

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Obama makes final Gitmo resettlement push

*The Washington Post*

The Obama administration has informed Congress of its plans to resettle as many as 19 detainees held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in a final sprint to pare down the inmate population at the military prison, U.S. officials said.

Even if the transfers occur before Jan. 20 as planned, about 40 inmates will remain at the facility, a lasting reminder of President Barack Obama's failure to deliver on his Inauguration Day promise to close the prison and an illustration of the difficulty of following through on one of his central national security goals.

Obama's inability to close Guantanamo after eight years in office empowers President-elect Donald Trump to keep the prison operational. Trump has said he will make it part of his counterterrorism policy and will "load it up with some bad dudes."

The end to Obama's Guantanamo plans also sets up a renewed debate over the proper handling of terrorism suspects and the legality of a system that was designed to interrogate and hold al-Qaida suspects after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

"The bottom line is that the continuing existence of Guantanamo is a legal and moral blight," said Hina Shamsi, director of the American Civil Liberty Union's National Security Project. "It is the embodiment of U.S. violations of the rule of law, unfair trials and unlawful and indefinite detentions without charge or trial."

The 11th-hour transfer plans, which would move a group of prisoners to the United Arab Emirates and additional inmates to Oman, Saudi Arabia and, possibly, Italy, culminates a flurry of resettlements that U.S. diplomats have negotiated in recent years. The planned transfers were first reported by The New York Times.

Since Obama took office, the United States has repatriated or resettled 179 prisoners, helping to winnow the detainee population from a peak under President George W. Bush of more than 700 to 59 today.

Early in his administration, Obama attempted to bring suspects to the United States for trial in the federal courts, but he abandoned those efforts in the face of stiff political resistance. Over the years, Congress has enacted tight restrictions on how and where prisoners can be resettled.

Last winter, Obama made another appeal to Congress, asking them to set aside opposition and to consider a plan for wrapping up a 15-year detention saga by bringing some inmates to the United States for imprisonment here.

Some legal experts and detainee advocates fault Obama for not pushing harder for closure, saying he could have skirted congressional obstacles if he had been willing to weather the political fallout.

As Obama prepares to leave office, he leaves behind a military trial system so slow that five 9/11 suspects, including self-proclaimed mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, are not expected to be tried until 2020. Guantanamo also holds a group of "forever prisoners," whom officials say they cannot release because of security risks but who also cannot be tried because of a lack of appropriate evidence.

"History is going to judge him badly for his failure to close Guantanamo and particularly for his failure to do everything he has legal authority to do," said Wells Dixon, a senior staff attorney at the Center for Constitutional Rights, which represents Guantanamo prisoners.

Emily Horne, a White House spokeswoman, said the administration has continued to take "all possible steps" to move detainees out of Guantanamo and to close the prison.

"The continued operation of the Guantanamo Bay detention facility weakens our national security by draining resources, damaging our relationships with key allies and partners and emboldening violent extremists," she said.

Some lawmakers continue to object even to transfers that are vetted by a panel of law enforcement, military and intelligence officials. Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, warned against additional transfers in a letter earlier this month to Defense Secretary Ash Carter, who signs off on each resettlement.

"I am concerned that there has been insufficient due diligence prior to transfer, and that recipient nations have lacked the capability to enforce proper security measures to mitigate the risk of re-engagement," Thornberry wrote in the letter, a copy of which was seen by The Washington Post.

While a small minority of released de-

tainees have been found to have returned to militant activity, officials say the risks have been overblown.

Although there are 23 prisoners approved for resettlement overseas, U.S. officials say they have no plans to transfer anyone beyond the 19 whose transfers already have been announced to Congress.

Republicans also have found fault with the administration's practice of keeping secret details of security arrangements for resettled detainees and information about U.S. financial support received by released prisoners.

Articulating the new optimism felt by critics of Obama's approach, Rep. Edward Royce, R-Calif., who chairs the House Foreign Affairs Committee, wrote this week that "on Jan. 20, we have an opportunity to chart a better way."

While Trump has not spoken extensively about Guantanamo, he has criticized prisoner releases and identified the military prison as a "very safe place" to house suspected militants.

"I want to make sure, 100 percent sure, that if we're going to release people, number 1, they're going to be people that can be released, and it's going to be safe to release them," Trump said in an interview with the Miami Herald.

He also suggested that he would put new prisoners into Guantanamo, possibly even trying U.S. citizens there, a move prohibited by current U.S. law. The last time the United States added to the prisoner population at Guantanamo was in 2008, before Obama took office.

A spokesman for the Trump transition team did not respond to a request for comment.

Legal experts suggest that the continued detention of prisoners, without parallel efforts to resettle them, or efforts to bring new detainees to Guantanamo could be met with fresh legal challenges.

Laura Pitter, senior national security counsel at Human Rights Watch, said Trump's apparent plans for the prison would feed into militant propaganda and would weaken the United States' ability to speak up for human rights worldwide.

"A statement like that just shows ... a lack of understanding of what Guantanamo means and the danger that keeping it open poses to U.S. national security," she said.



## 2 Guardsmen in Texas killed in Apache crash

BY COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Two Army National Guardsmen were killed Wednesday afternoon when the AH-64 Apache helicopter that they were flying crashed into Galveston Bay in Texas, the state's National Guard said.

The soldiers were conducting a "routine training flight" when the helicopter crashed into the water just off the shore of the Bayport Cruise Terminal, about 25 miles southeast of Houston, about 4 p.m. local time, according to a Texas Military Department statement. The Texas Military Department oversees the state's Army and Air National Guard.

The soldiers' names have not been released, pending next-of-kin notification.

Chief Warrant Officer 5 Glen Webb, the senior warrant officer for the Texas Army National Guard, said an investigation into the incident had been launched, but Thursday morning there was no information about what caused the crash.

Witnesses to the crash told Houston-area television stations that the Apache broke up in the air before it crashed into the water. Mark Gonzales told Houston's ABC13 that he was fishing in the bay when the Apache approached the coast along a normal military training flight path.

"I could see the helicopter coming," he said. "I heard an explosion, and I saw it crash."

Air and boat crews for the U.S. Coast Guard responded to the crash with local and state fire and law enforcement agencies, according to the Texas Military Department.

The soldiers were assigned to the 1st Battalion, 149th Attack Helicopter Battalion at Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base near Houston, Webb said.

He said both pilots had extensive experience flying Apaches.

Thursday morning, search-and-rescue operations were continuing for the scattered remnants of the attack helicopter, an official said. Both pilots' bodies had been located, but it was not clear whether they had been recovered.

Last year, the Army briefly grounded much of its helicopter fleet following fatal crashes during training missions.

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# Marine commander relieved of duty in wake of crashes

BY TARA COPP  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The commander of a Marine aircraft squadron that has been plagued with crashes was relieved of command Wednesday, the Marine Corps said.

Lt. Col. Wade Workman, commander of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 232, was relieved "due to a loss of trust and confidence in his ability to continue to serve in that position," the Marine Corps said in a statement. The squadron is based at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

During the last year, Squadron 232 has lost at least two F/A-18C Hornets in training crashes. On July 28, Maj. Richard Norton was killed during a nighttime air-to-ground training flight near Marine Air Ground Combat Center at Twentynine Palms, Calif.

On Aug. 2, an F/A-18C Hornet crashed from the same squadron that had been sent to Naval Air Station Fallon, Nev., for training. The pilot ejected with minor injuries.

Across the Marine Corps, additional F/A-18C Hornet crashes this year have caused the deaths of two more pilots and the loss of aircraft. On June 2, Capt. Jeff Kuss was killed when his F/A-18C Hornet crashed during a training flight with the Blue Angels. On Nov. 9, two F/A-18C Hornets assigned to Miramar collided over San Diego, resulting in the loss of an aircraft. Both pilots survived. On Dec. 7, Capt. Jake Frederick was killed when his F/A-18C Hornet crashed during a training flight off Japan.

In the November collision, the aircraft were part of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314, which, along with Squadron 232, is attached to 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. This month the commanding general of 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, Maj. Gen. Mark Wise, relieved Lt. Col. Michael Hernandez, the wing's top logistics officer in charge of ensuring the aircraft were ready to fly.

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## Philippines to seek arbitration ruling on South China Sea

*Associated Press*

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte said Thursday he will insist on a ruling of an international arbitration that invalidated Beijing's claims to most of the South China Sea if China starts to extract oil or gas from the area.

His statement in an interview with CNN Philippines on Thursday was a departure from his earlier pronouncement that he would "set aside" the ruling because he does not want to impose on China.

Duterte also criticized the U.S., saying it did not do anything when China started building artificial islands in the disputed sea.

Duterte, who took office in June, has taken steps to mend relations with China that grew hostile during the time of his predecessor over the long-unresolved territorial disputes. Former President Benigno Aquino III's administration took the disputes to international arbitration in a move backed by Washington after China seized a disputed shoal from the Philippines in 2012, then went on to construct seven man-made islands despite outside objections.

China has refused to recognize the arbitration tribunal, saying it has no jurisdiction.

Asked under what circumstances he would bring up the tribunal ruling with China, Duterte said, "Yes, when the minerals are already being siphoned out."

If that happens, he said, he will tell China: "I thought we're friends? We share economic bounties ... so how about us? I have this title, so what do you think? Don't you think we should talk now?"

Duterte added that if China's construction in the disputed waters was a serious concern then the United States should have led the way and stopped it "right at the beginning, when the first spade of soil was tossed out to the area that was being reclaimed."

"Why raise an issue putting the countries into distress or under stress when you are not going to do anything, when it is you who have the arms?" he added.

China is pitted against smaller neighbors, including the Philippines, in multiple disputes over islands, coral reefs and lagoons in waters crucial for global commerce and rich in fish and potential oil and gas reserves.

# Japanese visit to shrine draws ire

Associated Press

TOKYO — Japanese Defense Minister Tomomi Inada, just back from Pearl Harbor, on Thursday visited a Tokyo shrine that honors Japan's war dead, including convicted war criminals.

The visit, and one by another Cabinet minister the day before, drew rebukes from neighboring South Korea and China.

Inada accompanied Prime Minister Shinzo Abe during his visit this week to Hawaii's Pearl Harbor, where he offered condolences to those who died in the Japanese attack there in 1941.

Japan's Asian neighbors harbor bitter memories of the country's atrocities before and during World War II, when it colonized or invaded much of the region. So visits by top Japanese leaders to the shrine often draw complaints from countries such as China and South Korea that see them as attempts to whitewash that history of wartime aggression.

Abe's visit to Yasukuni in December 2013 caused such an uproar that he has since instead sent gifts of money and

religious ornaments.

Japan's Kyodo News service reported that Abe, who was golfing outside Tokyo, refused comment when asked about Inada's visit.

The defense minister doffed her shoes on her way into the shrine, and afterward told waiting journalists: "Regardless of differences in historical views, regardless of whether they fought as enemies or allies, I believe any country can understand that we wish to express gratitude, respect and gratitude to those who sacrificed their lives for their countries."

China's CCTV news and its official Xinhua News Agency remarked on the visit's timing.

South Korea's Foreign Ministry said it was "deplorable" that Inada had visited a shrine that "beautifies past colonial invasions and invasive war and honors war criminals."

The ministry summoned Kohei Maruyama, a minister at the Japanese Embassy in South Korea, to lodge a protest over the Yasukuni visit.

The country's Defense Ministry expressed "serious concern and regret."

Inada's visit was her first

since becoming defense minister last summer, though she has regularly visited it in the past. A lawyer-turned-lawmaker with little experience in defense, she is one of Abe's proteges and backer of his long-cherished hope to revise Japan's Constitution.

Inada has defended Japan's wartime atrocities, including forcing many Asian women into sexual servitude in military-linked brothels, and has led a party committee to re-evaluate the judgment of war tribunals led by the victorious Allies.

Her link to a notorious anti-Korea group was acknowledged by a court this year in a defamation case she lost. Inada also was seen posing with the leader of a neo-Nazi group in a 2011 photo that surfaced in the media in 2014. Reports at the time cited Inada as saying she was unaware of his status and did not subscribe to neo-Nazi ideology.

Masahiro Imamura, Japan's disaster reconstruction minister, went to Yasukuni on Wednesday, also drawing criticism from Beijing.

# No evidence of explosion in crash into Black Sea

Associated Press

MOSCOW — Flight recorders revealed no evidence of an explosion aboard a Russian plane that crashed into the Black Sea, killing all 92 aboard, but investigators haven't ruled out foul play, a military official said Thursday.

Russian air force Lt. Gen. Sergei Bainetov, who heads the Defense Ministry commission conducting the crash probe, said that a cockpit conversation recorder contained the captain's words that indicated a "special situation" that began unfolding on board the plane.

Bainetov wouldn't elaborate on what could have led to the crash, but noted that it likely had been caused by several factors.

The Tu-154 of the Russian Defense Ministry crashed into the sea early Sunday, moments after taking off in good weather from the city of Sochi. It was carrying members of the Alexandrov Ensemble, widely known as the Red Army Choir, to a New Year's concert at a Russian military base in Syria.

"After deciphering the first flight recorder, we have made a conclusion that there was no explosion on board," Bainetov said at a news conference.

But asked if that means that investigators have ruled out a terrorist attack, Bainetov said "we aren't ruling out that version yet."

"A terror attack doesn't always involve an explosion," he said. "Along with an explosion on board, there could have been some mechanical impact."

He wouldn't offer any details, saying that Russian law-enforcement agencies are working on the case.

Bainetov's words appeared to contradict a previous statement from Russia's top domestic security and counterterrorism agency, the FSB, which has said it found "no indications or facts pointing at the possibility of a terror attack or an act of sabotage."

# Turkey insists US aided militia

Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey — The Turkish government on Thursday dismissed Washington's denials that it has provided weapons to a Syrian Kurdish militia force, which Turkey considers to be a terrorist group.

It also complained about a lack of support from the U.S.-led coalition to its offensive against the Islamic State group in northern Syria.

Differences over the U.S.-backed Syrian Kurdish forces in Syria are driving a wedge between Turkey and its NATO ally, the United States. Turkey views the People's Protection Units, or YPG, as a terrorist organization because of their

links to Turkey's outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK. It accuses the group of involvement in a series of bomb attacks in Turkey carried out by Kurdish militants — charges the YPG rejects.

The U.S. does not consider the YPG or its political wing to be terrorists and has backed the Syrian Kurdish groups, arguing that they are the most effective force against Islamic State.

In an interview with A Haber news channel Thursday, Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said, "The United States has provided arms to the YPG — period."

He was responding to a statement issued by the U.S. Em-

bassy a day earlier that said the U.S. had not "provided weapons or explosives to the YPG or the PKK — period."

"They know as well as we know that the United States provides arms to the YPG because they are fighting [the Islamic State]," Cavusoglu said. "We have documents to prove it, and the whole world is aware."

Cavusoglu said the U.S.-led anti-Islamic State coalition had stopped providing air cover for Turkish troops and Turkey-backed Syrian opposition forces in Syria. He blamed that on alleged pressure by the Syrian Kurdish groups on the United States.

"The YPG is exerting pressure on America," he said.



## Police: Pa. woman left suicide note, killed baby

*The Washington Post*

Sheri Shermeyer's last message to the world was that of an angry, lonely and desperate woman.

She was angry at her husband, a man she described as a drunk with empty promises: "You will never see your son again. You don't deserve to have a son, to have a legacy. Why should you have your name carried on? You are a nasty man."

And she was desperate, so much so that she talked about ending it all: "And even now, all I can think about is leaving this world. Putting a gun in my mouth and leaving. Which is what is going to happen."

The lengthy message was posted to Shermeyer's Facebook wall at 10:52 a.m. on Monday.

She and her son, John, 1, were found dead about two hours later in a home in a small Pennsylvania borough.

Pennsylvania State Police arrived at the house in Shrewsbury Township in rural York County about 1 p.m., according to a news release.

Police believe Shermeyer, 40, who was found in bed with a gunshot wound to the head, had suffocated her son before killing herself. Coroner Pam Gray told the York Daily Record that Shermeyer's husband was not home at that time.

# US retaliates against Russian interference with 2016 election

*Bloomberg*

President Barack Obama retaliated Thursday against Russia for cyberattacks aimed at interfering with the 2016 the presidential campaign, imposing sanctions on top Russian intelligence officials and agencies and expelling 35 Russian operatives from the U.S.

As part of the administration's response, the FBI and Homeland Security Department also were set to release a report with technical evidence intended to prove Russia's military and civilian intelligence services were behind the hacking to expose some of their most sensitive hacking infrastructure.

"All Americans should be alarmed by Russia's actions," Obama said in a statement. "These data theft and disclosure activities could only have been directed by the highest levels of the Russian government. Moreover, our diplomats have experienced an unacceptable level of harassment in Moscow by Russian security services and police over the last year. Such activities have consequences."

Among those targeted in the sanctions announced by the Treasury Department were the chief and deputy chiefs of GRU, Russia's military intelligence agency. Cybersecurity experts in the U.S. have linked GRU to the hacking of the Democratic National Committee and party officials through a group they have nicknamed APT 28 or Fancy Bear. The U.S. also is sanctioning the Federal Security Service and Main Intelligence Directorate of the Russian state and cyberspace companies associated with them.

Those expelled were described by Obama as intelligence operatives and the U.S. also shut down two Russian compounds — one in Maryland and another in New York — used for "intelligence-related purposes."

The hackers leaked the pilfered emails in a bid to damage the campaign of Democratic

presidential candidate Hillary Clinton, according U.S. intelligence agencies. She lost to Republican Donald Trump who repeatedly has scoffed at the finding that Russia was behind the cyberattacks.

The moves will ratchet up tensions with Russia less than a month before Trump's inauguration. The president-elect, who has said the hacking could have been the work of "somebody sitting in a bed someplace," told reporters Wednesday that "we ought to get on with our lives."

They also raise the possibility of an escalating cycle of finger-pointing and retaliation between Washington and Moscow despite Trump's pledge to seek better relations with Putin. The Russian government, which has denied responsibility for the hacking, has vowed to respond to any new sanctions with unspecified counter-measures.

The actions announced Thursday may be matched by covert countermeasures intended to warn Russia that the U.S. is able to breach its most sensitive computer systems, while preserving public deniability.

"If I want to just quietly take out their capability and send a very sneaky message and not an overt message, I would probably do a covert action," Bob Stasio, a fellow at the Truman National Security Project and former chief of operations at the National Security Agency's cyberoperations center, said in advance of Thursday's announcement.

U.S. relations with Putin's government have deteriorated over Russia's military intervention in Ukraine on behalf of separatist rebels and in Syria to bolster the regime of President Bashar al-Assad.

The U.S. and European allies imposed sanctions over Russia's moves in Ukraine and its annexation of Crimea, targeting Russia's financial services, energy, metals and mining, defense, and engineering sectors.

## Actress Debbie Reynolds, 84, dies day after daughter

*Associated Press*

Debbie Reynolds, who lit up the screen in "Singin' in the Rain" and other Hollywood classics despite a tumultuous life, has died a day after losing her daughter, Carrie Fisher. Reynolds was 84.

Her son, Todd Fisher, said Reynolds died Wednesday.

"She's now with Carrie and we're all heartbroken," Fisher said from Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, where his mother was taken by ambulance earlier Wednesday.

He said the stress of his sister's death

on Tuesday "was too much" for Reynolds. Carrie Fisher, who was 60, had been hospitalized since Friday.

"She said, 'I want to be with Carrie,'" her son said. "And then she was gone."

Reynolds enjoyed the heights of show business success and endured the depths of personal tragedy. She lost one husband to Elizabeth Taylor and two other husbands plundered her for millions. Fisher, who found lasting fame as Princess Leia in "Star Wars" and struggled for much of her life with drug addiction and mental health problems, died after falling ill on a plane.

Reaction to Reynolds' death was swift.

"Debbie Reynolds, a legend and my movie mom. I can't believe this happened one day after Carrie," Albert Brooks, who played opposite Reynolds in "Mother," said on Twitter.

Reynolds found superstardom early. Studio boss Louis B. Mayer cast her in "Singin' in the Rain," despite Kelly's objections. She was 19 with little dance experience, and she would be appearing with two of the screen's greatest dancers, Donald O'Connor and Kelly.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Driver is accused of speeding past bus

**PA** POCONO PINES — A Pennsylvania motorist who was cited for speeding at 100 mph during a police chase faces more serious charges after witnesses say he raced past a school bus that was letting off students.

Pocono Mountain Regional Police said they tried to pull over Marcus Anastasiaris, 20, for speeding on Dec. 15 in the Pocono Pines area but lost sight of him when he accelerated to 100 mph.

Police eventually found him and issued summary traffic citations.

Witnesses later told police they saw Anastasiaris' red Audi drive onto the shoulder, passing a school bus on the door side as children were getting off. No one was hurt.

Anastasiaris has been charged with illegally overtaking a school bus, reckless endangerment and other offenses.

### 9-foot Burmese python spotted in Biscayne Bay

**FL** MIAMI — A Burmese python has been spotted in Biscayne Bay — a first for Biscayne National Park and another sign that the state's out-of-control pythons are getting more adept to inhabiting the state's salty fringes.

The Miami Herald reported that in November, a kayaker found a 9-foot python sunning on a platform more than a half-mile offshore in Biscayne Bay. University of Florida wildlife biologist Frank Mazzotti said the sighting confirms pythons are as comfortable in open water as they are in freshwater marshes and mangroves.

The snakes became estab-

lished around 2000, but biologists still have no reliable way to control them. In September, state wildlife biologists confirmed for the first time that pythons are now breeding in the Keys.

### Man sought in aborted robbery at gas station

**NJ** PENNSVILLE — Police are searching for a man who tried to hold up a New Jersey gas station for \$2 worth of gasoline but fled after the attendant refused.

NJ.com reported the attempted robbery occurred Tuesday night at the Coastal Gas Station in Pennsville Township.

Police Chief Allen Cummings said the suspect was carrying a gas can when he approached the attendant outside the station. The man pulled out a knife and demanded \$2 in gasoline.

When the attendant denied the request, the suspect ran off.

Police are reviewing surveillance video in an effort to identify the suspect.

### Firefighters 'rescue' boy's drone from tree

**CO** BASALT — Firefighters in the western Colorado town of Basalt say they've rescued cats from trees before, but this time they saved a drone that a 9-year-old boy had just received for Christmas.

The Aspen Times reported firefighters used a ladder truck to extract the drone Monday after gusty winds pushed it into the branches.

Family members had tried knocking it loose with a football, and somebody tried climbing the tree, but nothing worked.

The boy's grandmother then called police for ideas. Police

called a fire station, and since the crew wasn't busy, they rolled to the rescue.

### Contractor sues over injuries from squirrel

**VA** CHESAPEAKE — A contractor is suing a Chesapeake couple for \$90,000 in damages for injuries he says were caused by their pet squirrel during an attack.

The Virginian-Pilot reported Monday that Daniel Felice says he was doing contract work last summer when Deborah and Paul Desjardin's squirrel bit and scratched his leg and hand.

The lawsuit says the couple was keeping the animal as a pet.

Paul Desjardin says they never had a pet squirrel, and that the animal lived outside in their neighborhood but never indoors with them. Under city code, residents are not allowed to keep wild animals without a permit.

### Father is accused of stabbing year-old son

**NC** WILMINGTON — New Hanover County authorities accuse a 28-year-old father of trying to kill his 1-year-old son with a knife.

Sheriff's spokesman Lt. Jerry Brewer said David Batchelor, of Wilmington, is charged with attempted first-degree murder, assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill and child abuse.

The Wilmington Star-News reported that arrest warrants say Batchelor stabbed his son in the stomach and through the spinal cord Dec. 22, causing internal organs to spill out. The documents say the attack caused the boy to permanently lose mental and emotional

abilities.

The baby has been in critical care following several surgeries.

Batchelor is in jail on a \$2.5 million bond.

### Man and daughter, 5, rescued by Coast Guard

**LA** NEW ORLEANS — U.S. Coast Guard officials said a man and his 5-year-old daughter were rescued from their recreational boat after it began taking on water near the northern end of Lake Borgne.

NOLA.com/The Times-Picayune reported that the Coast Guard launched an MH-65 Dolphin helicopter aircrew and reached the boat shortly after 5 p.m. Tuesday.

Coast Guard officials said the father and daughter were flown to Air Station New Orleans and were in stable condition.

### Man charged in series of burglaries in county

**NY** HEMPSTEAD — Police on Long Island have arrested a man they say was responsible for multiple burglaries in Nassau County.

Brian Tierney, 23, of North Bellmore, was arrested Tuesday after police received a 911 call of a burglary in progress at a home in Bethpage.

Police said a subsequent investigation revealed that Tierney was a suspect in three other residential burglaries during December.

Two of the burglaries occurred in Massapequa and one in Garden City Park. Police said he made off with jewelry, cash and other personal property.

The investigation is continuing.

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STARS AND STRIPES®



# Alabama's defense ready for Huskies

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Even when Jonathan Allen praises Alabama's defense, he does so with a caveat making it clear that now is not the time to lower the standard.

The top-ranked Crimson Tide once again have staked a claim to having the nation's most Scrooge-like group with a host of All-Americans, national awards and the rare defense with stats that can actually be called gaudy.

"When we're focused doing our job, executing, communicating, running to the ball, having fun, we feel like we can be the best ever," Allen, Alabama's All-America defensive end, said Tuesday. "But if we're not doing our job, guys aren't communicating — just not doing our job — I mean, anybody can win the ball game. So I feel like it's in our hands."

And that's just the way Alabama likes it. The Tide defense faces a significant challenge against No. 4 Washington on Saturday in the Peach Bowl.

Alabama leads the nation in scoring, total and rushing defense.

Led by quarterback Jake Browning and wide receiver John Ross, the Huskies are fourth nationally in scoring offense.

Washington is bringing more than its high-powered passing attack to Saturday's national semifinal game against

Alabama's tough defense.

The Huskies have proved they can rely on a running game led by Myles Gaskin to provide balance when defenses focus their efforts on stopping Browning and Ross.

How balanced is the offense? Just look at Washington's 41-10 rout of Colorado in the Pac-12 championship game. The Huskies' offense flourished even when Browning completed only nine of 24 passes for 118 yards. Washington (12-1) pounded the ball with 265 yards on the ground, including 159 from Gaskin. Lavon Coleman added 101 yards rushing.

"It's definitely good to have a balance, run and pass," Washington wide receiver Dante Pettis said Tuesday. "There are a lot of teams that can only pass the ball. There are a lot of teams that can only run the ball. So it is good, when one thing isn't working, you can always resort to the other."

Gaskin has 1,339 yards rushing with 10 touchdowns. It's his second straight year with more than 1,300 yards, production that is sometimes overshadowed by the Huskies' passing attack.

Allen said he knows the Crimson Tide has to prepare for Washington's balance.

"Going in, I thought they were just a pass-happy team," Allen said. "But when you look at it, I'd say they favor the run more. That's definitely a challenge. But as

a defensive lineman, I'm excited about it. I love to go against teams that like to run the ball."

Tide defensive coordinator Jeremy Pruitt said his team hasn't faced a comparable offense among the first 13 opponents.

It was his answer when family asked him over the Christmas break, and when reporters posed the question a couple of days later.

"There's no comparison," Pruitt said. "This is the best football team we've played."

Washington offensive players and coaches could easily say, Ditto.

'Bama's defense was so dominant during the regular season that Allen & Co. didn't allow a touchdown in November. A touchdown-free November?

"I have never seen that," Washington offensive coordinator Jonathan Smith said.

It's not the only attention-getting statistic for a defense that is making a case as the best of coach Nick Saban's decade in Tuscaloosa, Ala. And that's saying something.

The defense has scored 11 touchdowns and only given up 14. The defenders have collectively won more national awards (four) than they've allowed rushing TDs (three).

## RB Williams leads Utah over Indiana

Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — Whenever it seems Joe Williams won't be available to Utah, he comes back and delivers.

Williams returned from a four-week retirement early in the season to help solidify a broken-down running back position. Then in the bowl game, he overcame an illness that forced him to miss a team meeting the night before and capped his career in style.

Williams ran for 222 yards and a touchdown, Andy Phillips kicked a 27-yard field goal with 1:24 to play and Utah beat Indiana 26-24 on Wednesday night in the Foster Farms Bowl for its 14th victory in its past 15 bowl games.

"We weren't positive we'd have him tonight. He showed a lot of toughness," coach Kyle Whittingham said. "I couldn't

be more proud of Joe to end his career as a Ute on this note."

Williams had to check out of the game several times but shook off his own costly fumble to run for 64 yards on the final drive, setting up Phillips' fourth field goal of the night.

"We prepared well these last few weeks so I just had to go out there like (Michael) Jordan did in '97 in the flu game and just leave it all out there," Williams said.

Tyler Huntley ran for another score and the Utes (9-4) forced three turnovers to spoil Tom Allen's coaching debut at Indiana and improve Whittingham's bowl record to 10-1.

"We're carrying the mantle for hundreds of football players who have come through here and raised the bar to where it's at," Whittingham said. "We have to continue that tradition and this group did just that."

### Pinstripe Bowl

**Northwestern 31, No. 22 Pittsburgh 24:** At New York, Justin Jackson ran for 224 yards and three touchdowns to power the Wildcats to their third bowl victory, 31-24 over the Panthers in the Pinstripe Bowl on Wednesday night.

The victory at Yankee Stadium followed wins in the 1948 Rose Bowl and 2012 Gator Bowl victories in the program's oft-futile history.

Jackson had TD runs of 8 and 16 yards in the second quarter, then went deep on a 40-yard burst in the third that left one defender face down on the turf and gave the Wildcats (7-6) a 21-17 lead.

### Russell Athletic Bowl

**Miami 31, No. 14 West Virginia 14:** At Orlando, Fla., Brad Kaaya tied a career best and Hurricanes bowl record

with four touchdown passes as Miami beat the Mountaineers to snap a 10-year bowl drought.

Kaaya completed 24 of 34 passes for 282 yards for the Hurricanes (9-4), which had lost their last six bowl appearances. Kaaya already held Miami's career record in yards and took over the school's No. 1 spots in completions and attempts. He was selected the game MVP.

### Texas Bowl

**Kansas State 33, Texas A&M 28:** At Houston, Jesse Ertz threw for 195 yards and a touchdown and ran for two more scores in Kansas State's victory over Texas A&M.

Ertz had a 79-yard touchdown pass and scoring runs of 1 and 5 yards to help give Kansas State its fourth straight win and first bowl victory since the 2013 Buffalo Wild Wings Bowl.

# Oregon hands No. 2 UCLA its first loss

Associated Press

EUGENE, Ore. — Ten years ago at McArthur Court, it was Oregon's Aaron Brooks with the shot that knocked off No. 1 UCLA.

This time the dagger was in the hands of Dillon Brooks, and he delivered against the No. 2 Bruins, too.

Brooks hit a three-pointer with 0.8 seconds left to give No. 21 Oregon an 89-87 victory Wednesday night in the Pac-12 opener for both teams.

Brooks, who finished with 23 points and nine rebounds, grabbed Bryce Alford's missed free throw with 8.9 seconds to go, dribbled to the right wing and pulled up for the game-winning shot.

"It's amazing," Brooks said. "You work on your game every day and dream of that moment.

"I want more moments like that for my team."

Payton Pritchard added 15 points and nine assists for the Ducks (12-2, 1-0), who won their 10th consecutive game

and pushed the nation's second-longest home winning streak to 34 games. Pritchard's three-pointer pulled Oregon within one with 12.9 seconds left to set the stage for Brooks' shot.

Brooks said Oregon coach Dana Altman called "pop" for the final shot and the ball was supposed to find the hot-handed Pritchard, who hit three of Oregon's 11 three-pointers. Instead, Brooks used a screen by Jordan Bell to squeeze off the game-winner.

"We had an option to get to the basket or shoot it," Altman said, "and [Brooks] felt like he liked the shot and he was right. Who am I to argue?"

"Dillon likes those big moments and hit or miss, he's willing to take the consequences for it."

That included being swarmed by Bell and his teammates at the other end of the court before the officials could clear the court for a final possession by UCLA, which didn't come close with its shot.

"I was running away from

it," Brooks said of the celebration, "but Jordan just tackled me."

Thomas Welch had 20 points and 10 rebounds for the Bruins (13-1, 0-1), and Alford had 20 points. Lonzo Ball added 14 points and TJ Leaf had 13.

UCLA was trying to match its best start to a season in 10 years, but Alford missed the front end of a 1-and-1. Alford was shooting a team-best 87.0 percent at the free throw line this season.

"That's who we want at the line," UCLA coach Steve Alford said of his son. "More times than not he makes shots to get us back in it and that's the guy we want at the free throw line."

The Bruins came in as the nation's best shooting team and fourth-best beyond the arc, and they nearly hit those marks by going 34-for-64 overall (53.1 percent) and 11-for-25 (44.0 percent) on three-pointers.

However, UCLA also had 14 turnovers against 19 assists and lost the rebounding battle

37-35.

The Bruins used a 15-0 run sparked by three straight 3s by Ball midway through the second half to take a 72-65 lead. UCLA was up by eight with 4 minutes to play before Pritchard sparked Oregon's final rally with seven points.

"Credit to them," Bryce Alford said. "First and foremost they made big-time plays (and) hit some really tough shots.

"Their last two 3s were highly contested, fadeaway 3s, so they made big-time plays but we have to be much better on the defensive end."

Oregon beat the Bruins at their own game in the first half, pushing a 100-point pace with 11 assists on its first 14 field goals and shooting 7 of 14 from 3-point range.

The Ducks also held Leaf, UCLA's leading scorer, without a shot for the first 11½ minutes. A 16-5 run had Oregon up by 12 late in the half before UCLA closed with a 10-3 burst to trail at the break for only the second time this season.

# Top-ranked Villanova holds off DePaul

Associated Press

VILLANOVA, Pa. — Josh Hart scored 25 points and Jalen Brunson added 13 as No. 1 Villanova barely held off DePaul, 68-65 on Wednesday night, the Wildcats' 19th straight win.

The Wildcats (13-0, 1-0 Big East) looked rather pedestrian playing for the first time in a week. But thanks to Hart, considered among the favorites for national player of the year, they survived.

A 14-6 Villanova run gave the Wildcats a 51-39 lead with 16:41 to go. But the Blue Demons responded with a 14-0 run to get back in the game and take a 53-51 lead.

Hart scored 10 points in the final 3:06, including a dagger three-pointer from the top of the key with 9.5 seconds left that gave Villanova a 66-62 lead.

Billy Garrett Jr. missed a clean look for a tying three-pointer at the buzzer.

Tre'Darius McCallum had 19 points for DePaul (7-7, 0-1).

**No. 12 Virginia 61, No. 6 Louisville 53:** Devon Hall scored 10 points and Kyle Guy added a key jumper with 2:02 remaining as

the visiting Cavaliers withstood a late rally in the Atlantic Coast Conference opener for both schools.

Virginia (11-1, 1-0) seemed headed to another lopsided win over Louisville before the Cardinals rallied from a 21-point second-half deficit to get within 57-48 with 3:51 left. Guy's basket regained momentum for Virginia, which got two free throws from Mamadi Diakite with 28 seconds left to seal its fourth straight win overall and fourth in five games against Louisville (11-2, 0-1). He had nine points.

**No. 9 North Carolina 102, Monmouth 74:** Justin Jackson scored 28 points to lead the host Tar Heels.

**No. 10 Creighton 89, Seton Hall 75:** Maurice Watson had 21 points and 10 assists and four other Bluejays players scored in double figures as host Creighton opened Big East play.

**No. 15 Purdue 89, Iowa 67:** Freshman guard Carsen Edwards scored 19 points and Dakota Mathias added 17 for Purdue in the Big Ten opener for both teams.

**Nebraska 87, No. 16 Indiana 83:** Glynn Watson Jr. scored 26 points and Tai Web-

ster had 21 to lead the visiting Cornhuskers (7-6, 1-0) to the upset.

**No. 17 Xavier 82, Providence 56:** At Cincinnati, Trevon Bluiett scored 22 points and the Musketeers took control at the outset in the Big East opener.

**No. 20 Florida St. 88, Wake Forest 72:** Dwayne Bacon and Xavier Rathan-Mayes scored 23 points apiece as the host Seminoles opened Atlantic Coast Conference play.

**No. 22 Southern Cal 70, Oregon St. 63:** Chimezie Metu had 19 points and eight rebounds and the visiting Trojans stayed undefeated in the Pac-12 opener for both teams.

**No. 23 Cincinnati 56, Temple 50:** Gary Clark scored 11 points, including two important free throws with 14.9 seconds left, for the visiting Bearcats, who won their fourth in a row in the AAC opener for both teams.

**No. 24 Notre Dame 63, Saint Peter's 55:** V.J. Beachem scored 18 points to help the host fighting Irish close out their non-conference schedule.



# Butler's buzzer-beater lifts Chicago

Associated Press

CHICAGO — With just under five minutes left, Jimmy Butler had to be helped to the bench and couldn't seem to put any weight on his right ankle.

It appeared his night was over. He was far from finished, though.

Butler matched his season high with 40 points and hit a 20-footer at the buzzer Wednesday to give the Chicago Bulls a 101-99 comeback victory over the Brooklyn Nets.

Butler scored nine points in the final 2½ minutes to rally Chicago. He finished 11-for-11 from the free-throw line and grabbed 11 rebounds as the Bulls overcame a 7-point deficit in the final three minutes for their second consecutive win.

**Spurs 119, Suns 98:** La-

Marcus Aldridge scored 27 points and host San Antonio defeated Phoenix without leading scorer Kawhi Leonard.

San Antonio forced seven turnovers while outscoring Phoenix 30-16 in the final quarter.

**Pelicans 102, Clippers 98:** Anthony Davis highlighted a 20-point performance with a soaring, one-handed, alley-oop dunk during a pivotal fourth-quarter spurt, and suddenly surging host New Orleans beat Los Angeles.

**Hawks 102, Knicks 98 (OT):** Dennis Schroder scored 27 points, Dwight Howard added 16 points and 22 rebounds, and host Atlanta took advantage of Carmelo Anthony's second-quarter ejection to beat New York in overtime.

**Hornets 120, Magic 101:** Kemba Walker scored 21 points, Nicolas Batum had 20 and Charlotte used a huge third quarter to rout host Orlando.

**Wizards 111, Pacers 105:** John Wall had 36 points and 11 rebounds, and host Washington held off Indiana despite playing the second half without Bradley Beal.

**Bucks 119, Pistons 94:** — Jabari Parker scored 31 points and Giannis Antetokounmpo had 23 points and eight rebounds as Milwaukee beat host Detroit.

Greg Monroe added 14 points, six assists and five rebounds against his former team to help the Bucks win for the second time in five games.

**Nuggets 105, Timberwolves 103:** Wilson Chandler scored

17 points and delivered a key block in the final seconds, helping host Denver hang on.

The Nuggets overcame a triple-double by Karl-Anthony Towns, who had 15 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists for the Timberwolves.

**Trail Blazers 102, Kings 89:** CJ McCollum scored 20 points and host Portland snapped a six-game losing streak with a victory over Sacramento.

**Warriors 121, Raptors 111:** Kevin Durant had 22 points, matched his season best with 17 rebounds, and added seven assists and five blocks as host Golden State held off Toronto.

Stephen Curry added 28 points, seven assists and seven rebounds, and Klay Thompson scored 21 points for Golden State.

## Canadiens blow 3-1 lead, lose to Lightning in overtime

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Montreal coach Michel Therrien was short and direct after the Canadiens blew a late lead and lost in overtime to the Tampa Bay Lightning.

Tyler Johnson scored his second goal of the game 1:36 into the extra session and the Lightning rallied from a two-goal deficit in the third period to beat the Canadiens 4-3 on Wednesday night.

"No positive," Therrien said. "It's unacceptable."

Montreal is 15-2-1 when ahead entering the third period.

"The desperation was not there," Therrien said. "They certainly had more desperation than us."

Johnson's winner from the right circle got past goalie Carey Price.

Tampa Bay, 4-4-2 in its past 10 games, had little time to celebrate the victory with another home game Thursday night against Toronto.

"It's a 'what have you done for me lately' league," Tampa

Bay coach Jon Cooper said. "If you have a bad loss, you've got to turn the page. You have a good win like we did, you want to hold onto that feeling, but we can't hang our hat on what happened."

Tampa Bay also got goals from Victor Hedman and Ondrej Palat, who combined to tie it at 3 in the third. Andrei Vasilevskiy stopped 19 shots.

"It's a big boost to get a win like this," Hedman said.

Shea Weber, Alexander Radulov and Chris Terry scored for the Canadiens, who have lost three in a row. Price had 26 saves.

Soon after Price made a stellar reaching stick save on Palat's redirection early in the second period, Terry made it 3-1 from the low right circle.

Radulov got a gift goal 3:24 into the game when Vasilevskiy misplayed a dump-in and Paul Byron passed from behind the net for the first of his two assists.

"He gave us a chance to stay in the game," Therrien said of Price. "We didn't play well in front of him."

Johnson tied it midway through the first after a turnover by Weber, who got a power-play goal three minutes later to put Montreal up 2-1.

Weber has nine goals, including eight on the power play.

Weber also had a big check in the third on Vladislav Namestnikov, who skated off under his own power. Weber was serving a tripping penalty when Palat tied it with 3:30 left in the third.

Hedman had cut the Lightning deficit to one midway through the third.

Kucherov (six games, lower body) and Palat (five games, undisclosed) both returned from the Lightning's lengthy injury list. However, center Valtteri Filppula was scratched after missing a team meeting.

Cooper said Filppula would be back in the lineup Thursday.

Kucherov had two assists, and Palat also had an assist.

**Blues 6, Flyers 3:** Robby Fabbri got a hat trick, David Perron and Scottie Upshall scored during St. Louis' four-goal third period.

Kevin Shattenkirk also

scored and Carter Hutton made 17 saves as the Blues improved to 12-1-4 at home.

**Penguins 3, Hurricanes 2:** Carl Hagelin scored with 4:15 remaining and host Pittsburgh rallied to beat Carolina.

Hagelin got his fifth of the season and second in two games off a feed from Patric Hornqvist. That followed a tying goal from Chris Kunitz early in the period.

**Maple Leafs 3, Panthers 2 (SO):** Mitchell Marner scored in the third round of the shootout to lift Toronto over host Florida.

Rookie Auston Matthews got his team-leading 17th goal and an assist and William Nylander also scored for the Maple Leafs. Frederik Andersen made 45 saves and blanked Florida in the shootout.

**Canucks 2, Kings 1:** Ryan Miller made 36 saves to lift host Vancouver over Los Angeles.

Miller was nearly unbeatable even as the Kings outshot the Canucks 37-20, including 31-8 over the final 40 minutes.