

BRIEFLY

Man charged with rape had 19 deportations, removals

WICHITA, Kan. (AP) — A Mexican man accused of raping a 13-year-old girl on a Greyhound bus that traveled through Kansas had been deported 10 times and voluntarily removed from the U.S. another nine times since 2003, records obtained by The Associated Press show.

Three U.S. Republican senators — including Kansas' Jerry Moran and Pat Roberts — demanded this month that the Department of Homeland Security provide immigration records for 38-year-old Tomas Martinez-Maldonado, who is charged with a felony in the alleged Sept. 27 attack aboard a bus in Geary County. He is being held in the Geary County jail in Junction City, which is about 120 miles west of Kansas City.

U.S. Sen. Charles Grassley, from Iowa and chairman of the judiciary committee, co-signed a Dec. 9 letter with Moran and Roberts to Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson, calling it "an extremely disturbing case" and questioning how Martinez-Maldonado was able to re-enter and remain in the country.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement said it has placed a detainer — a request to turn Martinez-Maldonado over to ICE custody before he is released — with Geary County. ICE declined to discuss his specific case beyond its October statement regarding the 10 deportations.

Mormon choir singer quits over Trump inaugural

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — A member of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir said she has resigned from the famed group over its decision to perform at next month's inauguration of President-elect Donald Trump.

Jan Chamberlin posted her resignation letter to choir leaders on her Facebook page Thursday. In it, she writes that by performing at the Jan. 20 inaugural, the 360-member choir will appear to be "endorsing tyranny and fascism." She says she feels betrayed by the choir's decision to take part.

The choir is part of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Church spokesman Eric Hawkins told *The Salt Lake Tribune* that participation in the choir and the inaugural performance is voluntary.

Hawkins said last week the choir's tradition of presidential performances isn't "implied support of party affiliations or politics" but a "demonstration of our support for freedom, civility and the peaceful transition of power."

Chamberlin's decision earned praise from one of the most powerful Mormons in the country: Nevada Sen. Harry Reid.

The retiring Democrat said Friday in a statement to the *Tribune* that he admires people like Chamberlin who "reject tyranny and fascism and do what they can to stand up for what is right."

U.N. to vote Saturday on Syria cease-fire

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The U.N. Security Council has scheduled a vote Saturday morning on a Russian resolution that would endorse the cease-fire agreement in Syria and reiterate support for a roadmap to peace that starts with a transitional government.

The draft resolution also calls for "rapid, safe and unhindered" access to deliver humanitarian aid throughout the country. And it looks forward to a meeting in late January between the Syrian government and opposition in Kazakhstan's capital Astana "as an important part of the Syrian-led political process facilitated by the United Nations."

Russia and Turkey, who

brokered the cease-fire agreement, circulated the text and the draft resolution to Security Council members Thursday night. After closed discussions in the council Friday morning, Russia's U.N. Ambassador Vitaly Churkin circulated a revised text, called for a vote on Saturday, and urged council members to support it.

Syria's cease-fire holding despite minor violations

BEIRUT (AP) — A nationwide Syrian cease-fire brokered by Russia and Turkey that went into effect at midnight held Friday despite minor violations, marking a potential breakthrough in a conflict that has disregarded high-level peace initiatives for over five years.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported clashes early Friday between troops and rebels in the central province of Hama and near the capital, Damascus. It said that later in the day a man was killed by sniper fire in eastern suburbs of Damascus, becoming the first fatality since the truce went into effect. The group also reported an aerial attack on the rebel-held Barada Valley near Damascus.

The Syrian army denied reports it was bombarding the Barada Valley region saying opposition claims aim to show that the army is not abiding by the truce.

Opposition activist Mazen al-Shami, who is based in the Damascus suburb of Douma, said minor clashes nearby left one rebel wounded. Activist Ahmad al-Masalmeh, in the southern Daraa province, said government forces had opened fire on rebel-held areas.

Several past attempts at halting the fighting have failed. As with previous agreements, the current cease-fire excludes both the al-Qaida-affiliated Fatah al-Sham Front, which fights alongside other rebel factions, and the Islamic State group.

Debbie Reynolds and Carrie Fisher to be buried together

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Debbie Reynolds' son said Friday his mother and sister, actress Carrie Fisher, will have a joint funeral and will be buried together.

Todd Fisher said the actresses will be interred at Forest Lawn-Hollywood Hills, the final resting place of numerous celebrities, including Lucille Ball, Dick Van Patten, Liberace, Florence Henderson, David Carradine and Bette Davis.

The son said no date for the funeral has been set, but it will be private. A public memorial is being contemplated, but no plans have been finalized.

Earlier Friday, the Los Angeles coroner's office released Carrie Fisher's body to her family. Chief of Operations Brian Elias says an examination of Fisher was done, but he stopped short of calling it an autopsy and would not provide any details on what tests were done.

U.S. shuts down two Russian compounds

CENTREVILLE, Md. (AP) — Two luxury retreats in New York and Maryland where Russian diplomats have gone for decades to play tennis, sail and swim were shut down by the Obama administration Friday in retaliation for Moscow's cyber-meddling in the presidential election.

The U.S. said the two Cold War-era estates were being used for intelligence activities.

About a half-hour before the noon eviction deadline, caravans of diplomatic vehicles, some carrying boxes, left both Russian compounds under the watch of U.S. State Department agents.

The 45-acre Maryland retreat boasts a brick mansion along the Corsica River in the bucolic Eastern Shore region. It was bought by the Soviet Union in 1972 and served as a getaway for its diplomats in nearby Washington.

In New York, Russian diplomatic staff members were evicted from a mansion on Long Island's Gold Coast. The estate, once called Elmcroft, is in the town of Oyster Bay and was purchased by the Soviets in 1952.

Russian U.N. Ambassador Vitaly Churkin told reporters at U.N. headquarters that the Obama administration is destroying holiday fun for the children of Russian diplomats who vacation at the two retreats during their New Year's break.

"I think it's quite scandalous that they chose to go after our kids," Churkin said. He added: "Here go their family values."

President Barack Obama announced the shutdown Thursday as part of a raft of sanctions that included the expulsion of 35 Russians who the U.S. said were spies operating under diplomatic cover.

Neighbors of both compounds described generally friendly relations with the diplomats and their



AP Photo/Alexander F. Yuan

A fence encloses an estate in the village of Upper Brookville in the town of Oyster Bay, N.Y., on Long Island. On Friday, the Obama administration closed this compound for Russian diplomats, in retaliation for spying and cyber-meddling in the U.S. presidential election.

Russia, brushing off Obama, looks to friendlier Donald Trump

HONOLULU (AP) — Stung by new punishments, Russia is looking straight past President Barack Obama to Donald Trump in hopes the president-elect will reverse the tough U.S. stance toward Moscow of the last eight years. In a stunning embrace of a longtime U.S. adversary, Trump is siding with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Whether Trump steers the U.S. toward or away from Russia upon taking office is shaping up as the first major test of his foreign policy disposition and his willingness to buck fellow Republicans, who for years have argued Obama wasn't tough enough. Now that Obama has finally sanctioned Russia over hacking allegations, Putin has essentially put relations on hold till Trump takes over.

"Great move on delay (by V. Putin)," Trump wrote Friday on Twitter. "I always knew he was very smart!"

He was referring to Putin's announcement that Russia won't immediately retaliate after Obama ordered sanctions on Russian spy agencies, closed two Russian compounds and expelled 35 diplomats the U.S. said were really spies. Though Putin reserved the right to hit back later, he suggested that won't be necessary with Trump in office.

Brushing off Obama, Putin said Russia would plan steps to restore U.S. ties "based on the policies that will be carried out by the administration of President D. Trump." Not only would Russia not kick Americans out, Putin said, he was inviting the kids of all U.S. diplomats to the Kremlin's New Year's and Christmas parties.

families.

"We coexist with these people peacefully," said Alison Davis, who lives near the Maryland retreat. "It's basically their summer cottage, but we see the

diplomat tags driving here all the time, very friendly. We see them biking, say hello."

Still, she said, "They kind of keep to themselves."

She said the compound

'Turbocharged' storm clobbers northern New England

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — The most powerful nor'easter in nearly two years brought heavy snow, powerful winds and even thunder and lightning to northern New England, leaving tens of thousands of people in the dark Friday and burying some towns under 2 feet of snow.

More than 100,000 homes and businesses in Maine were without electricity at the storm's peak, and residents were warned that it could take days to restore service. The National Weather Service received reports of snow falling at up to 6 inches per hour.

"It went from just a garden-variety, low-pressure system to a turbocharged storm," meteorologist Eric Schwibs said.

In Brunswick, resident Jason Weymouth went to bed with a sense of dread as powerful thunderclaps accompanied the falling snow.



Jill Brady/Portland Press Herald via AP

Brian Murray of Lucas Tree Experts hauls away tree branches cut by Don Libby as they clean up limbs causing downed wires Friday in Gorham, Maine.

"It hit over the house, and it was pretty loud and very strong and very unusual. That set me a little bit on edge," he said.

By Friday morning, he was among the thousands of Maine residents without power. Compounding his misery: His snowblower was unable to cope with the heavy snow and his wood-

carving shop was knocked offline for the day.

The storm's fury walloped some places and skipped others as powerful bands of snow buried some communities while others just miles away received mostly rain.

Hundreds of cars slid off roads from the beginning of the storm on Thursday

through Friday morning, when the sun appeared. In Vermont, a 69-year-old man was killed in Cornwall when his car went off the road in slippery conditions Thursday and crashed into a tree, state police said.

In Maine, the storm was believed to have contributed to a fatal fire in the town of Pownal. The victim's power had gone out, and investigators suspect he was using an alternative heat source when he died early Friday.

The heavy snow knocked down power lines and tree limbs. In Orono, the domed structure used by student-athletes at the University of Maine athletic complex collapsed under the weight.

Southern and western Maine turned out to be in the storm's bull's-eye, but the storm played a game of hopscotch, pummeling some communities with snow while leaving others just miles away drenched in rain.

BE EMPOWERED

not just employed.

Open Interviews Daily

9:00am - 4:00pm

*no appointments necessary

"At SYKES, I do a job that matters while working with people I like. I also have great opportunities to advance my career. That's why I love my job."



Equal Opportunity Employer

Apply Online: sykes.com/Milton

SYKES®

Text "sykes151" to 85760
151 Sykes Blvd
Milton Freewater, OR 97862