

A Call to Serve

by John Cardinal Newman

God has created me for some definite service.
God has committed some work to me
which He has not committed to another.
I have my mission.
I am a link in a chain,
a bond of connection between persons.
I shall do good. I shall do God's work.
I shall be an angel of peace,
a preacher of truth in my own place.

Quotes of the Day

Submitted by Joan Mulligan

A friend is someone who reaches for your hand, but touches your heart!
"The question is not what you look at, but what you see." --Henry Thoreau
"Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted."
--Albert Einstein

God gave the world stars and there was beauty.
God gave the world sun and there was warmth.
God gave the world rain and there was life.
God gave the world mothers and there was love.

"My dad always had this little sign on his desk: 'The bigger your head is, the easier your shoes are to fill.' He really drilled that in."

retired NBA coach
PHIL JACKSON

"It's not what's under the tree that matters, it's who's around it."

submitted by GUIDEPOSTS reader
SUSAN WALBRECHT of Bethany Beach, Delaware

"Gossip is like a nasty virus. If you learn to cover your mouth you won't spread the germs."

—submitted by Guideposts reader Audrey Harvey of Antioch, Tennessee



BY: LEON IRBY DATED: FEBRUARY 01, 2015

JANUARY



| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|---|---------|-----------|-------------------------|--------|----------|
| <small>DECEMBER 2014</small> <small>S M T W T F S</small> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 | <small>FEBRUARY 2015</small> <small>S M T W T F S</small> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 | | | 1 New Year's Day | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

● New Moon ● First Quarter ○ Full Moon ● Last Quarter



God has put something noble and good into every heart His hand created.

MARK TWAIN

PROBLEMS
ARE
GUIDELINES,
NOT STOP
SIGNS.



Lose as if you like it; win as if you were used to it.

TOMMY HITCHCOCK

Session Wrap-Up



Mental Health Reform Signed into State Law

Under current law, individuals living with mental illness or developmental disabilities, as well as those who are drug-dependent, are routinely and often times unnecessarily brought to the Milwaukee County Mental Health Complex by police. Assembly Bill 500, which I co-authored, creates the Milwaukee County Emergency Detention Pilot Program. This program gives qualified mental health professionals the authority to individually assess the therapeutic intervention these individuals need and determine whether these individuals should be detained. Assembly Bill 500 was signed into law on April 8, 2014.

Predator Accountability Act Stalls in Committee

Victims of sex trafficking often do not have the financial means to begin the healing process and move on with their lives. If passed, Senate Bill 552 would have allowed sex trafficking victims to sue the individuals who sexually exploited them.

Public Safety Should Not Be on the Back Burner

Gun violence has escalated in Milwaukee over the last few years. If passed, my Universal Background Check Bill would have closed the loopholes that allow criminals to get their hands on guns by requiring background checks on all gun sales across the state.

Wisconsin is Number One... In Black Male Incarceration

Wisconsin leads the nation in our incarceration of African-American and Native-American males. If passed, Senate Bill 538, which I authored, would have helped address that staggering statistic by requiring that minority impact statements accompany any new or modified crime bill or criminal penalty prior to that bill becoming law.

Similar to environmental impact statements or fiscal estimates, minority impact statements would indicate whether proposed criminal legislation would have a disparate or disproportionate impact

on minorities. By catching racial biases prior to enacting legislation, we would be able to modify flawed legislation and be more deliberate in our drafting of criminal policy.

Wisconsin should not be recognized as leading the nation in racial disparities in the criminal justice system. Minority impact statements would enable us to anticipate and positively change racial biases by making informed decisions about laws that impact our criminal justice system.



Senator Nikiya Q. Harris

6TH SENATE DISTRICT

Legislative Update

Spring 2014

Dear Neighbor,

As the legislative session comes to an end, I would like to take this time to update you on the past year in the Wisconsin State Capitol.

While we have seen an increase in economic development, the road to recovery for many in the 6th Senate District has been difficult. Many families across the district are still struggling to afford their day-to-day living expenses, as barriers to family-sustaining employment and increased costs of living weigh heavily on families' abilities to make ends meet.

I believe that every citizen of this state should have the opportunity to achieve the American dream. That is why this past session, I pushed for an increase in the minimum wage, access to job training, and affordable healthcare. I fought strongly against efforts to silence the freedom to vote and efforts to cut funding for our public school system.

In this newsletter, you will find information on some of the legislative happenings over the past year, including information on the bills that I proposed. I have also included a summer calendar of events, which I encourage you to use as you begin to plan for this upcoming summer.

Thank you for the opportunity to represent the 6th Senate District and to serve as your voice in the State Legislature. I look forward to improving our community together.

Sincerely,

Senator Nikiya Harris



How to Contact Nikiya Harris

Email

Sen.Harris@legis.wi.gov

Madison Office

877-474-2000

Milwaukee Office

414-273-1555

Senator Harris

Wisconsin State Capitol

P.O. Box 7882

Madison, WI 53707-7882

I send out periodic email updates about current issues in the State Legislature. Your opinions are important to me. Please go to Harris.Senate.wi.gov to make your voice heard.



PROGRAM NEWS

PEN PAL CLUBS



Mail call can be the highlight of the day for many in prison. But for those whose name is never called, it is one more reminder that you are forgotten, that no one cares. We, at Companions, maintain a list of those imprisoned people who would enjoy exchanging thoughts with someone who lives outside prison walls. There are never enough volunteers to meet the need. Last year we met Laura has become a gift to us. She wanted to start a pen pal club at her church but was having trouble finding someone to help supply her with names. Working together, she was able to establish such a wonderful group.

She has created quite a model. We would like to duplicate it in other churches or groups. Would you help us be exploring the possibility of starting such a group at your church? There is such a need. We can provide training, a post office return address and continuing availability to answer questions or concerns. Please get in touch with us!

LAURA'S REFLECTION

In Spring 2013, a Lutheran church in suburban Chicagoland formed a group of congregation members who wanted to begin a prison ministry. Being that it was a small group, brand new to the endeavor, they didn't know where to begin. After almost a dozen promising leads that turned to shut doors, they were matched with Jana and *Companions Journeying Together*. It was an instant partnership with matched ideology and a vision of growth.

Jana made a long drive to meet with the group of five women and two men, who were full of questions about becoming a meaningful pen-pal to a prisoner. Jana brought a binder of letters and drawings from her decades of correspondence. Of all the people who attended the informational meeting, each person signed up to be a member. This speaks volumes to the positive nature and inspiration Jana brings when talking about her work. With these new members, *Faithful Friends* was born.

Still in its infancy, this new group has matched six pen-pals, recruited fifteen members to send holiday cards (267 to date), fundraised for stamps, donated more than 50 knit bookmarks for Aunt Mary's Storybook Project, and said endless prayers for the incarcerated. Many of the members report having formed trusting bonds with their pen-pals and look forward to many more letters sent and received. *Faithful Friends* has begun publishing a quarterly newsletter in hopes of staying connected, offering each other support, fulfilling prayer requests, and attracting new members.

Currently, this partnership is discussing ideas of how to best plant seeds to grow new groups like *Faithful Friends* at other Chicagoland churches. Continue to follow JourneyNotes for future updates.

Companions and *Faithful Friends* both share the belief in presence. Letters and cards sent to those behind bars are meant to bring comfort, peace, and hopefulness. *Faithful Friends* remains steadfast in their promise to pray for victims and offenders of crime, hoping to live the belief in action that no person is ever forsaken.



PRAYER REQUESTS:

We ask that you keep in your prayers:

- Those who were wrongfully committed and now are still imprisoned.
- All loved ones of those who are confined in our penal institutions.
- Each person in prison who is struggling with depression.
- All who are working for reform of our Criminal Justice System.
- Health care workers in jails and prisons that they can and will provide good care.
- An end to the death penalty in this country.
- Rev. Karen and her family as they begin a new life away from Chicago.

BY: LEON IRBY

DATED: FEBRUARY 8, 2015

BOARD PROFILE & ARCHIVES

BOARD PROFILE: MARY ANN

Can you remember back to when you first got involved in CJT? What drew you to not only that first meeting or encounter, but also what pushed you to take the step to become a Board member?

I had been involved in prison ministry prior to joining the Board. For a number of years, I was a volunteer at the Illinois Youth Center in Warrenville and I knew that I had an interest in prison ministry. When Jana Minor asked me to serve on the Board, in 2003, I was in the middle of a job search, had a little time on my hands and joined the Board in May 2003. My first opportunity to serve was on the search committee for our 'then-new' Executive Director, Karen Hutt. I've been on the Board ever since.

What lessons have you learned in your role?

I've been so impressed with our wonderful volunteers who support the various programs that Companions facilitates. Everyone has talents that they can share and I have learned so much for people that I would never had a chance to meet, if not for Companions. I believe that I can learn from everyone and during the time that I have served on the board, I've had the opportunity to learn from so many people and to do so many things I would never have a chance to do.

What do you think the public needs to know about those who are incarcerated?

That they have families that suffer along with them and we can/should do more to help and support those families, especially the children. Also, we need better support systems and reentry programs for when the incarcerated are released.

Where do you see CJT in five years?

I'm optimistic that technology will play an important role in CJT future and that in 5 years, we will be using technology to reach more families and incarcerated people. As we look back on our past 25 years, the one thing that I learned is that we stayed true to our mission and I am confident that we will do that in the FUTURE also!

WE WERE AMAZED!



On May 15th, several of our staff and board visited the Special Collections and Archives of the John T. Richardson Library at DePaul University where our program records from the beginning are now housed in those archives. What a special experience! Jamie Nelson, the Director, showed us the boxes in which our materials are stored, gave us a tour of the collection and archives room and explained to us the procedures interested parties would need to follow if they wanted to review these records. It was a delightful experience.

To know that these records are accessible to anyone who wants to research them means so much. Can you imagine? From our humble beginnings in the office in our home in Brimfield, IL to having our efforts housed in a place that will keep them safe and available to people interested in what we have done and the philosophy and values out of which we work. It is astounding. We are grateful and hope that those records are helpful to many people.

Lolita was captured in 1970 about 50 miles northwest of Seattle, according to People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, which successfully petitioned for her federal endangered listing earlier this week, paving the way for her possible release into the wild.

Shocked doctor reveals how unresponsive Missouri boy's heart started again when his mother PRAYED over him in hospital room

A Missouri boy's heart started beating after his mother prayed aloud to God in a hospital room, she says.

John Smith fell through ice on top of a lake and stayed under for 15 minutes, KDSK reported.

Two of his friends also made the fall, with the NBC affiliate reporting 'When rescuers arrived, one was almost out of the water, another was holding onto the ice and one couldn't be found.'

The 14-year-old was reportedly taken to SSM St. Joseph Hospital West on Martin Luther King Day, when the trio's drop into the waters of Lake Sainte Louise occurred.

The teenager was unresponsive to 27 minutes of CPR at the hospital, according to KDSK. Dr. Kent Sutterer said in an interview with the television station 'Everybody says "Well the cold helped him." Well, he was dead for 45 minutes.'

KDSK reported the boy's mother, Joyce Smith, was asked to enter the room by Sutterer so he could tell her it wasn't looking good.

Sutterer said that 'John's mom [Joyce Smith] came in and she started praying loudly.' 'Within a matter of a minute or two, his heart started again,' the doctor said.

Joyce Smith told KDSK 'I don't remember what all I said. But I remember, "Holy God, please send your Holy Spirit to save my son. I want my son, please save him." And they hadn't been getting a pulse at that time, so all of a sudden I heard them start saying, "We got a pulse, we got a pulse."'

Smith's son was later transported to SSM Cardinal Glennon Children's Medical Center, KDSK reported. The news outlet reported the teenager's bloodstream had acid in it and his circulatory system was in shock and he soon started to heal.

Dr. Jeremy Garrett said to the television station 'This is a bona fide miracle.'

Garrett said that after signs of improvement, 'I did a very interesting neurologic exam. We said, "Well John, pretend your left hand is Lebron James and your right hand is Michael Jordan," then asked him a series of questions and he got them all right. It's truly amazing.' John Smith, meanwhile, told the television station 'I'm surprised I'm alive but it's a real miracle that I'm alive, and I thank God I'm alive, and there's a reason I'm alive, so I'm just going to kind of follow what God has in store for me throughout my life.'

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported Smith received a combined 43 minutes' worth of CPR from first responders and hospital staff. The newspaper reported 'He has some scrapes on his arms, legs and neck from the jagged

edges of the ice, and his hands are sore, but not sore enough to keep him from texting his friends.'

According to the Post-Dispatch, Smith will undergo physical therapy and left the hospital on Wednesday.

Syracuse announces self-imposed postseason ban this year

Syracuse informed the NCAA of a self-imposed ban on the 2014-15 men's basketball postseason in response to an NCAA investigation, the university announced Wednesday.

The ban includes the NCAA tournament and National Invitation Tournament as well as the ACC tournament for the Orange, a fringe team to make the field of 68 this season.

"I am very disappointed that our basketball team will miss the opportunity to play in the post-season this year," Syracuse coach Jim Boeheim said in a statement. "Senior Rakeem Christmas has been an outstanding member of the team for the past four years. However, I supported this decision and I believe the University is doing the right thing by acknowledging that past mistakes occurred. Our players have faced adversity and challenges before. I know they will rise to this challenge by keeping our program strong and continuing to make our University proud."

"We are all tremendously disappointed that we are going to miss out on playing in the postseason based on issues that do not involve us," said team captains Rakeem Christmas, Trevor Cooney and Michael Gbinije in a statement.

"However, we support our school and this won't change how hard we will continue to work in practice and in games."

"We are fully supportive of Syracuse and its decision to self-impose sanctions by removing themselves from any men's basketball postseason opportunities," ACC Commissioner John Swofford said. "They've been cooperative throughout the NCAA process, and I commend Chancellor Syverud and the Syracuse University leadership for taking this proactive step."

The ACC adjusted its conference tournament to reflect Syracuse's absence. The No. 10 seed will now have a bye and begin tournament play on the second day, Wednesday, March 11. Only two games will be played Tuesday, March 10.

The ban is a response to an NCAA investigation the school said it initiated when it self-reported potential violations within the athletics department in 2007.

Syracuse said no current player is involved in the investigation and that the conduct in the case did not occur after 2012.

In October, Boeheim and other Syracuse officials attended a hearing in front of the NCAA's Committee on Infractions. Chancellor Syverud wrote a letter to alumni to give advanced notice.

"I am disappointed for our current men's basketball players who must shoulder this postseason ban as a result of things that occurred years ago," Syverud wrote. "I also

recognize that not participating in postseason play will be disappointing for you and other Orange supporters. However, we look forward to moving past this matter and I am confident the men's basketball program will be strong and successful both on the court and in the classroom in the years ahead."

Top 25 Capsules

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — Byron Wesley scored 17 points and keyed a crucial second-half run that helped No. 2 Gonzaga rally for its 16th straight win with a 77-63 victory over Santa Clara on Thursday night.

Kyle Wiltjer led the way with 22 points including a dunk at the buzzer that drew boos from the crowd and Gary Bell Jr. added 16 for the Bulldogs (23-1, 11-0 West Coast Conference), who shot a season-high 69 percent from the field.

Jared Brownridge scored 25 points to lead the Broncos (11-13, 5-7), who have lost 26 straight games against ranked teams and 10 straight to the Bulldogs.

CINCINNATI 62, NO. 23 SMU 54
DALLAS (AP) — Jermaine Sanders scored 15 points, including one of two huge 3-pointers for Cincinnati as it started to pull away late in a win over SMU.

Sanders swished a 3-pointer from the right corner with 4:40 left to put the Bearcats (16-6, 7-3 American Athletic) up 53-46.

SMU (18-5, 9-2), in its first game since getting back in the Top 25 this week, pulled to 55-52 after Sterling Brown had a putback of his own shot after he had rebounded a Cincinnati miss and drove the court only to miss a layup.

With the shot clock running down after Cincinnati got the ball back, Shaq Thomas made a 3 from the right wing.

Cannen Cunningham led SMU with 14 points.

Virginia beats UNC

Malcolm Brogdon scored 17 points and No. 3 Virginia's defense locked down in the second half to beat No. 12 North Carolina 75-64 on Monday night.

Justin Anderson added 16 for the Cavaliers (20-1, 8-1 Atlantic Coast Conference), who responded to their first loss of the season by blowing open a tight game at halftime for an impressive road win.

Coming off Saturday's loss to Duke in one of the program's biggest home games in years, Virginia erased a 33-32 halftime deficit by shooting 50 percent while holding the Tar Heels (17-6, 7-3) completely in check to build an 18-point lead and improve to 8-0 in true road games this year.

After shooting 52 percent in the first half, UNC went just 11-for-29 (38 percent) after halftime while preseason ACC player of the year Marcus Paige struggled for open looks against Brogdon's constant defensive harassment.

Top 25 college basketball roundup: Forte makes OT free throws to lift OSU over No. 25 Texas

AUSTIN — Phil Forte made two free throws with 2.1 seconds left in overtime and Oklahoma State beat No. 25 Texas 65-63 on

BY: LEON IRBY

2 of 2 DATED: FEBRUARY 9, 2015

Fun fact: With four costume changes, Perry wore more outfits than anyone ever has during a halftime show.

Sneak peek: 'Poltergeist' reboots for 2015 terror

In 1982's *Poltergeist*, young Carol Anne Freeling carved out a place for herself in horror history when she eerily announced the arrival of malevolent spirits, saying, "They're here."

Well, they are back.

Poltergeist has been rebooted with a new cast and a contemporary setting more than 30 years after the original made the suburbs feel unsafe. Director Gil Kenan (*Monster House*) was rocked by the original film and vows to get the contemporary version right when it hits theaters in 3-D on July 24, with a first trailer appearing Thursday.

"Whenever someone approaches material that's so beloved, there's a reflexive reaction to be worried," says Kenan. "It's a responsibility we take very seriously. We're working to make a *Poltergeist* film that lives up to the original's legacy."

A key to Kenan and producer Sam Raimi's plan has been to mirror key aspects of the original. Director Tobe Hooper's 1982 version featured a screenplay co-written by Steven Spielberg and a stellar cast of Craig T. Nelson and JoBeth Williams as parents fighting against angry spirits to take back their abducted daughter (Heather O'Rourke). The reboot features a screenplay by Pulitzer Prize-winning dramatist David Lindsay-Abaire and is led onscreen by Sam Rockwell and Rosemarie DeWitt as the parents.

"Unlike the traditional horror film, I wanted to put together a cast to give weight and reality to these characters. It's the way to anchor the family," says Kenan. "It's such an emotional story at the core. Parents fighting to get their child back from the beyond." The Bowen family finds itself in a paranormal world of hurt when they move into a suburban fixer-upper, which is in worse need of spiritual cleansing. Kenan says he found his key central girl, Madison, in 8-year-old Kennedy Clements, whom he calls "a force of nature."

Like the original, television is a conduit from the spirit world. But in 2015, the screens are bigger, packing more menace. And there are screens throughout the house.

"The original film commented on how we've let television get out of control, babysitting our kids," says Raimi. "It's only gotten worse with the handheld portable devices. Screens are everywhere."

Once the spiritual invasion overwhelms, the Bowens seek help from a respected supernatural researcher and clairvoyant (Jared Harris). But they really come together and rely on each other.

"The thing that keeps them a family is what they have to draw on, to stay sane, and also to win Madison back," says Kenan. "The film is super-scary. And it's scary on its own terms. I am excited to finally be able to share that with the world."

'Dragon Tattoo' trilogy sequel set for August

An authorized sequel to the wildly popular *Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* series will hit bookshelves on Aug. 27, publisher Knopf announced Thursday.

The novel, written by David Lagercrantz, is an original story based on the books by Stieg Larsson, who died in 2004. The project is in cooperation with his estate.

"By letting David Lagercrantz write his own Millennium novel we keep the characters and the universe Stieg Larsson created alive. This new work hews closely to the first three Millennium novels and is faithful to those characters; it is wholly new and contemporary – the perfect way for readers to resume their acquaintance with Lisbeth and Mikael," Joakim and Erland Larsson, of the Stieg Larsson Estate, said in a news release. It's not unusual for the estates of deceased authors to allow new writers to continue series; it's happening for Ian Fleming (James Bond), Robert Ludlum and Tom Clancy, to name a few.

The new *Tattoo* book will follow the story of Mikael Blomkvist and Lisbeth Salander as well as familiar characters from the first three novels. Its Swedish title is *Det som inte dödar oss* ("What doesn't kill us"), but it will have a different U.S. title containing one "four-letter word," according to the release. Lagercrantz is a Swedish author and journalist.

Larsson had planned his series to include 10 books and had written a good portion of the fourth volume when he died. It has not been published, and Lagercrantz's novel does not use Larsson's unseen material.

The first three novels in the series have sold 80 million copies worldwide. A film adaptation of the first novel, *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*, hit theaters in 2011, directed by David Fincher and starring Daniel Craig and Rooney Mara.

First Stars are 100 Million Years Younger than Previously Thought

The first stars in the universe apparently formed 100 million years later than previously thought, according to new research.

This data was acquired from the European Space Agency's Planck Space Telescope and indicates the first ancient star formations began some 550 million years after the Big Bang occurred and gave life to the cosmos. Before stars were born in the reionization epoch, the universe was literally existing in a dark age where there was no visible light. The Big Bang occurred some 13.8 billion years and filled up the universe with matter. Scientists previously thought the earliest stars began shining some 440 million years ago after the Big Bang. New data which have yet to be confirmed by more measurements and data, however, suggest stars are 100 million years younger.

The Planck space telescope was launched in 2009 to further study the cosmic microwave background or the remnants of faint radiation echoes from the Big Bang. This telescope

was built for precision, however. It was decommissioned in 2013 after it ran out of liquid helium coolant.

According to scientist Carlo Baccigalupi of the International School of Advanced Studies in Trieste, Italy, Planck's observations suggest stars are younger than first believed. He said this new understanding can produce major consequences in the attempt to further understand the dark forces found in the universe.

These dark forces involve invisible dark matter and dark energy, which are forces that exist in the universe and whose natures are still unknown to scientists.

The reionization that occurred during the Big Bang refers to a process in which ultraviolet light energy exploded from the first stars. This split hydrogen atoms into protons and electrons.

Washington state mulls ban on capture of killer whales for entertainment

(Reuters) - Washington state senators held a hearing on Thursday to consider banning the increasingly controversial capture or holding of killer whales for entertainment.

More than half of the approximately 455 orcas taken for captivity originated in Washington state but the practice has come under more scrutiny following the 2013 documentary, "Blackfish," which described the capture of orcas and how one killed a trainer at SeaWorld in Orlando, Florida. Today, 57 orcas are in captivity in 14 marine parks in eight countries, including 25 in SeaWorld parks in Florida, California and Texas, according to a sponsor of the legislation, State Senator Kevin Ranker, D-Orcas Island.

Ranker told fellow senators on Thursday that even though there are no cetaceans held in captivity for entertainment or performance in Washington, the state should lead the nation on the question of hemming in these creatures.

"These animals that swim thousands of miles should not be put into a fish tank; it's unacceptable," he said.

A group representing marine parks told senators the proposed legislation cast a pall on facilities where the public can see orcas and be inspired to support their conservation. "It (the bill) discounts and delegitimizes the important role that zoos and parks perform every day," said Kathleen Dezio, head of the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums.

The Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Parks heard almost an hour of testimony on the ban relating to killer whales, or orcas, and other cetaceans such as dolphins and porpoises, without scheduling a vote on the measure.

The legislation would need the approval of members to be sent to the floor for a vote. Animal activists worried about the effects of captivity are behind a push to free Lolita, a 7,000-pound (3,175-kg) killer whale that has lived at the Miami Seaquarium for 44 years in one of the smallest tanks housing orcas.

Old questions about 9-11 resurface

WASHINGTON — For years, some current and former American officials have been urging President Barack Obama to release secret files they say document links between the government of Saudi Arabia and the Sept. 11 attacks.

Other officials, including the executive director of the Sept. 11 commission, have said the classified documents do not prove that the Saudi government knew about or financed the 2001 terrorist attacks, and that making the material public would serve no purpose.

Now, unsubstantiated court testimony by Zacharias Moussaoui, a former al-Qaida member serving life in federal prison, has renewed the push by those who want a closer look into whether there was official Saudi involvement with al-Qaida and the Sept. 11 hijackers. They say it should start with the release of 28 pages relating to Saudi Arabia from a joint congressional inquiry into the attacks.

"We owe the families a full accounting," said Rep. Stephen Lynch of Massachusetts, a Democrat who has read the classified pages written in 2002. They were left out of the public version of the report on the orders of President George W. Bush, who said they could divulge intelligence sources and methods. Officials on both sides of the debate acknowledge that protecting the delicate U.S.-Saudi relationship also played a role. Lynch and Rep. Walter Jones, R-N.C., have sponsored a resolution that calls for declassifying the records. The White House has asked intelligence agencies to review the pages with an eye toward potential declassification, spokesman Ned Price said, but there is no timetable.

The controversy comes at a consequential moment in the relationship between the U.S. and the kingdom.

Saudi Arabia has a new king — pro-American like the late monarch — and the two wary allies are working closely to confront the Islamic State, the turmoil in Yemen and Iran's nuclear aspirations. At the same time, U.S. officials say they continue to privately admonish Saudi Arabia over human rights abuses in the kingdom, such as the recent flogging of a blogger, and its support of the spread of religious extremism abroad. Moussaoui, who claimed during his terror conspiracy court case that he had planned to fly a plane into the White House on Sept. 11, was deposed by lawyers in a civil suit by some Sept. 11 families who are seeking damages from the Saudi government and other defendants, including charities and banks. Saudi Arabia vigorously disputes the allegations.

Moussaoui testified at his trial that key members of the Saudi royal family continued to fund al-Qaida in the late 1990s, even after the organization had declared war on the House of Saud. He also described plotting with an employee of the Saudi Embassy in Washington to shoot down Air Force One.

Lynch said the classified 28 pages, which are drawn from intelligence collection and FBI investigations, "are consistent" with Moussaoui's testimony.

"There are specifics, there are transactions, there are names," Lynch said.

Others who have read the document say it's far from definitive.

Two senior congressional aides described the case as weak. One noted that just because Saudi citizens helped the mostly Saudi hijackers in the U.S. does not mean they knew about the operation. Another said that the pages contain inaccuracies that could compromise an important diplomatic relationship.

The aides spoke on condition of anonymity to describe material that remains classified.

"If you think it's thin, well then, why not release it?" Lynch said.

Rep. Adam Schiff of California, the top Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, said he supports the release because he believes the pages would "demystify" the notion of a Saudi conspiracy.

"The issues raised in those pages were investigated by the 9/11 commission and found to be unsubstantiated," he said.

That commission, which built on the work of the joint congressional inquiry with access to FBI files and secret intelligence, did not exonerate Saudi Arabia. But it did conclude in its 2004 report that there was no evidence that the Saudi government funded al-Qaida during the planning of the attacks.

"It does not appear that any government other than the Taliban financially supported al-Qaida before 9/11, although some governments may have contained al-Qaida sympathizers who turned a blind eye to al-Qaida's fundraising activities," the report said. "Saudi Arabia has long been considered the primary source of al-Qaida funding, but we have found no evidence that the Saudi government as an institution or senior Saudi officials individually funded the organization."

Two ardent dissenters from that conclusion have been former Democratic Sen. Bob Graham of Florida, a leader of the congressional inquiry and longtime chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, and John Lehman, a Sept. 11 commission member and former Navy secretary under President Ronald Reagan.

Graham has said he sees "a direct line between some of the terrorists who carried out the Sept. 11 attacks and the government of Saudi Arabia." He believes that a Saudi government agent living in the United States, Omar al-Bayoumi, provided assistance to two Sept. 11 hijackers in San Diego at the behest of elements of the Saudi government.

The New York lawsuit argues that Saudi rulers were playing a double game in the years before the attacks, expelling Osama bin Laden and declaring opposition to al-Qaida, while secretly funding it to assuage the kingdom's religious conservatives.

Moussaoui, in testimony from a supermax prison in Florence, Colorado, told plaintiff

lawyers it was "an absolute lie" that Saudi Arabia severed its ties with bin Laden and al-Qaida in 1994.

"This is a complete misleading ... assumption of people who are not familiar with the way the Saudi government is established" because the government has "two heads of the snake," he said, according to a transcript.

The House of Saud, he said, "cannot keep power in Saudi Arabia without having the agreement" of the extremist Wahhabi religious establishment, he said.

"Look, see, we are not against Islam or the jihad, we finance bin Laden."

Obama ISIS fight request sent to Congress

President Barack Obama on Wednesday made the case for Congress to formally authorize the use of military force in the war against ISIS, declaring that congressional passage of the measure makes the U.S. "strongest" in the fight, and that "ISIL is going to lose."

"Now, make no mistake, this is a difficult mission and it will remain difficult for some time," he said during an afternoon press conference. But, he added, "Our coalition is on the offensive, ISIL is on the defensive and ISIL is going to lose."

Obama, flanked by Vice President Joe Biden, Secretary of State John Kerry and Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, outlined the parameters of the request he delivered to Congress earlier that day. He said the bill reflects "our core objective to destroy ISIL," and includes authority for a "systemic and sustained campaign of airstrikes," support and training for forces on the ground and humanitarian assistance.

He made clear, however, that the Authorization for the Use of Military Force, or AUMF, does not call for the deployment of ground troops in Iraq or Syria.

"I am convinced that the U.S. should not get back into another ground war in the Middle East -- it's not in our national security interest and not necessary for us to defeat ISIL," he said.

The proposal does give the military the "flexibility" to confront "unforeseen circumstances," potentially by deploying special forces in the region.

Lawmakers on Capitol Hill received a draft AUMF, a resolution that would formally authorize the already six-month-old U.S. military effort against the militant group. The joint resolution would limit the President's authority to wage a military campaign against ISIS to three years and does not authorize "enduring offensive ground combat operations," according to text of the resolution.

In a letter to Congress, Obama explained that the draft resolution would give him the authority to authorize "ground combat operations in limited circumstances," including rescue operations and special forces operations to "take military action against ISIL leadership."

The resolution would also sunset the 2002 AUMF that spawned the Iraq War. Obama withdrew American troops from Iraq in 2011,

BY: LEON IRBY

2 OF 2

DATED: FEBRUARY 13, 2015

but the military authorization remains in effect.

The resolution drafted by the White House does not repeal the 2001 military force authorization that has served as the legal justification for the military campaign against ISIS and other U.S. military efforts to combat terrorism around the world.

The document also specifically notes that ISIS poses a "grave threat" to U.S. national security interests and regional stability. And Obama detailed the ISIS threat in a letter to Congress accompanying the draft legislation.

"The so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) poses a threat to the people and stability of Iraq, Syria, and the broader Middle East, and to U.S. national security," Obama writes. "It threatens American personnel and facilities located in the region and is responsible for the deaths of U.S. citizens"

As in the draft resolution, Obama goes on to name the Americans killed in ISIS captivity, "including James Foley, Steven Sotloff, Abdul-Rahman Peter Kassig, and Kayla Mueller."

There is broad support in Congress for a formal AUMF, though lawmakers disagree on the scope of the military powers that should be handed to the President.

The Hill sounds off

House Republican leaders were quick to dismiss the White House draft authorization as too limited, insisting that the President should have fewer limitations.

"If we are going to defeat this enemy, we need a comprehensive military strategy and a robust authorization, not one that limits our options," House Speaker John Boehner said in a statement Tuesday. "Any authorization for the use of military force must give our military commanders the flexibility and authorities they need to succeed and protect our people...I have concerns that the president's request does not meet this standard."

Boehner's No. 2, Rep. Kevin McCarthy, echoed Boehner's support for an AUMF as well as his criticism of the limits the White House's draft would impose.

"I am prepared to support an Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) that provides new legal authorities to go after ISIL and other terrorist groups. However, I will not support efforts that impose undue restrictions on the U.S. military and make it harder to win," McCarthy said in a statement. House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi took the opposite path during a press conference Wednesday.

"We hope to have bipartisan support for something that would limit the power of the President, but nonetheless protect the American people in a very strong way," Pelosi said.

Pelosi added that she hoped the three-year authorization would be longer than needed to defeat ISIS.

Pelosi also offered her support for repealing the 2002 authorization, another provision included in Obama's draft resolution.

"I don't see any reason -- in fact I actively support -- repealing the 2002 authorization. It was based on a false premise," Pelosi said.

"Nonetheless, it should go, and it should go now."

Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky, who is staffing up for a potential 2016 presidential bid, took the opportunity to slam likely Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton.

"I do really blame Hillary Clinton's war in Libya," Paul said Wednesday on Fox News referring to the NATO campaign to oust Libyan dictator Moammar Gadhafi authorized by Obama while Clinton was secretary of state.

Libya has erupted into civil war and has become a breeding ground for radical Islamic fighters, many of whom have left to join ISIS's ranks.

Paul also said the U.S. needs to supply more weapons to Kurdish fighters fighting ISIS in Iraq, but said the U.S. should refrain from getting involved in the war in Syria -- fearing weapons supplied to moderate fighters could get into ISIS's hands.

Paul has been at odds with his Republican colleagues on many aspects of foreign policy, especially in urging for a more restrained, and not limitless, authority to fight ISIS.

Projecting American unity

Obama urged Congress during his State of the Union address to formally authorize the military campaign to "show the world that we are united in this mission" and Secretary of State John Kerry urged Congress to swiftly pass the resolution.

"We are strongest as a nation when the Administration and Congress work together on issues as significant as the use of military force," Kerry said. "This is a moment where Congress can make it clear all over the world that no matter differences on certain issues, at home we're absolutely united and determined in defeating ISIL."

Obama again noted in his letter to Congress Wednesday that he already has the authority to fight ISIS, "I have repeatedly expressed my commitment to working with the Congress to pass a bipartisan authorization for the use of military force" against ISIS. Obama also stressed that the White House's draft resolution would constrain the U.S. military effort and would not authorize "long-term, large-scale ground combat operations" like in Iraq and Afghanistan.

While Obama did not repeal the 2001 military authorization, he explained in his letter that he remains "committed to working with Congress and the American people to refine, and ultimately repeal, the 2001 AUMF."

Texas winning ticket in \$564 mln

Powerball bought at food mart

A food mart in a small city north of Dallas, Texas, was one of three places where winning tickets were sold in the estimated \$564.1 million U.S. Powerball lottery, officials said on Thursday.

Winning tickets were sold in Princeton, Texas, as well as North Carolina and Puerto Rico for the jackpot drawing Wednesday night, which was the third-largest in the game's history and one of the largest lottery jackpots ever in the United States.

The Texas ticket was bought with the cash option, meaning the winner or winners will receive about \$127 million before taxes, the Texas Lottery said. The holder of that winning ticket has yet to come forward, a lottery spokeswoman said.

The Appletree Food Mart in Princeton where the ticket was sold will receive a \$1 million retailer bonus, the Texas Lottery said. The business, a Valero gas station, is owned by husband and wife Chandra Siwakoti and Smriti Acharya.

"You never think of something like this happening so when it did, we couldn't imagine it," Acharya said in a telephone interview.

The Powerball rolled over for nearly three months, pushing the jackpot beyond the half-billion mark until three tickets matched the numbers 11, 13, 25, 39 and 54, lottery officials said. The Powerball number was 19.

Powerball winners can select a lump-sum cash payout or opt to take annuity payments over 29 years, before taxes. Before Wednesday, the last Powerball jackpot was won in late November at \$90 million.

The jackpot has reverted to its starting point at \$40 million. Drawings are made on Wednesday and Saturday nights and tickets cost \$2 each. The odds of winning the Powerball jackpot are one in 175 million.

The biggest Powerball jackpot awarded by the Multi-State Lottery Association was \$590.5 million in May 2013 to the holder of a single winning ticket. The association's Mega Millions lottery awarded a top prize of \$656 million three years ago.

Powerball tickets are sold in 44 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Dog Shows Up at Hospital Where Owner Is Battling Cancer

Call it coincidence or love, but a miniature Schnauzer in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, ended up at the hospital where her owner is battling cancer -- even though the dog was originally 20 blocks away at home.

A surveillance camera in the hospital lobby caught the dog entering through the automatic doors and wandering around. The dog, named Sissy, belongs to Nancy Franck, 64, who has been at Mercy Medical Center for about two weeks following surgery. Her husband, Dale Franck, 66, had been taking care of Sissy and her brother Barney, also a miniature Schnauzer, back home.

"She was on a mission that night to see her mom," Dale Franck told ABC News today, "but she couldn't find the right elevator to take."

He said he noticed Sissy was missing around 1:30 a.m. this past Saturday, and he was worried sick.

Madison Gas & Electric and We Energies also have asked the PSC to let them dramatically increase their monthly rates as well, saying they, too, need to make sure customers pay their share for maintaining infrastructure. The commission is expected to make a decision on those requests later this month.

Gov. Scott Walker wins re-election

MADISON — Wisconsin's Republican Gov. Scott Walker won a hard fought election over Democratic challenger Mary Burke Tuesday, overcoming fierce opposition from unions and other liberal groups for his third victory in four years and cementing his position as a possible contender for the 2016 GOP presidential nomination.

Walker told The Associated Press after he was projected the winner that any decision about running for president "will have to wait," as he focuses on quickly passing his agenda through the Legislature next year. While he downplayed talk of a 2016 run on the campaign trail, his victory in a state that voted for a Democratic president and U.S. Senator in 2012 will immediately shift the focus to his intentions for 2016.

"The bottom line is people elected me to get the job done in Wisconsin," Walker told AP. "We're going to spend the next couple months putting together our legislative agenda."

Walker became a hero to conservatives for taking on public sector unions, stripping them of nearly all collective bargaining authority. But the move angered them and led to a recall election in 2012, which he won. The race this year was the toughest of Walker's long political career. Polls showed it was deadlocked for months, even as Walker and Burke and their backers flooded the airwaves with attack ads to influence a sliver of undecided voters and motivate partisans to show up.

Walker argued he deserved a second term because he balanced a \$3.6 billion budget shortfall, took on special interests such as the unions, cut taxes \$2 billion and presided over the addition of more than 110,000 private-sector jobs.

Doug Szudy, a 70-year-old retired insurance claims agent from Madison, voted for Walker because he liked his tax cuts.

"He keeps taxes in line," Szudy said. "Everybody else raises taxes."

Josef Litchfield, 34, of Madison, who is about to become a father for the first time, said he voted for Walker because he thought his policies were better for his young family. "He's held down my property taxes, down as much as they've been held down as long as I've been a homeowner," said Litchfield, who has owned his house for nine years. "The more in my pocket, having a young family, is important."

But Burke said Wisconsin could have done better. Walker did not come close to delivering on his promise to add 250,000 new private-sector jobs and the next state budget faces a \$1.8 billion shortfall. Burke also

argued that Walker was divisive instead of bringing people together.

Tim Liebau, a 44-year-old software engineer from Madison who works for Accuray, voted for Walker in 2010 and in the 2012 recall, but he also voted for Obama in 2008 but for Republican Mitt Romney in 2012.

In this race, Liebau voted against Walker for the first time, casting his ballot for Burke.

"It was a tossup," Liebau said. "I do think Walker has divided the state. That was my tipping point. We've got to become more neutral."

Walker said he planned to meet with his cabinet on Wednesday and then tour the state visiting technical colleges on Thursday.

Walker's win comes two years after Wisconsin voters re-elected President Barack Obama by 7 points and elected a liberal Democratic Sen. Tammy Baldwin. But Republicans typically do better in midterm elections.

Walker has spent nearly his entire adult life in politics, having first been elected in 1993 to a state Assembly seat. Burke's father started Trek Bicycles in the 1970s and she worked there two different times as an executive. She was elected to the Madison school board in 2012.

Burke spent \$5 million of her own personal wealth on the race, one-third of the \$15 million her campaign brought in. Walker raised \$25 million since the middle of 2013, but outside groups spent millions more. Total spending on the race was expected to reach up to \$60 million.

Shelling of high school soccer field kills two boys, just another day in so-called Ukraine cease-fire

ONETSK, Ukraine — The shelling of a high school in Ukraine's rebel stronghold of Donetsk has chilled even the battle-hardened in this weary nation.

The killing of two teenagers as they were playing soccer after lunch Wednesday is a stark reminder that the cease-fire agreed upon in September has only really ever existed on paper. Four other students were wounded, according to Dr. Vladimir Voropayev, chief of the children's trauma unit at the regional hospital in Donetsk.

The warring sides — government troops on one side and pro-Russian separatists on the other — now look as far from any lasting settlement as they ever were.

In the soccer field at Donetsk's school No. 63, two bloodied coats still lay out in the open Thursday as relatives and staff gathered at the scene.

Alexander Yeliseyev, the father of one victim, 18-year-old Andrei, walked by in shock as he gathered belongings left behind when his son's body was removed — a dark brown coat and a pair of sneakers.

"They went to play football at about 2 p.m., while I was at work. And then the shelling began. Here you see the result," Yeliseyev said, gulping back sobs.

He said 14-year-old Danya, another student, was also killed.

Authorities in the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv said the security services will investigate the shelling of a school, but officials already appear to have made their minds up. Security spokesman Andriy Lysenko said preliminary information indicated the shells flew into the school from a location controlled by separatist forces.

The rebels, however, swiftly blamed Ukrainian forces for the deadly attack, saying government troops often indiscriminately target residential areas in eastern Ukraine. All that is certain so far is that the school where the shells landed is at least 2 kilometres from the nearest government position but close to rebel posts. That would appear to lend weight to claims of Ukrainian culpability — government troops shelling the rebels — but Lysenko said the shelling was planned in advance by the rebels to discredit government forces.

Government officials have failed to produce cast-iron evidence of such claims in the past, and independent rights groups say there's evidence that government artillery has hit homes in eastern Ukraine. Residents of stricken areas have frequently complained that rebels deploy artillery near homes, invariably drawing return fire.

The UN estimates more than 4,000 people have been killed over six months of fighting between Ukrainian government forces and pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine. That includes several hundred who have died since a much-violated cease-fire was signed in early September.

At school No. 63, which was lavishly refurbished last year with funds provided by local billionaire Rinat Akhmetov, a dozen teachers and sobbing parents huddled by the soccer field Thursday as the roar of outgoing missile fire was heard a few kilometres away. Two mortars had landed on the school premises Wednesday: one next to a concrete porch by the school, shattering a few windows. The one that killed the students landed behind a goalpost, scorching the ground and leaving a small crater.

Oksana Safonova's son, 11-year old Kirill, was lucky to sustain only wounds to the shoulder, hip and ribs. Quick thinking may have saved his life.

"He said to me: 'Mom, we got down on the ground and then the mortar landed next to me. I passed out. It hurt so bad. Then I realized that I don't want to die and I came around,'" Safonova said.

At the regional trauma hospital in Donetsk, a pale, frail-looking Kirill asked after his friend, Nikita, who was also being treated for injuries. Later Thursday, Nikita was discharged from the intensive care unit and joined his schoolmate.

Voropayev, the doctor, said his staff has treated 39 other children injured in artillery strikes since June. At the peak of the fighting in summer, they had to evacuate the children into the basement for three days.

Accustomed now to the sounds of shelling and war, Donetsk residents near the front

5 4 of 7

lines have come to ignore some basic safety precautions. Safonova said her perception of what is dangerous has been dulled by living for months in a war zone, but added that parents still strive to instill caution in their children.

"The sense of peril is everywhere, but we are not hiding," she said. "I used to tell him: 'Stay at home, don't go outside.' But you can't tie him down, he's just a boy."

US troops claimed chemical weapons exposure in Iraq, report says

More than 600 U.S. service members told military medical staff that they believe they were exposed to chemical warfare agents in Iraq after the U.S.-led invasion in 2003, The New York Times reported Thursday.

Pentagon officials said the department will now expand its outreach to veterans and establish a toll-free hotline for reporting potential exposures and seeking medical evaluation or care, the newspaper said.

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel ordered an internal review of military records after the Times reported in October that U.S. troops encountered degraded chemical weapons from the 1980s that had been hidden or used in makeshift bombs. The initial newspaper report disclosed that 17 service members had been injured by sarin or sulfur mustard agent, and several more came forward after the story appeared, the Times said Thursday. The Army's Public Health Command collects standardized medical-history surveys, known as post-deployment health assessments, which troops fill out as they complete combat tours, the newspaper reported. Those who responded "yes" to a question about exposure to such warfare agents — "Do you think you were exposed to any chemical, biological and radiological warfare agents during this deployment?" — were asked to provide a brief explanation.

The review ordered by Hagel showed that 629 people answered "yes" to that question and also filled in a block with information indicating chemical agent exposure, Col. Jerome Buller, a spokesman for the Army surgeon general, told the newspaper. Each person who answered the questionnaire would have received a medical consultation at the end of their combat tour, Buller said. The Times reported that it was not clear why the military did not take further steps, such as including compiling the data as it accumulated over more than a decade, tracking veterans with related medical complaints, or circulating warnings about risks to soldiers and to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

South Korea Disbands Coast Guard in Wake of Ferry Disaster

South Korean lawmakers have agreed to disband the country's coast guard in the wake of a ferry disaster that killed nearly 300 people.

The coast guard's duties will now be taken up by the National Police Agency and a soon-to-be-established safety agency, the *Associated Press* reports.

In April, the Sewol ferry carrying 476 passengers, most of whom were students, capsized and sank while in route. 295 bodies have been found; some are still missing at sea.

The coast guard's failure to rescue the hundreds of passengers who eventually perished on the sinking ferry was criticized by many in the South Korean government, including President Park Geun-hye. Prosecutors have also sought the death penalty for the captain of the ferry and life sentences for members of the crew. According to the AP, verdicts will come down next week.

'Black cloud' leaves Egyptians short of breath

CAIRO — A dark cloud once again hangs over Egypt's capital.

It's not economic distress. It's not the threat posed by Islamic militants. It's quite literally a dark cloud — a concentrated layer of pollution that descends on Cairo every fall, engulfing the city and reminding residents of the government's inconsistent attempts to redress a constant problem.

The World Health Organization does not rank cities based on levels of outdoor air pollution, but data it compiled covering 2008-2013 show Cairo is more polluted than Bangkok, Mexico City and Beijing.

Though Cairo's not as polluted as Delhi in India or Karachi in Pakistan, it still has a PM2.5 level — a measure of the concentration of fine particles in the air — that is more than seven times higher than WHO guidelines. High levels of PM2.5 have been linked to heart disease and cancer. "It's definitely serious," said Ahmed El-Dorghamy, an energy and environment expert at Cairo's Center for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe.

Residents describe the phenomenon that has occurred in Cairo in October and November for over a decade as a black cloud, but El-Dorghamy said it's really a "brownish cloud." "It's (comprised of) a mix of volatile organic compounds — carcinogenic substances — sulfur oxides, nitrogen oxides and also invisible gases like carbon monoxide and other gases," El-Dorghamy said.

Black or brown, the cloud is the result of a fusion of factors including the seasonal burning of rice straw by farmers seeking to clear their fields, the fumes emitted from Cairo's notoriously heavy traffic and industrial pollutants.

"It's like having smokers in a closed room and then you start lowering the ceiling," El-Dorghamy said.

The cloud doesn't loom over Cairo alone. Ahmed Hassan, who lives in the Nile Delta region that fans out northward from the capital for more than a hundred miles, said he has been experiencing pollution-related illness that affects his throat.

"Look at the sky — I can't breathe," said Hassan, a lawyer. "A lot of people are sick — children, old people — all over the place."

Heart disease, stroke and respiratory infections are among the top four causes of premature death in Egypt, according to the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, based in Seattle. Though many factors contribute to these disorders, exposure to air pollution can increase risk of heart attack and stroke, the American Heart Association says. Respiratory infections are associated with exposure to pollution.

The poor air quality hasn't stopped the city from brimming with outdoor activity. Some, such as the Cairo Runners running group, work around it. They meet early at the start of every weekend when car congestion is minimal.

"Seven in the morning on Friday is way less polluted than any time during the day, and there is less traffic," said Mohamed Seif, a member of the group. (The Egyptian weekend runs Friday to Saturday.)

To address the problem, Egyptian authorities monitor emissions in the cement industry and have made waste burning illegal, according to the World Bank. They have invested in infrastructure such as metro lines that could reduce pollution, while natural gas has been widely introduced in the power, industrial, housing and transport sectors.

It's not clear whether it's helping.

"In spite of these accomplishments, uncoordinated policies may have, in fact, accentuated the increase in pollution rather than reducing it," the World Bank said in a report last year.

The report noted that rice cultivation has been allowed to expand from southern Egypt to districts around Cairo and that poor traffic management combined with limited public transportation capacity has allowed for an abundance of vehicles with diesel engines. After the ouster of Egypt's longtime leader Hosni Mubarak in 2011, organizations sprouted to tackle environmental and air pollution problems.

Green Arm, an environmental think-tank with an outreach aspect, has urged Cairo's residents to walk, ride bikes or take trains instead of using cars. Ice Cairo is a company that supports Egyptian entrepreneurs who want to start businesses that address environmental and social challenges.

"It is really important to look at the effect we're having on the environment and how that will affect the country," said Adam Molyneux-Berry, the co-founder of Ice Cairo and the firm Nawaya, which teaches sustainable farming methods.

Grass-roots efforts are limited. The government faces a slew of other concerns that may prevent it from dealing with the problem.

"You can talk about environment as much as you want, but if you can't feed people or maintain an economy, the environment becomes pretty unimportant," Molyneux-Berry said.

Some say Egypt's leaders should be doing more to fight the black cloud.

one has to wonder about the countries in the western Balkans," Merkel said.

The German leader added that sanctions against Russia would remain in place "as far and long as they are needed."

Church of England to appoint first female bishop

CANTERBURY, England — Twenty years after women were ordained as priests, the Church of England is set to appoint its first female bishop by year's end or at the start of 2015.

On Monday, the church's two most senior leaders, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby and Archbishop of York John Sentamu, signed the change into church, or canon, law after asking the General Synod, made up of bishops, clergy and laity, to signal their approval by a show of hands. The shattering of what's called "the Church of England's stained-glass window" marks the culmination of years of campaigning for reform.

In July, the synod, voted overwhelmingly in favor of legislation to create female bishops. Hilary Cotton, chairwoman of Women and the Church, an advocacy organization, told reporters she is now hopeful the reform will lead to "changing the culture of the church." U.S.-born Christian Rees, a member of the synod's House of Laity, said Monday's ceremony would change the public perception that the Church of England has "a problem with women."

Speculation mounts on who will be the first woman to wear purple in a church so long divided on this issue, but no front-runner has emerged in reports coming from Canterbury. Four contenders for the title of first female bishop are Vivienne Faull, dean of York; June Osborne, dean of Salisbury; Canon Philippa Boardman, canon treasurer of St. Paul's Cathedral in London; and Jane Hedges, dean of Norwich.

State budget shortfall projected at \$2.2 billion

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — Gov. Scott Walker's administration said Thursday that Wisconsin faces a \$2.2 billion budget shortfall by mid-2017, a problem that will have to be tackled by the Republican-controlled Legislature next year as Walker builds his resume for a potential presidential run and looks to deliver on a campaign promise to cut taxes.

The estimate from the state Department of Administration is the first to take into account spending requests made by state agencies for the next two years.

"The numbers put out today show what it would cost to fund everyone's wish list," Republican Assembly Speaker Robin Vos said in a statement. "The reality is that's not going to happen."

Those requests will be pared down significantly in the budget Walker releases in early 2015. From there, the Legislature will refine Walker's plan before passing it sometime around June. Walker has said he

wants to be aggressive in passing the budget faster, and noted this week his timeframe for deciding on a White House bid will be dictated in part by the budget passage.

The current shortfall estimate shows the state faces a \$132 million shortfall that must be plugged by the end of June. The estimate for the next two years will be further refined in January when the nonpartisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau releases likely figures for state tax revenue in the next two years.

Walker's spokeswoman Laurel Patrick said the shortfall will be addressed through "continued prudent management of agency resources," but didn't offer specifics.

Walker won re-election two weeks ago on the promise of cutting property taxes, a pledge that will be more difficult to achieve given the looming shortfall. Just last week, the Department of Transportation proposed a budget that would increase taxes and fees \$751 million over the next two years, a request that Walker said will be changed significantly.

Walker also promised to expand the state's private school voucher program, a potentially costly step depending on how much he loosens the enrollment cap that currently sits at 1,000 students.

State agencies asked for a 4.8 percent increase in general fund support the first year and 6 percent in the second. That includes the tax and fee increases from the Transportation Department as well as nearly \$700 million additional for schools asked for by the Department of Public Instruction.

Vos said Republicans will be focused on cutting government waste and fraud and eliminating duplicative services. Republican Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald also didn't offer any specifics on how the shortfall will be solved, other than saying lawmakers will be "good stewards of Wisconsin's finances and practice sound fiscal management."

Democratic Sen. Jennifer Shilling, the incoming Senate minority leader, said a different approach is needed.

"Rather than digging a deeper budget hole, we need to invest in education, worker training and economic infrastructure to create jobs and build toward a brighter future," she said in a statement.

But Democrats don't have enough votes to stop what Republicans want. The GOP increased their majorities in this year's election, with a 63-36 majority in the Assembly and a 19-14 advantage in the Senate for the session that begins in January.

Report: Scott Walker preparing to launch presidential bid next year

In the clearest terms yet, Gov. Scott Walker and his key advisers have begun detailing his plans to seek the Republican presidential nomination in 2016.

On Thursday, Politico reported that Walker is "taking active steps toward a presidential campaign that would launch next summer" and would "contrast his record of

conservative achievements in a swing state with paralysis in Washington."

"I think there's going to be a hunger for a leader who can actually get things done," Walker said.

He also told U.S. News & World Report in an interview Thursday that his wife and two sons, Matt and Alex, are supportive of a White House bid in 2016.

"There are certainly enough clues that he's thinking about running," said Joe Heim, a UW-La Crosse political science professor. "To me, it's clear that he is making initial moves toward that."

Walker's comments Thursday are the latest and most definitive he has made to national media about his presidential considerations since being re-elected two weeks ago by a nearly 6-point margin.

During the campaign, Walker told Wisconsin voters he planned to serve out a second four-year term, which begins in January.

Walker has been in Florida this week for a meeting of the Republican Governors Association, where he has had a prominent role in discussing immigration, government spending and the future of the GOP.

He has said governors make better presidents, though he has essentially said he would not run if fellow Republican Paul Ryan of Janesville, the 2012 vice presidential nominee and recently elected chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, got in the race.

The Politico report, based on interviews with Walker and his "top political advisers," said Walker's 2015-17 budget and legislative agenda — which includes drug-testing welfare recipients, expanding school vouchers, replacing the Common Core education standards with state standards and lowering property taxes — "would bolster his standing with Republican primary voters." The online news site also said Walker would announce whether he's running after the budget is put to rest.

He is expected to introduce the budget in January and has told his Cabinet he would push for quick passage and an "aggressive" agenda.

The budget would take effect July 1. "Any (presidential decision) that would come officially would have to come after that," Walker told the website. "That could be midsummer. I want to fulfill those obviously important responsibilities."

A presidential campaign would be headquartered near Madison, and some senior campaign aides — including Keith Gilkes, Stephan Thompson and R.J. Johnson — have been asked to stick around for a potential 2016 bid, Politico reported.

Former Republican Gov. Tommy Thompson, who was Wisconsin's longest-serving governor before becoming U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services under then-President George W. Bush, said Thursday in an interview with the State Journal that he

G ~~6~~ 7

Ilham Tohti's wife, Guzelnur Ali, was unaware of the verdict Friday until a reporter handed her his mobile phone with a message from the lawyers.

"The verdict is not fair," she said, looking up. "All he wanted is to be a professor at a university. He never had any intention of splitting the country as they say he did." The government seized 850,000 yuan (\$139,000) of the family's savings, complicating Guzelnur Ali's efforts to raise her two sons in the small, spotless apartment given to her husband by the university where he taught for 23 years. Losing her home is not something she wants to consider. "This is China. I think there are laws," she said, adding: "What would I do if they kick me out?"

Her boys, aged 4 and 8, wrestled each other in a heap of giggles on the floor. "The younger one doesn't know exactly what happened, but the elder one does," she said. "The younger doesn't know where his father is, nor what the situation is."

Do they ask you about it very often?

"Very often," she said. "And every time they ask, I lie to them."

Violence flares on Mexico streets over missing students

There have been clashes in Mexico City, as thousands of people took to the streets to protest at President Enrique Pena Nieto's handling of the disappearance of 43 students. Protesters pushed away police in riot gear as they tried to round up demonstrators armed with molotov cocktails and firecrackers. Mexico has been convulsed by a string of protests since the trainee teachers were taken from the city of Iguala. The attorney general says there is strong evidence all of them are dead.

Police Question Indian Guru and Find Arsenal in His Compound

NEW DELHI — The police on Friday began questioning a self-styled Indian "godman" who spent more than a week barricaded inside his compound in northern India with about 15,000 followers, culminating in violent clashes when security forces tried to enter.

Baba Rampal Maharaj, 63, who claimed to be the reincarnation of a 15th-century mystic poet, had repeatedly resisted summons to respond to charges from 2006 of murder and incitement to violence. Early this week, the guru's supporters lined the compound's ramparts and pelted police officers with stones as they attempted to enter his 12-acre ashram in the city of Barwala in Haryana State, at one point breaking down a wall with a bulldozer.

Scores were injured, and six of Mr. Rampal's followers died under unclear circumstances during the standoff, which ended with his arrest on Wednesday.

His defense lawyer, who appeared in court on Thursday, argued that Mr. Rampal had been unable to appear earlier because he was being held hostage inside his compound. Mr.

Rampal told reporters that the allegations against him that thousands of people were kept at the ashram against their wishes were false.

"I never used women and children as hostages," he told reporters.

The police have registered two cases of murder based on complaints from family members and are investigating what caused the six deaths, said Anil Kumar Rao, the inspector general of the police in the Hisar District.

Post-mortem examinations showed that two of the women had broken ribs, though they appeared to have died from a pre-existing illness, said a medical official from the area, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly.

Mr. Rao said searches of the compound had uncovered an extensive arsenal, including homemade bombs and firearms. Since Mr. Rampal's arrest, journalists have roamed through the guru's vast compound, where he would deliver sermons in a hall the size of two football fields, and bless followers across a barrier of bulletproof glass from a brocade-covered chair known as the throne. The police told reporters that the chair was attached to a hydraulic lift that enabled him to appear from the basement, seemingly from nowhere, to the wonderment of his followers.

As they exited the ashram, some followers described eccentric forms of veneration that were practiced inside. Two men told The Indian Express, a daily newspaper, that during his meditations, Mr. Rampal was bathed in milk, which was later collected and used to prepare kheer, a kind of rice pudding, which was then fed to his followers. "The fruit of his meditation is present in the kheer," a man who identified himself as Krishnan told the newspaper.

The police said the guru lived in a five-story house with "granite tiles, marble floorings, fancy grills, strong doors, well-equipped bathrooms with modern fittings, split air-conditioners, flat-screen TVs and even massage beds," according to IANS, a news service.

Gurus and mystics can be found throughout India, often providing services like hospitals and schools within the walls of their ashrams. Many of them cultivate relationships with political leaders, who use them to mobilize voters during elections, and attract wealthy and influential patrons.

Putin: Russia won't allow a rebel defeat in Ukraine

As fighting increases in eastern Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin is vowing that Moscow will not allow pro-Russian rebels in the region to be defeated while Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko is threatening "total war."

The exchange comes amid warnings from German Chancellor Angela Merkel that the Ukrainian crisis threatens peace in Europe.

"Who would have thought that, 25 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, after the end of the Cold War and the end of the world's separation into two blocks, something like this could have happened in the middle of Europe?" Merkel said in Sydney. "Old ways of thinking in spheres of influence, which spurn international law, must not become accepted."

Putin, in a lengthy interview with Germany's ARD television, accused the West of turning a blind eye to Ukraine's use of heavy artillery in resident areas in rebel strongholds in eastern Ukraine.

"You want the Ukrainian central authorities to annihilate everyone there, all of their political foes and opponents?" he said in the interview, which was broadcast Sunday. "Is that what you want? We certainly don't. And we won't let it happen."

We are prepared for a scenario of total war. We don't want war, we want peace, we are fighting for EU values. Russia doesn't respect any agreement

— Petro Poroshenko (@PoroshenkoEng) November 17, 2014

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko was equally defiant, saying Monday in a tweet: "We are prepared for a scenario of total war. We don't want war, we want peace, we are fighting for EU values. Russia doesn't respect any agreement"

More than 4,000 people have been killed in the fighting in eastern Ukraine since April. NATO and international observers say Russia has poured new troops and material in the region, where low-level fighting continues despite an 11-week-old cease-fire.

Ukrainian Interior Minister Arsen Avakov tells the INSIDER online newspaper that there are 7,000 Russian soldiers in separatist-controlled regions of Donetsk and Luhansk. Russia has denied supplying separatists with weapons and Putin sidestepped the question in his ARD interview, saying that "in today's world, anyone waging a fight that they believe fair will always find weapons."

In the latest fighting, Ukrainian officials said rebels fired on Donetsk airport on Sunday with mortars, grenade launchers and small arms, prompting Ukrainian forces to return heavy artillery fire, Ukrinform reports.

The press center for the Ukrainian Anti-Terrorist Operation claimed that 23 "bandits" were killed and 27 wounded. The ATO said 9 Ukrainian soldiers were killed in the fighting, Interfax Ukraine reports.

In her remarks, Merkel, speaking after the G-20 summit in Australia, warned that regional conflicts like the one raging in eastern Ukraine "can very quickly broaden to major fires."

She said Russia's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine "calls into question the horror of two World Wars and, after the end of the Cold War, Europe's framework of peace."

"It's not only about Ukraine. It's about Moldova, it's about Georgia, if it continues like this ... one has to wonder about Serbia,

has encouraged Walker to run for president and thinks he could win.

Thompson, who launched an unsuccessful bid to become the 2008 GOP presidential nominee, said he talked to Walker before the Nov. 4 election about running for president.

"I told him that I should have run for the presidency when I was finishing my second term," Thompson said. "I think he's in a much stronger position to run now than wait like I did."

Thompson added that Walker and Ryan would both make strong presidential candidates.

Walker told Politico he hasn't firmly decided to run.

"The closer I've gotten to this position, the more I've realized that anyone who really wants to be president has to be a little crazy. ... The only way you should run is if you feel called to," Walker said.

During his re-election campaign, Walker distanced himself from speculation about a possible 2016 presidential bid, saying he planned to serve a full four-year term if re-elected.

During his election night victory speech, Walker repeatedly drew sharp distinctions between Wisconsin and Washington.

"You see, the folks in Washington like this top-down approach that's old and artificial and outdated that says government knows best," Walker told the crowd of supporters in West Allis.

"We believe that you should build the economy from the ground up. That's new, and fresh, and organic, and that's what we're going to do."

Charles Franklin, director of the Marquette Law School Poll, said there's been an "evolution" in Walker's comments about a possible presidential bid, with notable shifts on the campaign trail, in his victory speech, and then in interviews since he won.

Franklin added that anyone seriously considering a presidential run would need to be not only assembling a campaign team; he or she would also need to start organizing in states with early primaries or caucuses, such as Iowa.

That would include reaching out to county chairmen and local organizers and activists, Franklin said.

Politico reported that in addition to Gilkes, Thompson and Johnson, Walker is expected to continue working with Mike Grebe, his campaign chairman who runs the conservative Milwaukee-based Bradley Foundation, spokesman Tom Evenson, digital director Matt Oczkowski, and finance director Colleen Coyle.

Wisconsin Democrats said Walker's "rigid ideology" would stand out among other GOP presidential hopefuls, even in "this crowded field of right-wing extremists."

"His second term hasn't even started yet and Scott Walker is already talking about leaving behind the mess he's made in Wisconsin to

run for president," said Melissa Baldauff, spokeswoman for the Democratic Party of Wisconsin.

"But ultimately all that Walker brings to the table is a record of fiscal mismanagement, an inability to address or even understand economic inequality, and a history of sowing division."

Recovering eagles set for release during Eagle Watching Days in Sauk Prairie
Eagle Watching Days returns to Sauk Prairie in January, the highlight of which is Marge Gibson's release of adult eagles that have been in her care at the Raptor Education Group Inc. clinic in Antigo.

Gibson has been busy helping two eagles that arrived at her clinic this fall with lead poisoning.

It's a common problem, she said, because eagles are scavengers that look for convenient meals, often in a gut pile leftover from a harvested deer during hunting season. Both eagles have undergone intensive treatment at the group's clinic, and Gibson's hopes at least one of them may be well enough to be among those released at VFW Park in Prairie du Sac on Jan. 17.

The clinic takes in around 100 eagles each year.

"About a quarter of the eagles we get have lead poisoning," Gibson said. "Fall is always when we see it. We call this lead poisoning season. It will get worse following deer season."

She said the treatment for lead poisoned eagles is extensive.

"It's expensive and it's personal for me," Gibson said. "It costs us about \$1,000 a bird to chelate them. That's just the pharmacy cost, not the food or staff to care for them." The birds receive injections of medicines and specialized acids that remove toxins such as lead from the bloodstream.

Gibson and her staff force-feed food and liquids to the birds, which may be too sick to eat on their own.

"It's hard on the bird and hard on us," Gibson said. "(Rehabilitation) is a very long process. I don't get state or federal support at all. I absorb huge amounts of money."

Lead source

Veterinarian Joe Kelley of the Prairie du Sac Small Animal Hospital has treated a number of lead poisoned bald eagles since joining the practice of his father, Dale Kelley, in 1990. He said the highest number of cases were seen in 1995 and 1996 when eagles suffered from a strange disease that caused seizures, the source of which was never found.

"Lead poisoning is a chronic wasting (illness) that starts to destroy the liver," Joe Kelley said. "As the liver gets bad, they get weaker and weaker."

Kelley is a life-long hunter. He said he was very young when his dad switched to non-lead bullets because of the potential to kill wildlife, including eagles, that might feed on the toxic leftovers.

"Since I was a kid I've been hunting with my dad and we went from lead to steel shots," Kelley said. "It doesn't fly as well, but it was the right thing to do."

Alternatives to lead

There are alternatives to lead bullets that are made of 100 percent copper or copper alloys that expand, but without all the fragmentation.

"Hunters should remember to take that bullet with you when you're dressing the deer, because everything will go down and eat that gut pile," Kelley said.

Tom Lochner of Sauk Prairie Ace Hardware said he keeps a supply of copper-coated and low-lead bullets because of the dangers to wildlife posed from lead. But in general, Lochner said non-lead bullets aren't used all that much.

"There's not a ton of non-lead bullets around," Lochner said.

He does recommend certain types of slugs that the store carries.

"The Hornady Superformance has a typical ballistic point and lead, or an all-copper version," Lochner said.

He also recommended the Fusion brand or Remington Core-Lokt brand.

"The copper jacket is chemically bonded to the lead," Lochner said. "So when it impacts and mushrooms out, it stays all in one piece instead of getting fragments of lead coming off."

Lochner said an eagle isn't likely to eat a large chunk of lead.

"It's not completely non-toxic, but it's better than the traditional lead slug," he said.

Lochner said the copper based bullets are about \$10 more per box at \$36 to \$37.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources toxicologist Sean Strom said a study of 600 bald eagle deaths between 2001 and 2007 showed 16 percent were caused by lead poisoning.

"When we looked at the data closer, we found a seasonal pattern where the occurrences started to increase in October and peaked in December and January, and trails off after that," Strom said. "We deduced from that reasoning it was probably due to lead ammunition. We can't exclusively prove that, but other agencies have identified similar patterns."

Marge Gibson said she has spent half her life raising awareness about the problem.

"It's complicated and emotional because you're with birds who are convulsing and can't eat and we have to tube feed them with liquid food," Gibson said. "Come spend just one day with us when we have a lead poisoning patient here."

Amazon pledges to run 100% on renewable energy

Amazon has pledged to get all of its data centres to run entirely on renewable energy, joining Apple, Google and Facebook which have all made similar commitments.

"AWS [Amazon Web Services] has a long-term commitment to achieve 100%

BY: LEON IRBY 7 ~~10~~ 10/10/15 DATED: FEBRUARY 16/2015

renewable energy usage for our global infrastructure footprint", it said on its website.

AWS is one of the largest cloud providers in the industry, used by internet services including Netflix, Instagram and Spotify. Earlier this year Greenpeace awarded Amazon an 'F' for its energy performance. David Pomerantz from the environmental group said: "A renewably powered Amazon Web Services could be a catalyst for clean energy growth around the world, a hero in the effort to build the modern economy, powered by 100% renewable energy that is so urgently needed to address climate change."

185 mph ATS-V billed as 'fastest Cadillac ever'

HOLLYWOOD — For living the fast life, Cadillac has created what it says is its fastest model ever.

The 2016 ATS-V is capable of 185 mph, delivered from its 455-horsepower 3.6-liter V-6 engine. Besides its blistering top speed, it can zip off the starting line to 60 mph in a mere 3.9 seconds.

ATS-V — the V designates its part of Cadillac's performance line — appeared from under a sheet Tuesday night at a Hollywood studio. It is due to appear Wednesday at the Los Angeles Auto Show.

"It is the fastest Cadillac we have ever produced," says David Leone, Cadillac's executive chief engineer.

The power comes from touches like turbochargers that spin up faster and titanium connecting rods. The ATS-V is meant for the track as well as the street. It also incorporates advances over past V models, like a suspension that responds and adjusts quicker to bumps.

Leone says it's one of the lightest cars in its segment, helped along by use of carbon fiber for parts like the hood and front splitter.

Wynn Resorts being investigated for possible money laundering violations: DJ

Wynn Resorts is under investigation for potential money-laundering law violations, according to a new report from Dow Jones. Quoting individuals familiar with the matter, Dow Jones reported that Manhattan and Las Vegas U.S. Attorney's offices are investigating the company in conjunction with the Internal Revenue Service and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

The company, which is run by casino mogul Steve Wynn, saw stock dropped more than 2 percent after the story came out.

"We are not aware of any criminal investigation of the company and no agency has notified the company that it is under any investigation," a Wynn spokesman told CNBC. "The fact that information is requested from us by a governmental agency in no way implies the accusation of any wrongdoing by the company."

The Nevada U.S. Attorney's Office told CNBC that it is not able to confirm or deny any investigation into Wynn Resorts, citing Department of Justice policy.

According to the report, Wynn Resorts is the third major Las Vegas casino firm to come under money-laundering investigation recently.

First Look:

2016 Mercedes-Maybach S600

For the V-VIPs

Mercedes might have killed the Maybach brand in 2012, but the name is living on through the 2016 Mercedes-Maybach S600. Aimed at "customers for whom status is important," the Maybach sedan adds even more excess to excess, so if you were already impressed with all the ridiculous gadgets the S-Class had to offer, wait until you see what the Maybach S600 brings to the table.

Because you ride around in something like the Maybach S600 instead of driving it, lots of work was put into the rear passenger area of the sedan. The wheelbase has been stretched 7.9 inches to help increase legroom, which nearly doubles from 6.5 inches to 12.8 compared to a regular S-Class. Headroom also increased from 37.4 inches to 37.9, and even though the car's overall length increased by a lofty 8.1 inches to 214.6, the Maybach S600 doesn't just look like a much longer S-Class. Maybach influences are found everywhere, starting with the signature double-M Maybach Manufaktur logos displayed on the C-pillar on both sides of the sedan. Maybach lettering also sits opposite the S600 badge on the trunk, and up front, the familiar Mercedes grille boasts subtle yet noticeable changes. Look close and you'll notice the opening is larger with three fat chrome slats versus the four skinny ones on the regular S-Class, and hidden behind those are thin, vertical slats that further point to the sedan's exclusivity. Meanwhile, the chrome trim in the air intakes and lower bumper has also been doubled up in size, and the trim pieces on the Maybach S600's rear end have been, as well. There's more bling on the wheels, too, with exclusive 20-inch Maybach-like wheels that can be had instead of the thin-spoked wheels on the regular S-Class.

If the rear doors also look different, that's because they are. They've been shortened by 2.6 inches and stripped of the rear-quarter windows, which are now situated in the C-pillar. Although this helps further differentiate the styling, the main purpose for pushing them back was to provide more privacy for rear passengers. With the seats now located far back behind the door cutout, V-VIPs can hide more comfortably from the paparazzi. And by comfortable, we mean really comfortable. The Maybach's interior looks more like an extravagant living room than the inside of a car; it's got sumptuous materials everywhere you look. Copious amounts of wood and chrome trim pair nicely with all the Nappa leather found on the front and rear seats, dashboard, armrests, headliner, and door trim. The quilted pattern on the seats gives the interior an ultra-premium look, and seatbacks feature

embossed Maybach crests. Further emphasizing the Maybach theme is an IWC analog clock, which features individually milled and applied numbers in fine metal. But all the good stuff is way in the back. The rear space is equipped to accommodate any mood a V-VIP might be in. For those looking to get some work done, the executive rear seats have an upright angle of 19 degrees, though they can be adjusted down to a maximum backrest angle of 43.5 degrees. Thermo cupholders and light alloy folding tables with leather inserts also help transform the rear space into a comfy work station. Meanwhile, sleepy V-VIPs who want to get some shut-eye should consider sitting behind the front passenger, where 3 more inches of legroom and a forward-folding front seat allow the rear seat to fully extend into an almost bed-like position. Calf support, heel support, and an extra-soft cushion on top of the headrests further spoil sleepy V-VIPs, as does a hot-stone seat-massaging function. They're also sure to get a good nap in, as Mercedes says the Maybach S600 has the quietest cabin out of any production sedan, thanks to the use of several special seals. V-VIPs who want to get the party started can sip some bubbly out of silver-plated champagne glasses while bumping their favorite party tunes on the Burmester sound system, which features 24 speakers and rotating tweeters. The tweeters rotate 360 degrees when the head unit is turned on, moving 10 millimeters toward passengers in a spiral motion. Mercedes says this movement aligns the tweeters to "give the optimum sound impression."

The Maybach also comes with the S-Class' perfuming system, though it features a Mercedes-Maybach perfume that you won't smell in any other S-Class models. Called Agarwood, Mercedes says the exclusive scent "speaks of the centuries-old tradition of perfume." Even the bottle is adorned with Maybach lettering. The special treatment ends there, as the Maybach S600 features the same 6.0-liter twin-turbo V-12 that makes 523-hp and 612-lb-ft of torque in the S600. A seven-speed automatic sends that power to the rear wheels, and Mercedes says the Maybach S600 will accelerate from 0-60 mph in 5.0 seconds. With all the Mercedes-Maybach has to offer, it puts other S-Class models to shame. The German automaker stresses that Maybach isn't simply an equipment line, but another sub-brand next to AMG. And just as AMG models dropped the "Benz" name, so too will Maybach models. The Mercedes-Maybach S600 will be sold in its key markets in China and the U.S., where it will launch in April 2015. We expect the Maybach S600 to cost around \$200,000.

Honda: Require Car Owners Comply with Recalls
Amid reports of people killed because they didn't know their cars had a defect, an executive with the Japan-based carmaker urged state and federal regulators to consider new methods, such as withholding vehicle registration renewals.