

North Korea fires suspected cruise missiles after U.S. drills

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea fired several suspected short-range anti-ship missiles off its east coast Thursday, South Korea's military said, in a continuation of defiant launches as it seeks to build a nuclear missile capable of reaching the continental United States.

The missiles were fired from the North Korean eastern coastal town of Wonsan and likely flew about 125 miles with an altitude of about 1.2 miles, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement. They landed in waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan, where U.S. aircraft carriers USS Carl Vinson and USS Ronald Reagan participated in joint exercises with the South Korean navy that ended earlier this week.

The North's missile tests present a difficult challenge to new South Korean Presi-

dent Moon Jae-in, a liberal elected last month who has expressed a desire to reach out to Pyongyang. North Korea, which could have a working nuclear-tipped intercontinental ballistic missile in the next several years, may also be the most urgent foreign policy concern for the Trump administration, which has been distracted by domestic political turmoil and has insisted China do more to rein in the North's weapons activities.

Roh Jae-cheon, spokesman of Seoul's military, said the latest launch would have intended to show off its widening range of missiles and also its "precision strike capabilities" on ships in response to the joint drills.

North Korea's weapons tests are meant to build a nuclear and missile program that can stand up to what it sees as U.S. and South

Korean hostility, but they are also considered by outside analysts as ways to make its political demands clear to leaders in Washington and Seoul. Analysts say the latest launch appeared to be aimed at keeping up pressures on Moon to try to win concessions.

The launches Thursday from Wonsan were North Korea's fourth missile test in as many weeks as the country continues to speed up its development of nuclear weapons and missiles.

Kim Dong-yub, a North Korea expert at Seoul's Institute for Far Eastern Studies, said the projectiles, which showed longer range than North Korea's previously known KN-01 anti-ship cruise missiles that can travel up to 99 miles, were likely from a new cruise missile system North Korea displayed during a massive April 15 military parade.

WOLVES: Washington Cattlemen not yet on board to take legal action

Continued from 1A

Todd Nash, the Cattlemen's wolf committee chairman, said the absence of a completed analysis three years after U.S. Fish and Wildlife closed its public comment period regarding its environmental policy analysis to delist gray wolves from the endangered species list was one reason for the suit.

"They are legally bound to do that within one year and that's the preface pressing forward with lawsuit," Nash said.

The lack of manpower Fish and Wildlife dedicates to managing wolves was the other frustration that led to litigation, Nash said.

In Oregon, like Washington and Utah, managing wolves is complicated.

Through an appropriations bill Congress removed gray wolves from the

Endangered Species List in Montana, Idaho and parts of Oregon, Washington and Utah in April 2011. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife then took over sole management of wolves living east of U.S. Highway 395, Oregon Highway 78 and U.S. Highway 95.

In November 2015 wolves were removed from the state endangered species list, but west of that line wolves remain protected by the federal Endangered Species Act.

In the vastly larger landscape of the western portion of the state under federal jurisdiction, Nash said the agency is woefully understaffed.

"This is no discredit to John (Stephenson, wolf biologist)," Nash said, "but he is one guy."

Nash said the Cattlemen believe the U.S. Fish and Wildlife needs to increase

its staffing to better capture, collar and monitor wolves and complete its effort to delist gray wolves through the National Environmental Policy Act.

A vote was taken to sue the federal government at the Cattlemen's November annual meeting in Bend as well, Nash said, but the members were waiting to see if the Washington Cattlemen were interested in taking legal action along with them. While a contingency of Washington Cattlemen members were in attendance at the Oregon Cattlemen's Pendleton last week and participated in lengthy discussions regarding the intent to sue, Nash said they are not yet on board.

"Washington is going to take it back to their board and discuss it and California will likely throw in with us," Nash said.

SIGNS: Buses will add tribal language signs

Continued from 1A

dance for American Indian students. The district used its grant to focus on Washington, the Pendleton school with the highest share of Native American students.

In addition to purchasing the signs, the district hired a Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation Education Department employee, Brent Spencer, as a family advocate.

Tasked with creating initiatives to boost attendance, Spencer began implementing attendance contests between classes, prizes for good attendance, and after-school family nights.

Spencer said American Indian attendance at Washington was 93 percent last year and they hoped to increase it to 95 percent by the end of this year, but those statistics barely budged.

Still, Spencer said the early impact of the program went beyond statistics. He said the school is building relationships with parents and students through its family nights and continual follow-up contact, even going as far as personally pick up kids for school when they let him know they can't make it.

While the statistics haven't caught up yet, there is one number school officials are noticing. Matt Yoshioka, Pendleton interim superintendent, noted that attendance at family nights grew from 17 students and parents at the first event to 40 at the final one.

While Spencer thinks it will take a few years before the program can make a dent in attendance rates, it may not be around that long.

The district didn't include the family advocate position in its 2017-2018 budget and its set to expire with the grant at the end of June. Yoshioka said the pilot project grant is included in Gov. Kate Brown's budget



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Translations of Den 2 in both Umatilla and Weyilletpuu adorn a wall in Washington Elementary School in Pendleton.

proposal, but that won't be finalized until the Legislature votes on it.

In the meantime, Yoshioka said the district will focus on sustaining its current tribal education programs to address a persistent achievement gap between American Indian students and their peers.

A different state grant allowed the district to develop a tribal curriculum for students in kindergarten, fourth grade and sixth grade in 2015. Yoshioka said that curriculum could be further bolstered by Senate Bill 13, which would direct the Oregon Department of Education to develop curriculum relating to Native American experience in Oregon and to provide related professional development tools.

Although a Native American teacher recruitment grant only resulted in the hiring of one teacher, Yoshioka said Pendleton High School continues to maintain its Oregon Teacher Pathways program for aspiring teachers.

While the goal is to develop more local teachers affiliated with the tribes, Yoshioka said the district will face stiff competition from the tribes themselves, which offer many professional-level jobs to enrolled members with college

degrees.

Yoshioka said the district is also looking into other investments that will have a longterm impact like book purchases, tribal drumming classes and an elementary lacrosse team.

If the pilot program grant is re-authorized, Yoshioka said there could be some changes in store.

Yoshioka said district officials recently attended a conference with other recipients of the tribal attendance grant, where they noticed that other district employed a part-time staff member who specialized in training teachers in culturally inclusive professional development in addition to a full-time position similar to the family advocate.

While taking note of other district's ideas, Yoshioka noticed that Pendleton's trilingual signs were an aspect unique to Pendleton.

Now that Washington's signs are fully installed, Yoshioka said Mid Columbia Bus Co. has agreed to add tribal language signs on their buses that go on routes on the reservation. The new Washington façade will be officially unveiled at a ceremony on June 14 at 5 p.m.

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Staff photo by Phil Wright

The derelict Rodeo City Inn about five miles west of Pendleton could see new life. Umatilla County counsel Doug Olson reported the defunct hotel's owner has plans to renovate the building.

MOTEL: County commissioners adopted the 2017-18 budget of \$73.7M

Continued from 1A

hazard, and could be a hazard for a variety of other reasons."

Olson said he would draft something for the board to consider at a future meeting.

County commissioners at the top of the meeting adopted the 2017-18 budget of \$73.7 million. Jerry Baker, county budget committee chair, told the board balancing the budget required using some of the reserve for the Public Employees Retirement System the county built up through funds from the federal Payments in Lieu of Taxes.

"If we can continue to do this in the future, I don't know," Baker said. "... with PERS continuing the way it is, it's going to be tough, really tough, to have a balanced budget."

The county cannot raise its permanent tax rate of



Staff photo by Phil Wright

The Rodeo City Inn was declared a crime property in 2013 and has been shut down since early 2014.

2.8487 percent. Murdock said economic growth will be the answer to providing additional tax revenues for county services. Umatilla County is one of the fastest growing in Oregon, he said, and several projects are in the works that would expand the tax base. Murdock after the meeting

noted "like every other entity in Oregon, the rising costs of PERS continue to assault our budget, and we remain hopeful the Legislature will take on this issue."

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VIDEO: 'They listen and find common ground'

Continued from 1A

earlier version raised the eyebrows of Preus and White back in March.

"It was concerning to us because the bill would have expanded the definition of lobbyist," White-Zollman said. "The new definition included most public employees or anyone else who wanted to go and advocate for or oppose a bill in Salem."

White-Zollman and Preus often travel to the Capitol to visit with lawmakers about legislation relating to community colleges. This bill, as then written, required anyone who spent more than an aggregate amount of \$100 during the calendar year or stayed more than 24 hours in Salem during any quarter while lobbying to register as a lobbyist with the Oregon Government Ethics Commission.

That didn't sit right with White-Zollman.

"That definition includes almost anybody on the east side of the state who drives to Salem to testify," she said. "When you drive from this side of the state, it's usually not a day trip. One night in a Salem motel usually costs more than \$100."

She brought her concerns to Hansell and Barreto during a video conference. Later that morning, Hansell asked his staff to review the Senate bill to determine whether the objection had merit. He thought it did. He learned a hearing on the bill was scheduled for that very afternoon, and worked up some testimony on the fly.

"He used the example of a couple who drove from Imnaha to testify a couple of weeks prior," White-Zollman said.

"The trip from Imnaha, in my district, to Salem is over 800 miles round trip," Hansell told members of the Senate Committee on Rules. "If reimbursed at the state rate, the traveler would receive \$427.18 — well above the \$100 threshold. Requiring local officials and common citizens to register may chill their inclination to come testify on legislation that directly impacts them."

He proposed an amendment saying that no local public official or common citizen would have to register as a lobbyist in order to testify. The most recent version of the bill includes the amendment.

The Pendleton Chamber of Commerce sponsors the video chats, and Gail Nelson attends most sessions. She recalled when a 2015 bill ended up on the scrap heap after Pendleton participants expressed their opinion. House Bill 3034 would have charged rural hospitals property taxes if they didn't give away a minimum amount of charity care. The law addressed the increasingly common practice of hospitals (considered nonprofit) purchasing for-profit clinics and removing them from the tax rolls. Nelson believed the bill would hurt rural hospitals.

When Barreto heard similar objections echoed by St. Anthony Hospital CEO Harry Geller and administrators at two other Eastern Oregon hospitals, he decided to visit to the House Revenue Committee Chairman, Rep. Phil Barnhart (D-Central Lane and Linn Counties).

"I told him I'd heard from hospitals that this was a bad bill," Barreto recalled.

Barreto pushed, but Barnhart didn't budge, citing the need for more revenue.

Finally, Barreto said he instructed his staff to call hospitals in Barnhart's district to inform them about the bill. Barnhart got a rash of calls from disgruntled hospital administrators. The bill was killed.

Hansell, along with Rep. Greg Smith, R-Hepburn, also participates in a monthly teleconference sponsored by the Hermiston Chamber of Commerce. He said he benefits as much as the locals from the sessions.

"I find them very valuable," Hansell said. "Legislation has come out of these meetings and we've also had the opportunity to amend or stop legislation we were alerted to."

A lot can come from a simple, earnest conversation, White-Zollman said.

"They listen and find common ground," she said. "They rely on us to bring them issues. It's a two-way street here."

Check the chamber calendar of events at pendletonchamber.com for the upcoming legislative video conference.

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Born Twice

What did Jesus mean when He said, "You must be born again"? (John 3:7). Nicodemus, the religious leader whom Jesus was speaking, asked if that meant becoming a baby a second time (v.4). Jesus explained that He was talking about spiritual rebirth (vv.5-8).

We need to be reborn because we are spiritually dead. Our sin has separated us from a life-giving relationship with God. We all have sinned by violating His perfect moral standards (Romans 3:23), and so we all are guilty and deserving of God's judgment (John 3:18-21).

What every person needs is the forgiveness and eternal life that Jesus made possible through His sinless life, His sacrificial death on the cross, and His resurrection. Spiritual rebirth occurs when a person exercises genuine trust in Christ as Savior and Lord (vv.14-18). At that point a believer experiences God's forgiveness and a radical transformation at the very core of his being (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Christianity was never intended to be merely a "fire escape" from hell. Being born again is the beginning of a whole new life. We are to grow up into mature men and women of faith. This process is often difficult, costly, and unrewarding by the world's standards.

Above all else, we must realize that it's impossible to please God without a life-changing personal encounter with Christ. This involves recognizing that we need a savior, accepting the gift of salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9), and trusting in Jesus as our only hope of being right with God now and living with Him forever (Romans 6:2-3).

Have you been born twice?