

Navy officer punished for rude letter

By ERICA EARL
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — A Navy officer has been punished for penning a letter to the Yokosuka Naval Base housing office that excoriated his enlisted neighbors as “deviants” and “perverts.”

Yokosuka Naval Hospital determined that Lt. Nathanael Allison wrote the letter, in which he complained of being forced to live with his family in a building for enlisted families, according to Task and Purpose, a military news site, on Thursday.

Task and Purpose cited Regina Kowitz, a spokeswoman for Naval Medical Forces Pacific in San Diego. Kowitz did not respond to queries Friday from Stars and Stripes.

On Thursday, Yokosuka

hospital spokeswoman Erika Figueroa said the matter was concluded with non-judicial punishment, which is administered by a unit commander for minor offenses.

Figueroa declined to identify the perpetrator by name or specify what elements of the Uniformed Code of Military Justice the letter writer faced.

“Anyone who engages in unbecoming behavior that brings discredit on the organization will be dealt with in an appropriate manner,” she said.

Kowitz, in San Diego, said privacy rules prohibit the command from providing details of the case, according to Task and Purpose.

Allison did not respond to an email query Thursday from Stars and Stripes.

A screenshot of the letter, written in February on Allison’s Google email with his name attached, began circulating on social media last week.

It said that the Ikego Housing Detachment, a housing area seven miles from the naval base, is a dangerous place for an officer and his family. Enlisted members are more likely than officers to abuse drugs and alcohol and commit violent crimes such as sexual assault, according to the letter, which contained many spelling and grammatical errors.

“Officers are much more respectable and [these] types of deviant activities are incredibly rare compared to deviant activities of enlisted being commonplace,” the letter said.

“This enlisted housing will increase the risk to my family and mentally cause my family and I to be worried and unhappy due to safety.”

Other Ikego residents found the accusations offensive.

“It is hurtful, especially since I was 4th generation in my family to serve in the military,” Ikego resident Katie Archer, an enlisted Army veteran and military spouse, said in a Facebook message to Stars and Stripes on Thursday.

“His comments didn’t just apply to me and my husband and our children, but also to my father, my grandfather who died in Vietnam, my great-grandfather who served in World War II and my favorite uncle,” she said.

Bonhomme Richard to be retired and scrapped

The San Diego Union-Tribune

SAN DIEGO — After extensive cleanup and reclamation in the wake of a July inferno, the amphibious assault ship Bonhomme Richard will be decommissioned in San Diego this week before being towed to Texas where it will be scrapped, the Navy said in a statement.

Navy officials said in November that while Bonhomme Richard was salvageable, the time and price of repair — five to seven years at an estimated \$2.5 billion to \$3.2 billion — were too steep to warrant saving the 22-year-old ship.

The Navy plans to hold a small decommissioning ceremony Wednesday with limited attendance. Then the ship will be towed to Galveston, Texas, said Cmdr. Nicole Schwegman, a Naval Surface Force Pacific spokeswoman.

Schwegman said most of the roughly 1,000 sailors assigned to Bonhomme Ri-

chard have either been reassigned or are in the process of transferring.

Fire broke out on the vessel around 8:30 a.m. on July 12. Noxious black smoke darkened otherwise clear San Diego skies as the fire raged out of control. Temperatures on board topped 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit at times, making it all but impossible for firefighting crews to access burning spaces to extinguish the fire.

More than 400 sailors from 16 San Diego-based ships joined federal firefighters to battle the blaze day and night. Helicopters from Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 3 dumped more than 1,500 buckets of water onto the ship in nearly round-the-clock operations.

The fire burned for four days before the Navy officially declared it extinguished.

Navy officials said at the time they believed the fire began in the 844-foot ship’s lower vehicle-storage area, a part of the

ship with an ample supply of fuel and oxygen for a fire.

According to a KGTV news report, Navy Criminal Investigative Service agents searched the home of a Bonhomme Richard sailor in August. No charges have been filed in the case, according to Cmdr. Myers Vasquez, a U.S. Pacific Fleet spokesman. Vasquez said the Navy’s investigation into the cause of the blaze is ongoing and he declined to say when it might be completed.

Amphibious assault ships are the largest amphibious ships in the Navy and are used to deploy Marines and their equipment during amphibious landings. Their flight decks are capable of handling operations with helicopters and the F-35B Lightning fighter jet.

At the time of the fire, Bonhomme Richard was nearing the end of a two-year, \$250 million upgrade to accommodate F-35B operations. It is the largest U.S. naval warship lost since World War II.

Austin to discuss US troops in Germany

By JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin will discuss the future of the U.S. military in Germany before meeting with allies in Brussels and London during his first official visit to Europe this week, the Pentagon said.

Austin, who met with Israel Defense Minister Benny Gantz in Tel Aviv on Sunday, said he reaffirmed “our commitment to Israel is enduring and ironclad.” The Associated Press reported.

Austin’s first talks in Israel since he became Pentagon chief in January come as the United States seeks to leverage Middle East diplomatic progress made by the Trump administration,

US, Philippines discuss China’s militia vessels

Associated Press

ABOARD A U.S. MILITARY AIRCRAFT — Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Saturday discussed with his Philippine counterpart China’s recent positioning of “militia vessels” near the Philippines in the South China Sea.

Austin spoke by phone with Philippine Secretary of National Defense Delfin Loren-

zana while Austin was flying from Washington to Israel to begin an international trip.

Pentagon press secretary John Kirby said Austin and Lorenzana discussed the situation in the South China Sea and the recent massing of Chinese vessels at Whitsun Reef, which has drawn criticism from Manila.

China has said its vessels are there for fishing.

which brokered a deal normalizing relations between Israel and several Arab states, the AP reported.

In Europe, Austin is slated to meet with commanders at U.S. European and Africa Command headquarters in Stuttgart and

also hold talks with his German counterparts in Berlin.

The visit to Europe comes as the Pentagon reviews a plan by the former Trump administration that calls for pulling nearly 12,000 troops out of Germany, and repositioning them in the

U.S. and other parts of Europe. Additionally, the plan would move EUCOM and AFRICOM out of Stuttgart.

Austin also will meet with U.S. troops and senior commanders in Stuttgart, the Pentagon said.

Army officer sues Va. police over traffic stop

Associated Press

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. — A second lieutenant in the U.S. Army is suing two Virginia police officers over a traffic stop last December during which the officers drew their guns, pointed them at him and used a slang term to suggest he was facing execution before pepper-spraying him and knocking him to the ground.

Body camera footage shows Caron Nazario, who is Black and Latino, was dressed in uniform with his hands held in the air outside the driver’s side window.

In a lawsuit filed earlier this month, Nazario says his constitutional rights were violated during the traffic stop in the town of Windsor. The two sides in the case dispute what happened after a second police officer joined the first one in the stop. At the time, Naza-

rio was coming from his duty station and going home, attorney Jonathan Arthur told The Associated Press on Friday.

Windsor Police Officer Daniel Crocker radioed he was attempting to stop a vehicle with no rear license plate and tinted windows. He said the driver was “eluding police” and he considered it a “high-risk traffic stop,” according to a report he submitted afterward.

Arthur said Nazario explained at the time that he wasn’t trying to elude the officer, but was trying to stop in a well-lit area “for officer safety and out of respect for the officers.”

Another officer, Joe Gutierrez, was driving by when he heard Crocker’s call, saw him attempting to stop the SUV and decided to join the traffic stop.

Roughly 40% of Marines decline COVID vaccines

USA Today

Nearly 40% of U.S. Marines who have been offered the COVID-19 vaccine have declined it, according to the Pentagon.

Of the 123,500 Marines who have had access to the vaccine, 75,500 Marines are either fully vaccinated or have received one dose, and about 48,000 have declined it, Communication Strategy and Operations Officer Capt. Andrew Woods told USA Today.

“We fully understand that widespread acceptance of the COVID-19 vaccine provides us with the best means to defeat this pandemic. The key to addressing this pandemic is building vaccine confidence,” he said, confirming a statistic first reported by CNN.

Woods said the Navy and Marines were working to ensure that soldiers have accurate information about the safety of the

vaccine.

Woods said service members may have declined the offer for any one of a variety of reasons, including wanting to allow others to get the vaccine before them, having already received the vaccine through other channels or waiting until the military makes receiving the vaccine mandatory, which it has yet to do.

Because the Defense Department has only emergency-use authorization from the Food and Drug Administration for the COVID-19 vaccine, the department can’t make receiving the vaccine mandatory for service members, but President Joe Biden could issue a waiver.

Seven Democratic members of Congress sent a letter to Biden asking him to issue a “waiver of informed consent” to require all U.S. military service members to get the vaccine.

New details emerge about Capital riot

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — From a secure room in the Capitol on Jan. 6, as rioters pummeled police and vandalized the building, Vice President Mike Pence tried to assert control. In an urgent phone call to the acting defense secretary, he issued a startling demand.

“Clear the Capitol,” Pence said.

Elsewhere in the building, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi were making a similarly dire appeal to military leaders.

“We need help,” Schumer, D-N.Y., said in desperation, more than an hour after the Senate chamber had been breached.

These new details from the deadly riot of Jan. 6 during the congressional certification of

Joe Biden’s election victory are contained in a previously undisclosed document prepared by the Pentagon for internal use that was obtained by The Associated Press and vetted by current and former government officials.

The timeline adds another layer of understanding about the state of fear and panic while the insurrection played out, and lays bare the inaction by then-President Donald Trump and how that void contributed to a slowed response by the military and law enforcement. It shows that the intelligence missteps, tactical errors and bureaucratic delays were eclipsed by government’s failure to comprehend the scale and intensity of a violent uprising by its own citizens.

At 1:49 p.m., then-Capitol Police Chief Steven Sund called

Maj. Gen. William Walker, commanding general of the D.C. National Guard, to request assistance.

On the Pentagon’s third floor E Ring, senior Army leaders were huddled around the phone for what they described as a “panicked” call from the D.C. Guard. As the gravity of the situation became clear, McCarthy bolted from the meeting, sprinting down the hall to Miller’s office and breaking into a meeting.

Shortly after 3 p.m., the Army secretary provided “verbal approval” of the activation of 1,100 National Guard troops to support the D.C. police, and the development of a plan for the troops’ deployment duties, locations and unit sizes.

But they struggled over the next 90 minutes to execute the

plan as the Army and Guard called all troops in from their checkpoints, issued them new gear, laid out a new plan for their mission and briefed them on their duties.

At 3:19 p.m., Pelosi and Schumer were calling the Pentagon for help and were told the National Guard had been approved.

At 3:48 p.m., frustrated that the D.C. Guard hadn’t fully developed a plan to link up with police, McCarthy dashed from the Pentagon to D.C. police headquarters to help coordinate with law enforcement.

By about 4:30 p.m., the military’s response plan was finalized and Walker had approval to send the Guard to the Capitol.

Dressed in full riot gear, the Guard began arriving at the Capitol at 5:20 p.m.

Storms cause heavy damage, 1 death, in South

Associated Press

PANAMA CITY — A cluster of severe storms swept across the South early Saturday, leaving one person dead in Louisiana, toppling trees and power lines in Mississippi, dropping large hail on an Alabama coastal city and leveling buildings in the Florida Panhandle.

St. Landry Parish President Jessie Bellard confirmed a man’s death in an early morning

tornado in Palmetto, La. Bellard told KLFY-TV that Jose Antonio Higareda, 27, was killed when the tornado smashed into the man’s home.

He said seven injured people were taken to hospitals and at least eight homes were destroyed or heavily damaged, including one lifted off its foundations and plunked down nearly intact beside a road.

In Mississippi, a possible tor-

nado downed power lines and trees in Rankin County, but no injuries were reported.

In Panama City Beach, Fla., a home and convenience store were leveled by a possible tornado, city officials said in a Facebook post. A resident’s photo posted by The Panama City News Herald shows the store’s roof and walls ripped away, but its counters, shelves and the merchandise they held

appear untouched. There were no immediate reports of injuries.

In Pensacola, Fla., the roof of a downtown brewery was ripped off by the storm, local news reports showed. The National Weather Service has not confirmed if that was caused by a tornado, but reported winds of up to 60 mph. The Pensacola News Journal reported that about 5 inches of rain fell.

Iran calls atomic facility blackout ‘nuclear terrorism’

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Iran on Sunday described a blackout at its underground Natanz atomic facility an act of “nuclear terrorism,” raising regional tensions.

Ali Akbar Salehi, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, stopped short of di-

rectly blaming anyone for the incident. Details remained few about what happened early Sunday morning at the facility, which initially was described as a blackout caused by the electrical grid feeding the site.

Many Israeli media outlets offered the same assessment that a cyberattack darkened

Natanz and damaged a facility that is home to sensitive centrifuges. While the reports offered no sourcing for the evaluation, Israeli media maintains a close relationship with the country’s military and intelligence agencies.

If Israel caused the blackout, it further heightens tensions

between the two nations, already engaged in a shadow conflict across the wider Middle East.

It also complicates efforts by the U.S., Israel’s main security partner, to re-enter the atomic accord aimed at limiting Tehran’s program so it can’t pursue a nuclear weapon.

Black Americans now more open to vaccine

From wire reports

Like others in her family, Mattie Pringle had doubts about taking the coronavirus vaccine.

The 57-year-old Black woman from Myrtle Beach, S.C., feared that her high blood pressure and diabetes might heighten her chances of a severe reaction to the shot. The speedy development and approval of the vaccines also fed her skepticism.

Then a member of Pringle's church, a local NAACP leader who has led a vaccination campaign targeting Black residents, urged her to reconsider. He shared a news story about Kizzmekia Corbett, a Black government scientist who played a key role in developing the Moderna vaccine.

"That's what made me change my mind," said Pringle, who finally agreed to an appointment to get her first coronavirus shot. "I had to pray about it. And I felt better after that."

Campaigns aimed at Black communities across the United States are making headway in the effort to persuade people that the COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. With millions of dollars in assistance from President Joe Biden's administration, local groups have urged Black Americans to roll up their sleeves for shots and set aside what for some is a shared historical distrust of science and government.

A poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research in late March found that about 24% of Black American adults said they will probably or definitely not get vaccinated. That's down from 41% in January. The latest number shows Black Americans leaning against getting shots in almost the same proportion as white Americans at 26% and Hispanic Americans at 22%.

Dr. Georges Benjamin, executive director of the American Public Health Association, said attitudes toward the vaccine among Black Americans have taken "almost a 180-degree turnaround" as outreach campaigns have worked to combat misinformation.

Florida

JACKSONVILLE — They sprouted like yellow flowers last week in front of Memorial Hospital Jacksonville, planted there by nurses, doctors and staff to remember the past year's battles against COVID-19.

The Flags of Hope, some in bright sun while others flapped in shadowy morning breezes, were there to remember the tears and exhaustion they lived with as the COVID-19 pandemic impacted Jacksonville and the world.

But for all the memories of those treated at the University Boulevard hospital since Jacksonville's first pandemic patient arrived there almost 13 months ago, the flags became a symbolic healing gesture of letting go and looking forward.

Memorial Hospital was the first Northeast Florida hospital to admit a COVID-19 patient on March 11, 2020, officials said. Almost exactly 13 months later, Florida has recorded 34,434 deaths so far and 2,090,862 cases, according to the state Department of Health.

Washington

BELLINGHAM — Washington Gov. Jay Inslee on Friday altered the criteria used to determine whether a county moves from one COVID-19 reopening phase to another, making it easier for counties to remain in their current phase.

Counties must now fail both metrics for case counts and

hospitalizations in order to move back a phase, Inslee said in a news release. Previously counties could be moved backward by failing to meet one of those metrics.

All of Washington's 39 counties are currently in Phase 3 of Inslee's reopening plan, which allowed indoor spaces — including indoor dining at restaurants, indoor fitness centers and retail — to increase capacity from 25% to 50%.

With COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations rising in many areas, more than a half-dozen counties were at risk of rolling back before Inslee's change.

Arizona

WINDOW ROCK — Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez has vetoed a resolution to reopen tribal roads on the Navajo reservation to tourists and other visitors amid the continuing pandemic.

Nez said Friday in a statement that he vetoed the resolution approved March 31 by the Navajo Nation Council because COVID-19 variants are spreading in the region and because more people need to be vaccinated "to move closer to herd immunity, and this will take time."

The closure does not affect state highways that pass through the reservation, which includes parts of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah.

Texas

AUSTIN — The percentage of Texans who have received at least one dose of the coronavirus vaccine is nearing one-third, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control on Saturday.

The CDC reported 30.6% of the state's residents, more than 8.8 million, have been given one vaccination and 18.2%, more than 5.2 million, have been fully vaccinated.

More than 2,600 newly confirmed or probable virus cases and 76 additional deaths due to COVID-19 were reported Saturday by the state health department.

Oklahoma

TULSA — A mask mandate for the public in Tulsa is expected to end April 30, according to Mayor G.T. Bynum.

"There has not been a spike in contagion resulting from spring break," Bynum said Friday after meeting with Tulsa Health Department officials. "If these trends continue through the end of the month, the Health Department's recommendation is that the City's mask ordinance can expire as scheduled on April 30. I support this recommendation."

Bynum said private businesses are allowed to require masks, and restaurant and bar employees must also continue wearing a mask. Events with more than 150 people must also meet spacing requirements and events of more than 500 people must have a safety plan approved by health officials, Bynum said.

Alabama

ORANGE BEACH — Beach season is heating up, and Alabama's coast is getting federal money to help recover from tourism losses caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The Commerce Department's Economic Development Administration said that it will provide the Alabama Gulf Coast Convention and Visitors Bureau with \$800,000 for a marketing program. The money will be combined with \$200,000 in local funding.

The agency is helping communities nationwide implement programs to counter economic hardships caused by the pandemic, Dennis Alvord, acting assistant secretary for economic development, said in a statement.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man naked below waist accused of home arson

LA MAMOU — A man wearing nothing below the waist set fire to a mobile home occupied by a woman and three children, including a baby, and was arrested without incident, authorities said.

The woman, baby and two school-age children escaped unharmed but the home and the woman's car were total losses, said Ashley Rodrigue, spokeswoman for the Louisiana State Fire Marshal's Office.

The woman told investigators that James N. Rozas, 33, was clad only in a hooded sweatshirt and had a gun when he entered the home in Mamou, telling the older children they had to get out because he had set fire to the home and the car parked outside, Rodrigue said.

Nurse, captures feeling of nation, gets stuck in mud

MA BOSTON — Camille Coelho just wanted to take a stroll on the beach and look for some sea glass. Instead, the Massachusetts nurse ended up feeling the way so many have felt during the pandemic: she was stuck in the mud.

The 54-year-old was taking a walk at Boston's Constitution Beach when she found herself sinking into the low tide's wet sand. Soon it was up to her knees and left her unable to move, according to an account she gave to The Boston Herald.

"It's a great metaphor for the year," Coelho, a nurse in South Shore Hospital's intensive care unit, told the Herald.

Her dilemma caught the at-

tention of other beachgoers, who called for help.

Stolen Confederate monument recovered

AL MONTGOMERY — Authorities have recovered a Confederate monument that had been stolen in Alabama and was the subject of a ransom note threatening to convert it into a toilet, New Orleans police confirmed.

A spokesperson for the New Orleans Police Department wrote in an email that "we can confirm that we recovered the chair" and that two people have been arrested on charges of possession of stolen property. Investigators are also searching for another suspect.

The strange saga began March 20 when a representative of the United Daughters of the Confederacy reported to police that the "Jefferson Davis Memorial Chair" had gone missing from a Selma cemetery.

New Orleans police said Stanley Warnick and Kathryn Diionno were arrested for having stolen property in their possession and authorities are searching for a man named Stanley Pate.

Lizards, tarantulas, tortoise others seized

MI LANSING — Lizards, tarantulas, a prairie dog and a desert tortoise were among about 40 animals removed from a mid-Michigan home during a neglect investigation.

Ingham County Animal Control officers also found rats, mice, an iguana and about two dozen dogs and cats at the house, the Lansing State Jour-

nal reported.

The lizards included geckos and a tegu, which is native to South America, said Animal Control Director Heidi Williams, who described the 22-year-old tortoise as "a pretty good-sized boy."

Officer charged for illegal gambling operation

CA LOS ANGELES — A Los Angeles police officer is among three people charged with running an illegal gambling operation that involved placing bets on this year's NFL Super Bowl, police announced.

Robert Felix, a 13-year veteran assigned to the LAPD's Transit Services Division, is facing felony bookmaking charges along with two other men, an LAPD statement said.

The men are accused of orchestrating an operation where participants placed "high-dollar bets" on the outcome of the Super Bowl, the LAPD said.

Amusement parks reopen after losing year to virus

NY NEW YORK — The Wonder Wheel began turning and the Cyclone whipped into action as Coney Island's illustrious amusement parks reopened after the coronavirus pandemic shuttered New York City's iconic summer playground all last year.

After 529 days of closure, "it's a very emotional day. We wanted to spread positivity," Alessandro Zamperla, the president of the company that owns Luna Park — home of the Cyclone — said at an opening ceremony.

The attractions will be open

on weekends at first, with reduced capacity and other pandemic precautions.

6 sickened by salmonella linked to songbirds

WA OLYMPIA — Six Washington residents became ill in an outbreak of Salmonella Typhimurium, believed to be linked to wild songbirds, particularly Pine Siskins, state health officials said.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 19 cases of salmonella in eight states, the Washington state Department of Health said.

Three Washington cases have required hospitalization, officials said.

No further information about how people were infected was released.

Salmonella germs can spread between species of birds, to pets and to people, officials said.

Landowners increase reward for elk poachers

ND KEENE — A group of anonymous landowners near Keene added more than \$1,000 to a reward fund for information about poachers who killed two bull elk in the area.

The Bismarck Tribune reported the eight landowners have contributed \$1,600 to the fund. The North Dakota Wildlife Federation had already put up \$2,000.

Authorities believe the elk were killed on Feb. 17.

No meat was taken from either animal but one of the bulls' heads was missing.

— From The Associated Press



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Contenders get head start on trades

Associated Press

The defending Stanley Cup champions found a way to get better, the NHL's top team solved a problem that has hurt it in the past, and another filled a major void created by an injury.

Some of hockey's best teams got a head start on the trade deadline Saturday by making important moves and scooping up some of the hottest players on the market. The cap-strapped, reigning champion Tampa Bay Lightning surrendered three draft picks to get defenseman David Savard, the Colorado Avalanche landed veteran goaltender Devan Dubnyk, and the Florida Panthers did something to compensate for Aaron Ekblad's absence by acquiring defenseman Brandon Montour.

"I wanted to get David Savard on our team, and the sooner the better," Lightning general manager Julien BriseBois said. "It's really, really hard to win the Stanley Cup. ... If there was an opportunity for me to add a good player to our group to give it a little bit of a boost, I felt like I owed it to them to make that happen."

Given the Lightning's salary-cap situation, BriseBois said a month ago, "Realistically, I think it's unlikely that we're going to be adding a player between now and the trade deadline." It was only possible because the Columbus Blue Jackets retained half of Savard's salary — for a 2021 first- and a 2022 third-round pick — and the Detroit Red Wings took 25% for a fourth-rounder

and Tampa Bay taking minor leaguer Brian Lashoff.

"I didn't really expect us to be able to pull this off," BriseBois said. "We used our draft picks to purchase cap space to acquire a good player and squeeze him on to our team, and I know that we're going to be a harder out now come playoff time because David Savard's going to be wearing our jersey."

Savard gives Tampa Bay a physical presence on the right side of the blue line, a role Zach Bogosian, now with Toronto, filled during the 2020 Cup run. The Lightning also expect to get 2019 MVP Nikita Kucherov back from hip surgery when the playoffs begin in mid-May.

"I know they have the recipe to win again," Savard said. "They've had a great team for numbers of years, so I'm really excited to go on a team that has a chance to win the Stanley Cup. I couldn't be more pumped to go meet the guys and join the team and be part of a run again."

Colorado didn't go on as long a run in the playoff bubble as it would have liked after top two goalies Philipp Grubauer and Pavel Francouz went down with injuries. After acquiring goalie Jonas Johansson last month, general manager Joe Sakic added more depth in goal with Dubnyk by sending defenseman Greg Pateryn and a fifth-round pick to San Jose.

He also gave the locker room a boost with the Avalanche atop the league standings.

"I think it sends a pretty strong message

that obviously he believes in this group and that we are trying to make a run at this thing," Colorado captain Gabriel Landeskog said. "That's been no secret from Day 1 of training camp."

Florida is a new addition to the class of Cup contenders and was in that stratosphere in large part because of Ekblad's play before his season-ending injury in late March. The Panthers can't replace Ekblad, but they took a step past his injury by sending a third-round pick to Buffalo for Montour.

"He's a very skilled defenseman," Panthers captain Aleksander Barkov said. "He can help us with the puck and the offensive game, holds the puck really well. Good addition."

With less than 48 hours remaining until the deadline, there are many prominent players still waiting to find out where they're going. Buffalo is also expected to trade winger Taylor Hall; Detroit center Luke Glendening and goalie Jonathan Bernier are available; and Columbus could listen on captain Nick Foligno, who is a pending free agent.

The Avalanche have over \$4 million in cap space to make another move, and coach Jared Bednar said options will be explored. Much like other contenders, the Lightning are capped out, but BriseBois won't rule anything out.

"I'm not turning my phone off been now and 3 o'clock on Monday," he said.

Matsuyama's masterpiece gives him Masters lead

Associated Press

AUGUSTA, Ga. — The storms that stopped play for a little more than an hour Saturday at the Masters were expected. The masterpiece delivered by Hideki Matsuyama after the break was not.

Matsuyama played the final eight holes in 6-under par, turning a two-shot deficit into a four-shot lead. With four flawless swings and three putts late on the back nine at Augusta National, he went from part of a logjam on the leaderboard to the cusp of becoming the first Japanese player to win a major.

The final touch was a superb par save from 25 yards behind the 18th green for a 7-under 65, the only bogey-free round this week at the Masters.

"I wouldn't have believed it," Matsuyama

said through his interpreter. "But I did play well today. And my game plan was carried out, and hopefully, tomorrow I can continue good form."

It all started in his car, where the 29-year-old waited out the storm delay. Part of the time was playing on his phone. He also thought about his last shot, a drive into trees right of the 11th fairway.

"During the rain delay, I just figured I can't hit anything worse than that," Matsuyama said. "And so maybe it relieved some pressure. I don't know. But I did hit it well coming in."

Now comes the real test.

"If Hideki plays well, he can control his own destiny, I guess," Leishman said. "But a lot can happen around here."

Matsuyama did just about everything

right, starting with his first shot after the delay — a 7-iron he punched under the trees and onto an 11th green slightly slowed by the moisture to 20 feet for birdie.

After his birdie from 10 feet on the 12th, Augusta National came to life. Imagine the roars if there had been a full capacity of spectators.

In a sequence that took no more than two minutes, Schauffele ran in a 60-foot eagle putt across the 15th green to momentarily tie for the lead at 7 under; back on the 12th, Rose made a 25-foot putt for his first birdie since the second hole, giving him the lead at 8 under.

That lasted as long as it took Matsuyama to cash in on his 5-iron to the 15th by making a 5-foot eagle putt to reach 9 under, his first time in the lead. And no one could keep up.

Bichette drives in 5, Jays rout Angels

Associated Press

DUNEDIN, Fla. — Bo Bichette had five RBIs, Randal Grichuk hit a three-run double during a seven-run second inning and the Toronto Blue Jays stopped a four-game skid by routing the Los Angeles Angels 15-1 on Saturday night following a rain delay that lasted more than 2 ½ hours.

Bichette had two-run doubles in the third and fourth, and Vladimir Guerrero Jr. added RBI singles in both innings as the Blue Jays went up 14-1. The pair drew bases-loaded walks in the second from José Quintana (0-1), who allowed seven runs, five hits and four walks in 1 ⅔ innings.

“We all needed a night like this,” Blue Jays manager Charlie Montoyo said. “It was great to see. Great at-bats.”

After the start was delayed 2 hours, 38 minutes, the first four innings took 2:07 to play. Overall, the game lasted 3:21 and ended about 12 hours before Sunday’s series finale was scheduled to start.

Mariners 4, Twins 3 (10): Mitch Haniger homered and hit the go-ahead sacrifice fly in the 10th inning, lifting Seattle to a win at Minnesota.

All three of Minnesota’s losses this season have come in the 10th, with the bullpen struggling with baseball’s new-as-of-2020 rule that starts each extra inning with a runner on second base.

For Seattle, that was Taylor Trammell, who homered earlier in the game. Taylor Rogers (0-1) picked up Braden Bishop’s bunt in front of the mound, but he couldn’t

get a clean grip and held off on a throw as a precaution. Haniger hit a one-out fly deep enough to left for Trammell to come home.

Keynan Middleton pitched a perfect 10th for the save.

Indians 11, Tigers 3: Aaron Civale allowed just three hits while dominating over 7 ⅓ innings and was backed by five home runs, including Jordan Luplow’s three-run shot, as host Cleveland pounded Detroit.

Luplow narrowly missed a second three-run homer, settling for a two-run double to finish with a career-high five RBIs. Franmil Reyes hit his third homer in two days, Roberto Pérez and Andrés Giménez each added a two-run homer and César Hernández had a solo shot.

Civale (2-0), who beat the Tigers in his season debut a week ago, gave up two singles and faced the minimum through six innings before Robbie Grossman homered off him in the seventh.

Jeimer Candelario hit a two-run homer in the ninth for Detroit.

Padres 7, Rangers 4: Trent Grisham hit a go-ahead homer for San Diego in the seventh inning and the Padres followed up the franchise’s first no-hitter with another victory at Texas.

A day after Joe Musgrove pitched that no-hitter, the Padres won their seventh in a row against Texas. Eric Hosmer and Ha-Seong Kim also homered for San Diego.

Grisham put San Diego up 5-4 with his two-run homer off reliever Wes Benjamin (0-1).

Ryan Weathers (1-0) struck out three in

his two innings, though he gave up a tie-breaking solo homer to Isiah Kiner-Falefa in the fifth. Mark Melancon worked a perfect ninth for his fourth save.

Rays 4, Yankees 0: Austin Meadows and Randy Arozarena homered off Domingo Germán, helping host Tampa Bay extend its mastery over New York.

The Rays have won 10 of 12 regular-season games between the AL East rivals since the start of 2020. Tampa Bay also eliminated the Yankees from last year’s playoffs in a five-game series that went the distance.

Six Tampa Bay pitchers combined to limit the Yankees to five hits.

Meadows got things rolling for the Rays with a solo homer in the first inning, his third of the season. He had three hits in Tampa Bay’s 10-5 win over New York the previous day and has homered three times in eight career at-bats against Germán (0-2).

Arozarena hit a 420-foot solo shot in the third inning for a 4-0 lead. Andrew Kittridge (2-0) worked 1 2/3 innings for the victory.

Red Sox 6, Orioles 4 (10): Rafael Devers homered and visiting Boston scored twice in the 10th inning on a wild pitch and an RBI single by Christian Vázquez to beat Baltimore for its fifth straight victory.

Athletics 7, Astros 3: Ramón Laureano hit a two-run homer, rookie Seth Brown connected for his first big league home run and Oakland won at Houston to win the series.

Chisholm’s HR off deGrom drives Marlins past Mets

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Jazz Chisholm Jr. hit a stunning homer off an otherwise dominant Jacob deGrom, Trevor Rogers beat the two-time Cy Young Award winner for the second time and the Miami Marlins blanked the New York Mets 3-0 on Saturday.

DeGrom (0-1) matched a career best with 14 strikeouts over eight innings, Rogers fanned 10 in six and the teams combined for 28 overall.

The 23-year-old Rogers (1-1) outpitched deGrom for the second time in nine major league starts.

The left-hander got his first big league win against deGrom in a 5-3 victory last Aug. 31. This was his second.

A 2017 first-round draft pick, Rogers cruised in his third career outing against New York. He scattered three hits and two walks, retiring 11 straight during one stretch.

Brewers 9, Cardinals 5: Avisail García homered, doubled and drove in five runs and visiting Milwaukee ended St. Louis’ winning streak at four games.

Keston Hiura hit a three-run homer that capped a five-run burst in the seventh inning that made it 8-2. The Brewers won for the third time in four games.

Dodgers 9, Nationals 5: Chris Taylor hit a three-run homer and Zach McKinstry made big plays with his bat and arm in Los Angeles’ victory over visiting Washington.

Pirates 8, Cubs 2: Mitch Keller pitched five efficient innings and host Pittsburgh used an early burst to chase Chicago’s Zach Davies.

Giants 4, Rockies 3: Brandon Crawford delivered the decisive hit for a second straight day, connecting for a three-run homer in the sixth inning in San Francisco’s victory over visiting Colorado.

Diamondbacks 8, Reds 3: Riley Smith pitched six effective innings in his first career start, Tim Lincecum had four hits and host Arizona cooled off Cincinnati.

Braves 5, Phillies 4: Freddie Freeman hit a two-run homer and drove in the go-ahead run with a grounder in the seventh inning to lead host Atlanta past Philadelphia.

Jazz grab 24th straight home win

Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — Donovan Mitchell scored 14 of his season-high 42 points in the fourth quarter and the Utah Jazz beat the Sacramento Kings 128-112 on Saturday night, extending their franchise-record home winning streak to 24 games.

Mitchell had his 18th 30-point game this season, powering the NBA-leading Jazz's 19-4 run in the fourth quarter. Mitchell has scored 41, 37 and 42 points in his last three games. Mike Conley had 26 points, and Joe Ingles added 20.

De'Aaron Fox scored 30 points for the Kings, and Richaun Holmes had 25. They have lost six in a row.

Lakers 126, Nets 101: Andre Drummond had 20 points and 11 rebounds, Dennis Schroder scored 19 points before he and Kyrie Irving were ejected in the third quarter and visiting Los Angeles routed Brooklyn.

A nationally televised matchup already missing plenty of star power lost even more when Irving started jawing with Schroder and neither player stopped quickly enough for the officials.

The Lakers had led most of the way and were ahead 66-62 when Irving fouled Schroder with 9:41 left in the third. Los Angeles blew it open soon after the ejections

with a 15-2 burst to open an 88-71 lead.

A potential NBA Finals preview had a preseason feel with so many top names unavailable. LeBron James (right ankle sprain) and Anthony Davis (right calf strain) remain out for Los Angeles, while James Harden is sidelined with a strained right hamstring for the Nets.

The Lakers handled being short-handed much better. Ben McLemore, in his second game with Los Angeles, scored 17 points.

Kevin Durant scored 22 points in his second game back following a 23-game absence with his own hamstring injury. Irving added 18, but the Nets had their nine-game home winning streak snapped.

76ers 117, Thunder 93: Joel Embiid had 27 points and nine rebounds and Philadelphia won at Oklahoma City to pull even with Brooklyn for the Eastern Conference lead.

On Friday night in a loss at New Orleans, Embiid went just 5-for-16 from the floor and scored 14 points. He was 10-for-17 in three quarters of work against the Thunder.

Furkan Korkmaz added a season-high 20 points for the 76ers.

Darius Bazley had 17 points and nine rebounds, and Tony Bradley added 16 points and 14 rebounds for Oklahoma City. The Thunder have lost six straight.

Suns 134, Wizards 106: Devin Booker scored 27 points and host Phoenix used a 44-

point third quarter to rout Washington.

Deandre Ayton had 14 points and 10 rebounds, Chris Paul added 13 points and 10 assists and the Suns had only three turnovers to tie the franchise record. They have won 17 of their last 21 games and are 37-15 overall.

Trail Blazers 118, Pistons 103: Enes Kanter had 24 points and a franchise-record 30 rebounds to help host Portland beat Detroit.

Kanter bested Sidney Wicks' Portland record of 27 rebounds set in 1975. Kanter also surpassed his own career high of 26 set with the Knicks in 2018.

Warriors 125, Rockets 109: Stephen Curry scored 23 of his 38 points in the third quarter and Golden State beat visiting Houston.

Curry had his sixth straight 30-point game, the longest streak of his career. The two-time MVP made eight three-pointers and had five assists and eight rebounds.

Raptors 135, Cavaliers 115: Gary Trent Jr. scored a career-high 44 points and severely short-handed Toronto scored a franchise-record 87 first-half points to win at Cleveland.

Trent made 17 of 19 field goals, including shooting 7 of 9 from three-point range, and went 3-for-3 from the foul line in 33 minutes.

Couturier's goal gives Flyers key win over Bruins

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Maybe it wasn't a do-or-die game. For the Philadelphia Flyers, however, it was a win they absolutely needed.

Sean Couturier scored near the midway point of the third period to break a tie and the Flyers picked up a critical 3-2 victory over the Boston Bruins on Saturday.

Brian Elliott stopped 30 shots for Philadelphia, which moved within four points of Boston for the fourth and final playoff spot in the NHL's East Division. The Bruins have two games in hand on the Flyers with Philadelphia having 16 games remaining. The two teams have completed their regular-season series.

"I think it's safe to say that I wouldn't have liked our chances of battling back if we would have lost," Flyers coach Alain Vigneault said. "We needed to win, especially in regulation and especially (against) a team that we are chasing. They've got two games in hand, but they've got a lot of hockey to play in a short amount of time. You never know how it's going to turn out. We got to take care of our own business and focus on our game here."

Travis Konecny and Shayne Gostisbehere added goals for Philadelphia in the victory.

Maple Leafs 6, Senators 5: Auston Matthews had a hat trick, Jack Campbell made 27 saves to set an NHL record for

consecutive victories to start a season with 11 and host Toronto beat Ottawa.

Jets 5, Canadiens 0: Connor Hellebuyck made 19 saves for his second shutout of the season and Andrew Copp, Nikolaj Ehlers and Mathieu Perrault each had a goal and an assist in visiting Winnipeg's victory over Montreal.

Blackhawks 4, Blue Jackets 3: Alex DeBrincat had a goal and an assist, Kevin Lankinen stopped 23 shots and visiting Chicago rallied to beat Columbus.

Blues 3, Wild 2 (OT): Ryan O'Reilly scored with two seconds left in overtime to lift host St. Louis past Minnesota.

Stars 4, Panthers 1: Rookie

Jason Robertson scored twice for his first multigoal NHL game in host Dallas' victory over Florida.

Red Wings 5, Hurricanes 4 (SO): Adam Erne scored in the seventh round of the shootout to lift visiting Detroit past Carolina. Dylan Larkin also scored in the shootout. Thomas Greiss finished with 30 saves.

Flames 5, Oilers 0: Jacob Markstrom stopped 17 shots for his third shutout of the season and eighth of his career, helping host Calgary end a four-game skid.

Kings 4, Sharks 2: Andreas Athanasiou, Alex Iafallo and Dustin Brown scored in the second period to lift visiting Los Angeles past San Jose.