

STARS AND STRIPES®

Volume 73, No. 194A

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MIDEAST EDITION

Saturday, January 17, 2015

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EUROPE TERRORISM THREAT



Geert Vanden Wijngaert/AP

Police guard the Palace of Justice in Brussels on Friday, as French, German, Belgian and Irish police detained more than two dozen suspects in anti-terrorism raids across Europe. Two more suspects were arrested after a firefight in Verviers, Belgium, on Thursday.

2 DOZEN ARRESTED IN SWEEPS

Foiled Belgium attack fuels worry of extremism's spread

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'Fat Leonard' says 'scores' of Navy officials took bribes

By CRAIG WHITLOCK
The Washington Post

A Malaysian defense contractor pleaded guilty Thursday in a corruption scandal of epic proportions, admitting that he bribed "scores" of U.S. Navy officials with \$500,000 in cash, six figures' worth of sex from prostitutes, lavish hotel stays, spa treatments, Cuban cigars, Kobe beef, Spanish suckling pigs and an array of other luxury goods.

Leonard Glenn Francis, a businessman who charmed a generation of Navy officers while resupplying their ships in Asia,

admitted in federal court in San Diego to presiding over a decade-long corruption scheme involving his Singapore-based firm, Glenn Defense Marine Asia.

The investigation has steadily escalated into the biggest corruption case in the Navy's history, with Francis admitting that he bilked the service out of tens of millions of dollars by overcharging for food, fuel and basic services. Five current and former Navy officials have pleaded guilty so far, and prosecutors have made it clear they are targeting others.

SEE BRIBES ON PAGE 2



Leonard Glenn Francis pleaded guilty Thursday in an ever-expanding Navy bribery scandal involving prostitutes and luxury travel.

Courtesy of the Navy League of the United States

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“Yes, it was a Seth Rogen comedy, but next time it might not be.”

— A senior Obama administration official discussing the November cyberattack against Sony and the U.S. government’s response

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MILITARY

Bribes: Blow to Navy’s reputation may be severe

FROM FRONT PAGE

The Navy has also stripped security clearances from two admirals, including the chief of naval intelligence, for their alleged involvement with Francis, although they have not been charged with a crime.

Known in Navy circles as “Fat Leonard” for his girth, Francis, 50, agreed to forfeit \$35 million in ill-gotten proceeds and could face up to 25 years in prison. But the most severe impact may turn out to be the blow to the Navy’s reputation, given the array of evidence that so many officers were corrupted so easily by a foreign defense contractor.

“It is astounding that Leonard Francis was able to purchase the integrity of Navy officials by offering them meaningless material possessions and the satisfaction of selfish indulgences,” said Laura Duffy, the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of California, whose office has led the investigation. “In sacrificing their honor, these officers helped Francis defraud their country out of tens of millions of dollars. Now they will be held to account.”

The criminal investigation has spanned eight states and eight Asian countries, with more than 100 law enforcement agencies involved, court records show.

In his plea agreement, Francis admitted that he and his firm defrauded the Navy by overcharging for hundreds of Asian port visits by U.S. ships and submarines. To ensure he didn’t get caught, he led Navy officials with an array of temptations, including lavish meals, “top-shelf” alcohol, designer handbags, fountain pens, ornamental swords, computers, furniture and handmade ship models.

Federal prosecutors disclosed Thursday that Francis has provided evidence against two more Navy officials who have yet to be charged: a lieutenant commander and a contract specialist whose names have not been made public.

The unnamed contract specialist, a female civilian official based in Singapore for 20 years, was given a bottomless travel expense account, which she used to visit Bali, Bangkok, Dubai, Turkey and Greece, according to Francis’ plea agreement. In exchange, she worked as a mole for Glenn Defense Marine, handing over



LENNY IONELZI/AP

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Mark Pletcher, left, and Robert Huie talk outside the federal courthouse Thursday about the guilty plea of Leonard Francis, known in military circles as Fat Leonard, to bribery charges involving U.S. Navy officials.

proprietary contracting information and advocating on the firm’s behalf.

The scandal erupted into public view in September 2013, when federal agents lured Francis to a San Diego hotel and arrested him in a sting operation.

The Navy said it began scrutinizing Francis in May 2010 but that he was repeatedly able to thwart criminal investigators by bribing a senior agent with the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, who fed him sensitive files and helped to cover his tracks.

Although Francis initially fought the charges against him, he agreed to cooperate with prosecutors in recent weeks.

Navy leaders have condemned the unethical behavior of officers involved in the case and have acknowledged that the scandal could grow even worse. Navy Secretary Ray Mabus has pledged to set up a special disciplinary process, led by a four-star admiral, to review allegations against Navy personnel who avoid federal criminal charges but may have run afoul of ethical regulations.

“The Navy holds its personnel to the highest standards and those who fall short are held accountable,” Rear Adm. Dawn Cutler, a Navy spokeswoman, said in a statement. “NCIS uncovered the criminal activity associated with this case and continues to cooper-

“It is astounding that Leonard Francis was able to purchase the integrity of Navy officials by offering them meaningless material possessions and the satisfaction of selfish indulgences.”

Laura Duffy

U.S. attorney for the Southern District of California

ate with the Justice Department.”

Hours before Francis pleaded guilty Thursday, federal prosecutors won another conviction when a Navy captain, Daniel Dusek, admitted to disclosing military secrets to Francis and his firm in exchange for prostitutes, cash and visits to luxury hotels in Hawaii, Hong Kong and the Philippines.

According to a copy of his plea agreement, Dusek provided classified information about Navy ship schedules dozens of times to Glenn Defense Marine, which held contracts worth more than \$200 million to supply Navy vessels throughout Asia.

Dusek’s attorney, Douglas Applegate, did not respond to a phone call seeking comment.

The Navy announced in October 2013 that it had relieved Dusek of command of the USS Bonhomme Richard for his alleged involvement in the scandal, but his appearance in court Thursday was the first sign that he had been under criminal investigation.

According to court records, in October 2010, Dusek persuaded the Navy to send an aircraft carrier, the USS Abraham Lincoln, and its strike group to visit a port in Malaysia that was largely controlled by Glenn Defense Marine. As a result, the company was able to easily inflate invoices and overcharge the Navy for a variety of services.

Dusek, then working as deputy director of operations for the 7th Fleet, provided the contractor with classified information about ship movements on dozens of occasions, further aiding the company in its scheme to gouge the Navy during port visits, the records show.

Francis prized the arrangement so much that he called Dusek “a golden asset” in an email to another company executive, noting that he could “drive the big decks” — or aircraft carriers — “into our or reinvented” ports, according to the records.

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MILITARY

More uses for exosuits reported

By THOMAS GIBBONS-NEFF
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — It's no secret that U.S. armed forces are working on high-tech robotic suits, known as exosuits, to enhance the average servicemember's capabilities and develop the military's very own Iron Man.

But while many are excited about the potential of an army of Tony Stark's vanquishing the free world's enemies, a new report by the Center for a New American Security suggests exosuits have unrecognized potential when it comes to humanitarian assistance and ship-based operations.

The 28-page report, "Between Iron Man and Aqua Man: Exosuit Opportunities in Maritime Operations," suggests that exosuit technology will be available within five years and could greatly benefit U.S. maritime operations. It finds that "damage control is the application with the greatest opportunity for capability enhancement and that use in deck operations and maintenance would provide major cost savings."

The report's authors, Navy Lt. Scott Cheney-Peters and Capt. Matt Herr, come with vested interests in the subject. Cheney-Peters is a surface warfare officer in the Navy Reserve. Herr is the chief executive of Mind Plus Matter, a human performance consulting firm, and Helicase, a technology company.

But the two view exosuits as the way of the future — technology that will allow sailors to do more with less on ships that are damaged, repairing and resupplying at sea. Imagine a shipping container overturning in rough seas, or a fire below decks. Instead of having teams of people or large pieces of equipment deployed, one or two sailors outfitted with specifically equipped exosuits could do the job.

More importantly, the benefits from accelerating these functions would only increase during military operations. Getting ships back to the fight sooner is partic-



COURTESY OF LOCKHEED MARTIN/The Washington Post

Lockheed Martin says this suit is designed to allow users to carry heavy machinery and tools.

ularly valuable," the report says. Aside from ship-based operations, Herr and Cheney-Peters highlight the potential of exosuits in humanitarian missions and expeditionary base construction. The technology could play an integral role in moving large amounts of equipment and providing support during operations that might be strapped for resources.

Implementing exosuits as a force multiplier, however, could also have drawbacks. Unpredictable ship movements at sea, rust in saltwater environments and the need for a constant power supply would possibly push the Navy to modify aspects of their fleet and operating procedures

to accommodate suits on ship and for shore-based operations.

To control costs, the report suggests the implementation of a single type of exosuit that could be outfitted for various missions. Its development program, the authors say, could be led by the Navy, possibly in conjunction with the Coast Guard.

"If the Navy tries to jointly develop a suit with the Army, it will likely be burdened with the cost of the requirements necessitated by operating in a land environment away from reliable power sources, almost certainly skewing the cost-benefit analysis against this promising technology for maritime applications."

US troops set to train moderate rebels in Syria

By JON HARPER
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — American troops are preparing to deploy to the Middle East to train moderate Syrian rebels, Pentagon officials said Friday.

About 400 trainers and an unspecified number of support personnel will go to Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Qatar to conduct the training, which is expected to begin in early spring, according to Cmdr. Elissa Smith, a Pentagon spokeswoman.

"This number could fluctuate based on course load, course requirements and other variables," Smith said in an emailed statement.

Pentagon officials did not identify which U.S. military units will be involved or exactly when the troops will begin to deploy.

Col. Ed Thomas, a spokesman for Gen. Martin Dempsey, said the deployments will begin "soon," but the final dates have not been set.

The move is part of a larger U.S. and international effort to combat the Islamic State terrorist group, which has taken over large chunks of Syria and Iraq. About 1,200 American troops are in Iraq training and advising Iraqi security forces and the Kurdish peshmerga as they prepare to conduct large-scale offensive operations against the Islamic State group.

Thomas said the Syrian moderates will receive individual and group training with small arms and heavy weapons.

"Think basic infantry training for foreign fighters," he said.

U.S. Central Command is conducting a bombing campaign in both countries to degrade the

Islamic State group's military capabilities. Coalition partners from the Middle East and Europe are participating in the air war.

Countries in the coalition have also pledged to send trainers to build up the moderate Syrian rebel force, according to defense officials, but they have not officially announced their intentions.

The Pentagon hopes to train about 5,000 moderate Syrian rebels each year as the conflict evolves. The moderates are bat-

ting the Islamic State and other radical groups, as well as the Bashar Assad regime.

"The goal for the train and equip program is to build the capabilities of the moderate Syrian fighters to defend the Syr-

ian people; stabilize areas under opposition control; promote the conditions for a negotiated settlement of the conflict in Syria; and empower trainees to go on the offensive" against the Islamic State group, Smith said.

Thomas said the total number of U.S. troops that will ultimately be committed to the train and equip effort will depend on how many people international partners are willing to contribute.

Questions about how effective the U.S.-trained fighters will be against well-resourced factions in Syria.

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Lawmaker: Air Force OKs airspace expansion for bomber training

By JAMES NORD
The Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. — The Air Force has approved a proposal to establish an enormous bomber training area over the Northern Plains, South Dakota U.S. Sen. John Thune's office said Friday.

The Federal Aviation Administration will now examine the plan to expand the Powder River Training Complex over the Dakotas, Montana and Wyoming.

If the FAA approves the proposal it would quadruple the training airspace, making it the largest over the continental United States.

Thune has said the expanded

airspace would improve national security as B-1 bombers from Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota and B-52 bombers from Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota would use the airspace for trainings that resemble combat missions.

He also said the expansion would provide an additional layer of protection against Base Realignment and Closure for Ellsworth, which is a significant economic driver for the Rapid City area.

Also, the Air Force estimates that the expanded training airspace could save the military \$23 million a year in fuel costs by reducing the number of sorties now

being sent to Utah and Nevada for exercises.

The Air Force has provided no information on costs associated with the expansion, including potential damages.

\$23M

The amount the expanded training airspace could save the military in fuel costs by reducing the number of sorties now being sent to Utah and Nevada for exercises, the Air Force estimates.

Montana elected leaders and state aviation officials say the bombers would disrupt rural communities and scare livestock as they roared overhead on maneuvers, dropping flames and chaff.

North Dakota U.S. Sen. Heidi Heitkamp in January urged the Air Force to consider the expansion's impact on civilian aircraft, businesses and medical facilities.

Under the Air Force plan, any given location across the training area could experience up to nine low-altitude overflights annually. Supersonic flights would be limited to 10 days a year during large-scale exercises involving roughly 20 aircraft.

As many as 78 civilian flights a

day could be impacted when the large-scale exercises are conducted, the Air Force said.

The Air Force acknowledged in a study released Nov. 28 that the low-altitude flights and loud sonic booms have the potential to startle ranchers, recreationists and those living on four reservations in the region.

Thune, who has been working on the proposed expansion since 2006, said in a statement last week that he believes the expansion will save taxpayer dollars.

"I'm proud of the vital role Ellsworth continues to play in protecting and preserving America's freedom at home and abroad," he said.

MILITARY

'We can't fix that'

In speech at Texas base, Hagel discourages military overreach in Middle East

By JON HARPER
Stars and Stripes

FORT BLISS, Texas — Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel warned against American military overreach Thursday in what may be his last major speech as Pentagon chief.

Hagel's remarks came at a time when America is again deploying troops to Iraq to try to defeat insurgents. The U.S. military has also been injected into Syria's civil war, waging an air campaign and planning to train moderate Syrian rebels to take on the Islamic State terrorist group and other radical factions.

Still, the Iraqi government and some in Congress are calling for the Obama administration to step up American military involvement in the conflict against the militants.

Hagel said the terrorism and fighting roiling the Middle East are being driven by deep tribal, religious and ethnic tensions.

"We can't fix that," he said during a troop talk at Fort Bliss. "The United States of America can't fix that problem. No country outside that region can fix that problem."

He argued that some people are too quick to look for a military solution.

"Sometimes there are not immediate answers," he said. "We Americans can test that. We can fight for that [and say], 'Of course there's an answer to the problem. We'll fix it. Let's go to war. Let's commit troops. ...' [But] we have blundered when we have tried to force issues and tried to force answers on other people."

Hagel didn't mention specific "blunders," but he has been critical of the 2003-2011 Iraq War in the past.

Later in his remarks, he noted the toll that the post-9/11 wars have taken on the armed forces.

"Thirteen years of constant war have broken parts of our force," he said. "There are tremendous strains, especially [within] our Army."

He noted the efforts that the Pentagon and the Department of Veterans Affairs have taken to improve the health of the force, including providing more assistance for those dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder.

Although he doesn't expect the U.S. to get involved in extended land wars in the next few years, Hagel thinks that continued instability around the world will only create more need for possible U.S. military intervention.

"This is an issue that the American people are going to have to deal with on the



Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel listens to Maj. Gen. Stephen Twitty on Thursday as Twitty points out some of the newer living quarters at Fort Bliss, Texas, where Hagel served as an enlisted man before deploying for the Vietnam War.

PHOTOS BY RUBEN R. RAMIREZ, THE EL PASO (TEXAS) TIMES/AP



Hagel shares a laugh Thursday with Col. Alan A. Wiernicki, right.

basis of how much burden they want to carry," he said. "We have to be smart about that, especially in this kind of world that is so hair-trigger."

Trip down memory lane

Meeting with troops and discussing national security policy wasn't Hagel's only reason for traveling to Fort Bliss. It was also a trip down memory lane.

Hagel, a former Army sergeant, went through basic training here in 1967 before he deployed to Vietnam.

He joked that going through basic in the scorching heat was "a very enriching experience."

"Drill sergeants in 1967 were not as humane" as they are today, he told the troops. "It's enlightening and enhancing and educational when you are often asked, 'How dumb are you? How could you be so stu-

pid?' That's a hard one to answer."

He said his experience in the Army was the defining time in his life.

"I don't know anyone who isn't defined by service in uniform," he told the troops.

After his visit to Fort Bliss, Hagel went to the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico, where as a young soldier, he was trained to fire "Redeye" shoulder-fired, heat-seeking missiles. The technology was cutting-edge at the time.

While there, he met with soldiers training to use the sophisticated Terminal High Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, missile system. He also posed with a mockup of the Redeye.

Hagel, the first enlisted man to serve as secretary of defense, is expected to be replaced next month by Ashton Carter after the Senate approves Carter's nomination.

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Lawmaker: Congress likely to give military spending relief

By ROXANA TIRON
Bloomberg News

WASHINGTON — Congress probably will give the U.S. military some relief from spending caps as the nation faces threats from nuclear weapons to cyberterrorism, said Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, the new House Armed Services Committee chairman.

"On both sides of the aisle, there's widespread agreement that the resources going to the Pentagon are not enough to meet that wide array of threats," he said Tuesday in an interview.

"If you got Republicans and Democrats in the House and Senate who want to do that, I think we will," he said. "I trust that the president, given all that the country is facing, will want to do that, too."

A law passed in 2011 set annual spending caps through fiscal year 2021. Defense spending is capped at \$523 billion in fiscal 2016, \$1.75 billion more than the current year; the cap for nondefense funding is about \$60 billion less.

If Congress doesn't act within those caps — or agree to higher ones — the law requires an automatic reduction known as sequestration.

While lawmakers in both parties favor easing the spending restrictions for defense, many Democrats oppose doing so if it means cutting more deeply in domestic programs.

Sequestration will be one of the topics of discussion later this week when House and Senate Republicans gather privately in Hershey, Pa., Thornberry said.

The Defense Department has been asking lawmakers for help constraining costs, including what it spends on health care benefits as one way to get a grip on spending.

Congress agreed in 2014 to raise the cost of pharmacy copayments after long deliberations, and Thornberry said he's willing to look at ways to stem health costs in the future.

"We do have to control health care costs in our military and our society," he said.

Congress and the Defense Department have to strike a balance between keeping the promises to those who have served in the military and making sure that the Pentagon can recruit and retain "top quality people," he said.

"To me, it's not just about saving money; it's not even primarily about saving money. It's about should we update the pay and benefits structure for today's workplace," he said.

A blue-ribbon commission on military compensation and retirement is approaching the end of a two-year review and may soon release its proposals.

Thornberry, who leads the House's largest committee, said his top priority as chairman will be to give the U.S. military the tools it needs to be agile and well-prepared.

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MILITARY

Marine general to head intelligence agency

By **LOLITA C. BALDOR**
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A Marine three-star general will take control of the Defense Intelligence Agency later this month, marking the first time an African-American or a Marine has held that post, the Pentagon said Tuesday.

Maj. Gen. Vincent Stewart will be promoted to lieutenant general and will take over the DIA on Jan. 23. His promotion was confirmed last month by the U.S.

Senate. Most recently Stewart was serving as the head of Marine Forces Cyber Command, and he has also been the Corps' intelligence director.

James Clapper, director of national intelligence, said Stewart's "temperament, professional background, leadership skills and integrity make him eminently suited to be the next DIA director."

Stewart's appointment comes more than eight months after

the previous leader was nudged aside amid ongoing conflict within the agency. Then-DIA chief Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn and his civilian deputy director announced last April that they would retire. Officials



Stewart

at the time said their departures were hastened in part because of friction associated with efforts Flynn was making to shake up the agency.

The traditional role of the DIA has been to provide military intelligence, including insight into the makeup and capabilities of foreign military forces, to U.S. combat units and defense planners and policymakers. It also provides "strategic warning," or the forewarning of imminent hostilities, insurgencies, attacks

on the United States or its forces or allies, hostile reactions to U.S. reconnaissance activities and terrorist attacks.

Flynn, a career intelligence officer, had led the DIA since July 2012 and he retired early last August. Typically, the director's post rotates among the Army, Navy and Air Force about every three or four years. But it had never gone to a member of the Marine Corps, which is technically part of the Department of the Navy.

Coercion, damage key to US response over Sony hack

By **ELLEN NAKASHIMA**
The Washington Post

On the Wednesday a week before Christmas, Sony Pictures, following threats from hackers of a violent attack against theaters, canceled its plans to release a satirical movie that depicts the assassination of North Korea's supreme leader, Kim Jong Un.

The next day, alarmed by the surrender, President Barack Obama convened his top officials in the White House Situation Room and, based on their unanimous recommendation, decided to take an action the United States had never dared before in response to a cyberattack by another nation: name the government responsible and punish it.

The administration's response to the November cyberattack against Sony — it publicly blamed North Korea two days after the Hollywood studio shelved the film — has thrown into relief how the government's reaction was driven by the public fallout from the hack. It differed from the response to any of the numerous, significant cyberintrusions that had occurred previously in the United States, many of them originating abroad and some of them believed to be directed by foreign powers.

The blocking of Sony's freedom of expression, on top of a highly damaging hack, is what ultimately compelled officials to act, in the name of deterrence.

"The argument I made was the whole world is watching how we as a nation respond," said Adm. Michael Rogers, the director of the National Security Agency, who, other officials said, was, as the previously undisclosed meeting.

"And if we don't acknowledge this, if we don't name names here,

it will only — I'm concerned — encourage others to decide: 'Well, this must not be a red line for the United States. This must be something they're comfortable [with] and willing to accept,'" Rogers said at an international cybersecurity conference at Fordham University last week.

There "was a significant debate within the administration about whether or not to take that step" of naming North Korea, a senior administration official said. "Attribution is hard, and there are all sorts of reasons we don't normally want to do that," including setting a precedent that would increase pressure to name other countries in future incidents and antagonizing the offending governments.

But the attack on Sony's right to screen a movie struck a nerve. The entertainment company may not be "critical" to national security, but free speech is "a core value," said the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe internal discussions. "Yes, it was a Seth Rogen comedy, but next time it might not be," he said. What he described as the hack's "destructive" nature combined with the element of coercion against Sony "crossed the threshold," he said. "It took us into a new realm."

The attack was a violation of U.S. sovereignty "coupled with an attempt to interfere with freedom of expression," said Christopher Painter, State Department coordinator for cyberspace issues. "You had, in many ways, the perfect storm of all these things coming together that were really important."

The hackers, who called themselves Guardians of Peace, penetrated Sony's network and for at least three weeks exfiltrated emails, salary lists and other

sensitive data, undetected, before launching a "wiper" attack on Nov. 24, deleting data and disabling computers. Soon after, the hackers began releasing embarrassing emails that portrayed studio executives as, among other things, racially insensitive.

The FBI concluded early on that North Korea was to blame, but the administration was not inclined to say so publicly, in part because it had not figured out an appropriate response. It was prompted to act when Sony and the theaters canceled the movie's planned release. And while the government's attribution to Pyongyang has prompted skeptics to clamor for more proof, officials said this case was clear. "I have rarely seen the degree of evidence that we have amassed

both through our work with Sony and through other means," said the senior administration official.

Rogers said the NSA aided the investigation by sharing computer "activity and patterns" by North Korea that had been observed in previous cyberincidents.

It was equally important to the administration that other governments speak out against the attack to build toward an international norm. After Obama last month condemned North Korea's attack, a number of other world leaders followed — Britain's foreign secretary, Canada's prime minister, Australia's prime minister, New Zealand's foreign minister, as well as officials in South Korea, Japan, Norway, the Netherlands, Israel and Estonia.

The Pentagon has developed an

extensive set of scenarios to game out how it might respond to different levels of cyberattacks, said a senior defense official who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe internal discussions. Some exercises are conducted with other agencies. The idea, he said, is to answer questions such as: "If this happened, would we consider it an armed attack? What would the response be?"

But none of those scenarios, he conceded, involved a Hollywood movie studio. Had the attack not been so public, and had Sony not canceled plans to release the film, "it's fair to say" the government's response might have been more muted, the official said. The coercion, he said, "was a major part of the impact" and made the attack "more significant."



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NATION



MARK PYNES, PENNLIVE.COM/AP

GOP leaders House Speaker John Boehner, left, and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell meet with media members Thursday at the GOP retreat at the Hershey Lodge in Hershey, Pa.

Republicans try to chart path on immigration moves

By ERICA WERNER
The Associated Press

HERSHEY, Pa. — Not exactly brimming with confidence, Majority Leader Mitch McConnell says he's going to try to push a House-passed bill to overturn President Barack Obama's immigration policies through the Senate.

But neither McConnell nor other members of his leadership — and not even senior House Republicans — predict success for the plan that undoes Obama's moves and exposes hundreds of thousands of younger immigrants to deportation.

"Good question," Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., said Thursday when asked about the bill's prospects in the Senate. "It's a process," added Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers, R-Wash., equally noncommittal on the subject as

Republicans held a joint retreat in this capital of chocolates and sweets.

The \$39.7 billion legislation funds the Homeland Security Department for the remainder of the budget year while undoing executive actions by Obama offering protections to millions of immigrants in the country illegally.

"We're going to try to pass it. That'll be our first choice," McConnell told reporters at a news conference at the homely Hershey Lodge. "If we're unable to do that, we'll let you know what comes next."

Although the Senate is now under GOP control, Republicans are still six votes shy of the 60-vote margin needed to advance most legislation. But Democrats aren't McConnell's only problem. A number of Senate Republicans have concerns with the House

approach, which used the Homeland Security spending bill for priorities like cybersecurity and counterterrorism as the vehicle to take a stand against Obama. In the wake of the Paris terror attacks, lawmakers don't want that legislation jeopardized.

"It's very difficult to craft language in a way that takes aim at the overreach by the president with his executive authority and yet doesn't impede DHS's enforcement of the law," said Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine.

Funding for the Homeland Security Department expires at the end of February, so Republicans have until then to resolve the issue.

Republican leaders renewed pledges Thursday not to let funding for the Homeland Security Department expire, or risk a government shutdown.

US swiftly eases travel and trade rules on Cuba

By BRADLEY KLAPPER
AND MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Following through on its declaration of warming ties with Cuba, the Obama administration has eased travel restrictions and has opened a wide range of new export opportunities with the communist island.

The series of executive branch moves, taken together, has had the effect of punching a large hole in America's half-century-old embargo, although only Congress has the authority to fully end the 54-year embargo. President Barack Obama announced last month that he would soften the restrictions.

He argued at the time that "these 50 years have shown that isolation has not worked." The new spirit of cooperation emerged after 18 months of secret talks that culminated in the exchange of imprisoned spies and the release of Alan Gross, a U.S. government contractor who had been imprisoned in Cuba for five years.

Less than a month after the Cold War foes agreed to end their enmity, the Commerce and Treasury departments unveiled new rules Thursday permitting U.S. citizens to visit Cuba without special permits.

Most U.S. travelers still will be required to go on supervised group trips, but now virtually any U.S. company or organization can offer such trips without the paperwork and inspections that discouraged past expansion of travel to Cuba. Some tour operators, already seeing unprecedent-

ed interest in legal travel to Cuba, expect some tourists to simply ignore the restrictions.

American companies also now will be permitted to export telephones, computers and Internet technology, and to send supplies to private Cuban firms. However, Cuban authorities have said nothing about the restrictions they might impose on U.S. products entering a country that has long frustrated foreign investors with red tape and tapped-out infrastructure.

The changes are the latest step in Obama's plan to rebuild relations with Cuba after a history marred by suspicion, espionage and conflict. The new regulations come three days after U.S. officials confirmed the release of 53 political prisoners Cuba had promised to free.

The U.S. is now "one step closer to replacing out-of-date policies," Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew said Thursday. White House spokesman Josh Earnest said the new rules "immediately enable the American people to provide more resources to empower the Cuban population to become less dependent upon the state-driven economy."

They also allow U.S. citizens to start bringing home small amounts of Cuban cigars, long adored by aficionados but banned under U.S. law. The limit is \$100 for alcohol and tobacco products and \$400 in total goods.

The few U.S. companies facilitating travel to Cuba say inquiries have exploded since December and American visits are expected to surge this year from about 90,000 annually.

Obama renews call for paid sick, family leave for workers

The Associated Press

BALTIMORE — President Barack Obama launched a fresh push Thursday to bring paid sick and family leave to working parents and other private-sector employees as the White House unveiled proposals that could benefit tens of millions of people. Most require action by the Republican-controlled Congress.

"Forty-three million Americans do not get paid sick leave," Obama said after a lunchtime discussion about juggling work and family with a group of women at a Baltimore cafe that offers paid sick leave to its small work force. "It's a pretty astonishing statistic."

Obama said the issue transcends demographics and geography, but "the good news is that we can really do something about it."

Obama wants Congress, states and cities to pass measures to let workers earn up to a week of paid sick time per year. He'll also ask for more than \$2 billion to encourage states to create paid family and medical

leave programs.

Obama also will propose that Congress pass legislation giving federal workers an additional six weeks of paid parental leave.

Before traveling to Maryland, he directed federal agencies to advance six weeks of paid sick leave that federal workers could use as paid family leave. The leave would have to be paid back over time.

The White House said details on how Obama would raise the \$2 billion will be released next month.

The National Federation of Independent Business, which represents small businesses, opposes the president's effort.

Spokesman Jack Mozloom said required paid leave would force the association's members to make corresponding cuts in pay and benefits that would harm the people Obama and the advocates of such policies say they want to help. Most of the association's members have fewer than 25 employees, he said.

The odds are slim that Congress will send Obama the bill — in part, because it was first introduced nearly a decade ago.



EVAN VUCCA/AP

President Barack Obama talks with Amanda Rothschild, left, and Mary Stein on Thursday at Charmington's Cafe in Baltimore before speaking about paid sick leave for working Americans.

NATION

Duke cancels Muslim call to prayer

The Associated Press

DURHAM, N.C. — Before it unraveled, a plan to use Duke University's chapel tower in a call to prayer for the school's Muslim community was meant to promote religious unity and pluralism.

One administrator explained in a newspaper column that "at Duke University, the Muslim community represents a strikingly different face of Islam than is seen on the nightly news: one that is peaceful and prayerful." Religious pluralism is part of the school's mission, wrote Christy Lohr Sapp, Duke Chapel's associate dean for religious life.

But after a flurry of objections arrived by phone and email

— along with reported security concerns — Duke canceled a plan to have members of the Muslim Students Association read a moderately amplified call to prayer from the tower for about three minutes each Friday.

Instead, Muslims will gather for their call to prayer in a grassy area near the 210-foot gothic tower before heading into a room in the chapel for their weekly prayer service. Michael Schoenfeld, Duke's vice president for public affairs and government relations, said it would be up to the students if they want to use some sort of amplification.

The original plan drew the ire of evangelist Franklin Graham, who urged Duke alumni to with-

hold support because of violence against Christians he attributed to Muslims. Schoenfeld said emails and calls came from alumni and others in the community.

"There was considerable traffic and conversation and even a little bit of confusion, both within the campus and certainly outside, about what Duke was doing," Schoenfeld said. "The purposes and goals and even the facts had been so mischaracterized as to turn it into a divisive situation, not a unifying situation."

Many had questions and concerns about the structure that's an important piece of the school's identity. The tower of the 83-year-old Duke Chapel was modeled after Can-

terbury Cathedral in England. "The chapel is a very powerful symbol to anybody who has been at Duke or is connected to Duke. We have to be very thoughtful and deliberate in the way that it is used and presented," Schoenfeld said.

He also said there were concerns about safety and security, but he declined to elaborate on whether any specific threats had been received.

The private university was founded by Methodists and Quakers and its divinity school has historically been connected to the United Methodist Church.

Reactions to the change in plans Thursday afternoon ranged from disappointment to ambivalence.



JONATHAN DREW/AP

Duke Chapel in Durham, N.C., was to be the site of a traditional weekly Muslim call to prayer.

Justices must act fast to settle gay marriage by June

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Time is running short for the Supreme Court to get same-sex marriage on its calendar if the justices want to tackle the issue before their current term ends in late June.

They might have to decide to jump in at their closed-door conference Friday if they want to resolve the legal debate over gay marriage in the next few months.

The justices would hear the case in April, the last month for oral arguments before the next term begins in October.

Written arguments already would have to be filed on a compressed schedule, though both sides are well versed in the issues after numerous rounds in the lower courts.

Until now, the court has managed both to contribute to a dramatic increase in the number of states that allow same-sex couples to marry and avoid settling the issue for the entire nation. Last week, Florida became the 36th state to issue licenses for same-sex unions.

In October, the justices offered no explanation when they passed

up appeals from both sides calling on the court to take up gay marriage. The court also subsequently refused to block court orders in favor of same-sex couples from taking effect while state officials appealed. As a result, the number of states where same-sex couples could wed nearly doubled.

The appeals before the court come from gay and lesbian plaintiffs in Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and Tennessee. The federal appeals court that oversees those four states upheld their same-sex marriage bans in November, reversing pro-gay rights rulings of federal judges in all four states.

Ten other states also prohibit such unions. In Arkansas, Mississippi, Missouri, South Dakota and Texas, judges have struck down anti-gay marriage laws, but they remain in effect pending appeals. In Missouri, same-sex couples can marry in St. Louis and Kansas City only.

Louisiana is the only other state that has seen its gay marriage ban upheld by a federal judge. There have been no rulings on lawsuits in Alabama, Georgia, Nebraska and North Dakota.

Science panel: No alternative to NSA's bulk data collection

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A committee of U.S. scientific experts has concluded that there is no viable technological alternative to bulk collection of data by the National Security Agency that allows analysts access to communications whose significance only becomes clear years later.

An 85-page report by the National Research Council, commissioned last year in the wake of surveillance revelations by former NSA contractor Edward Snowden, did not take a position on the merits of bulk collection of telephone or other records. But asked to look for effective software alternatives to bulk collection, it concluded

there weren't any, in cases when, for example, the NSA wants to examine the past communications of new terror suspects.

"Restricting bulk collection will make intelligence less effective, and technology cannot do anything about this," the report says. "Whether the gain in privacy is worth the loss is a policy question that the committee does not address."

The report does suggest ways to mitigate the privacy impact of bulk collection by restricting use of the data, something NSA says it does. It recommends the use of automatic controls on bulk data, with audits that can be publicly shared.



SUE OROCKI/AP

Jerry Massie, spokesman for the Oklahoma Department of Corrections, announces the time of death of inmate Charles Warner to the media at the Oklahoma State Penitentiary in McAlester, Okla., on Thursday.

Okla. carries out 1st execution since botched lethal injection

The Associated Press

MCALISTER, Okla. — In its first lethal injection since a botched one last year, Oklahoma executed a convicted killer with a three-drug method also used by Florida for a punishment the same night.

Oklahoma inmate Charles Frederick Warner showed no physical signs of distress after the lethal drugs were administered, although he did say, "My body is on fire." He was declared dead 18 minutes after the execution began.

Warner, 47, was put to death for killing an infant in 1997. He was originally scheduled to be executed in April on the same night as Clayton Lockett, who began writhing on the gurney, moaning and trying to lift his head after he'd been declared unconscious. That prompted state officials to impose a moratorium on executions in Oklahoma until an investigation was completed into what went wrong.

Midazolam also was used in problematic executions last year

in Arizona and Ohio, however. Inmates snorted and gasped during those lethal injections that took longer than expected.

Oklahoma used the sedative midazolam as part of a three-drug method that had been challenged by Warner and other death row inmates as presenting a risk of pain and suffering that violated their constitutional rights.

States have been scrambling to find new combinations of lethal drugs after European pharmaceutical companies restricted their distribution to U.S. states that use them for executions.

The execution came after a divided U.S. Supreme Court in a 5-4 ruling said it wouldn't consider an appeal over the drugs.

In a dissenting opinion, Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote that she believes questions about the effectiveness of the drugs are particularly important because of states' increasing reliance on new and scientifically untested methods of execution.



Warner

When asked before the execution began if he had any final words, Warner responded: "Before I give my final statement, I'll tell you they poked me five times. It hurt. It feels like acid." Warner also apologized to his family for the pain he caused them and said: "I'm not a monster. I didn't do everything they said I did."

Witnesses said they saw slight twitching in Warner's neck about three minutes after the lethal injection began. The twitching lasted about seven minutes until he stopped breathing.

NATION

More questions than answers in fatal DC subway accident

By BEN NUCKOLS
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — More than three days after a fatal accident on Washington's aging and frequently criticized subway system, investigators have not provided details about what caused a train to fill with smoke nor what could have been done to limit passengers' exposure.

That left the local government, which was only responsible for the emergency response, to explain its actions, and its timeline left as many questions as answers.

Preliminary details released Thursday by the District of Columbia government showed it took rescuers at least a half-hour to reach the smoke-filled train, as communication breakdowns between its operator, his command center and firefighters left help waiting at a station just 800 feet away.

First responders couldn't safely leave the Metro platform because they weren't told whether someone could be electrocuted by the third rail that powers the trains, authorities said.

One woman died and more than

80 others were sickened by smoke Monday afternoon when an electrical malfunction on the tracks led the train to stop as it traveled toward Virginia, shortly after it left the busy L'Enfant Plaza station in downtown Washington.

The city's preliminary timeline confirmed that passengers waited more than a half-hour for help, and that more than an hour passed before an ambulance began carrying the dying woman to a hospital. It shows firefighters waited at the station for 13 minutes before officials with the Metro transit authority confirmed people were trapped and that the electrified third rail had been shut down. City firefighters are trained not to walk on the tracks while the third rail is live.

It's still not clear what caused the electrical malfunction that halted the train nor whether the operator could have returned it to the station, which he told passengers he was planning to do. The National Transportation Safety Board is investigating and Metro officials have declined to comment, leaving city officials and passengers to fill in what details are publicly known.

Ariz. makes civics priority for high school graduation

By BOB CHRISTIE
The Associated Press

PHOENIX — Arizona high school students face the nation's first requirement to pass the U.S. citizenship test on civics before they can graduate after the legislation sailed through the Republican-controlled Legislature.

Lawmakers approved the bill amid a growing, nationwide effort to boost civics education, and newly elected Republican Gov. Doug Ducey signed it into law Thursday evening.

The swift action comes as states around the country take up similar measures, driven primarily by a conservative institute whose motto is "Patriotism Matters." The leader of the organization is former California U.S. Rep. Frank Riggs, who came in

last in Arizona's Republican primary for governor after running a hard-right campaign focused on immigration and rhetoric against President Barack Obama.

The Arizona-based Joe Posa Institute has set a goal of having all 50 states adopt the requirement by 2017, the 230th anniversary of the U.S. Constitution. The institute says legislatures in 15 states are expected to consider it this year.

The proposal requires high school students to correctly answer 60 of 100 questions on the civics portion of the test new citizens must pass. The test includes questions about the Founding Fathers, the Bill of Rights and U.S. presidents. Passing it would be required to earn a high school or GED diploma starting in the 2016-17 school year.



JACQUELYN MARTIN/AP

Lights illuminate the U.S. Capitol, which is covered in scaffolding for restoration, in Washington on Wednesday. The FBI says the Capitol was going to be the target of attack by an Ohio man.

Terror suspect's kin say they saw a change in him

By DAN SEWELL
The Associated Press

CINCINNATI — Christopher Lee Cornell showed little direction in his life, spending hours playing video games in his bedroom in his parents' apartment, rarely going out or working, and voicing distrust of the government and the media. But in recent weeks, his parents say, they noticed a change in him.

They thought it was a change for the better: The 20-year-old suburban Cincinnati man was helping his mother around the house, cooking meals, sitting with his parents to watch movies, and talking about having become a Muslim.

"He said, 'I'm at peace with myself,'" his father, John Cornell, recalled Thursday — a day after his son was arrested in an FBI sting and charged with plotting to attack the U.S. Capitol with pipe bombs and guns and to kill government officials.

The arrest came with U.S. counterterrorism authorities on high alert against homegrown extremists and "lone wolves" — disaffected or disturbed indi-

viduals who hold radical beliefs but have no direct connection to a terrorist organization.

The bearded, long-haired Cornell was taken into custody outside a gun range and store west of Cincinnati after, the FBI said, he bought two M-15 semi-automatic rifles and 600 rounds of ammunition as part of a plan to go to Washington.

The FBI said that for months he had sent social media messages and had posted video espousing support for Islamic State militants and for violent attacks by others.

It was unclear from court papers whether he had made contact with any terrorist groups.

But in an instant message to an FBI informant, Cornell wrote that he had been in contact with people overseas and that he planned to go ahead with the attack even



Cornell

without specific authorization.

Cornell, using the online name of Raheel Mahrus Ubaydah, told the informant they should "wage jihad," authorities said in court papers. He allegedly wrote in an instant message that "we should meet up and make our own group in alliance with the Islamic State here and plan operations ourselves."

Cornell was jailed for a federal court appearance Friday in Cincinnati. A federal public defender listed as representing him did not immediately respond to messages.

Cornell wrestled in school, and a case in the family living-room displayed wrestling trophies and awards. But his father said Cornell quit, partly because schoolmates teased him about being in close contact with other guys.

He had a girlfriend but found she was "just using him," his father said. He didn't pay attention to the news because he thought it was all propaganda from "Jew-run" media, and he believed presidential elections were controlled by a secret society, the elder Cornell said.

Authorities search for Ky. teen couple suspected in multistate crime spree

The Associated Press

LEITCHFIELD, Ky. — Two Kentucky teenagers who vanished nearly two weeks ago are suspected in a multistate crime spree that has police desperately searching for the couple — an 18-year-old and a 13-year-old girl he has been dating.

Grayson County Sheriff Norman Chaffins said the couple, Dalton Hayes and Cheyenne Phillips, disappeared Jan. 3 from their small hometown in western Kentucky. Since then, authorities believe

the couple has traveled to South Carolina and Georgia. Along the way, they're suspected of stealing multiple vehicles and using stolen checks, law enforcement officials said.

Hayes' mother said the girl had portrayed herself as being 19 years old.

Chaffins said the couple's behavior is "becoming increasingly brazen and dangerous," and he said they had evaded law enforcement twice. The sheriff said he believes Hayes is calling the shots as the

teens try to stay ahead of the law.

"He's a hard-headed kid," the sheriff said. "He does have issues with authority. Very rarely does he take responsibility for what he's done, and he has a history of making bad choices."

Hayes' mother urged the young couple to turn themselves in and "face the consequences."

The young couple has been dating for about three months and liked to hang out and watch movies at the Martins' home,

Tammy Martin said.

The two were spotted Monday at Wal-Mart in South Carolina. Authorities believe they then headed to Georgia and stole a pickup truck from the driveway of a home about 30 miles southeast of Atlanta. The homeowner told police he kept two handguns in the vehicle.

Hours later, another truck the couple is suspected of having stolen in another state was found nearby. Chaffins said anyone who spots the couple should call 911.

NATION

Too much pot

Growers struggle with glut of legal pot in Wash. state

By GENE JOHNSON
The Associated Press

SEATTLE — Washington's legal marijuana market opened last summer to a deluge of weed. Some stores periodically closed because they didn't have pot to sell. Prices were through the roof.

Six months later, the equation has flipped, bringing serious growing pains to the new industry.

A big harvest of sun-grown marijuana from eastern Washington last fall flooded the market. Prices are starting to come down in the state's licensed pot shops, but due to the glut, growers are — surprisingly — struggling to sell their marijuana. Some are already worried about going belly-up, finding it tougher than expected to make a living in legal weed.

"It's an economic nightmare," says Andrew Seitz, general manager at Dutch Brothers Farms in Seattle.

State data show that licensed growers had harvested 31,000 pounds of bud as of Thursday, but Washington's relatively few legal pot shops have sold less than one-fifth of that. Many of the state's marijuana users have stuck with the untaxed or much-less-expensive pot they get from black market dealers or unregulated medical dispensaries — limiting how quickly product moves off the shelves of legal stores.

"Every grower I know has got surplus product, and they're concerned about it," said Scott Masengill, who has sold half of the 280 pounds he harvested from his pot farm in central Washington. "I don't know anybody getting rich."

Officials at the state Liquor Control Board, which regulates marijuana, aren't terribly concerned.

So far, there are about 270 licensed growers in Washington, but only about 85 open stores for them to sell to. That's partly due to a slow, difficult licensing process; retail applicants who haven't been ready to open; and pot business bans in many cities and

counties.

The board's legal pot project manager, Randy Simmons, says he hopes about 100 more stores will open in the next few months, providing additional outlets for the weed that's been harvested. Washington is always likely to have a glut of marijuana after the outdoor crop comes in each fall, he suggested, as the outdoor growers typically harvest one big crop which they continue to sell throughout the year.

Weed is still pricey at the state's pot shops — often in the \$23- to \$25-per-gram range. That's about twice the cost at medical dispensaries, but cheaper than it was a few months ago.

Simmons said he expects pot prices to keep fluctuating for the next year and a half. "It's the volatility of a new marketplace."

Colorado, the only other state with legal marijuana sales, has a differently structured industry. Regulators have

kept a lid on production, though those limits were loosened last fall as part of a planned expansion of the market. Colorado growers still have to prove legal demand for their product, a regulatory curb aimed at preventing excess weed from spilling to other states. The result has been more demand than supply.

In Washington, many growers have unrealistic expectations about how quickly they should be able to recoup their initial investments, Simmons said. And some of the growers complaining about the low prices

‘We’re running out of money. We need to make sales this month to stay operational, and we’re going to be selling at losses.’

Andrew Seitz
Dutch Brothers Farms



ELAINE THOMPSON/AP

Ashley Green trims a marijuana flower at the Pioneer Nuggets marijuana growing facility in Arlington, Wash.

they're getting now, also gouged the new stores amid shortages last summer.

Those include Seitz, who sold his first crop — 22 pounds — for just under \$21 per gram; nearly \$230,000 before his hefty \$57,000 tax bill. He's about to harvest his second crop, but this time he expects to get just \$4 per gram, when he has big bills to pay.

"We're running out of money," he said. "We need to make sales this month to stay operational, and we're going to be selling at losses."

Because of the high taxes on Washington's legal pot, Seitz said stores can never compete with the black market while paying growers sustainable prices.



ELISE AMENDOLA/AP

Founders Brewery Co., of Grand Rapids, Mich., would be allowed to show images of minors on its beer labels if proposed legislation passes in New Hampshire.

NH considers allowing baby images on alcohol labels

By RIK STEVENS
The Associated Press

CONCORD, N.H. — Babies and bottles normally get along just fine, unless a picture of that baby happens to be plastered to the front of a bottle of beer being sold in New Hampshire.

Currently, that bottle of Breakfast Stout crafted by Founders Brewery Co. in Grand Rapids, Mich., is illegal in the Granite State, but legislation proposed this year would permit brewers to peddle their ales, stouts, porters and lagers even if the label shows images of minors.

State Rep. Keith Murphy, of Bedford, N.H., who also is the proprietor of Murphy's Taproom in Manchester, is sponsoring the measure that would allow images of kids on alcoholic beverage packaging as long as the state's Liquor Commission determines the picture isn't meant to entice minors to drink.

Breakfast Stout is a rich brew that Murphy says is his hand-down favorite. He samples it

‘It’s obviously not meant to appeal to minors. It’s a breakfast stout. It’s a very heavy beer, like a bowl of porridge.’

Rep. Keith Murphy
R-Hillsborough, N.H.

from the tap at his establishment (where the tap handle can't bear the baby's image) but can't go buy a four-pack of it in New Hampshire because of the label that depicts a rosy-cheeked and seriously satisfied-looking baby scooping a spoonful of porridge into his mouth. It's much more Norman Rockwell than Norm from "Cheers."

"I sell a million dollars of beer a year, and it breaks my heart that I can't take this home," Murphy said.

That's because of a New Hampshire law that reads: "Advertising of liquor or beverages shall not contain any reference to minors, pictorial or otherwise."

Think of it this way: Under the law, the Founders baby is being equated to Joe Camel, the controversial cartoon cigarette pitchman that was ultimately outlawed after critics said it was a blatant attempt to recruit young smokers.

Murphy said it's misguided to suggest a chubby baby eating breakfast would lure an underage drinker to a specialty beer that sells for a comparatively pricey \$12 for four 12-ounce bottles.

"It's obviously not meant to appeal to minors," he said. "It's a breakfast stout. It's a very heavy beer, like a bowl of porridge."

If, on the other hand, it was a picture of kids at a college party that was used to sell a more main-

stream, ubiquitous variety like a lager or ale, Murphy could see where the Liquor Commission might ban that image.

The federal government and most — if not all — states already prohibit alcohol labeling or advertising that targets minors.

David Jerigan, an associate professor at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore and director of the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth, said laws that govern what a label or advertisement looks like do little to cut down on underage drinking.

"The bottom line is they're very hard to enforce," he said. "The best way to deal with (underage drinking) is to limit their exposure and not try to play with their content."

James Wilson, director of enforcement and licensing for the New Hampshire Liquor Commission, said the commission opposes the legislation. "The current language offers the commission a bright line standard to make those determinations," he said.

WORLD

2 dozen arrested in anti-terrorism sweeps in Europe

By Raf Casert
and Angela Charlton
The Associated Press

BRUSSELS — French, German, Belgian and Irish police arrested more than two dozen suspects in anti-terrorism raids Friday, as European authorities rushed to thwart more attacks by people with links to Mideast Islamic extremists.

Rob Wainwright, head of the police agency Europol, told *The Associated Press* that foiling terror attacks has become “extremely difficult” because Europe’s 2,500-5,000 radicalized Muslim extremists have little command structures and are increasingly sophisticated.

Highlighting those fears, a bomb scare forced Paris to evacuate its busy Gare de l’Est train station during Friday morning rush hour. No bomb was found. A man also briefly took two hostages at a post office northwest of Paris, but police said the hostage-taker had mental issues and no links to terrorism.

Visiting the tense French capital, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry met President Francois Hollande and toured the sites of last week’s terror attacks: the satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* and a kosher supermarket. Twenty people, including the three gunmen, were killed.

One of those Paris attackers had proclaimed allegiance to the Islamic State group, and French and German authorities arrested at least 14 other people Friday suspected of links to the Islamic State group.

Thirteen more people were detained in Belgium and two were

arrested in France in a separate anti-terror sweep following a firefight Thursday in the eastern Belgian city of Verviers. Two suspected terrorists were killed and a third wounded in that raid on a suspected terrorist hideout. Federal magistrate Eric Van der Sypst said Friday the suspects were within hours of implementing a plan to kill police.

In Ireland, police arrested a suspected French-Algerian militant at Dublin Airport as he tried to enter the country using a false passport. The man, who was being interrogated, landed on a European watch list after expressing support in social media for last week’s attacks, authorities said.

In more than a dozen raids Friday, Belgian forces found four military-style weapons including Kalashnikov assault rifles and several police uniforms. Van der Sypst said, Belgian officials were reasonably confident they dismantled the core of an important terrorist cell but the magistrate said more suspects could be at large.

“I cannot confirm that we arrested everyone in this group,” he told reporters.

Authorities said most of those detained or killed in Belgium were citizens and some had returned from Syria. They stressed that the targets of their crackdown had no known connections to last week’s attacks in France.

French Prime Minister Manuel Valls said Friday that while there was no apparent operational connection between the two terror groups, “the link that exists is the will to attack our values.”



FRANK AUGSTEN/AP

Belgian police officers examine a house Friday in Verviers, Belgium. The street was blocked after an anti-terrorist raid in which two suspects were killed and one was wounded during a shootout.

Peter Neumann of the London-based International Center for the Study of Radicalization estimated that 450 people have left Belgium to fight with Islamic radicals in Syria and that 150 of them have returned home.

In Prague, hundreds of people rallied against Islam in the first such protest in the Czech Republic, waving Czech flags and banners with slogans including “Islam is evil.”

Across Europe, anxiety has grown as the hunt continued for possible accomplices to the Paris gunmen — French police earlier told AP there could be up to six of them.

The Paris prosecutor’s office said at least 12 people were arrested in anti-terrorism raids in the area, targeting people linked to kosher market gunman Amedy Coulibaly, who claimed ties to the Islamic State group. France has put the country on high alert and deployed 122,000 police and

troops to protect its citizens, especially at Jewish schools and transport hubs.

The Belgian government on Friday decided to start using its army for some security tasks, part of a 12-point, anti-terror plan lawmakers agreed upon in less than 24 hours since the deadly clash Thursday night. The government will also expand legislation to make traveling abroad with a terror goal a crime and allowing authorities to withdraw ID from people suspected of traveling to such areas.

In Berlin, police arrested two men Friday morning on suspicion of recruiting fighters for the Islamic State group in Syria. Prosecutors said 250 police officers raided 11 residences at dawn, part of a month-old investigation into Turkish extremists.

Kerry’s visit to France came after the Obama administration apologized for not sending a higher-level delegation to Sunday’s

massive rally in Paris, which drew more than 1 million people to denounce terrorism. Hollande thanked Kerry for offering support.

“You’ve been victims yourselves of an exceptional terrorist attack on Sept. 11. You know what it means for a country,” Hollande said. “Together, we must find appropriate responses.”

In a separate speech to diplomats, Hollande said France is “waging war” against terrorism and will not back down from its international military operations against Islamic extremists in Iraq and North Africa. France’s Parliament voted this week to extend airstrikes against Islamic State extremists in Iraq.

Several countries are involved in the hunt for possible accomplices to Coulibaly and the gunman who attacked the newspaper, brothers Cherif and Said Kouachi.

Video purports to show boy killing Islamic State prisoners

By Laura King and Nabih Bulos
Los Angeles Times

CAIRO — Executions of captives by the Sunni Muslim militants of the Islamic State have become grimly commonplace, but on Tuesday a newly surfaced video featured a horrifying twist: the use of a child executioner.

The UK-based SITE group, which monitors jihadist activity, posted the video online. Lasting just over 7½ minutes, it appears to show the shootings of two alleged Russian spies at the hands of a young boy dressed in a black sweater with camouflage trousers.

Pale, with long, straight hair and doll-like features, he appears to be about 12. The video, titled “Uncovering an Enemy Within,” purports to show confessions, with

the men answering questions put to them in Russian. They give such information as their names and dates of birth speaking calmly while starkly lighted against a white background.

According to SITE’s transcription, the pair admit to working for Russian intelligence and say they were instructed to gather information and to report back such details as where a particular Islamic State leader resided.

Near the end of the footage, the child is seen firing a pistol at the accused men, who are bound and kneeling.

According to SITE’s transcript, an interviewer asks the boy, “Who will you be in the future, God willing?” “I will be the one who slaughters you, oh disbelievers,” the child replies.

Photographer shot during Pakistan anti-Charlie Hebdo demonstration

By Adil Jawad and Zarah Khan
The Associated Press

KARACHI, Pakistan — A rally by Pakistani students against a French satirical weekly’s latest publication of a Prophet Muhammad cartoon turned violent on Friday, with police firing warning shots and water cannons to disperse the demonstration. A photographer with the Agence France-Presse was shot and wounded in the melee.

But although there were concerns that rallies against Charlie Hebdo’s new cover depicting the prophet — an act deemed insulting to many followers of Islam — would unravel into violence across the Muslim world, most of the protests elsewhere passed peacefully.

The weekly’s new issue with a drawing of Muhammad, a tear rolling down his cheek and holding a placard that reads “Je Suis

Charlie” — a saying that has swept France and the world — was an act of defiance in the wake of last week’s terrorist attack at the paper’s Paris office.

Pakistan has condemned the Paris massacre but many people in this overwhelmingly Muslim country view the magazine’s prophet caricatures as a profound insult. Protesters took to the streets after midday prayers in the port city of Karachi, the eastern city of Lahore and the capital of Islamabad to denounce the weekly.

In Karachi, clashes erupted when the protesters started heading toward the French Consulate. They began throwing stones at the police, who tried to push them back with water cannons and tear gas.

AFP news director Michele Leridon said photographer Asif Hassan was shot and wounded. He underwent surgery and “his life does not seem in danger,” Leridon said.

WORLD

NASA photos spot missing Mars lander

The Associated Press

LONDON — The European Space Agency's Beagle-2 lander, which had been lost on Mars since 2003, has been found, the agency said Friday.

New photos taken by the high-resolution camera on NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter show the lander partially deployed on the surface of the Red Planet, it said.

Rudolf Schmidt, ESA's Mars Express project manager at the time, called the finding "excellent news." He said that not knowing what happened to Beagle-2 had "remained a nagging worry."

Beagle-2 has not been heard of since it separated from its mother ship, but ESA said the images prove the entry, descent and landing sequence did work and that it successfully landed on Mars on Christmas Day in 2003.

UK Space Agency chief executive David Parker said the discovery of the craft showed its complex landing procedures had worked.

"This finding makes the case that Beagle-2 was more of a success than we previously knew and undoubtedly an important step in Europe's continuing exploration of Mars," he said.

Parker took a London news conference that there are no indications the lander crashed.

"These images are consistent with the Beagle-2 having successfully landed on Mars but then only partially deploying itself," he said.

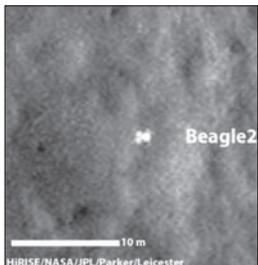
The British-built Beagle-2 was launched on ESA's Mars Express orbiter and was supposed to look for signs of alien life.

It was released from its mother ship on Dec. 19, 2003, and was supposed to land six days later, but no communications with the lander were ever established.

Professor Mark Sims, of the University of Leicester, who worked on the project, said the new information shows the team came extremely close to its goal of getting data from Mars, with the deployment failing only in its final stage.

"To be frank, I had all but given up hope of ever knowing what happened to Beagle-2," he said.

After the project failed, two U.S. space craft landed on Mars and sent back many pictures and extensive scientific data.



A high-resolution camera aboard NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter has located the Beagle-2 close to the center of its planned landing area. The lander has been lost on the Red Planet since 2003.



Pope Francis stands with children of the Anak-Tnk Foundation, which helps poor and homeless children, in Manila, Philippines, after celebrating Mass on Friday.

Pope defends church's stance on contraception

The Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — Pope Francis issued his strongest defense yet of church teaching opposing artificial contraception on Friday, using a rally in Asia's largest Catholic nation to urge families to be "sanctuaries of respect for life."

Francis also denounced the corruption that has plagued the Philippines for decades and urged officials to instead work to end its "scandalous" poverty and social inequalities during his first full day in Manila, where he received a rock star's welcome at every turn.

Security was tighter than it has ever been for this pope, who relishes plunging into crowds. Cellphone service around the city was intentionally jammed for a second day on orders of the National Telecommunications Commission and roadblocks along Francis' motorcade route snarled traffic for miles.

Police vans followed his motorcade while officers formed human chains in front of barricades to hold back the tens of thousands of wildly cheering Filipinos who packed boulevards for hours just for a glimpse of his four-door Volkswagen passing by.

Police said another 86,000 gathered outside one of Manila's biggest sports arenas, capacity 20,000, where Francis held his first encounter with the Filipino masses: a meeting with families. There, he firmly upheld church teaching opposing artificial contraception and endeared himself to the crowd with off-the-cuff jokes and even a



Filipino Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, left, shows Pope Francis how to give the hand sign for "I love you" at the Mall of Asia arena in Manila, Philippines, on Friday.

well-intentioned attempt at sign language.

Francis has largely shied away from emphasizing church teaching on hot-button issues, saying the previous two popes made the teaching well-known and that he wants to focus on making the church a place of welcome, not rules. But his comments were clearly a nod to the local church, which recently lost a significant fight when President Benigno Aquino III pushed through a reproductive health law that allows the government to provide artificial birth control to the poor.

"Be sanctuaries of respect for life, proclaiming the sacredness of every human life from conception to natural death," Francis exhorted the crowd. "What a gift this would be to society if every Christian family lived fully its noble vocation."

Schools closed amid Ebola crisis to reopen

The Associated Press

ACCRA, Ghana — All schools in Guinea will reopen on Monday after being closed amid the deadly Ebola outbreak, Guinea's health minister said Friday.

Health minister Remy Laham told The Associated Press in Accra, Ghana, during a summit by the Economic Community of West African States that the action is being taken "because the situation has improved." In Liberia, the schools are reopening "next month," said the Liberian Embassy's Charges d'Affaires in Ghana, Musa Ruthe.

The developments mirror how Ebola is affecting the three hardest-hit nations. There have been gains against the virus, which is spread through contact with bodily fluids of a person showing symptoms, or of a corpse, in Guinea and Liberia, but the disease continues to spread in Sierra Leone.

Schools will remain closed in Sierra Leone, that country's health minister said. "We are monitoring the situation and would take a decision after that," said Sierra Leone Health Minister Foday Siera Lalah. "We have imported thermometers to be used for surveillance in the schools. Once that is done and the number of cases keep falling, we would consider (reopening schools)."

In the most recent 24-hour monitoring period, 16 new Ebola cases were discovered in Sierra Leone, according to government figures.

Online rumors of dog culling has Russian pet owners on edge

The Washington Post

MOSCOW — Panic is percolating among Russia's dog owners after Internet warnings that vigilantes are planning a canine culling next week, ostensibly to kill off strays, but endangering pets as well.

Dog owners are warning each other on various Russian chat forums and social media sites to look out for poisoned food, carry first-aid kits, and know how to give their dogs emergency doses of vitamin B6, should they show signs of being infected with Isornid, an anti-rabies activist drug that is expected to be the preferred poison.

Nobody knows exactly who will be doing the poisoning, or where it will take place. But what in other countries might be dismissed as an online hoax is in Russia, inspiring all serious media attention and a backlash from animal rights activists, who are directing their anxieties about this latest pop-poisoning scare toward the Russian authorities.

During the Soviet period, the government helped control the population of strays by catching and often killing them.

But in modern-day Russia that doesn't sit well. In 2014, when officials in Sochi ordered a culling of stray dogs in advance of the Winter Olympic Games there, the backlash was so strong that authorities pledged to build a shelter for the animals instead.

Yet incidents of mass dog poisonings continue to be reported.

STARS AND STRIPES

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Stars and Stripes (USPS 04717900) is published weekly (except Dec. 25 and Jan. 1) for 50 cents Monday through Thursday and for \$1 on Friday by Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002; APO AF 96338-5002. Periodicals postage paid at San Francisco, California. Postmaster: Send address changes to Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, APO AF 96338-5002.

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OPINION
 Attacks revive Jews' fear in Israel

By DANIEL GORDIS
 Bloomberg News

The horrors that unfolded in Paris and its outskirts last week captivated Israel no less than any other Western country, but they have played differently in the Jewish State, which knows well what it is like to have cities turned into war zones. In Israel, chilling scenes like the blood-soaked floor of the Charlie Hebdo offices unfold far too often, as they did most recently in a Jerusalem synagogue.

The Charlie Hebdo attack and the hostage scene in the kosher market did more than evoke recent Israeli memories. Far more poignantly, they brought images of the Holocaust to Israelis' minds. The image of frightened European Jews hiding in a freezer was for many Israelis a haunting reminder of Jews hiding from Nazis, as were images of parents holding young children and fleeing for their lives. (Israel's press also went to great lengths to praise the young Muslim man who protected some of the patrons of the Hyper Cacher supermarket; Israeli newspapers plastered his photograph across their front pages.)

The massacre in the Charlie Hebdo offices had Holocaust echoes, too. Georges Wolinski, the 80-year-old Charlie Hebdo cartoonist, was born to a Polish Jewish father who had fled to Tunisia to escape the Nazis. In 1936, Siegfried Wolinski was killed in Tunisia, and his family left for Paris. Georges, Siegfried's son, was killed by Muslim extremists in Paris last week.

Such moments afford an ironic sense of confirmation for the Jewish State; modern

political Zionism was born of a Jewish consensus that Europe was a bloodbath just waiting to happen.

Even bitter political rivals such as Ze'ev Jabotinsky (father of Revisionist Zionism and mentor to Menachem Begin) and David Ben-Gurion (Israel's first prime minister and a leader of Labor Zionism), who detested each other and disagreed about most everything, agreed that Jewish life in Europe was doomed and that the only answer was a state.

The events in Paris seemed to confirm again their prediction. The rate of Jewish immigration from France to Israel had already doubled to 7,000 in 2014, making France Israel's largest source of immigrants. That rate is expected to rise to about 10,000 immigrants in 2015. In the aftermath of the attacks, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called for French Jews to come to Israel en masse, while France's prime minister, Manuel Valls — apparently taking seriously the possibility of mass Jewish emigration — said if 100,000 French Jews were to depart, France would no longer be France. The burial of the four Jewish victims of the supermarket attack in Israel, and not in France, held symbolism that was lost on no one; in moments of crisis, Israel goes to great pains to remind the world that Jews have only one true home.

Whatever advantage Israelis might have gleaned from the horrors, however, was short-lived. Although the image of Netanyahu walking arm-in-arm with other world leaders in Paris suggested an easing of Israel's pariah status in France, a darker back-story soon emerged. The French had asked Netanyahu not to come because they

did not wish to highlight the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during the march. When he insisted on attending, Netanyahu was told that Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas (who is not technically a head of a state) would be invited and would also be at the front row. Netanyahu and French President Francois Hollande attended a ceremony in Paris' Grand Synagogue after the march, but when Israel's prime minister got up to speak, the French president walked out.

And even as hundreds of people were attending the funeral of one of the supermarket victims, Israel's Foreign Ministry released a report predicting that Israel's international standing would plummet further in 2015. Europe would extend its boycotts of Israeli products, the Foreign Ministry said, and after Israel's elections, the U.S. might not use its veto in the U.N.'s General Assembly on Israel's behalf.

A week that began with horrific images of Jewish vulnerability allowed Israelis to believe, however fleetingly, that the necessity of a Jewish State was obvious to all. By the end of the week, though, the press was calling Netanyahu's visit to Paris a public relations disaster, an event Israel's government was predicting that Israel's standing would only worsen. It was a week, some Israelis muttered, that demonstrated with regard to both Netanyahu and Europe that "plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose" (The more it changes, the more it's the same thing).

Daniel Gordis, senior vice president and Koret distinguished fellow at Shalom College in Jerusalem, is the author of "Menachem Begin: The Battle for Israel's Soul" and "The Promise of Israel."

Political muscle of US blacks has gone soft

By COURTLAND MILLOY
 The Washington Post

WHAT if blacks were as politically unified as our racial attitudes make us appear to be? Suppose, for instance, we did more than believe that racial discrimination exists but actually used our political and economic muscle to remedy race-specific problems?

There are 42 million blacks in this country with a combined purchasing power expected to hit \$1.1 trillion this year. If Black America were an actual nation state instead of just a shaky state of mind, it would have a population slightly less than Spain's and rank as the 46th-richest nation in the world, according to a statistical profile published in the Atlantic last year. And yet, blacks spent much of 2014 on bended knee — pleading for justice, crying for jobs, begging for equal treatment, with President Barack Obama declaring that "a country's conscience has to be sometimes triggered" to bring awareness to the killings of unarmed black men and boys by police. Stand up, Black America.

Leading up to the 2014 midterm elections, Obama urged his base of support not to sit this one out. Too much was at stake. Black people needed to be as fired up as elderly white Republicans. Yet a poll by the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee leading up to the elections found that 67 percent of Obama's base didn't even know that an election was being held. No point

in complaining about Republicans in Congress now.

An Associated Press survey two years ago found that 56 percent of Americans have explicit "anti-black attitudes" — and the rest don't love you all that much, either. Harvard University professor Michael I. Norton found last year that many whites now believe anti-white racism is a bigger problem than anti-black bias — the latter having been all but eliminated, they say.

On the most important issues, a NBC News/Marist College poll found last month that 82 percent of whites have a "great deal" of confidence that police officers in their community treat blacks and whites the same, compared with only 12 percent of blacks. So whose "conscience," exactly, are black people trying to prick?

The answer ought to be our own. Black people have serious problems to be sure — extraordinarily high incarceration and homicide rates, for starters. But the resources at our disposal are enormous, if not always used most effectively.

"African-Americans make more shopping trips than the average consumer," reports Target Market News, an authority on black consumer habits. "They are more likely than average to buy beauty and ethnic products, children's cologne, toiletries for both men and women, frozen meats, and fresh vegetables and grains."

We have sweet-smelling kids but no major black-owned publishing companies that can reflect their sweet little faces in children's books. There are fewer than 30 black-owned banks in the country, accord-

ing to the Federal Reserve, compared with about 130 such institutions at the turn of the 20th century. You'd think black people would be seeking more community-oriented banks as alternatives to the big Wall Street firms that ripped them off during the Great Recession.

Black-owned businesses are the second-largest employer of black people, next to the federal government. But only 7 percent of small businesses are owned by blacks. How unfortunate that the president must go hat in hand to Corporate America, asking for \$200 million to help black men and boys stay in school and get jobs. The program is called "My Brother's Keeper." Better we start more businesses and hire these black men and boys. Let the brothers keep themselves.

As shoppers, African-Americans are influencers and trendsetters whose purchasing habits affect others," Target Market News said. "They set trends in their purchase of apparel, autos and food and in their use of social media."

Surely we can influence more than that. The Atlantic article cited a speech by the black rapper W.E.B. Du Bois, given more than 80 years ago, titled "A Negro Nation Within a Nation." In it, he declared: "The peculiar position of Negroes in America offers an opportunity. . . . With the use of their political power, their power as consumers, and their brainpower. . . Negroes can develop the United States an economic nation within a nation. . . ."

At the very least, we could stop expecting people who hate us to save us.

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OPINION

It makes no sense for Romney to run again

By CHRIS CILLIZZA
The Washington Post

EVER since the news broke last week that Mitt Romney is not only thinking about running for president again in 2016 but also making moves that suggest he is going to run, I've been trying to figure out why. I've talked to Republicans who are close to Romney and Republicans who are only interested observers.

For people outside of Romney's direct orbit, there is bafflement about what Romney is doing. Closer allies explain, without their names attached, why Romney running again isn't as odd as it is being portrayed. "Lots of people get elected to governor or senator on their third try," said one Romney supporter urging the former governor to run. "Nothing magical about that not being a presidential."

Those conversations — and my own thinking — have produced three basic reasons to explain why Romney is doing what he is doing:

1. He doesn't believe Jeb Bush is a terribly strong candidate/front-runner.
 2. He doesn't think anyone in the current field can beat Hillary Rodham Clinton.
 3. He believes he has something more/new/different to offer the country at a critical moment in history.
- Numbers one and two are, of course, intricately linked. Romney doesn't like Bush's public critique of the sort of campaign he ran in 2012 and believes that Bush drastically misunderstands how the modern political world works. Bush, who has run for office since 2002, has deep vulnerabilities on the work — from finance to education — that he has done since leaving office, Romney believes. And, Bush simply doesn't understand (or doesn't want to understand) the problems

he has on that front.

And if you believe, as Romney does, that Bush is much weaker than most people — including many Republican donors — currently regard him, then the prospect of a Clinton presidency seems very real. "Romney is the only person who is beating anybody thinking about running in both parties," said one Romney supporter. "He only beats Hillary by a point or two but still, if you are beating everyone and can raise money, that's not a reason to run but it's certainly not a reason not to run.

Fair enough. It is absolutely true that Bush remains largely untested in the world of Vine, Instagram and Twitter on the campaign trail. And that his gubernatorial — and, more importantly, post-gubernatorial — record has not taken anywhere near the scrutiny it will if/when he runs. And that Romney is a proven fundraiser and vote-getter.

It's that third point, though, that Romney, according to those who know him best, sees as most important — and on which he and I part ways.

There is something in Mitt that drives him to solve problems," explained one Romney confidante of the governor's mindset. "When he sees something in a mess, he doesn't have it in his DNA to sit back and let someone else just try to clean it up."

Added another: "He believes he can help the country and help people."

I don't doubt Romney's sincerity. But I do think he and those close to him are fooling themselves that he can simply proclaim that he is running a new and different campaign — one based on foreign policy and poverty, according to Politico — and that will be an impressive and unimaginable success scenario. The reason Romney is in the position he is — nationally known, a massive fundraising network — is because of his 2008 and 2012 campaigns. Those are the pluses of having run twice before. But



there are also significant minuses in having done so. Does Romney think either his Republican opponents or potentially Clinton in a general election are going to just let the whole "47 percent" thing drop? Or that the car elevator "severely" conservative and the picture of him with money coming out of his suit jacket are going to disappear?

Um, they won't. The second Romney declares — and, even now as he moves toward a candidacy — all of the things people didn't care about him and the man creep back to the front of their minds. The image of him as an out-of-touch plutocrat, the Obama theme so effectively painted, will linger no matter what Romney says or does as a candidate. And unlike in 2012 when he

was seen as the de facto front-runner due to his close-but-no-cigar bid in 2008, the logic for why he would choose to run again in 2016 would make him a puzzle in the eyes of many Republican primary voters. People don't usually vote for puzzles.

There's no question that Romney feels a call to service and believes that he is uniquely able to solve the problems of the GOP and the country at the moment. But the assumption that he can pluck the good things from his past candidacies while wiping away all the bad stuff from voters' minds is a deeply flawed reading of how politics works. And it's why it makes little sense for Romney to run again.

Chris Cillizza writes "The Fix," a politics blog for The Washington Post, and covers the White House.

American expats face tough questions in Europe

By ANN JONES

IN my long nomadic life, I've been to both poles and most countries in between. I still remember when to be tried as an American was envied. The country where I grew up after World War II seemed to be respected and admired around the world.

Today, as one of 1.6 million Americans living in Europe, I instead face hard questions about our nation. Wherever I travel, Europeans, Asians and Africans ask expatriates like me to explain everything odd or troubling about the conduct of the United States. Politely people, normally reluctant to risk offending a guest, ask pointedly about America's trigger-happiness, cutthroat free-marketearing, and "exceptionality."

Their questions share an underlying theme: Have Americans gone over the edge? Are you crazy?

At the absolute top of the list: "Why would anyone oppose national health care?" Many countries have had some form of national health care since the 1930s, Germany since 1880. Some versions, as in France and Britain, have devolved into two-tier public and private systems. Yet even the privileged would not begrudge their fellow citizens government-funded comprehensive health care. That so many Americans do strikes Europeans as baffling, if not brutal.

In the Scandinavian countries, long considered to be the most socially progressive in the world, a national (physical and mental) health program is a big part — but only a part — of a more general social wel-

fare system. In Norway, where I live, all citizens also have: access to free education from age 6 through specialty training or university; low cost, subsidized preschool; unemployment benefits, job placement and paid retraining; paid parental leave; old-age pensions, and more. These benefits are not a "safety net" — that is, charitable payments grudgingly bestowed upon the needy. They are universal, publicly available, based on human right, promoting social harmony.

This is the Nordic Model: a balance of regulated capitalism, universal social welfare, political democracy, and the highest levels of gender and economic equity on the planet. It's their system, begun in Sweden in the 1930s and developed across Scandinavia in the postwar period. Yes, they pay for it through high taxation. (Though compared with the U.S. tax code, Norway's progressive income tax is remarkably streamlined.) And despite the efforts of the personal conservative government to muck it up, they maintain it. Why? They like it. International rankings cite Norway as the best place to grow old, to be a woman and to raise a child. The title of "best" or "happiest" place to live on Earth comes down to a neighborly contest quality of life and the neighborly quality of social democracies, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Iceland.

All the Nordic countries broadly agree that only when people's basic needs are met — when they cease to worry about jobs, education, health care, transportation, etc. — can they truly be free to do things they like. While the U.S. settles for the fantasy that

every kid has an equal shot at the American dream, Nordic social welfare systems lay the foundations for a more equitable and individualism. These ideas are not novel. They are implied in the preamble to our own Constitution. You know, the part about "We the People" forming "a more perfect Union" to "promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity."

Knowing this, a Norwegian is appalled at what America is doing to its posterity today. That top chief executives are paid 300 to 400 times as much as an average employee. Or that Govs. Sam Brownback, of Kansas, and Chris Christie, of New Jersey, having run up their state's debts by cutting taxes for the rich, now plan to cover the loss with money snatched from public pension funds. That two-thirds of American college students finish in the red, some owing \$100,000 or more. That in the U.S., still the world's richest country, 1 in 3 children live in poverty. Or that the multitrillion-dollar wars of Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama were fought on a credit card, to be paid off by the kids.

Implications of America's uncivilized inhumanity lurk in the questions foreign observers ask me: Why can't you shut down that concentration camp in Cuba? Why can't you stop interfering with women's health care? What is it about science and climate change you can't understand?

And the most pressing question of all: Why do you send your military all over the world to stir up trouble for all of us?

Europeans often connect America's reckless conduct abroad to its refusal

to put its own house in order. They've watched the U.S. unravel its flimsy safety net, fail to replace decaying infrastructure, weaken organized labor, bring its national legislature to a standstill and create the greatest degree of economic inequality in almost a century. As they see it, with ever less personal security and next to no social welfare system, Americans are bound to be anxious and fearful. They understand as well why so many Americans have lost trust in a national government that for three decades has done so little for them (save Obama's endlessly embattled modest health care effort).

In Norway's capital, where a statue of a contemplative President Franklin D. Roosevelt overlooks the harbor, many America-watchers think he may have been the last U.S. president who understood and could explain to the citizenry what government might do for all of them.

It's hard to pin down why America is as it is today, and — believe me — even harder to explain it to others. Some Europeans who interrogate me say that the U.S. is "crazy" — or "paranoid," "self-absorbed," or simply "behind the times." Others, more charitably, imply that Americans are merely "misguided" or "asleep" and may still recover sanity. But wherever I travel, the questions follow, each suggesting that the U.S., if not exactly crazy, is decidedly a danger to itself and others.

Ann Jones is the author of "They Were Soldiers: How the Wounded Return From America's Wars — The Untold Story." This dispatch first appeared in the Los Angeles Times.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Woman finds python during potty break

PA SHARON — A 62-year-old woman said she discovered a python on her bathroom floor when she went to take an overnight potty break.

Debbie LaMotte told The Herald newspaper of Sharon that she first thought the snake was a scarf lying on the floor “because it had such a beautiful pattern.” But when she prodded it with her cane, the snake’s head moved.

The incident happened about 4 a.m. Tuesday at her apartment in Riverview Manor in Sharon. That’s about 60 miles northwest of Pittsburgh.

Police came in and, LaMotte says, wound up using her “old lady grabber” — a long-handled device that helps people pick up items without bending over — to lift the snake into a bag.

She believes the snake may have been a slither-away pet that squeezed under her front door.

After heist, man stops for chicken and biscuits

PA NEW KENSINGTON — Police arrested a western Pennsylvania bank robbery suspect when he stopped for chicken and biscuits at a restaurant two blocks away.

Online court records don’t list an attorney for Shane Lindsey, 32, who was arrested Wednesday about 20 minutes after he allegedly robbed the Citizens Bank in downtown New Kensington.

Police told the Valley News Dispatch of Tarentum that witnesses saw a bald man matching Lindsey’s description run toward a restaurant after the heist. Police knew the business had surveillance video and went inside to view it hoping for clues as to where the suspect went — only to find Lindsey eating at a booth.

Police said the video showed the robbery suspect run past the restaurant and then pause before coming back and going inside. Lindsey had been staying in a nearby halfway house.

Strip club awarded for its cleanliness

IL CHICAGO — A Chicago strip club has received an award for its efforts at dressing up the neighborhood.

The Admiral Theatre on Chicago’s northwest side received one of Albany Park Neighbors’ six “Block Star Business” awards this week. The group’s website says the honor is meant to spotlight businesses that work to keep the neighborhood clean and presentable.

“It’s difficult to dispute the Admiral doesn’t deserve the award,” group member Shylo Bissett said. “They recently upgraded their facade and even during construction it was still tidy, it was still passable.”

Nick Cecola, the Admiral’s creative director, said he thought it was a scam when he received an email informing him about the award.

The club plans to showcase the certificate in the main lobby.

THE CENSUS

989.98

The amount in dollars of a tip that an anonymous passenger gave to a Philadelphia cab driver. The fare was \$4.31 for the Dec. 13 trip. Omar Maiga’s bosses revealed the hefty, holiday-season gratuity Wednesday after waiting to make sure the credit card cleared and it wasn’t an error.



WILFREDO LEZ/AP

Seaside celebrity

Journalists and staff members from the Miami Seaquarium watch as a female loggerhead sea turtle named Trigger, makes her way to the ocean Wednesday at Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park in Key Biscayne, Fla. Trigger was rescued last February near Fort Lauderdale. She was emaciated, covered in parasites and had an old boat-strike wound that needed to calcify properly. Trigger weighed 72 pounds when she was rescued and now weighs 157 pounds after a successful rehabilitation at the Miami Seaquarium.

Woman drives drunk to jail, ends up in jail

MI BAY CITY — Police said a 49-year-old woman who drove drunk to the Bay County Jail ended up getting put behind bars at the facility.

The Bay City Times reported sheriff’s deputies around 1:45 a.m. Saturday spotted a car parked using two spaces in the lot that was partially in a snowbank. Undersheriff Troy Cunningham said the woman was found passed out behind the wheel of the car, which was still running.

Cunningham said several alcohol containers were found inside the car. The woman told police she was heading to Bay City when she stopped.

California girl’s balloon message gets response

CA WHITTIER — Every year on her late father’s birthday, Ashlynn Marracino writes a message to him on a bal-

loon and sends it aloft.

This year the Southern California teen got an unexpected response.

The Whittier Daily News reported the balloon flew 436 miles north to Auburn, Calif., where it ended up in the hands of Lisa Swisley.

Swisley says she became emotional after reading the message and decided to look Ashlynn up on Facebook. She discovered the Whittier High School junior dreams about attending Humboldt State University and playing softball there.

Swisley reached out to the softball coach at the university and put him in touch with Ashlynn, making the girl’s dream one step closer to coming true.

Polygamous group can’t use the Mormon name

UT SALT LAKE CITY — The Supreme Court in the Canadian province of British Columbia has banned a polygamous group there from using the

name of the mainstream Mormon church.

The order issued Monday prohibits a small polygamist group run by Winston Blackmore from using the Utah-based church’s official name: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It also forbids the sect from using “Latter-day Saints,” “Mormon” or any other name that creates confusion.

Eric Hawkins, spokesman for the LDS Church in Salt Lake City, said they are pleased with the decision that protects church interests and reduces confusion.

Man caught on camera stealing cop’s bicycle

PA PHILADELPHIA — Investigators are looking for a bandit who was captured on video taking off with a Philadelphia Police bicycle.

The theft took place Jan. 9 in the lobby of a high-rise building in downtown Philadelphia while officers were taking a police report.

Police said officers were on the

fourth floor responding to a call and left the bicycle in the lobby, where a man dressed in a tan jacket and gray hooded sweat-shirt took off with it.

Video shows the man exiting an elevator and looking at the black Trek bicycle as he walks by. Soon after, he returns, looks around and wheels it outside.

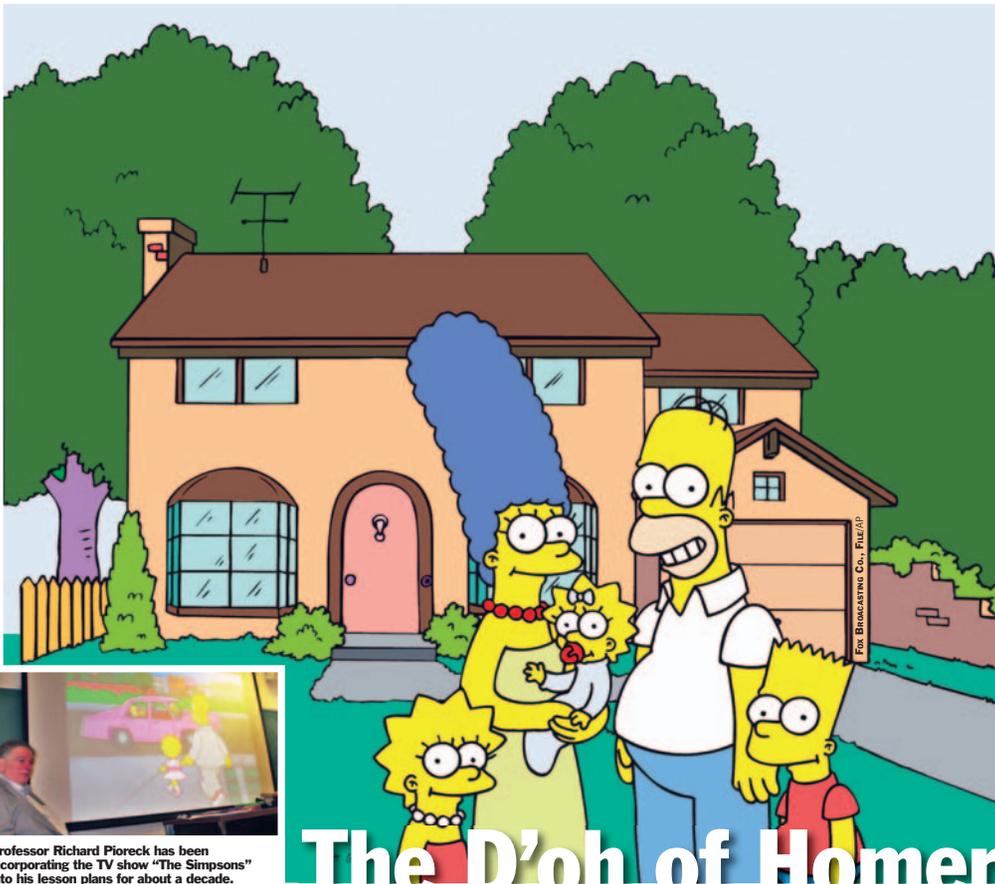
Auction house guilty in wildlife smuggling case

FL MIAMI — A South Florida auction house and its president have pleaded guilty to federal wildlife smuggling conspiracy charges in a case involving rhinoceros horns, elephant ivory and corals.

The pleas were entered Wednesday by Christopher Hayes, 55, of Wellington and his company, Elite Decorative Arts of Boynton Beach. Prosecutors said Hayes sold horns of at least six endangered black rhinos, four of them to undercover U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service investigators.

From wire reports

LIFESTYLE



The D'oh of Homer

Professors using satirical references from TV's 'Simpsons' as a teaching tool

BY FRANK ELTMAN
The Associated Press

BART and Lisa Simpson have been in elementary school for 25 years. But that hasn't stopped them from showing up on university campuses.

Universities across the U.S. are using satirical references from "The Simpsons" to grab students' attention and convey lessons in literature and popular culture.

"If the references are important enough to be lampooned by 'The Simpsons,' these works must be important cultural milestones," says Hofstra University adjunct English professor Richard Pioreck, who has been incorporating the denizens of Springfield into his courses for about a decade.

He teaches a course about the Broadway theater and how "The Simpsons" have embraced various musicals. Next semester, he shifts to an online literature course titled "The D'oh of Homer" that includes readings from Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven"

and "The Fall of the House of Usher," and Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol"—all referenced in "Simpsons" episodes.

"Teachers need to keep things fresh," says Denise DuVernay, an adjunct English professor at St. Xavier University in Chicago, co-author of the book "The Simpsons in the Classroom: Embiggening the Learning Experience with the Wisdom of Springfield."

In recent years, other universities have had courses focused on the prime-time show, including Oswego State University in New York and San Jose State University in California.

Longtime "Simpsons" executive produc-

er Al Jean says he's not surprised professors have embraced the program. "Some people may think we are very vulgar, but then they find there is a lot of warmth and emotion and many people are surprised at the intelligence of some of the jokes," he says.

Pioreck says he decided to use the show after a friend of his daughter's passed an exam on "The Devil and Daniel Webster" by watching a "Simpsons" episode that focused on the story.

He found that the animated sitcom usually aims for more than just the easy punchlines, with writers layering the plotlines with humor that can be appreciated by low-

brow and highbrow audiences alike.

For example, in one episode that parodied "A Streetcar Named Desire," the dynamics of Homer and Marge Simpson's marriage are deftly illustrated through a comparison to the relationship of the couple in the play, Stella and Stanley.

"The Simpsons" do a great deal of parodying, whether it's a complete script or a number here or there," Pioreck says. "Quite often they choose family relationships, what makes a man a success is one of the things that we pursue. And you can see what happens to Homer. Even though it looks like he's not a good father, he steps up and he comes through in the end."

One young Hofstra student confesses she'd never seen the sitcom before signing up for the Simpsons-Broadway course.

Elizabeth Sarian, a 21-year-old music performance major from Plainview says she signed up because of her interest in Broadway, not the cartoon.

Still, she says, the connection to "The Simpsons" is hardly trivial "because it really does teach you a lot from watching it."

"If the references are important enough to be lampooned by 'The Simpsons,' these works must be important cultural milestones."

Richard Pioreck
adjunct English professor, Hofstra University

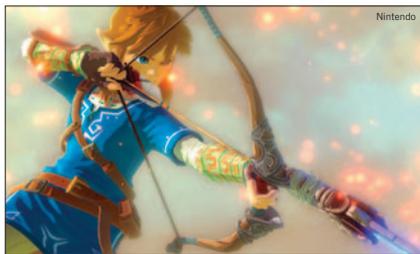
VIDEO GAMES

11 most anticipated games of 2015

BY MICHAEL DARNELL / Stars and Stripes

Last year's E3 Electronic Entertainment Expo was largely derided for its emphasis on games that would never see the light of day in 2014. Fans were upset that most of the great-looking games were scheduled for the distant future of 2015. This was bad news for us then, but it also provided an excellent glimpse into what to expect out of gaming this year.

Ladies and gentlemen, the future is looking bright.



'The Legend of Zelda'

Unless you've just started playing video games 10 minutes ago, you're at least somewhat familiar with the "Zelda" legacy. In more than 20 years, the series has evolved from the prototypical adventure game to a genuine cultural touchstone. There are a lot of reasons for that, but No. 1 is the quality of the games themselves. Very few of the "Zelda" games are anything but great (the disastrous CD-i abominations notwithstanding), and almost all of them end up as the best games released that year.

"Zelda" for the Wii U is shaping up to be another worthy entry in the venerable franchise. The game is still in the early stages of development but, from what we've seen so far, the focus on a more open-ended world looks to shake things up a bit. If creator Eiji Aonuma can pull off his vision, we could end up with a game that combines the best of "Zelda" with the best of open-world games like "Skyrim."

Platform: Wii U

Due: TBD, 2015

Online: tinyurl.com/olep4kq



'Tom Clancy's The Division'

Tom Clancy's video games are more or less a genre unto themselves. Even though the author is unfortunately no longer with us, the legacy he built with Red Storm Entertainment remains strong. "The Division," developed by Red Storm and Ubisoft Massive, is the latest realistic military shooter bearing his name. It also is looking like one of the best since 2001's "Ghost Recon."

"The Division" is set in New York City after a plague wipes out swaths of the population. The ensuing chaos causes the activation of an elite unit of military operatives who are tasked with preserving what remains of society. It sounds like the perfect plot for a great action game, and the videos we've seen show promise. It's also an online, co-op game that places a premium on social interaction and exploration. There looks to be plenty of PvP action, but the bulk of the game seems to center on cooperation and teamwork rather than kill-death ratios.

Platforms: Xbox One, PS4, PC

Due: TBD, 2015

Online: tinyurl.com/maz94fo

The Xbox One and PlayStation 4 are entering the second full year of their lifespan — historically the year when consoles really hit their stride.

Wii U owners have a new "Zelda" to look forward to, and PC gaming is looking stronger and more diverse than ever before.

Here are some of the games set to be released in 2015 that we're most excited about.



'Bloodborne'

This role-playing action game springs from the mind of "Dark Souls" creator Hidetaka Miyazaki. Fans of that series, or its predecessor "Demon's Souls," likely already have this PlayStation 4 exclusive on their radar. For those unfamiliar with either series, this could be an excellent entry point into what looks to be a brutally challenging adventure in keeping with the legacy of Miyazaki's past creations.

"Bloodborne" drops the medieval influence of the "Souls" series for a more gothic Victorian atmosphere. You'll still be fighting the undead, monsters and massively oversized creatures, but now you'll be doing with it with bullets, as well as swords and axes.

Gone too is the plodding, defensive pace of "Souls," replaced with a much more twitch-based combat system that rewards offense as much as defense. And if the videos Sony has released are anything to go on, the infamous challenge of the "Souls" series remains very much intact.

Platform: PS4

Due: March 24

Online: tinyurl.com/n9sjeio



'Halo 5: Guardians'

Despite the failings of last year's "The Master Chief Collection," it's hard to not be a little excited for a new, proper "Halo" game.

Little remains known about the single-player campaign, but the multiplayer beta is ongoing as we speak, and early impressions are very positive.

The new additions to the tried-and-true formula, like jet packs and powerslides, are adding new dimensions, while 343 Industries continues to listen to fan feedback to tweak the overall experience.

One immediate example of this is how they listened to feedback on the sprint mechanic, which is now tied into shield regeneration.

Regardless of how you feel about that particular feature, it's promising that they're actively listening to their player base to balance the game out, and for that they get a spot on our most anticipated games of 2015.

Platform: Xbox One

Due: TBD, 2015

Online: tinyurl.com/nxjz8ke

VIDEO GAMES

**'No Man's Sky'**

This spacefaring adventure game from Hello Games is difficult to fully explain to the uninitiated. In "No Man's Sky," players are given a spaceship and set free in a massive universe. What they decide to do from that point on is entirely up to them.

The big draw of "No Man's Sky" is that unlike every other space exploration game to date, each of the planets is reachable through a seamless transition from the outer atmosphere to the planet's surface. No loading screens, no cutscenes showing a shuttle launch. You just fly there. Once on a planet's surface, players can scan local flora and fauna, each procedurally generated to give each planet its own set of unique attributes. You might be on an ice planet with roving bands of giant orange dinosaurs, or a lush garden world full of hostile enemies.

While there is supposedly an overarching plot of reaching the center of the galaxy, expect the bulk of the "No Man's Sky" experience to be player-driven and not bound to a series of follow-the-glowing-dot-on-the-minimap missions.

If Hello Games pulls this off, they're going to revolutionize the concept of sandbox gaming.

Platforms: PS4, PC

Due: TBD, 2015

Online: tinyurl.com/nca77mu

**'Metal Gear Solid V: The Phantom Pain'**

It's pretty telling that the prologue chapter to "Phantom Pain" ended up in many of 2014's game of the year lists, even though "Ground Zeroes" was basically a glorified demo. In that demo, we got a glimpse of the enormity of "Phantom Pain's" world and a reaffirmation that Metal Gear's creator Hideo Kojima remains gloriously off center. "Phantom Pain" is ostensibly an action-stealth game centered on Big Boss' adventures in a war-torn landscape. "Metal Gear" games are never quite that simple, though, and this installment is no different.

Big Boss will add mountain climbing and horseback riding to his repertoire, and the base-building and soldier recruitment from the underrated "Peace Walker." He'll also have to manage relationships with AI companions, of which only two — the troubled soldier Quiet and a wolf companion — have been revealed. The most recent gameplay trailer shows that the zealot of past "Metal Gear" games has not been minimized whatsoever. For instance, this is likely the first military action-stealth game that features goat herding and eliminating enemy vehicles with balloons.

Platforms: Xbox One, PS4, PC, Xbox 360, PS3

Due: TBD, 2015

Online: tinyurl.com/lo5xg6u

**'The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt'**

CD Projekt Red's magnum opus might be the most ambitious role-playing game coming out this year. The final game in the Geralt trilogy is being billed as an open-world game where nearly every action has a consequence. The previous games remain the hallmark of the choice-and-consequence game philosophy, so there is little reason to doubt this one will be any different. "The Witcher 3" is also looking like one of the most visually detailed games coming out this year, which is impressive considering CD Projekt is aiming for a world size that dwarfs the competition. For the first time in the series, players will also be able to play as a second character, in this instance a sorceress by the name of Ciri. All in all, this is looking like the role-playing game to beat in 2015.

Platforms: Xbox One, PS4, PC

Due: May 19

Online: tinyurl.com/n57o5u8

**'Batman: Arkham Knight'**

This continuation of the excellent "Batman: Arkham" games was supposed to hit shelves last year, but Rocksteady Studios pushed it back to polish up some of the rough spots. Last year's loss is this year's gain. This sequel's main draw, besides the continuation of the best Batman video game series ever made, is the addition of the Batmobile as a playable element. For the first time in the Arkham series, players will be able to jump behind the wheel of Batman's famed car to explore the greatly expanded series and to solve puzzles. The most recent series of trailers shows a tweaked combat system that shows Batman in his prime, easily taking out chumps left and right, and a story that ties in directly to the events of "Arkham City."

Platforms: Xbox One, PS4, PC

Due: June 2

Online: tinyurl.com/k95qms0

**'Yoshi's Woolly World'**

The cutest game in the pipeline for 2015 is Nintendo's next platformer starring everyone's favorite dinosaur. "Yoshi's Woolly World" is a high-def take on the same visual style shown in 2010's "Kirby's Epic Yarn." Yoshi will be pulling apart enemies and weaving levels back together with the flick of a tongue or the toss of an egg.

Anyone impressed by previous fabric-based art styles will be blown away by the depth-of-field tricks and texturing in this game, which even in early previews looks astounding. The game sports a co-op mode, especially fun in this kind of remake-the-world type of environment. Players will use one another as egg ammo, working together to find hidden gems. This Nintendo title might just steal the cute crown back from Sony's "LittleBigPlanet."

Platform: Wii U

Due: Spring 2015

Online: tinyurl.com/omnuntur

**'Splatoon'**

It's not too often that we see truly unique shooters come down the pipeline, and it's even less frequent that shooters of any kind are published by Nintendo. This colorful, cheerful entry is looking like both. Rather than grizzled war veterans shooting off one-liners as often as bullets, "Splatoon" puts players in the tentacle-clad boots of squid people spouting colored ink across twists, turning maps.

Teams of squid people are pitted against each other as they each race to cover the map with their team's colors before the round ends. The team with the most coverage wins. The ink also doubles as a mode of transportation, as players can use their team's colors to "swim" through the ground, create bridges to higher points and slide up walls.

The recently announced single-player mode looks like a fun mashup of the multiplayer concept and the "Ratchet & Clank" series.

Everything we've seen so far is showing that "Splatoon" is going to be a great kid-friendly game to pick up when it releases later this year.

Platforms: Wii U

Due: TBD, 2015

Online: tinyurl.com/nzwtjnm

**'The Order: 1886'**

This is the first of the major games to be scheduled for release this year, and also one of the most anticipated and most contentious. Early videos showed this steampunk shooter to have some amazing visuals, but gameplay details were sparse. Here we are, just weeks away from release, and those details still remain vague.

The most recent set of videos show an abundance of cover-based shooting and quick-time events — both mechanics we're bored with — but it also shows an interesting setting and a unique atmosphere. Here's a bit of "The Order: 1886," but we've seen enough that we're bursting with excitement nonetheless.

Platform: PS4

Due: Feb. 20

Online: tinyurl.com/kz7lrb4

There are many other games that could have made this list, including "Uncharted 4," "Cuphead," "Rise of the Tomb Raider" and "Crackdown." That fact is even more reason to be excited for gaming in 2015. Some years the prospects look a little anemic, but this year is positively bursting with potential. Happy gaming!

Sam Laney contributed to this report.

HEALTH & FITNESS

By CHERYL POWELL
Akron Beacon Journal

Laura Hood is celebrating what she considers her personal miracle. Since 2007, Hood had suffered from debilitating seizures that a powerful mix of medications couldn't control. Hood, 47, is one of the first people in the nation to get a new device implanted in her brain that monitors for signs of seizures and sends impulses directly to the source to quiet the storm.

Before undergoing brain surgery at the Cleveland Clinic in April, Hood suffered seizure activity as often as five times a day.

Now she experiences two or three auras a month that end before a full seizure begins.

"I feel it coming on very faintly, and then it stops," she said.

The NeuroPace RNS System is a "smart device" that monitors the brain's activity, interprets the signals and provides stimulation when needed for patients' intractable seizures.

The NeuroPace RNS is an improvement over other systems that provide stimulation without regard to the individual's unique brain activity, said Dr. Dileep K. Nair, section head of adult epilepsy at the Cleveland Clinic and an investigator in the trial for the device.

"We teach the device to look for the specific pattern that patient has that's associated with a seizure," Nair said. "We try to stop that activity from moving anywhere else."

More than 2 million Americans have epilepsy, a neurological condition with unpredictable seizures, or sudden surges of electrical activity in the brain, according to the Epilepsy Foundation.

The majority of people can control their epilepsy with medications, Nair said. But for about 30 percent of patients, anti-seizure drugs alone aren't effective.

"In this group, the options really have been to see if they are epilepsy surgery candidates," he said.

But resecting (or cutting out) the portion of the brain where the seizures originate isn't always possible, particularly if the region is vital for movement or speech or if multiple parts of the brain are involved, Nair said.

For Hood, her seizures began about six months after she and her husband, Michael, got married at a local temple, where they met. She was a Hebrew teacher and he was a building manager.

While in the hospital after her first seizure, she struggled to remember recent events and important people in her life, even her husband.

"Who is that nice man?" she asked her mother, Elaine Williamson.

Over the next several years, medications failed to control her seizures, including a major episode that caused her to go into cardiac failure.

Every day, she experienced auras, a strange feeling "like a very, very horrific dream you're having," she said. "You can feel it coming on your body."

Epilepsy surgery to remove the portion of her brain where the seizures started wasn't an option because that region is responsible for her memory.

Laura Hood, above and with husband, Michael, at right, is one of the first people in the U.S. to have the NeuroPace RNS System implanted in her brain. The device has helped reduce her seizure activity, which she once experienced as often as five times a day.



REAL-LIFE MIRACLE

'Smart' device in Ohio woman's brain helps control severe seizure disorder

"If they removed a portion, then she would have no short-term memory at all," her husband said.

Hood quit her job in sales, gave up driving and began staying close to home for fear of having a seizure or frightening auras.

"I miss working so much," she said.

Hood has relied on her husband, mother and longtime family friend, Micki Wise of Akron, to take her to and from appointments and other places.

When her doctors at the Cleveland Clinic said a new device might help her, she and her family were eager to try it. She became the first patient at the hospital to get the NeuroPace RNS after it earned Food and Drug Administration approval.

"I was glad there was an option," Hood said.

The NeuroPace RNS can be offered only at advanced epilepsy centers, such as the Cleveland Clinic, that can conduct invasive brain testing in which electrodes temporarily are implanted in the brain to pinpoint seizure activity.

"There's a whole process that leads up to seeing if a patient is even a candidate," Nair said.

The device consists of a stimulator implanted in the skull under the scalp and leads imbedded in the brain. Up to two focal points for seizure activity can be targeted.

A wand is held against the scalp to transfer data wirelessly from the NeuroPace RNS to a computer so it can be analyzed by doctors and adjusted as needed. A specialized magnet also can be waved by the head to "mark" in the data when the patient experiences seizure activity.

The neurostimulator costs about \$37,000, not including the surgery and necessary pre-testing, according to a

NeuroPace spokesperson. Most major insurers, including Medicare, cover the device.

The battery lasts about three years before it must be replaced.

In a clinical study, 55 percent of patients with the NeuroPace RNS System had their seizure frequency reduced by 50 percent or more over a two-year period after getting the device, Nair said.

"We were able to offer something for patients who have a very devastating epilepsy who had no other options," he said. "This is an example of a new generation of devices."

Hood's husband said they're hopeful her doctors soon can help her off of her medicines, which make her groggy all the time.

"It's a real-life miracle," Wise said.



Study: Kids who sleep near smartphones get less sleep

Bloomberg News

Gave your kids smartphones for the holidays? You might want to reconsider their bedtime.

Children who slept in the same room as small screens such as smartphones got almost 21 fewer minutes of shuteye a night than those who didn't, according to research published recently by the journal *Pediatrics*. The two age groups studied—about 9 years old and 12 years old—also reported significantly less regular sleep with a phone nearby, possibly due to the buzz of text messages and Snapchat.

The paper joins a growing body of research finding that gadgets correspond to shorter, more fitful nights, as well as other health issues such as weight gain. As one study found last month, adults who used glowing e-readers before bed had worse sleep and more drowsiness than those with printed books. The evidence suggests that bright, blinking screens are affecting our biological time-keeper, the circadian clock.

While the *Pediatrics* study didn't conclude that phones cause sleep deprivation, its lead author, Jennifer Falbe, said the case for clamping down on kids' screen time is gaining strength.

Recent findings "caution against unrestricted access to media in children's bedrooms," Falbe, a researcher at the University of California at Berkeley, said. "The risks associated with shorter sleep duration and poorer sleep quality would include reduced academic performance, behavioral problems, possibly an increased risk for weight gain and possibly negative impacts on immunity."

The human body uses light and darkness to influence circadian rhythms, the physical, mental and behavioral changes in a 24-hour cycle. The brain's internal clock uses the amount of light to determine when to produce more melatonin, a hormone that brings on sleepiness. Charles A. Czeisler, a professor of sleep medicine at Harvard Medical School, estimates that since the advent of electricity-powered light, people's internal sleep triggers have been pushed back six hours.

The study in *Pediatrics*, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health, surveyed more than 2,000 fourth- and seventh-graders in Massachusetts as part of a broader investigation into obesity in children. The majority of kids surveyed slept with a small screen by their side.

The 21 minutes lost with smaller screens exceeded the 18 minutes given up by children who slept in a room with a TV. Since small devices are held closer to the face, they might delay the release of melatonin more than TV light, the researchers said.

ENTERTAINMENT

Taking over 'Gotham'

Robin Lord Taylor is on a thriller of a ride as the Penguin

By GREG BRAXTON
Los Angeles Times

Robin Lord Taylor made one of the biggest splashes of the fall TV season, even though he had some pretty big web-like feet to fill.

Taylor's colorful portrayal of Oswald Cobblepot, the sneaky underworld figure who eventually transforms into the Penguin, has been a highlight of "Gotham," the crime thriller exploring the origins of Batman and his many nemeses. The series, which premiered to critical praise in the fall, has become one of Fox's biggest freshman hits, receiving a full-season order a few weeks after its debut. It airs Sundays on AFN-Spectrum.

Though the series focuses on rookie detective and future Batman ally James Gordon (Ben McKenzie), Taylor has stolen his share of scenes as Cobblepot, evolving from a bullied, pathetic underling who hates being called Penguin to a crafty psychopath who commits murders with malicious glee. Taylor has put his own distinctive, grounded menace into the role, winning over fans and critics. Cobblepot wears a sinister smirk while carrying out his evil deeds, and his relationship with his mother, Gertrude Kapelput (Carol Kane), a European immigrant with a freakish appearance, might be called a bit too close.

Co-starring in "Gotham" has been just one of Taylor's accomplishments. He had a brief but memorable role during the last two seasons on "The Walking Dead" as Sam, one of the hapless captives whose throat was slashed by cannibals at the opening of the fifth season.

Taylor recently talked about "Gotham" by phone from the show's New York set.

What has the experience of "Gotham" been like?

I'll try to keep from being trite, but it's been absolutely mind-blowing. I never in a million years imagined I would be on something this huge, this iconic.

You're no doubt familiar with how Burgess Meredith and Danny DeVito played the Penguin. Did that intimidate you?

Absolutely. I don't think I could be human and not be intimidated to follow in the footsteps of Burgess and Danny. They are iconic actors, and their portrayals were iconic. I grew up watching both of them. It was daunting, but when I ultimately got to read the script, I saw it was a unique take on the character and illuminated parts of the character that hadn't been illuminated in previous incarnations. The pressure was lessened because I know I could make my own choices and make the character my own.

Cobblepot seems to land in the sweet spot between the TV show, where he was really outrageous, and "Batman Returns," which was much darker.

I have to give the credit for that to (executive producer) Bruno Heller, who has created such a rich world and a rich interpretation for the character. When I get a new script, I feel like it's there all in front of me. Not one note rings false.

Cobblepot's relationship with his mother is rather creepy.

She immigrated to this country from Europe, and there's no father on the scene, so all they have is each other, this really kinetic connection and bond. They're outsiders. They're strange but connected. Playing those scenes with Carol is a dream.



Q: What's next for Cobblepot... ?

A: He's learning as he goes, and mistakes are going to be made, but at the same time, I see him achieving a lot of what he wants to accomplish and becoming a major player on the Gotham crime scene.

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VIETNAM

AT

50



Explore **STARS AND STRIPES** new feature section: Vietnam at 50.

With contributions from the men and women who were there, as well as voices from experts and our readers, we take a look back at the Vietnam War and the cultural changes that surrounded it. How the war was prosecuted, how it changed our military and foreign policy thinking, and how America viewed itself then and now. It's a radically new design for Stars and Stripes, and one you can help shape by sharing your thoughts and voices.

Visit online for more content and video—or to share your memories: stripes.com/vietnam50



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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 - 36 Aroma
 - 37 "Elder" of ancient history
 - 38 Ski lift device
 - 39 Aftermath
 - 40 Sacred bird of Egypt
 - 41 Sandwich treat
 - 42 Actress
 - 43 Jessica
 - 44 Ultimate
 - 45 Pre-diploma hurdle

Answer to Previous Puzzle

S	P	A		I	T	S		M	O	A	N	S
T	A	U	R	H	O			E	R	N	I	E
O	T	T		A	R	T		M	O	B	I	L
R	I	O		N	O	H	O					
M	O	S	H		W	O	N			M	O	L
				T	O	N		K	E	E	P	E
A	L	I	G	N				R	A	T	T	
R	I	C	H	E	S			P	A	L		
F	E	E	S		W	E	E		S	O	C	K
				P	A	C	T	S		F	A	R
B	A	L	T	I		M	O	R	E		F	R
A	W	A	I	T		L	E	E		E	E	N
D	E	P	T		I	L	K			R	Y	E

1-17 CRYPTOQUIP

V J M H W Z V X T W A V X D F
 J A U X P S Q V S N V P D M
 T U X Z D A X V U H M Z A W F
 M N W W S Q H I: "Z A D V S S V M S D,
 H D M M T U H U X Z."

Yesterday's Cryptiquip: THE CAFE HAS SOME GOOD MIDMORNING MENU ITEMS, BUT THIS DISH IS THE BEST OF THE BRUNCH.

Today's Cryptiquip Clue: S equals T

BASEBALL/SPORTS BRIEFS

MLB briefs

P Lynn agrees to three-year deal

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — St. Louis pitcher Lance Lynn was among 21 players who avoided salary arbitration by agreeing to contracts Thursday, reaching a \$22 million, three-year deal with the Cardinals.

Milwaukee catcher Martin Maldonado agreed to a \$1.95 million, two-year contract, and 19 players struck one-year agreements.

Among the 175 players who filed for arbitration Tuesday, 149 were on track to swap proposed arbitration figures with their teams Friday. A majority of those were expected to settle before the exchange.

High-profile players still set to swap included pitchers David Price, Stephen Strasburg, Jeff Samardzija, Rick Porcello, Ian Kennedy, Doug Flister and Ken Jansen.

Chris Davis, Matt Wieters, Austin Jackson and Mark Trumbo were among the position players.

Pittsburgh had the most players in arbitration with 12, while Baltimore had 10, and Kansas City and Oakland nine each.

Yankees 27-year-old right-hander, gets \$7 million this year and \$7.5 million in each of the following two seasons. He earned \$535,000 last year, when he was 15-10 with a 2.74 ERA in 33 starts.

Cardinals outfielder Peter Bourjos, coming off hip surgery in November, agreed at \$1.65 million and St. Louis backup catcher Tony Cruz at \$775,000.

Maldonado, who hit .234 with four homers and 16 RBIs, gets a \$50,000 signing bonus and salaries of \$800,000 this year and \$1.1 million in 2016.

The Chicago White Sox agreed with right-handed pitchers Hector Nesi (\$1.95 million), Javy Guerra (\$937,500) and Nate Jones (\$660,000), and Washington reached deals with catchers Wilson Ramos (\$3.55 million) and Jose Lobaton (\$1.2 million), right-hander Craig Stammen (\$2.25 million) and second baseman Danny Espinosa (\$1.8 million).

Cleveland settled with right-hander Carlos Carrasco (\$2,337,500), left-hander Marc Rzepczynski (\$2.4 million) and third baseman Lonnie Chisenhall (\$2.25 million).

Also agreeing were Texas reliever Neftali Feliz (\$4,125,000), Atlanta left-hander James Russell (\$2,425,000), Los Angeles Angels catcher Hector Sanchez (\$2.29 million), Los Angeles Dodgers outfielder Chris Heisey (\$2.16 million), Toronto pitcher Brett Cecil (\$2,475,000), Chicago Cubs left-hander Felix Doubront (\$1,925,000) and Houston catcher Carlos Corporan (\$975,000).

Hearings will be scheduled for the first three weeks in February before three-person panels in St. Petersburg, Fla.

Just three of the 146 players who filed their names went to hearings, with Cleveland defeating

pitchers Vinnie Pestano and Josh Tomlin in the Indians' first cases since 1991 that went to hearings. Pitcher Andrew Cashner beat San Diego.

Teams have a 293-215 advantage since the process started in 1974 and have had a winning record in 15 of the past 17 years with decisions.

Johnson to wear D-Backs cap into Hall

PHOENIX — Randy Johnson will wear an Arizona Diamondbacks cap on his plaque in baseball's Hall of Fame.

Johnson had said it was out of his hands as to whether the cap would be from the Diamondbacks, from his previous team, the Seattle Mariners, or have no insignia at all.

Johnson said in a statement Friday that after thinking about the issue and conferring with Hall of Fame representatives, they came to the decision that "the Diamondbacks logo on my Hall of Fame plaque makes the most sense."

Johnson had his biggest success with Arizona, winning four consecutive Cy Young Awards and a World Series title.

Selig emotional in final owners meeting

PARADISE VALLEY, Ariz. — Bud Selig concluded his final baseball owners meeting as commissioner after two days of basking in praise for the job he's done during more than 22 years in charge of the game.

The meeting of all the owners Thursday followed a gala in Selig's honor the previous night.

Selig said there was more emotion than he thought there would be at the dinner and at the end of Thursday's meeting. Selig noted that there were three generations of owners during his time on the job.

Selig, 80, will be replaced by Rob Manfred on Jan. 25.

Manfred said every speaker at the dinner talked about how Selig had unified the owners after taking over a game that was, in Selig's words, "a mess" in 1992.

Drew, Yanks finalize \$5 million, 1-year contract

NEW YORK — Infielder Stephen Drew and the Yankees have finalized a \$5 million, one-year contract, a deal that puts him in position to become New York's starting second baseman.

Drew, who turns 32 in March, was acquired by the Yankees from Boston on July 31. He hit .150 with three homers and 15 RBIs in 155 plate appearances for New York while making 34 appearances at second base and 12 at shortstop as a backup to Derek Jeter.



CAROLYN KASTER/AP

In this Nov. 5, 2005, file photo, Penn State football coach Joe Paterno acknowledges the crowd before a game against Wisconsin in State College, Pa. A proposed settlement, announced Friday by the NCAA, will give Penn State back 112 football team wins that were vacated two years ago in the Jerry Sandusky child molestation scandal. If approved, the new agreement also would restore former coach Paterno's status as the winningest coach in major college football history with 409 victories.

Briefly

Paterno wins could be restored to Penn State

The Associated Press

HARRISBURG, Pa. — The NCAA on Friday announced a proposed agreement that would restore 112 wins by the school's football team that were wiped out during the Jerry Sandusky child molestation scandal and would put the late Joe Paterno back as the winningest coach in major college football history.

College sports' governing body announced the proposed deal weeks before a scheduled trial in state court on the legality of the 2012 consent decree it would replace.

The new deal would direct a \$60 million fine to address child abuse spent within Pennsylvania and would resolve the lawsuit.

The deal still must be approved by the NCAA board and the Penn State board.

Ali in hospital for 'follow-up care'

LOUISVILLE, Kentucky — Muhammad Ali was back in the hospital Thursday for follow-up care related to a severe urinary tract infection, his second stint in the hospital in the past four weeks.

The three-time former heavyweight champion was admitted to an undisclosed hospital earlier this week, Ali family spokesman Bob Gannell said Thursday. Ali is in stable condition.

Ali was hospitalized on Dec. 20 with what was initially believed to be a mild case of pneumonia. Doctors later determined Ali was suffering from a urinary tract infection.

Germans win WC race, Americans crash

KOENIGSSEE, Germany — Kathleen Martini steered Germany to a bobbed World Cup victory Friday in a race overshadowed by the heavy crash of the U.S. crew of Jamie Greubel Poser and Lauryn Williams.

Poser crashed heavily in the first heat while heading for a top-3 finish. She and pusher Williams bumped a wall and overturned, coming down the track upside down before coming to a stop. They were helped out of the bobbed and walked slowly from the scene. They were being evaluated by the U.S. team's medical staff.

Martini took advantage of a mishap by first-run leader Elana Meyers Taylor of the United States, who bobbed went on its side in the same area as Poser's vehicle. The American got the bobbed back on track but dropped down.

■ Lindsey Jacobellis of the United States won the women's snowboard cross for her fourth world title. France, while Luca Matteotti won the men's event for

his first major championship.

Nelly Moenne Loco of France was the fastest starter and led the women's final before being overtaken by Jacobellis, who also won the world title in 2005, '07 and '11.

■ Kaitlyn Farrington, the American snowboarder who pulled off one of the biggest surprises at the Sochi Olympics, is retiring because of a degenerative spine condition.

The 25-year-old raised in Bellevue, Idaho, won the gold medal on the halfpipe last year, defeating previous champions Torah Bright and Kelly Clark.

Hole-in-1 helps McIlroy's pursuit of Kaymer

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates — Rory McIlroy made his first competitive hole-in-one as a professional as part of a brilliant hole-in-one that propelled his pursuit of Martin Kaymer in the second round of the Abu Dhabi Championship on Friday.

The world No. 1 threw his hands in the air and high-fived playing partner Rickie Fowler after his 9-iron from 177 yards at the par-3 15th landed a yard from the hole, hopped right and trickled in.

McIlroy's 6-under 66 put him in third on 11 under and two shots behind Kaymer, who followed up an opening-round 64 with a 67. Belgium's Thomas Pieters (67) is second on 12 under.

NBA

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division		W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	16	12	56.9	—	
Brooklyn	16	23	41.0	10½	
Boston	15	24	38.1	12½	
Philadelphia	7	31	18.4	19	
New York	12	22	35.1	12½	

Southeast Division		W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	31	8	79.5	—	
Washington	27	12	69.2	4	
Miami	17	22	43.6	14	
Charlotte	16	23	41.0	15	
Orlando	15	27	35.7	17½	

Central Division		W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	16	14	65.0	—	
Milwaukee	21	19	52.5	5	
Cleveland	20	20	50.0	6	
Indiana	15	25	37.5	11	
Detroit	14	25	35.9	11½	

Western Conference

Southwest Division		W	L	Pct	GB
Memphis	27	11	71.1	—	
Houston	23	15	60.4	4	
Dallas	27	13	67.5	1	
San Antonio	20	16	60.0	4	
New Orleans	19	19	50.0	8	

Northwest Division		W	L	Pct	GB
Portland	9	7	56.9	—	
Oklahoma City	18	20	47.4	11½	
Denver	18	21	46.0	12	
Utah	13	26	33.3	17	
Minnesota	21	31	40.3	23	

Pacific Division		W	L	Pct	GB
Golden State	31	5	86.1	—	
L.A. Clippers	13	13	50.0	6½	
Phoenix	23	15	60.4	10½	
Sacramento	21	21	50.0	11	
L.A. Lakers	12	28	30.0	21	

Wednesday's games		W	L	Pct	GB
Orlando 120, Houston 93	100	100	100	100	0
San Antonio 98, Charlotte 93	100	100	100	100	0
New Orleans 105, Philadelphia 84	100	100	100	100	0
San Antonio 98, Detroit 94	100	100	100	100	0
Atlanta 103, Boston 92	100	100	100	100	0
Washington 105, Chicago 99	100	100	100	100	0
Atlanta 105, Boston 91	100	100	100	100	0
Denver 114, Dallas 101	100	100	100	100	0
Golden State 104, Miami 89	100	100	100	100	0
L.A. Clippers 100, Portland 94	100	100	100	100	0

Thursday's games		W	L	Pct	GB
Milwaukee 95, New York 70	100	100	100	100	0
Houston 112, Oklahoma City 101	100	100	100	100	0
Cleveland 109, L.A. Lakers 102	100	100	100	100	0

Friday's games		W	L	Pct	GB
New Orleans at Philadelphia	100	100	100	100	0
Brooklyn at Washington	100	100	100	100	0
Memphis at Orlando	100	100	100	100	0
Portland at Indiana	100	100	100	100	0
Atlanta at Toronto	100	100	100	100	0
Chicago at Boston	100	100	100	100	0
Golden State at Oklahoma City	100	100	100	100	0
Denver at Dallas	100	100	100	100	0
Golden State at Phoenix	100	100	100	100	0
Minnesota at Utah	100	100	100	100	0
Miami at Sacramento	100	100	100	100	0
Cleveland at L.A. Clippers	100	100	100	100	0

Saturday's games		W	L	Pct	GB
Indiana at Charlotte	100	100	100	100	0
Golden State at Detroit	100	100	100	100	0
Atlanta at Chicago	100	100	100	100	0
Golden State at Houston	100	100	100	100	0
Washington at Brooklyn	100	100	100	100	0
Minnesota at Denver	100	100	100	100	0
Portland at Memphis	100	100	100	100	0
L.A. Clippers at Sacramento	100	100	100	100	0

Leaders

Player	PTS	REB	FTS	AST
Harden, HOU	40	331	1380	27.0
James, CLE	31	279	1870	25.2
Cousins, SAC	27	222	654	24.2
Davis, NOR	37	248	198	9.4
Anthony, NYK	31	245	74	23.9

Rebounds

Player	PTS	REB	FTS	AST
Jordan, LAC	9	667	530	13.6
Drummond, DET	39	188	312	49.7
Cousins, SAC	27	222	654	24.2
Chandler, DAL	38	153	308	42.1
Wall, MEM	29	114	225	23.7

Assists

Player	PTS	REB	FTS	AST
Lawson, DEN	39	397	10.2	
Wall, MEM	37	373	10.1	
Drummond, DET	34	324	9.9	
Paul, LAC	39	375	9.6	
Curry, GOL	36	287	8.0	

Thursday

Cavaliers 109, Lakers 102

CLEVELAND — James 12-24-8-13 36, Love 9-16-4-22, Smith 5-13-1-14, Martin 3-2-3-4-5, Thompson 2-5-1-2-5, Dellavedova 2-2-1-6, Totems 37-79-26-109.
L.A. LAKERS — Johnson 3-5-0-0-8, Davis 3-5-2-4-8, Hill 10-14-0-20, Price 1-3-3-4-5, Bryant 7-14-2-3-19, Boozer 4-6-1-2-9, Black 3-4-2-3-8, Kelly 1-0-0-2-0, Lin 3-4-3-5, Young 4-13-4-15-14, Totals 39-76-16-23-102.
Cleveland 30 31 14 27-102
L.A. Lakers 30 31 14 27-102
 Three-Point Goals—Cleveland 9-31 (James 4-0, Smith 3-10, Dellavedova 1-1, Love 1-6, Irving 0-4), L.A. Lakers 8-24 (Bryant 3-6, Johnson 2-4, Young 2-5, Lin 1-1, Price 0-2, Kelly 0-3). Fouled Out—None. Rebounds—Cleveland 51 (Thompson 11), L.A. Lakers 46 (Bryant, Hill 6). Assists—Cleveland 14 (James 5), L.A. Lakers 26 (Bryant 17). Total Fouls—Cleveland 15, L.A. Lakers 26. A—18,997 (18,997).

Rockets 112, Thunder 101

OKLAHOMA CITY — Durant 8-12-14-24, Ibaka 4-11-3-13, Adams 1-3-3-5, Westbrook 6-13-3-16, Robinson 0-0-0-0-0, Winters 0-0-0-0, Peres 0-0-0-0-3, 6, Jackson 7-12-1-3-16, collison 0-0-0-0, Morrow 0-3-2-2-1, Smith 0-0-0-0-0, P.Jones 0-1-0-0-0, Lamb 1-2-0-3, Totals 35-81-20-28-101.
OKLAHOMA CITY — Ariza 6-15-2-17, Motiejunas 6-12-0-14, Howard 5-11-3-14-13, Beverley 5-11-0-13, Harden 9-15-7-21, J.Smith 6-10-1-1-21, Terry 7-7-0-5, Drowsey 7-0-1-5, Papanikolaou 2-2-0-0-5, Brewer 0-0-1-2, Shavlik 1-0-0-0-0, Totals 41-88-14-112.
Oklahoma City 18 25 22 26-101
Thunder 40 24 24 24-112
 Three-Point Goals—Oklahoma City 11-29 (Durant 4-6, Ibaka 2-4, Waiters 2-5, Lamb 1-2, Westbrook 1-3, Jackson 1-3, P.Jones 0-1, Robinson 0-2, Morrow 0-3), Thunder 16-36 (Harden 6-8, Beverley 3-7, Ariza 3-9, Motiejunas 2-3, Papanikolaou 1-1, Brewer 1-4, J.Smith 0-1, Shved 0-1, Terry 0-2). Fouled Out—None. Rebounds—Oklahoma City 57 (Durant 10), Houston 47 (Harden 9). Assists—Oklahoma City 25 (Westbrook 8), Houston 25 (Harden 10). Total Fouls—Oklahoma City 15, Houston 19. Technicals—Oklahoma City 1, Houston 2. Timeout—Terry, Houston defensive three second. A—18,315 (18,023).

Bucks 95, Knicks 79

NEW YORK — Anthony 7-12-10-12-25, May 0-4-0-0-0, Stoudemire 0-1-0-0-0, Larkin 0-1-0-0-0, Calderon 8-9-0-11, Aldrich 1-3-0-0-2, Hardaway Jr. 4-10-0-11-0, Acy 2-0-0-0-0, Gallaway 2-9-0-5, Amundson 0-0-0-0-0, Wear 5-8-2-3-13, Totals 28-68-15-20-79.
MILWAUKEE — Antetokounmpo 6-10-4-5-16, O'Bryant 0-2-0-0-0, Pachulla 2-8-7-8-11, Knight 6-13-6-20, Middleton 4-9-4-6-14, Ilyasova 0-6-1-4-1, Mayo 8-14-2-22, Henson 1-3-2-6-4, Dudley 1-5-0-2-0, Bayless 0-1-0-0-0, Totals 28-72-31-42-95.
Milwaukee 31 25 25 13-79
New York — Three-Point Goals—New York 8-22 (Calderon 3-4, Hardaway Jr. 2-5, Wear 1-1, Anthony 1-3, Gallaway 1-7, Acy 0-2), Milwaukee 8-18 (Mayo 4-6, Knight 2-3, Mitchell 2-5, Marshall 1-2-0-0-0). Fouled Out—Hardaway Jr., Rebounds—New York 44 (Amundson 6), Milwaukee 46 (O'Leary 14). Assists—New York 22 (Calderon 9), Milwaukee 21 (Knight 6). Total Fouls—New York 32, Milwaukee 17. Technicals—New York Coach Ferry, Milwaukee defensive three second. A—18,689 (14,467).



PAUL RODRIGUEZ/AP

Lakers guard Kobe Bryant, right, and Cleveland Cavaliers forward LeBron James greet one another before the start of Thursday's game in Los Angeles.

Roundup

James, Cavs edge Lakers

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Kobe Bryant and LeBron James traded hugs, big shots and verbal jabs all night with warmth and humor. In the waning minutes, they went head-to-head in yet another entertaining duel between two of this generation's greatest talents.

Although LeBron ended up topping his friendly rival again, King James relished what could be one of his final chances to share a court with one of his few true peers.

James scored 36 points and the Cleveland Cavaliers snapped their six-game losing streak with a 109-102 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers on Thursday night despite Bryant's 19 points and career-high 17 assists.

"It's always fun, a pleasure," James said. "It's two of the best competitors this game has probably ever seen, and to be on the same floor with him, somebody

I looked up to when I was a child growing up, seeing him go straight from high school to the NBA, it's fun, it's great. I hated him being out of the NBA last year because of injury, and it's fun having him back."

Bryant set a career high for assists in his 1,279th regular-season game, playing in his second straight after skipping three of four games to rest his 36-year-old body.

James and Bryant laughed and joked throughout the game, exchanging good-natured jibes while waiting to check into the game together. James turned 30 last month, while Bryant's season has been defined by his weariness from a 19-year career.

"If we were contending for a championship, I'd be my same moody self," Bryant said. "But right now, I found to have a little more perspective, knowing I really won't get a chance to play

against him for much longer. So you want to enjoy it."

Kobe even had something to say when LeBron spectacularly changed a dunk attempt off the rim.

"He said, 'That's what old age will get you,' James said with a laugh. "You start missing dunks when you thought you was up there."

Rockets 112, Thunder 101: James Harden scored 15 of his 31 points in Houston's big first quarter against visiting Oklahoma City.

Kevin Durant had 24 points and 10 rebounds for the Thunder. They have lost three of their last four games.

Bucks 95, Knicks 79: O.J. Mayo scored 22 points, Brandon Knight had 20 points and six steals, and Milwaukee extended New York's franchise-record losing streak to 16 with a rout in London.

Austin Rivers dealt to Clippers in three-team deal

By BETH RAVEN
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Austin Rivers has joined the Los Angeles Clippers to play for Doc Rivers in the first father-son, player-coach combination in NBA history.

The Clippers acquired Austin Rivers from the Boston Celtics on Thursday in a deal that included the Phoenix Suns.

Coby Karl was briefly a member of the Denver Nuggets in 2010 under father-coach George Karl, but didn't play during a stint that coincided with his father being on leave for treatment of throat cancer.

Now the deal, guru Reggie Bullock, went from Los Angeles to Phoenix, forward

I think a year ago, I probably wouldn't. I think I would (now) for sure. I think this team could handle that. '

Doc Rivers

Clippers coach, on coaching his son Austin

Shavlik Randolph from Phoenix to Boston, and guard Chris Douglas-Roberts and a 2017 second-round pick from Los Angeles

to Boston.

The Celtics acquired Rivers on Monday from New Orleans as part of the three-way deal with Memphis that sent Jeff Green to the Grizzlies.

As Clippers president of basketball operations, the elder Rivers held the authority to sign off on acquiring his 22-year-old son.

Last weekend, Doc Rivers had said he would be open to coaching Austin.

"I think a year ago, I probably wouldn't," he said. "I think I would (now) for sure. I think this team could handle that."

Rivers was drafted 10th overall by New Orleans in 2012 after one season at Duke. He averaged 6.8 points, 1.9 rebounds, 2.3 assists and 21.4 minutes in 35 games this

season for the Pelicans. In 165 games in three seasons with New Orleans, he averaged 6.9 points, 2.3 assists, 1.9 rebounds and 21.4 minutes

Bullock was drafted by the Clippers with the 25th pick in 2013. The 6-foot-7 former North Carolina star averaged 2.6 points and 10.5 minutes in 25 games this season for the Clippers. In 68 games in two seasons with Los Angeles, he averaged 2.6 points, 1.4 rebounds and 9.7 minutes.

"Reggie Bullock is a talented young player we have liked for a while," Suns general manager Ryan McDonough said. "He shoots the ball very well and he has the potential to be a good perimeter defender."

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

No. 3 Zags hold on to beat Pepperdine

Traffic jam, delayed start rattles Bulldogs

By BETH HARRIS
The Associated Press

MALIBU, Calif. — Gonzaga got caught in unusually bad Los Angeles traffic, needing over two hours to reach Pepperdine. Then the third-ranked Zags got rattled against the scrappy Waves whose raucous crowd did its best to will them to the upset.

Kyle Wiltjer scored 19 of his 24 points in the second half and freshman Domantas Sabonis had 16 points on a career-best 9-for-9 shooting to go with a career-high 12 rebounds in a 78-76 victory Thursday night, the Zags' 27th in a row over the Waves.

"It was a good test for us," Wiltjer said. "We were a little down we won by so small. But we're going to have a lot of close games."

The Zags (17-1, 6-0 West Coast) arrived 25 minutes before the scheduled tipoff because of a traffic accident that caused one of two northbound lanes on Pacific Coast Highway to be closed for a while, creating lengthy delays. Pepperdine coach Marty Wilson agreed to delay the start by 33 minutes.

"That was a big-time sportsmanship move by Marty," said Gonzaga coach Mark Few, who earned his 200th league win against 24 losses. "Next time we'll leave three hours early. I've done this 26 times and never seen anything like that."

Jett Raines led four players in double figures with a career-high 22 points for the Waves (11-6, 4-2), who were off to their best league start since 2002 despite not having

any seniors. Stacy Davis added 21 points in coming off the bench for the third straight game.

The Zags struggled at the free-throw line, going just 14-for-33. Former USC player Byron Wesley was 3-for-10. "A lot of them were close, rattled in and out," said Kevin Pangos, an 88 percent free-throw shooter who went 2-for-4.

Davis blamed himself for not taking better advantage of the misses by Pangos and his teammates.

"That's a once-in-a-lifetime thing," Davis said.

Pepperdine closed to 69-68 on a layup by Davis after Wiltjer missed a layup and Davis snagged the defensive rebound. Sabonis scored before Raines' layup again drew the Waves within one.

Gonzaga scored four in a row to lead 75-70, although Gary Bell Jr. and Wesley each made just 1 of 2 free throws.

A basket by Aif Russell got the Waves within three before Pangos missed a pair of free throws with 21 seconds left. After a timeout, the Waves fouled Pangos, with their fans taunting him about an earlier airball. He made both to keep Gonzaga ahead, 77-72.

Davis powered to the basket for a layup and drew the foul, with his three-point play leaving the Waves trailing 77-75. They were forced to foul Wiltjer, who made 1 of 2.

Jeremy Major went to the line with 1 second left, making the first and missing the second, and the Zags secured the rebound as time expired.



Gonzaga forward Domantas Sabonis, right, drives past Pepperdine forward Jake Johnson for a basket during the first half Thursday's game in Malibu, Calif.

GUS RUELAS/AP

AP Top 25 roundup

No. 7 Badgers rip Huskers

The Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — Wisconsin got Frank Kaminsky back and may have found a capable replacement for Traevon Jackson.

Kaminsky scored 22 points in his return from a concussion that sidelined him a game to help No. 7 Wisconsin beat Nebraska 70-55 on Thursday night.

Bronson Koenig filled in well for Jackson, who hurt his ankle Sunday in the Badgers' loss at Rutgers. The sophomore scored 11 points and had one assist.

Wisconsin coach Bo Ryan said Kaminsky wanted to go Sunday and he wasn't surprised by Koenig's performance.

"He knows what I expect," Ryan said.

Kaminsky looked sharp early and finished 4-for-5 from three-point range and 7-for-11 overall as he eclipsed the 1,000-point mark for his career. He had hit just one of his previous nine three-point attempts over four games, but figured the law of averages had to catch up.

"You always regress to the mean," Kaminsky said.

Nigel Hayes scored 13 points for the Badgers (16-2, 4-1 Big Ten), and Sam Dekker added 11.

Wisconsin needed every bit of Kaminsky's performance early to counter Terran Petteway, who led Nebraska (10-7, 2-3) with 27 points. He had 20 in the first half.

Wisconsin switched defenders on picks set for Petteway, and he repeatedly took advantage of the bigger post players that ended up guarding him in the first half, either driving to the hoop or stepping back for a jumper.

He didn't get much help, though. The rest of the team shot 10-for-30.

Miles said Petteway's production dropped in the second half, in part, because he was looking to get his teammates more involved. After taking 13 shots in the first half, he attempted seven in the final period.

No. 8 Utah 76, Arizona State 59: Delon Wright scored 21 points and the visiting Utes routed the Sun Devils.

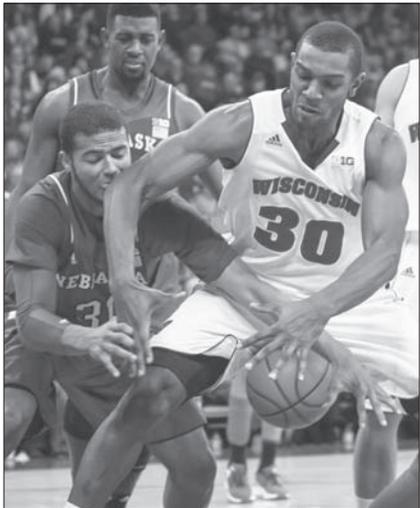
Jordan Loveridge added 14 points and Brandon Taylor had 13 for the Utes (14-2, 4-0 Pac-12). They have won seventh straight heading into Saturday's showdown at No. 10 Arizona.

After routing Southern California by 24 points, UCLA by 32 and Colorado by 25, Utah showed no signs of letting up in its first conference road game. The Utes are lone unbeaten team in the conference.

No. 10 Arizona 68, Colorado 54: Stanley Johnson scored 22 points, Kaleb Tarczewski added 14 and the host Wildcats pulled away to beat the short-handed Buffaloes.

Arizona (15-2, 3-1 Pac-12) struggled offensively at times without injured guard Gabe York and had a hard time containing Askia Booker after losing to Oregon State in its last game.

The Wildcats pulled out their 31st straight home win by dominating inside, outscoring Colorado by 16 in the paint while grabbing 15 more rebounds.



ANDY MANIS/AP

Nebraska's Shawn Shields, left, and Wisconsin's Vitto Brown vie for the ball during the second half of Thursday's game in Madison, Wis.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Ohio State QB Jones will return to school

Star of national title squad declines to enter NFL Draft

By RUSTY MILLER
The Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Not so long ago, the only reason a lot of people knew Cardale Jones was for a thoughtless comment on social media about not wanting to go to school.

Now the national-champion quarterback is also a shining example for educators preaching to kids to get a degree.

It's a turnaround almost as dramatic as the one he has taken in his Ohio State career over the past two months.

The big quarterback surprised a packed crowd Thursday, declaring at his old high school in Cleveland that he would stay at Ohio State rather than jump into the NFL Draft.

"My decision was very simple," he said. "I'm going to return next year for school."

That sentence was met with audible gasps in the gymnasium, then applause from students and teachers.

Many thought that Jones, who could have jumped to the pros after a year spent at military school, a redshirt season and a year capped by starring for the Buckeyes, would make himself available for the draft.

After all, it was just over two years ago he posted on his Twitter account: "Why should we have to go to class if we came here to play FOOTBALL, we ain't come to play SCHOOL classes are POINTLESS"

Coach Urban Meyer suspended him. Jones later apologized, and now calls it an embarrassing moment in his life. He said he has maturated a lot since sending out that message. He proved it by saying he was coming back to the Buckeyes.

In his only college starts, he led Ohio State to wins in the Big Ten title game, the Sugar Bowl and Monday night's national championship.

"It's everybody's dream and goal when they play football or any collegiate sport to make it to the next level," he said, wearing a gray T-shirt with his nickname "12 Gauge" because of his uniform number



MARK DUNCAN/AP

Ohio State quarterback Cardale Jones leaves a news conference in Cleveland on Thursday after announcing he would not declare for the 2015 NFL Draft. Jones, 3-0 as a college starter including a win in the national championship game, says he will return to the Buckeyes for his final two years of eligibility.

and shotgun-like arm. "At my point in my career, I feel like it's best for me to go back to school. One of the most important things for me to do is graduate.

"When I make that decision to play in the NFL, I want to be done with school. I want to devote all of my time and all my effort to the film room and getting better at playing the quarterback position."

Just a few weeks after coming from anonymity to take over the Ohio State quarterback job, his decision was broadcast live on ESPN.

The cable network's draft guru, Mel Kiper Jr., said Jones could go as high as the second round of the draft. He, like many football experts, believed Jones, who recently became a father, would jump to the

pros.

"We put everything on a scale for him and education outweighed everything else. This shows the maturity he does have," said his mentor and coach at Glenville Academic Campus, Ted Ginn. "I'm so proud. He's a great kid, very intelligent, smart. I think the biggest thing to him was to be able to say to his baby, 'I went back,' and to set an example for all kids."

Jones, his family, Ginn and Meyer met earlier Thursday in Cleveland.

The day after the championship game in Texas, Meyer had said there might not ever be a better time for Jones to make the move to the NFL.

"Cardale's brand right now has never been stronger, might never be stronger in

his life," Meyer said.

Instead, the 6-foot-5, 250-pound redshirt sophomore will battle two-time Big Ten player of the year Braxton Miller, a graduate student still recovering from shoulder surgery, and this year's quarterback of the year in the conference, sophomore-to-be J.T. Barrett (recovering from a broken ankle) for the starting job next season.

"I want to go back and compete for the spot," he said. "I don't want anything given to me."

Jones was asked what he would say to people who believe he's making a mistake.

"I can't say what I want to say to them," he said with a laugh. "It's my life. I have to live it. Not them."

Autonomy lets revenue, non-revenue sports co-exist

By RALPH D. RUSSO
The Associated Press

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. — NCAA President Mark Emmert says giving the five wealthiest conferences in Division I the ability to make some of their own rules will allow revenue sports such as football and men's basketball to co-exist with the many nonrevenue programs that make up college sports.

Emmert addressed the NCAA convention Thursday and held a news conference after with several university presidents, two days ahead of the first meeting of the so-called autonomy group, the 65 schools that make up the Big Ten, Big 12, Atlantic Coast Conference, Pac-12 and Southeastern Conference.

"We've got 3 percent of the students that participate in those



DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP

NCAA President Mark Emmert gave his state of the organization address on Thursday in Alexandria, Va. — his first since the governing body granted the five wealthiest conferences more power.

high-revenue, high-visibility sports," Emmert said. "We've got to find ways to integrate and address their concerns, while not negatively impacting the 97 percent and vice versa. The autonomy structure that (Wake Forest) President (Nathan) Hatch and his colleagues developed and designed is intended to allow the continued co-existence of all of the sports together."

On Saturday, the Big Five conferences will consider eight proposals, mostly related to increasing the value of an athletic scholarship by several thousand dollars to cover the full cost of attendance. Also on the agenda is a proposal that would prohibit athletic scholarships from being pulled or reduced because of athletic reasons and a concussion safety protocol proposal.

The legislation would be permissive, not mandatory, for the rest of Division I. Leaders from the other five other conferences that play FBS football, as well as some conferences that do not, such as the Big East and Atlantic 10, have said they plan to follow the Big Five's lead on cost of attendance.

Leaders of those Big Five conferences have been pushing for years to make rules that would allow them to spend more of the billions they make on media rights deals on student-athlete welfare. In the past, schools in some of the other 27 Division I conferences blocked attempts to pass legislation they feared they couldn't afford and would give the most powerful conferences unfair recruiting advantages.

NFL PLAYOFFS

Load: Both running backs hard to tackle

FROM BACK PAGE

utmost importance. Defenders will have to swarm in to the ball to prevent the runner from bouncing off a tackle and rumbling for extra yards.

It is Lynch's specialty. "He's a dog — his whole demeanor," Seattle safety Earl Thomas said. "He's a man amongst boys out there."

One who had his fourth straight season of at least 1,200 yards rushing, Lynch finished the regular season with 1,306 yards on 280 carries and 13 scores.

The Seahawks led the league in averaging 172.6 yards rushing per game, with mobile quarterback Russell Wilson also posing a threat on the ground.

"We're kind of just reaping the benefits of the philosophy but then how the players go

Those guys are similar in the sense that you have to have multiple defenders trying to get those guys down.

Julius Peppers
Green Bay DE

"Those guys are similar in the sense that you have to have multiple defenders trying to get those guys down," Peppers said.

Whereas Lynch and Wilson share top billing in the Seattle attack, Lacy and his production can get overshadowed by Aaron Rodgers. The quarterback is having an MVP-caliber year, even after being slowed by a strained left calf.

The injury makes Lacy an even more important piece to Green Bay's offense. As evidence, Lacy was added to the injury report as a precaution on Thursday as a limited participant because of a sore knee.

"I was just being conservative, so I pulled him about the middle of practice," coach Mike McCarthy said on Thursday. "I think Eddie will be ready to go on Sunday. Just the coach was nervous, all right?"

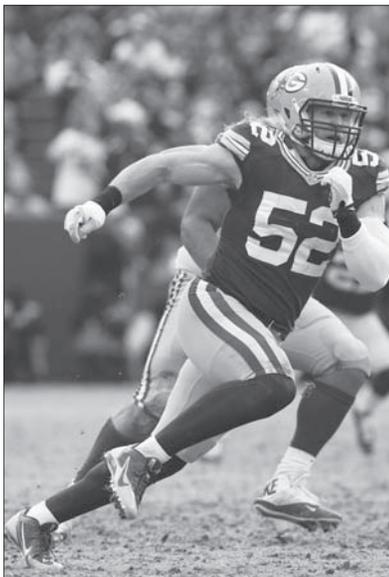
The running game stalled in a 1-2 start, when Jets Bay played Seattle, the New York Jets and Detroit to open the season — three of the top defenses against the run in the league.

The Packers were also a bit more conservative early on in giving Lacy carries, while putting added emphasis on catching passes out of the backfield.

He has turned into Green Bay's third-leading receiver as a check-down threat for Rodgers, while the production on the ground has steadily increased behind an effective offensive line.

Lacy finished with 1,139 yards on 246 carries with nine touchdowns. Counting last week's playoff win against Detroit, Lacy is averaging 99 yards in his past seven games.

"His ability to be a three-down player is of primary importance to us," McCarthy said. "He's breaking tackles, but we're going against an excellent tackling defense, so this will be a big challenge."



MIKE ROEMER, LEFT, AND RICK SCUTERI, RIGHT/AP

Green Bay's Clay Matthews, left, and Seattle's Bobby Wagner, right, are two of the top linebackers in the league. Their play on Sunday could largely determine which teams wins the NFC championship and advances to the Super Bowl.

Making their marks

Matthews, Wagner have huge impact on defenses

BY BARRY WILNER
The Associated Press

If it seems as if Clay Matthews is omnipresent off the field, well, yeah. No NFL linebacker has a higher profile — than the Green Bay star, thanks to his commercials and his flashy persona.

If you barely know anything about Bobby Wagner, that's understandable, too. He's not into snazzy, leaving that to his Legion of Boom teammates in Seattle.

On Sunday in the NFC championship game, their performances will go a long way toward determining which team goes to the Super Bowl. And while Matthews may add a touch of the ostentatious, Wagner will do things far more quietly, yet just as fiercely.

Indeed, he might be the least-ballyhooped member of this season's All-Pro team.

"With Wags, just killer instinct," fellow All-Pro Earl Thomas said Thursday.

"Some guys just have that nasty streak to him, and I want another guy beside me with killer instincts. He has that, Sherm has that, Kam has that, and that fired-up passion is contagious."

Essential, too, for the most feared defense in the league, one that helped the Seahawks win it all last year and has them on the verge of a repeat title — something not accomplished by anyone in a decade.

But, consistent with his nature, Wagner doesn't make a big deal of it all.

Did you know

Green Bay took linebacker Clay Matthews in the first round of the 2009 NFL Draft, 26th overall. Seattle linebacker Bobby Wagner was taken in the second round of the 2012 draft, 47th overall.

SOURCE: ESPN.com

"My job is to be in the middle of everything," he said the 2012 second-round draft pick from Utah State. "Also, the signal caller, making sure everybody's in the right spot, making adjustments when I need to, being as vocal as I possibly can on the field."

Of course, Wagner does far more than that. Even though he missed five games with a right foot injury, he still managed at least 104 tackles — he had 140 and 119 the previous two years. When he returned in late November, the Seahawks became immovable again. They didn't allow a fourth-quarter point from Week 12 through the end of the regular season.

"That's what we do, we finish," he said. "Whenever a fourth quarter comes around we understand those are when games are won. That's when big-time players make big-time plays. And that's when the good teams show up."

The Packers will show up at CenturyLink Field with a good but not great defense. Indeed, its only consistent playmaker is Matthews, who made his fifth Pro Bowl in six seasons by being a factor at outside and inside linebacker.

Matthews has displayed throughout his six pro seasons he is much more than a media star capable of ripping on himself in TV ads. He's capable of ripping apart offensive schemes, and his value in Green Bay has been increased with how coordinator Dom Capers used him in 2014.

When Capers began moving Matthews around in the Packers' alignments, it caused opponents to guess — something no offense or quarterback is comfortable with. Matthews had 6½ sacks in his final four games and 11 for the season.

"I think if you look at the change of where we were in Week 8 and the bye week into now, and obviously, statistics will show that we're moving in the right direction," Matthews said. "Both individually and as a team, as a defense really. So, you know, it seems to be working in the right direction. Obviously, we're winning games and I'm making plays, so as long as that's happening, we're doing something right."

NFL PLAYOFFS

Fond farewell?

42-year old Vinatieri, the NFL's oldest player, ready for what could be his final game in New England

By MICHAEL MAROT
The Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Adam Vinatieri savored all those New England celebrations.

He made the two big field goals in the “Tuck Rule” playoff game and, of course, the two game-winning Super Bowl kicks.

On Sunday, the longtime Patriots kicker will return to his former home, possibly for the final time.

“It’s amazing,” the 42-year-old Colts kicker said when asked about his career this week. “I could never have been more lucky. If I wrote it as a book, people would never believe it.”

Believe it.

The NFL’s oldest player has played for three Super Bowl-winning coaches — Bill Parcells, Bill Belichick and Tony Dungy. He’s played with three No. 1 draft picks — Drew Bledsoe, Peyton Manning and Andrew Luck — and a three-time Super Bowl-winning quarterback in Tom Brady. And, yes, as a rookie, Vinatieri actually did run down Dallas’ Herschel Walker on a kickoff return.

Along the way, Vinatieri filled his resume with other incredible feats.

He has four Super Bowl rings, is a perfect 6-0 on championship weekend as he makes his seventh appearance Sunday at New England (13-4).

Vinatieri also is the NFL’s career post-season scoring leader (233 points), and this weekend, he can make history in Foxborough, Massachusetts.

He will surpass Jerry Rice for most post-season games (29) in a career, if he plays Sunday, and he can break Tony Fritsch’s record for most consecutive post-season games with a field goal (13), a mark that was set during the 1970s — so long ago that even the NFL’s oldest player doesn’t remember it.

A win Sunday would send Vinatieri to another Super Bowl and give him a chance to tie Charles Haley for the most individual rings (five).

Teammates are astounded by Vinatieri’s feats.

“A lot of guys never make the playoffs,” said return specialist Josh Cribbs, a 10-year veteran who made his playoff debut Jan. 4. “For me, this is like a cherry on top of my career — just being in there.”

“I’ve seen him (Vinatieri) play in a lot of games and the Super Bowl, like it’s nothing, like it’s another day. I guess a guy like that, nothing can faze him,” Cribbs added.

Perhaps nothing should faze a man who is the great, great grandson of Gen. George Custer’s bandmaster, a distant cousin of daredevil Evil Knievel and a guy who has hunted lions and bears.

Age hasn’t slowed down Vinatieri, either.

This season, he scored 140 points and became the first player in league history to top 900 points with two different franchises. Vinatieri has missed only two kicks all season — a 46-yard field goal at Tennessee in the regular-season finale and a 44-yarder at Denver last weekend.

And at the start of next year, Vinatieri will need just eight points to break Mike Vanderjagt’s franchise scoring record (995) and 12 points to top the 1,000-point mark with two different teams.

Not bad for a guy who just wanted to land a spot on the Patriots’ roster.



PHOTOS BY JOE MANONEY, ABOVE, AND STEPHAN SAVOIA, BELOW/P

Above, Indianapolis Colts kicker Adam Vinatieri (4) celebrates his field goal with Matt Overtun during the second half of last week’s divisional playoff win over the Denver Broncos. Below, Vinatieri — who played ten seasons with New England, winning three Super Bowls — is embraced by Patriots coach Bill Belichick, right, after last season’s AFC divisional round loss. Vinatieri returns to his old stomping grounds on Sunday for perhaps his final game at New England.



Adam Vinatieri's postseason milestones

INDIANAPOLIS — Playoff milestones for Colts kicker Adam Vinatieri, who entered the NFL in 1996 with the New England Patriots. Vinatieri will face his former team in Sunday’s AFC championship game.

Postseason Record: 20-9 (Goals were 2-1 when Vinatieri was on injured reserve following 2009 season).

Conference championship record: 6-0.

Most Super Bowl Rings — Charles Haley, 5; Vinatieri, 4.

Most Career Points — Vinatieri, 233; David Akers, 175.

Most Games Played — Jerry Rice, Vinatieri, 29.

Most Consecutive Games Scoring — Vinatieri 29; David Akers, 24.

Most Consecutive Games with Field Goal — Vinatieri, Tony Fritsch (1972-79), 13.

Most Career Field Goals — Vinatieri, 56; Akers, 33.

Most Career Field Goal Attempts — Vinatieri, 67; Akers, 47.

Most Career PATs — Vinatieri, 65; Akers, 58.

Notes: Vinatieri kicked game-winning field goals in two of Patriots’ three Super Bowl wins; made tying field goal and winning field goal in overtime against Oakland in playoffs; following the 2001 season, gave up kickoff returns for touchdowns to Green Bay’s Desmond Howard, the Super Bowl MVP after the 1996 season against New England, and Devin Hester, who scored on opening kickoff in Super Bowl after 2006 season against Indianapolis.

It didn’t take long for Boston’s hard-core fans to embrace him.

“Back then, I was the underdog trying to find a spot on the team,” Vinatieri said.

But since the best clutch kicker in league history signed with Indianapolis as a free agent in 2006, Patriots fans have greeted “Automatic Adam” with a resounding chorus of boos each time he comes back to Gillette Stadium.

Following last season’s divisional round loss, Vinatieri told a Boston radio station that he was disappointed by the crowd’s reaction.

After all, Vinatieri hasn’t shed all of his Boston roots. He still appreciates a cup of coffee from Dunkin’ Donuts, he still likes the Red Sox and he still enjoys seeing some old friends at Gillette Stadium.

It might be his final chance.

With the Colts hosting New England during the 2015 regular season and no assurance Indy (13-5) will bring back a 44-year-old kicker in 2016, after his current two-year deal expires, Sunday’s game could be Vinatieri’s Foxborough farewell.

“I won’t reminisce,” he said. “It will be business as usual.”

SPORTS



Cardale's staying put

Ohio State QB passes on NFL Draft to return to school » **College football, Page 29**

NFL PLAYOFFS

Carrying the load

Lacy, Lynch lead way to NFC championship

BY GENARO C. ARMAS
The Associated Press

The Seahawks' Marshawn Lynch and the Packers' Eddie Lacy are known for being punishing runners.

Their conduct in front of the cameras couldn't be any different.

Lynch isn't a talker, to put it mildly. The affable Lacy can charm reporters and teammates with an easygoing personality.

Trying to tackle Lynch and Lacy won't be easy for the defenses when Green Bay visits Seattle on Sunday in the NFC title game.

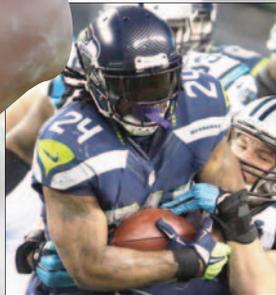
What are they like with the ball?

Lacy will take that question.

"I mean personally, I don't know him, I never met him or anything," he said. "But we're both physical backs. We don't care who's in front of us. When you come to hit us, you've got to come ... you've got to try your hardest to get us down."

Sure-handed tackles become of

SEE LOAD ON PAGE 30



AP photos

Although they couldn't be more different off the field, Green Bay running back Eddie Lacy, left, and Seattle running back Marshawn Lynch, above, are cut from the same cloth when they're on the football field.

James' 36 points help lift Cavaliers over Lakers

NBA, Page 27

Lynn gets \$22 million contract from Cardinals

MLB, Page 25