timing of Sayoc's transfer to New York is uncertain. It can happen quickly or take weeks, and is not usually announced ahead of time by the U.S. Marshals Service, attorney James Benjamin said. Even defense lawyers are not informed.

Sayoc is accused in New York of sending 15 improvised explosive devices to numerous Democrats, Trump critics and media outlets. He was arrested a week ago outside a South Florida auto parts store

in a white van in which he had been living, a vehicle covered with stickers of Trump and showing images of some of the president's opponents with red crosshairs over their faces.

No bombs exploded and no one was injured. Still, Sayoc faces nearly 50 years in prison if convicted on five federal charges that were filed in New York because some of the devices were recovered there.

The decision by Sayoc's lawyers not to seek release on bail came after federal prosecutors released a letter outlining more evidence against him, including DNA linking him to 10 of the explosive devices and fingerprints on two of them.

Other evidence includes online searches Sayoc did on his laptop and cellphone for addresses and photos of some of his intended targets, which included former President Barack Obama, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, former Vice President Joe Biden, California Sen. Kamala Harris and New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker. Packages were also mailed to CNN in New York and Atlanta.

Tennessee man's last words in electric chair: 'Let's rock'

Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — A Tennessee inmate's final words were "let's rock" moments before he became the first man executed in the electric chair in that state since 2007, put to death Thursday for shooting two men and slitting their throats during a drug deal decades ago.

Edmund Zagorski, 63, was pronounced dead at 7:26 p.m. Thursday at a Nashville maximum-security prison, officials said.

Asked if he had any last words in the death chamber, the inmate said, "Let's rock" shortly before the execution was carried out.

In opting for the electric chair over a lethal injection as Tennessee allowed him, Zagorski had argued it would be a quicker and less painful way to die. He became only the sec-

ond person to die in the electric chair in Tennessee since 1960. Nationwide, only 14 other people have been put to death in the electric chair since 2000, including a Virginia inmate in 2013.

The execution was carried out shortly after the U.S. Supreme Court on Thursday evening denied the inmate's request for a stay. Zagorski's attorneys had argued it was unconstitutional to force him to choose between the electric chair and lethal injection.

The state came close to administering an injection to Zagorski three weeks ago, a plan halted by Tennessee's governor when Zagorski exercised his right to request the electric chair.

Zagorski was convicted of a April 1983 double slaying. Prosecutors said Zagorski shot John Dotson and Jimmy Porter

and then slit their throats after robbing the two men after they came to him to buy marijuana.

Republican Gov. Bill Haslam declined to intervene in Zagorski's case despite receiving pleas from former jurors who convicted the inmate, correctional officers and Zagorski's priest.

At the time of Zagorski's conviction, Tennessee juries were not given the option of considering life without parole. Every state now requires juries to weigh that option in death penalty cases.

Zagorski had been on death row 34 years, the second-longest in Tennessee.

Protesters held vigils Thursday in Knoxville and Memphis, and outside the Nashville maximum-security prison where Zagorski was executed Thursday.

Trump, China's Xi give positive signs over call

The Washington Post

HONG KONG — The leaders of the United States and China said Thursday they had spoken and were making progress toward a face-to-face meeting at the Group of 20 summit in Argentina this month that could stall — if not altogether defuse — a further buildup in trade tensions.

President Donald Trump and his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, both described their phone call in optimistic terms on Thursday, with Xi in particular emphasizing that their personal relationship remains intact even as branches of the U.S. government unveiled tougher measures and rhetoric against Beijing.

Trump said in a morning tweet that he had a "long and very good conversation" with Xi that touched on trade. Hours later the Department of Justice unsealed the latest in a series of spying charges against Chinese companies and individuals.

The unusual slew of indictments are meant to be a stern warning to Beijing about pilfering U.S. tech secrets that, beyond the trade imbalance, hits at the heart of Washington's grievances about Chinese commercial behavior.

In a lengthy readout published by Chinese state media, Xi said he was "very happy" to talk to Trump and attached "great importance to the good relations with the president." China will host an import fair in Shanghai next week that Xi said will demonstrate Beijing's commitment to "increase imports and expand openness," according to the Chinese readout.

After months of fitful negotiations through intermediaries and lower-level officials, U.S. and Chinese officials hope that a meeting of the two presidents on the sidelines of the Buenos Aires summit will yield a breakthrough.

Congregations attacked at the Pittsburgh synagogue will be holding a joint service

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — The three congregations attacked at a Pittsburgh synagogue will gather for a joint service Saturday, while a prayer vigil is planned outside their desecrated worship space to mark the time the massacre began one week earlier.

Meanwhile, Friday brought the end of a wrenching series of funerals as the oldest victim, 97-year-old Rose Mallinger, was being laid to rest.

"We will reopen, but it will not be for quite a while," Rabbi Jeffrey Myers said Friday morning, as he prepared for the last funeral service. Myers himself survived the attack that began just as Shabbat services got underway. In the end, 11 people were gunned down in

the deadliest attack on Jews in U.S. history.

Six more were injured, including Mallinger's daughter and four police officers.

The suspect, Robert Bowers, pleaded not guilty Thursday to federal charges that could result in a death sentence. Bowers, 46, was arraigned on a 44-count indictment charging him with murder, hate crimes, obstructing the practice of religion and other crimes.

It was his second brief appearance in a federal courtroom since authorities say he opened fire Saturday at Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh's Squirrel Hill neighborhood.

Authorities say Bowers raged against Jews during and after the massacre. He remains jailed without bail.

University of Pittsburgh Medical Center said Friday that the two most seriously injured victims have been moved out of the intensive care unit. Hospital officials said a 70-year-old man was upgraded from critical to stable condition, while a 40-year-old police officer remains in stable condition.

The officer was previously identified as Timothy Matson, who suffered multiple gunshot wounds. The wounded congregant is Daniel Leger, a nurse and hospital chaplain.

A 61-year-old woman also remains hospitalized in stable condition.

The city's Jewish community began burying its dead Tuesday as thousands of mourners attended services. The funerals have continued each day since.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Drunk baggage handler makes unexpected flight

IL CHICAGO — Police said a baggage handler told them he was drunk when he fell asleep in a cargo hold and flew from Kansas City to Chicago.

American Airlines said the Piedmont Airlines employee was working American Flight 363 on Saturday when the Boeing 737 left Kansas City International Airport with the handler in a heated and pressurized cargo hold.

Chicago Police spokesman Anthony Guglielmi said he was found when the flight landed about an hour later at Chicago's O'Hare airport. The spokesman said the handler told police he was intoxicated and had fallen asleep.

No charges were filed, and he was sent back to Kansas City.

Dog accidentally shoots his owner in the back

NM LAS CRUCES — A New Mexico man is recovering after he said his dog, Charlie, shot him.

Yes, he said his 120-pound Rottweiler shot him in the back.

The Las Cruces Sun-News reported Sonny "Tex" Gilligan told police Charlie accidentally pulled the trigger during a hunt for jackrabbits in the desert west of Las Cruces.

According to Gilligan, 74, Charlie got his foot in the trigger of the gun while in the back seat of Gilligan's parked truck, slipped off and pulled the trigger. The bullet went through the driver's seat and struck Gilligan's back, breaking a few ribs and shattering his collarbone. He was transported to University Medical Center in El Paso where he underwent several surgeries and is expected to recover.

Gilligan says Charlie is still

"a good dog."

Group to return military medals across state

PA SELINGSGROVE — A Vermont-based organization that returns recovered Purple Hearts and other military medals to veterans or their families is making several stops in Pennsylvania over the next four days.

Purple Hearts Reunited Director Jessica Jaggars said six Purple Hearts, a Silver Star and a Bronze Star are being returned to Pennsylvania families or places of honor in the Keystone State through Sunday.

The medals were awarded to four Pennsylvania soldiers who served in World War II, two who served during World War I and one who fought in the Korean War.

'It's okay to be white' signs appear on campus

MA MEDFORD — Signs saying "It's okay to be white" have been found posted at Tufts University.

Campus police were notified around 2 a.m. Thursday that the flyers were attached to lawn signs urging students to vote.

A university spokesman says the signs were removed and police are investigating. No further information was immediately available.

Similar signs have appeared on college campuses across the country over the last year, including at Harvard University.

Several were found last weekend at the University of Vermont and at Champlain College in Burlington, Vt.

The phrase has been adopted as a slogan by some white nationalists.

A report from the Anti-Defamation League this year found that white supremacist groups have targeted college campus-

es in surging numbers since President Donald Trump was elected in November 2016.

Disease kills 1 island pony, infects others

VA CHINCOTEAGUE — Authorities in Virginia said one of its wild Chincoteague ponies died of a disease known as "swamp cancer" that's affected several others.

News outlets cited a Tuesday release from the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company announcing Essie died after surgery, as her infection was "too far gone." Spokesman Denise Bowden reported that other ponies who had the surgery seem to be doing well.

"Swamp cancer" isn't cancer, but rather pythiosis, caused by an organism similar to fungus.

Two ponies died from it last year. Essie is the first pony to die of the disease this year.

Man convicted of slashing off-duty cop

NY NEW YORK — A man has been found guilty of attacking an off-duty New York City police detective with a meat cleaver nearly two years ago.

Prosecutors said Akram Joudeh, 34, was convicted by a jury on Monday of all counts, including attempted murder, assault and menacing a police officer. He's expected to be sentenced on Dec. 6.

Authorities said officers were attempting to arrest Joudeh for trying to remove a boot from his car in Manhattan when he pulled out a meat cleaver and ran. As officers gave chase, authorities say the off-duty detective confronted Joudeh and was struck in the head, sustaining a deep laceration. Joudeh was eventually subdued after being shot by police.

Doctor convicted of fraud sentenced to jail

KY LONDON — A federal judge sentenced an eastern Kentucky doctor convicted of health care fraud to 42 months in prison.

News outlets reported U.S. District Judge Gregory F. Van Tatenhove also ordered Dr. Anis Chalhoub to pay restitution of \$257,515 and a \$50,000 fine during Tuesday's sentencing hearing in London.

The Department of Justice said Chalhoub implanted medically unnecessary pacemakers in his patients and billed it to Medicare and Medicaid. Prosecutors said Chalhoub implanted dozens of unnecessary pacemakers in patients at St. Joseph London hospital between 2007 and 2011.

Chalhoub was convicted of the federal counts in April.

Authorities investigate deaths of 5 baby goats

MT BUTTE — Authorities are investigating after five baby goats were found dead on a property in Butte.

The Montana Standard reported resident Deb Wood said she and her husband called police after they found three of their young goats dead Sunday morning.

Butte-Silver Bow Undersheriff George Skuletich says the goats were shot by a small-caliber firearm, but officers were unable to find bullet casings in the area. He said the goats appeared to have been shot from a nearby road.

Deb and John Wood called police again later that night after they found two more young goats dead on their property.

Skuletich said the two goats were also killed by a small-caliber handgun.

From wire reports

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Rookie QB leads 49ers in rout of Raiders

Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — Nick Mullens got several hundred congratulatory text messages, a phone call from Brett Favre and his Twitter account verified.

Delivering the most productive game by a quarterback in his NFL debut since the merger leads to many accolades.

Mullens threw for 262 yards and three touchdowns and the San Francisco 49ers thoroughly dominated the Battle of the Bay, beating the Oakland Raiders 34-3 on Thursday night.

The former undrafted free agent out of Favre's alma mater Southern Mississippi finished 16 for 22 in place of the injured C.J. Beathard and had a 151.9 passer rating, the highest for a quarterback with at least 15 attempts in an NFL debut since the 1970 merger.

"I think I'm here for a reason. This is my opportunity to prove that I can play," Mullens said. "Today's thing was just attack your job and worry about what matters. What mattered most tonight was the team and how we played."

The Niners (2-7) couldn't have played much better in snapping a six-game losing streak and winning for just the second time in two years without Jimmy Garoppolo at quarterback.

Mullens threw TD passes to Pierre Garcon and Kendrick Bourne on the opening two drives and connected on a 71-yard one-handed catch-and-run play to George Kittle to set up a third TD pass to Kittle.

Raheem Mostert added a 52-yard TD run and the defense generated eight sacks for the first time since 2009.

But the story of the game was Mullens, who got rid of the ball quickly and took advantages of several breakdowns in coverage for big plays, including the 24-yard TD pass to a wide-open Garcon on the opening drive.

"It was cool that he didn't change under the big lights and these circumstances," cornerback Richard Sherman said. "We're not really surprised. We've seen him do it in practice. He plays with a lot of confidence."

With Garoppolo out for the season and Beathard having lost nine of 10 career starts, the inevitable question will be whether Mullens will take over as starter for the next game Nov. 12 against the New York Giants.

"We'll definitely consider it," coach Kyle Shanahan said. "I'm definitely not thinking about it right now. Our whole team played very well. They definitely did."

The Raiders (1-7) clearly didn't, losing for the fourth straight time, getting outscored by 85 points during the skid.

"I know it's not looking pretty right now," coach Jon Gruden said. "I've heard a lot of negativity over the last six, seven months and rightfully so. But we're going to build a championship football team here."

In what was perhaps the worst prime-time matchup in NFL history, only the Raiders played down to expectations.

They provided little resistance on defense against an undrafted quarterback making his NFL debut, did nothing offensively after driving for a field goal on the opening possession and put together the most listless performance yet in Gruden's second stint as coach.

Derek Carr finished 16-for-22 for 171 yards and was sacked seven times before being replaced by AJ McCarron in the fourth quarter. McCarron was sacked once behind a banged-up offensive line.

"It's a frustrating thing to be sitting on the record you have, be going through some of the things we're going through as an offense and still not being able to put points on the board," tight end Jared Cook said. "It's definitely frustrating because we know the talent we have in this room is way better than that and way better than what we portray on the field."

Ring ceremony: Former Niners receiver Terrell Owens was presented his Hall of Fame ring at a halftime ceremony. Owens was voted into the Hall of Fame earlier this year but skipped the induction ceremony in Canton, Ohio, to hold his own celebration at his college in Chattanooga, Tenn.

"This is awesome," Owens said before the game. "This is an opportunity to give something to the fans. Ever since I left in 2003 and went on and did some great things, but this is where it started my first eight years of career."

MLS playoff roundup

Crew advance past Rooney, United in shootout

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Wayne Rooney was stopped on a shoot-out attempt in his MLS playoff debut, Nick DeLeon skied D.C. United's final kick over the crossbar and the Columbus Crew beat D.C. United 3-2 on penalty kicks after they tied 2-2 on Thursday night.

Columbus goalkeeper Zack Steffen denied United's top two scorers in Rooney and Luciano Acosta. Patrick Mullins, who was traded to Columbus from D.C. earlier this year, had a chance to win it, but his penalty shot hit the post and DeLeon wasn't close on the final

attempt.

Federico Higuain, Wil Trapp and Niko Hansen converted in the shootout for Columbus. The Crew won a penalty kick shootout on the road in the knockout round for the second straight season.

Higuain scored Columbus' second latest goal in club history in the 96th minute by heading in Harrison Afful's cross. But DeLeon, a second-half sub, tied it at 2 in the first minute of the second extra 15-minute session in front of a sellout crowd of 20,600.

Frederic Brillant opened the scoring in the 21st minute for D.C. United by heading home

a rebound for his first goal of the season. Higuain tied it nine minutes later by sending home a loose ball in front of the net.

Real Salt Lake 3, LAFC 2: Damir Kreilach scored two goals and visiting Real Salt Lake beat expansion club Los Angeles FC for RSL's first playoff victory since 2013.

RSL entered with just three road wins this season, and LAFC had only lost once at home.

Kreilach opened the scoring in the 21st minute by settling Brooks Lennon's cross with his chest and one-touching it home. Kreilach tied it at 2 in the 58th after a poor clearance fell to his

feet and he volleyed it inside the post.

RSL went ahead in the 69th on LAFC's own goal as Jefferson Savarino's shot redirected off Walker Zimmerman's head into the back of the net.

Danilo Silva tied it at 1 for LAFC in the 31st, heading in Carlos Vela's free kick. Second-half substitute Christian Ramirez gave LAFC a 2-1 lead in the 55th after getting past the defense for Lee Nguyen's through ball and sending it over goalkeeper Nick Rimando.

All three of Ramirez's goals with LAFC this season, after being traded from Minnesota, came against RSL.

Air Force seeking to retake trophy from Army

Associated Press

WEST POINT, N.Y. — It's been a year since Air Force lost its grasp on the Commander in Chief's Trophy, and the Falcons want it back.

"The CIC always means a lot, but especially this year after what happened last year," Falcons senior offensive guard Griffin Landrum said. "That would be huge for this football team to get that trophy back."

Air Force has won the coveted hardware, which goes to the champion of the annual series among the three service academies, a record 20 times. Army finally broke through for the seventh time last year, first stunning Air Force 21-0 at Falcon Stadium, an embarrassing home loss that snapped a school-record, 306-game scoring streak dating to 1992. The Black Knights then beat Navy by one point to win the trophy for the first time since 1996.

Today, the hardware rests inside the Kimsey Athletic Center at West Point alongside statues of four of the academy's most renowned football fig-

ures: Hall of Fame coach Earl "Red" Blaik and his three Heisman Trophy winners — Glenn Davis, Felix "Doc" Blanchard and Pete Dawkins.

Air Force (3-5) visits on Saturday, and the Black Knights (6-2) are intent on keeping the trophy right where it is.

"We're excited," Army quarterback Kelvin Hopkins Jr. said. "Last year's game was a great game and a great effort by us, but they're a really good team. However it plays out is how it plays out."

The Falcons sit on a precarious perch as the season winds down. They need to win three of their final four games to qualify for the postseason, and Michie Stadium has become a difficult place to play — Army has won 10 straight at home, the last a double-overtime victory over Miami of Ohio two weeks ago. At least the Falcons can take solace in knowing that not only were they the last visitor to win at Michie (31-12 two years ago), they've also won 18 of the past 21 games between the teams and are 14-10 on Army's home turf.

"This is a championship game for us," Air Force senior linebacker Brody Bagnall said. "It kind of brings some life to the meeting rooms. We've been in some close games this year, but once we got to Navy week we were fired up. Once you get to a service-academy week, it's a whole 'nother level."

Atoning for last year is foremost on the mind. Led by quarterback Ahmad Bradshaw's 265 yards rushing, the Black Knights dominated without throwing a pass against the flummoxed Falcons.

"I don't think anybody really completely understood what they were doing in the scheme last year when we were playing these guys," Bagnall said. "This year I actually know what I'm doing, and I think the defense feels the same way. We've just got to stop the run."

That's a tall task. Army's triple option ranks second nationally at 314.6 yards a game, averaging 4.6 yards a carry. Air Force, which throws the ball more, is averaging 255.5 and 4.26 on the ground and has outgained Army 1,100-731

passing, though both teams rank near the bottom of FBS in that category.

"At the end of the day, it's just about how physical we come to play and how locked-in we are and how we execute our assignments," Army senior center Bryce Holland said. "If we come out there and do that, we'll be pretty happy with the results."

Quarterback shuffle: Air Force has three quarterbacks on its depth chart — junior Isaiah Sanders, senior Arion Worthman, and sophomore Donald Hammond III. Hammond has played in five games with two starts but has missed the past two games with an injury. His first career start was against Navy, and he led Air Force to a 35-7 victory a month ago, rushing for three TDs and throwing for 142 yards and another score, so a victory over Army will again give the Falcons possession of the Commander in Chief's Trophy.

"It's the No. 1 priority," Air Force wide receiver Marcus Bennett said. "It's bigger than us."

No. 9 UCF pulls away from Temple in second half

Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — No. 9 UCF only knows one way to answer questions about where it stands among the elite teams in college football — keep winning.

The defending American Athletic Conference champion remained unbeaten Thursday night, pulling away from Temple late for a 52-40 victory that extended the nation's longest winning streak and gave the Knights (8-0, 5-0) sole possession of first place in the AAC East Division.

Alabama, Clemson and Notre Dame are only other undefeated teams in the Football Bowl Subdivision. They're among the front-runners in the race for spots in the four-team College Football Playoff, while

UCF remains a longshot despite a sparkling record dating to last season.

"I'm not even concerned about that right now," coach Josh Heupel said. "Our job is to go 1-0 every week. ... If you do that, you probably deserve to go play for something special at the end of the year."

McKenzie Milton threw for 312 yards and three touchdowns, Greg McCrae rushed for 188 yards and one TD, and the Knights defense forced two turnovers and held Temple to six points after halftime.

Anthony Russo completed 31 of 52 passes for 444 yards and four touchdowns for Temple (5-4, 4-1), which had a three-game winning streak snapped despite gaining 670 yards on a night the teams combined to gain exactly 1,300.

Taj McGowan scored on runs of 1 and 10 yards for UCF, the latter finishing a long drive that put the Knights up 49-40 after Temple (5-4, 4-1) nearly rallied to tie it.

Milton, returning to the lineup after missing a game with an undisclosed injury, finished 17 of 33 with one interception. Dredrick Snelson scored on a 19-yard reception and Michael Colubiale had TD catches of 9 and 19 yards.

Ventell Bryant had seven receptions for 107 yards and two TDs for the Owls. Russo completed passes to 11 different receivers, including Branden Mack and Randle Jones, who scored while building a 34-28 halftime lead that lasted less than a minute into the third quarter.

UCF took a 42-34 lead into

the fourth quarter and stopped a potential tying two-point conversion before pulling away for good.

"Down at halftime, the kids were calm and came out and kept playing," Heupel said. "I told them at halftime champions love playing in environments like this, in situations like this."

CFP ranking: In addition to staying on top of the East Division standings, UCF remained on course to be part of the discussion about which teams deserve to be part of this year's CFP.

The Knights, denied a spot in the playoff field a year ago despite finishing as the only undefeated team in the FBS, were 12th in the initial CFP rankings released this week.

NBA roundup

Celtics hand Bucks first loss of season

Associated Press

BOSTON — The Boston Celtics went outside and stayed there while knocking off the last of the NBA's unbeaten teams with a barrage of three-pointers.

The Celtics set a franchise record for three-pointers with 24 in a 117-113 win over the Bucks on Thursday night, handing Milwaukee its first loss of the season.

"We got a lot of open looks. We were taking what they were giving us," said Gordon Hayward, who hit three three-pointers while scoring a season-high 18. "Those are big shots for us. We have to be able to hit those."

Kyrie Irving led Boston with 28 points, including six three-pointers as the Celtics shattered the club record of 19 and came up one short of the NBA record.

Al Horford also scored 18, hitting four from beyond-the-

arc, and Marcus Morris made five three-pointers to finish with 17 points.

"It was probably a little more than we wanted to shoot, but those were the shots that were there," said Horford, who also led the Celtics with eight assists. "We definitely want to be better, but we did a good job. I just felt like we moved the ball well. That was encouraging to see."

Giannis Antetokounmpo returned to the lineup after missing one game while in the NBA's concussion protocol and led Milwaukee with 33 points and 11 rebounds.

Antetokounmpo helped lead the Bucks to a 62-22 advantage in points-in-the-paint, but it wasn't quite enough for Milwaukee to overcome Boston's outside shooting.

Milwaukee, the last unbeaten team left in the NBA after beating Toronto on Monday night,

came up just short after a furious rally in the fourth quarter.

Down 15 entering the final period, the Bucks opened on a 12-0 run and were within a point in the final minute, but the Celtics held on for their fourth straight win.

"We still think we are one of the best teams," Antetokounmpo said. "Tonight we didn't have an 'A' or 'B' game. Probably a 'C' game, but we were still close to winning the game in Boston."

Khris Middleton and Malcolm Brogdon scored 16 apiece and Eric Bledsoe had 13 points and seven assists for the Bucks.

The Celtics, whose previous record for three-pointers was 19, came one short of tying the NBA record of 25, set by the Cleveland Cavaliers in a win over the Atlanta Hawks on March 4.

76ers 122, Clippers 113: Joel Embiid had 41 points and

13 rebounds, helping host Philadelphia beat Los Angeles.

It was Embiid's sixth game already this season with at least 30 points and 10 rebounds.

Kings 146, Hawks 115: De'Aaron Fox set career highs with 31 points, 15 assists and 10 rebounds for his first career triple-double, and visiting Sacramento beat Atlanta for its fifth straight victory.

Thunder 111, Hornets 107: Russell Westbrook had 29 points, 10 assists and eight rebounds and visiting Oklahoma City overcame a 19-point third-quarter deficit to beat Charlotte.

Nuggets 110, Cavaliers 91: Juancho Hernangomez scored 23 points, Paul Millsap added 16 and visiting Denver rolled past Cleveland.

Trail Blazers 132, Pelicans 119: Damian Lillard scored 26 points to help host Portland beat New Orleans.

NHL roundup

Domi, Kotkaniemi score late to rally Habs past Caps

Associated Press

MONTREAL — Max Domi broke a tie with 21 seconds left and Jesperi Kotkaniemi scored his first two NHL goals in the Montreal Canadiens' 6-4 victory over the Washington Capitals on Thursday night.

After Domi's goal, Joel Armia added an empty-netter two seconds later for the fastest two goals in NHL history.

Kotkaniemi tied it with his second of the night with 3:04 remaining. Surrounded by three Capitals players, the Finn got his stick on the puck and his shot trickled past netminder Braden Holtby. At 18 years and 118 days old, Kotkaniemi became the second-youngest goal scorer in franchise history.

Domi gave the Canadiens the lead when Holtby fanned on his wrist shot.

Brendan Gallagher also had two goals, and Carey Price stopped 27 shots for his fifth victory of the season to help the Canadiens improve to 7-3-2.

Alex Ovechkin and Lars Eller each scored twice for the Capitals, and Holtby made 38 saves.

Predators 4, Lightning 1: Pekka Rinne made 42 saves in his return after missing five games with an injury, and visiting Nashville beat Tampa Bay.

Jets 4, Panthers 2: At Helsinki, Finnish star Patrik Laine had a hat trick and Winnipeg beat Florida in the Finnish capital.

Islanders 3, Penguins 2 (SO): Josh Bailey scored a short-handed goal in the second period and then the only goal in a shootout to lift host New York past Pittsburgh.

Red Wings 4, Devils 3: Justin Abdelkader scored a short-handed goal midway through the third period and Trevor Daley put the puck in an empty net for another short-handed score in the final minute, and host Detroit beat New Jersey for its third straight victory.

Stars 2, Maple Leafs 1: Backup goalie Anton Khudobin made 31 saves to help visiting Dallas beat Toronto.

Senators 4, Sabres 2: Craig Anderson made 21 of his 46 saves in the third period and host Ottawa held off Buffalo in the first game of a home-and-home series.

Blues 5, Golden Knights 3: Oskar Sundqvist scored twice to lead host St. Louis past Vegas.

Rangers 3, Ducks 2 (SO): Mats Zuccarello and Mika

Zibanejad scored in the shootout, Alexandar Georgiev made 22 saves and New York completed a four-game road swing with a victory over Anaheim.

Flyers 5, Kings 2: Oskar Lindblom had a goal and an assist as visiting Philadelphia defeated Los Angeles.

Blue Jackets 4, Sharks 1: Nick Foligno scored twice and Anthony Duclair had a goal and an assist in visiting Columbus' win over San Jose.

Oilers 4, Blackhawks 0: Mikko Koskinen made 40 saves for his first NHL shutout, Drake Caggiula scored twice and host Edmonton blanked Chicago.

Flames 6, Avalanche 5: Mark Giordano had a goal and two assists, and host Calgary scored five straight times in the third period to rally past Colorado.