

Marines' new base takes shape on Guam

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

CAMP BLAZ, Guam — Piles of clay-laden limestone, volcanic rock and machinery occupy the site that is becoming Camp Blaz, the first new Marine Corps installation in 70 years.

The base going up just to the east of Andersen Air Force Base will be ready for the 5,000 Marines expected to arrive by the mid-2020s, but many of its core structures are still works in progress.

The approximately 4,000-acre camp is going up rapidly, however, according to its commander, Col. Christopher Bopp.

"Camp Blaz, right now, is really a construction site when you look at it," he told Stars and Stripes during a media conference at Joint Region Marianas in Guam on Friday. "We're making solid progress, but Camp Blaz is not open as a functional base or functional camp yet."

Blaz, officially activated in 2020, is the first new Marine base since Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany, Ga., opened in 1952. Approximately 1,300 members of the III Marine Expeditionary Force, many from

Okinawa, are scheduled to relocate to Blaz. Another 3,700 will be stationed on the island as a rotational force.

Blaz originated in the Defense Policy Review Initiative, an agreement by the United States and Japan to relocate some Marine assets from Okinawa. Japan is paying \$3 billion of the estimated \$8.6 billion cost to build the base and surrounding infrastructure.

Relocating the Marines, a slow-and-steady effort rather than an immediate transfer, is expected to begin sometime in the next few years, Bopp said. He had no specific dates to provide Friday.

"What I can say here, at this level, is that the agreement was for the mid-2020s," he said. "There are a lot of estimates and people guessing as to when, but to be able to nail down the specific month, I don't have that answer."

Bopp referred additional questions regarding the force transfer schedule to the III MEF. A spokesman was not immediately available Friday evening.

Blaz is currently home to 39 Marines and approximately 110 civilians, according to Navy Cmdr. Brian Christner, the camp's

public works officer. Some projects are complete, including some road, water and electrical infrastructure and four of five firing ranges.

The base has also completed projects supporting Marine Corps aviation at Andersen, including an aviation maintenance hangar.

"There are other projects that have been completed, mainly up at Andersen for the Marine Corps to use, that are fully occupied," Christner told reporters during a tour of Blaz on Friday.

So far, the Defense Department has awarded \$3.7 billion in building contracts at Blaz, just under half of the allotted \$8.6 billion, with funding shared by Japan and the U.S., according to Navy Capt. Robert Stiles, officer in charge of construction at Marine Corps Marianas. Around \$600 million worth of projects are already complete, he said.

The next projects due for completion include three barracks for enlisted Marines, a dining facility and a fire station, Stiles said. More projects, such as the headquarters, are slated for a 2024 completion.

NASA Orion capsule safely blazes back from moon

Associated Press

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — NASA's Orion capsule made a blisteringly fast return from the moon Sunday, parachuting into the Pacific off Mexico to conclude a test flight that should clear the way for astronauts on the next lunar flyby.

The incoming capsule hit the atmosphere at Mach 32, or 32 times the speed of sound, and endured reentry temperatures of 5,000 degrees Fahrenheit before splashing down west of Baja California near Guadalupe Island. The amphibious transport dock USS Portland quickly moved in to recover the spacecraft and its silent occupants — three test dummies rigged with vibration sensors and radiation monitors.

NASA hailed the descent and splashdown as close to perfect, as congratulations poured in from Washington.

"I'm overwhelmed," NASA Administrator Bill Nelson said from Mission Control in

Houston. "This is an extraordinary day... It's historic because we are now going back into space — deep space — with a new generation."

The space agency needed a successful splashdown to stay on track for the next Orion flight around the moon, targeted for 2024 with four astronauts who will be revealed early next year. That would be followed by a two-person lunar landing as early as 2025 and, ultimately, a sustainable moon base. The long-term plan would be to launch a Mars expedition by the late 2030s.

Astronauts last landed on the moon 50 years ago. After touching down on Dec. 11, 1972, Apollo 17's Eugene Cernan and Harrison Schmitt spent three days exploring the valley of Taurus-Littrow, the longest stay of the Apollo era. They were the last of the 12 moonwalkers.

Orion was the first capsule to visit the moon since then, launching on NASA's new

mega moon rocket from Kennedy Space Center on Nov. 16. It was the first flight of NASA's new Artemis moon program, named after Apollo's mythological twin sister.

"From Tranquility Base to Taurus-Littrow to the tranquil waters of the Pacific, the latest chapter of NASA's journey to the moon comes to a close. Orion back on Earth," announced Mission Control commentator Rob Navias.

While no one was on the \$4 billion test flight, NASA managers were thrilled to pull off the dress rehearsal, especially after so many years of flight delays and busted budgets. Fuel leaks and hurricanes conspired for additional postponements in late summer and fall.

In an Apollo throwback, NASA held a splashdown party at Houston's Johnson Space Center on Sunday, with employees and their families gathering to watch the broadcast of Orion's homecoming.

Japanese woman tries to take rifle from Marines

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND KEISHI KOJA
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — A Japanese woman attempted to take a rifle from a member of a squad of U.S. Marines who strayed off a military training area and into a local village on Friday, according to a spokesman for the Okinawa Defense Bureau.

About 15 Marines wandered off the Jungle Warfare Training Center at Camp Gonsalves and into nearby Higashi village at about 3:40 p.m., the Okinawa Times newspaper reported Saturday.

The Marines realized their error and marched quickly toward the Gonsalves gate, 3rd Marine Division spokesman Lt. Col. Kurt Stahl wrote in an email to Stars and Stripes on Monday. He said the Marines were not carrying live ammunition.

"We strive to be good neighbors and mitigate the impact of training on the local community wherever possible," wrote Stahl, who did not identify the unit involved.

However, a group of local residents confronted the Marines on their way back to

Gonsalves, the Defense Bureau spokesman said by phone Monday. The bureau represents the Ministry of Defense.

The Okinawa Times on Sunday identified Akino Miyagi, a butterfly scientist known locally for protesting the U.S. military presence, as the person who grabbed the Marine's rifle.

"I got close to them and grabbed a gun, but we didn't chase them," the newspaper quoted her as saying.

The Marines were originally spotted walking southbound along both sides of Route 70 in the Takae area of Higashi village, the Okinawa Times reported Saturday. They carried rifles and a larger weapon thought to be a portable air-defense system, according to the report.

"It is not normal to carry guns out of base and it's normal to think that they are loaded," Miyagi told the newspaper. "It is very scary."

Police are considering whether to recommend charges against Miyagi, who was not arrested, a Nago Police spokesman told Stars and Stripes by phone Monday.

US, Philippines and Japan talk security issues

BY SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

CAMP ASAKA, Japan — Land forces from the United States, Japan and the Philippines are teaming up to address security challenges in the Indo-Pacific, military leaders from the three nations told reporters Sunday.

Five generals from the three democracies discussed land force cooperation at Camp Asaka, a Japan Ground Self-Defense Force base in Saitama prefecture near the Japanese capital.

The leaders included U.S. Army Pacific commander Gen. Charles Flynn, U.S. Marine Forces Pacific commander Lt. Gen. William Journey, Ground Self-Defense Force commander Gen. Yoshihide Yoshida, Philippine army commander Lt. Gen. Romeo Brawner and Philippine marine corps commandant Maj. Gen. Charlton Sean Gaerlan.

Their meeting coincided with Yama Sakura, an annual command-post exercise involving U.S. and Japanese military planners along with observers from Australia and the Philippines, that wrapped up Monday.

"This new Japan-Philippines U.S. trilateral relationship will lead to a more powerful force than bilateral ones to deter unilateral attempts to change the status quo," Yoshida said following the generals' meeting.

The leaders swapped opinions on the security environment in the Indo-Pacific and ground force cooperation between the three nations, he said.

"We developed strong trust among the five top leaders," he told reporters.

A pair of Japanese F-15J Eagles landed Dec. 6 at the former Clark Air Base, north of Manila on the Philippines' main island of Luzon, the Air Self-Defense Force tweeted the next day. The visit was the first to the Philippines by Japanese fighter jets since World War II. Yoshida noted the similarities between Japan and the Philippines: both have sovereignty over many small islands, both are prone to natural disasters and both have strong alliances with the U.S.

The generals plan to meet each year and send observers to bilateral exercises, Yoshida said.

Ukraine seeks air defense systems to counter attacks from Russia

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Ukraine's prime minister has appealed for Patriot missile batteries and other high-tech air defense systems to counter Russian attacks that knocked out electricity and water supplies for millions of Ukrainians, putting Europe on alert Monday to brace for more refugees.

Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal told French broadcaster LCI that in addition to making Ukrainians suffer, Russia wants to swamp Europe with a new wave of Ukrainian refugees by continuing to strike power stations and other infrastructure.

To defend against further strikes, Shmyhal reiterated previous Ukrainian calls for Patriot surface-to-air missiles — a highly sophisticated system. During an interview with LCI that aired Sunday night, he also

asked for more German and French air-defense systems, resupplies of artillery shells and modern battle tanks.

The provision of Patriot missiles to Ukraine would mark a major advance in the kinds of air defense systems the West is sending to help the country repel Russian aerial attacks. So far, no country has offered them, and such a step would likely mark an escalation in the fight against Russia.

U.S. officials have said they were considering providing Ukraine with Patriot missile batteries. But Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder, the Pentagon's press secretary, told reporters recently there were no plans to send any.

"We'll continue to have those discussions," he said, adding, "None of these systems are plug-and-play. You can't just show up on the battlefield and start using them."

US to announce fusion energy 'breakthrough'

The Washington Post

The Department of Energy plans to announce Tuesday that scientists have been able for the first time to produce a fusion reaction that creates a net energy gain — a major milestone in the decades-long, multibillion-dollar quest to develop a technology that provides unlimited, cheap, clean power.

The aim of fusion research is to replicate the nuclear reaction through which energy is created on the sun. It is a "holy grail" of carbon-free power that scientists have been chasing since the 1950s. It is still at least a decade — maybe decades — away from commercial use, but the latest development is likely to be touted by the Biden administration as an affirmation of a massive investment by the government.

Huge amounts of public and private funds have been funneled

into the fusion race worldwide, with the aim of ultimately manufacturing fusion machinery that could bring electricity to the grid with no carbon footprint, no radioactive waste and far fewer resources than it takes to harness solar and wind power. Beyond the climate benefits, promoters say it could help bring cheap electricity to impoverished parts of the world.

"To most of us, this was only a matter of time," said a senior fusion scientist familiar with the work of the National Ignition Facility at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California, where the discovery was made.

The development was first reported by the Financial Times on Sunday. It was confirmed by two people familiar with the research, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to avoid getting ahead of

the official announcement. Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm was slated to make the announcement Tuesday at a media event billed as the unveiling of "a major scientific breakthrough."

The department and the lab declined to comment. A lab official said researchers there are still finalizing their analysis and will not be releasing any official findings before Tuesday.

The science of nuclear fusion relies on smashing two atoms together at incredibly high speeds and transforming the energy from that reaction into electricity that can power homes and offices without emitting carbon into the air or dumping radioactive waste into the environment. In the decades scientists have been experimenting with fusion reactions, they had not until now been able to create one that produces more energy than it consumes. While

the achievement is significant, there are monumental engineering and scientific challenges ahead.

Creating the net energy gain required engagement of one of the largest lasers in the world, and the resources needed to re-create the reaction on the scale required to make fusion practical for energy production are immense. More importantly, engineers have yet to develop machinery capable of affordably turning that reaction into electricity that can be practically deployed to the power grid.

Building devices that are large enough to create fusion power at scale, scientists say, would require materials that are extraordinarily difficult to produce. At the same time, the reaction creates neutrons that put a tremendous amount of stress on the equipment creating it, such that it can get destroyed in the process.

Ducey stacks containers at border as he leaves office

Associated Press

SAN RAFAEL VALLEY, Ariz. — Work crews have steadily erected hundreds of double-stacked shipping containers topped by razor wire along Arizona's remote eastern boundary with Mexico in a bold show of border enforcement by Republican Gov. Doug Ducey even as he prepares to leave office.

Until protesters slowed, then largely halted the work in recent days, Ducey pressed forward over the objections of the U.S. government, environmentalists and an incoming governor who has called it a poor use of resources. Democratic Gov.-elect Katie Hobbs said last week she was "looking at all the options" and hasn't decided what to do about the containers after her Jan. 5 inauguration. She previously suggested the containers be repurposed as affordable housing.

"I don't know how much it will

cost to remove the containers and what the cost will be," Hobbs told Phoenix PBS TV station KAET in an interview Wednesday.

Federal agencies have told Arizona the construction on U.S. land is unlawful and ordered it to halt. Ducey responded Oct. 21 by suing federal officials over their objections, sending the dispute to court.

Environmental groups say the containers could imperil natural water systems and endanger species.

Ducey insists Arizona holds sole or shared jurisdiction over the 60-foot strip the containers rest on and has a constitutional right to protect residents from "imminent danger of criminal and humanitarian crises."

"Arizona is going to do the job that Joe Biden refuses to do — secure the border in any way we can," Ducey said when Arizona sued the U.S. government. "We're not backing down."

New mayor Bass inherits multiples crises in LA

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Karen Ruth Bass, a former physician assistant who shattered glass ceilings with her rise to a leadership post in the California legislature and later a prominent spot in Congress, took a ceremonial oath of office Sunday as mayor of Los Angeles.

A progressive Democrat, Bass becomes the first woman and second Black person to hold the city's top job and will formally assume her duties Monday amid multiple crises in the nation's second most populous city. She was sworn in ceremonially by Vice President Kamala Harris, a longtime friend and former California attorney general. The formal oath was administered privately by the city clerk.

Bass, 69, will be tasked with easing rising crime rates, restoring trust in a City Hall shaken by racism and corruption scandals

and addressing the issue of over 40,000 people living in trash-strewn encampments or rusty RVs that have spread into virtually every neighborhood.

Striking a tone of unity, Bass said the many, disparate arms of government must come together to confront homelessness.

To move in a new direction "we must have a single strategy" that brings together government, the private sector and other stakeholders," Bass said. She said if people link arms rather than point fingers, lives will be saved.

Bass — who was on President-elect Joe Biden's short list for vice president — claimed the post last month after overcoming more than \$100 million in spending by rival Rick Caruso, a billionaire developer and Republican-turned-Democrat who campaigned as a centrist and promised a strong emphasis on public safety.

Iran publicly executes second prisoner

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Iran executed a second prisoner on Monday convicted over crimes committed during the nationwide protests challenging the country's theocracy, publicly hanging him from a construction crane as a gruesome warning to others.

The execution of Majidreza Rahn timer came less than a month after he allegedly fatally stabbed two members of a paramilitary force after purportedly becoming angry about security forces killing of protesters.

The development underscores the speed at which Iran now carries out death sentences handed down for those detained in the demonstrations that the government has hoped to put down.

Activists warned that at least a dozen people have already been sentenced to death in closed-door hearings. At least 488 people have been killed since the demonstrations began in mid-September, according to Human Rights Activists in Iran, a group that's been monitoring the protests. Another 18,200 people have been detained by authorities.

Iran's Mizan news agency, which falls under the country's judiciary, published a collage of images of Rahn timer hanging from the crane, his hands and feet bound, a black bag over his head.

Masked security force members stood guard in front of concrete and metal barriers that held back a gathered crowd early Monday morning in the Iranian city of Mashhad.

Mizan alleged Rahn timer had stabbed two security force members to death Nov. 17 in Mashhad and wounded four others.

Footage aired on state TV showed a man chasing another around a street corner, then standing over him and stabbing him after he fell against a parked motorbike. Another showed the same man stabbing another immediately after.

The assailant, which state TV alleged was Rahn timer, then fled.

The Mizan report identified the dead as "student" Basij, paramilitary volunteers under Iran's Revolutionary Guard. The Basij have deployed in major cities, attacking and detaining protesters, who in many cases have fought back.

A heavily edited state television report

aired after Rahn timer's execution showed clips of him in the courtroom. In the video, he says he came to hate the Basijis after seeing video clips on social media of the forces beating and killing protesters.

The Mizan report accused Rahn timer of trying to flee to a foreign country when he was arrested.

Mashhad, a Shiite holy city, is located some 460 miles east of the Iranian capital, Tehran. Activists have said it has seen strikes, shops closed and demonstrations amid the unrest that began over the Sept. 16 death in custody of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old woman who had been detained by Iran's morality police.

Mizan said Rahn timer was convicted in Mashhad's Revolutionary Court. The tribunals have been internationally criticized for not allowing those on trial to pick their own lawyers or even see the evidence against them.

Rahn timer had been convicted on the charge of "moharebeh," a Farsi word meaning "waging war against God." That charge has been levied against others in the decades since the 1979 Islamic Revolution and carries the death penalty.

Danger from Hawaiian volcano eruption lessens

Associated Press

HONOLULU — The eruption of the Mauna Loa volcano on Hawaii's Big Island continues to ease, scientists said Sunday, reinforcing an earlier pronouncement that the mountain's first flare-up in nearly 40 years might soon end.

"We have good news to report," Ken Hon, the scientist in charge of the U.S. Geological Survey at the Hawaii Volcano Observatory, said during a briefing. "The eruption is still at an extremely low level at this point."

Hon said the eruption is contained entirely within the volcano's cinder cone. The USGS said a small amount of light remained visible at night through a vent in the cone, but the channels below that vent "appear

drained of lava."

The inactive front of the lava flow may inch northward very slowly as it continues to settle, the agency said.

Hon said Mauna Loa's eruption appears to be ramping down and that nearby Kilauea has now reached a "full pause," with its lava lake stagnant and crusted over.

Mauna Loa began spewing molten rock Nov. 27 after being quiet for 38 years. The incandescent spectacle drew onlookers and set some nerves on edge among people who've lived through past eruptions.

Sunday's update came a day after scientists lowered the alert level for the volcano from a warning to a watch and said the eruption could be in its final days.

Sierra Nevada winter storm packs a wallop

Associated Press

SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, Calif. — Heavy snow fell in the Sierra Nevada as a winter storm packing powerful winds sent ski lift chairs swinging and closed mountain highways, while downpours at lower elevations triggered flood watches Sunday across large swaths of California into Nevada.

More than 250 miles of the Sierra from north of Reno south to Yosemite National Park remained under winter storm warnings until either late Sunday or early Monday. The Heavenly ski resort at Lake Tahoe shut down some operations when the brunt of the storm hit Saturday. The resort posted video of lift chairs swaying violently because of gusts that topped

100 mph, along with a tweeted reminder that wind closures are "always for your safety."

To the south, Mammoth Mountain reported that more than 20 inches of snow fell Saturday, with another 2 feet possible as the end of the system moved to the eastern Sierra.

The UC Berkeley Central Sierra Snow Lab in Soda Springs, Calif., reported Sunday morning that more than 43 inches had fallen in a 48-hour span.

A 70-mile stretch of east-bound U.S. Interstate 80 was closed Saturday "due to zero visibility" from the northern California town of Colfax to the Nevada state line. Chains were required on much of the rest of I-80 and other routes in the mountains.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Police find dead woman at apartment of suspect

MD SILVER SPRING — Police officers in a Maryland suburb of Washington, D.C., searching an apartment to apprehend a suspect in the fatal shooting of a convenience store clerk also discovered inside the body of a woman believed to be pregnant and who had been dead for some time, authorities said.

Torrey Moore, 31, of Silver Spring, was arrested Friday and charged with first-degree murder and possession of a firearm while committing a felony in Thursday's gas station shooting, the Montgomery County police department said in a news release. The clerk, identified by police as Ayalew Wondimu, 61, of Silver Spring, was pronounced dead at the scene, news outlets reported.

Police were still investigating the circumstances of the death of the woman, whose name has not been released.

Investigators had tracked Moore to apartment buildings where he lived, and they entered his apartment with a search warrant. The officers took Moore into custody without incident, according to Montgomery County Police Chief Marcus Jones, and found a handgun and the body of the dead woman on the floor.

Former Fox News guest allegedly exploited mom

FL FORT LAUDERDALE — A former regular guest on Fox News stole at least \$224,000 from her 88-year-old mother and unnecessarily put her in a nursing home

twice against her will, including by once dragging her mom from her home, Florida authorities said Friday.

Cathy Areu, who provided a liberal perspective on several shows, faces numerous felony charges including kidnapping, exploitation of the elderly and organized scheme to defraud. Miami-Dade County prosecutors said she falsified documents to take control of her mother's home, took money from her mother's reverse mortgage and savings account, and took out credit cards in her mother's name and then used them for her own benefit.

According to Areu's Fox News profile, she is a former contributing editor for the Washington Post Magazine, where she conducted political interviews from 2001 to 2012, and in 2001 founded the magazine Catalina. It sought to "break stereotypes and show a positive side of the U.S. Hispanic community." She also hosted the "Liberal Sherpa" podcast. Fox took down Areu's profile after her arrest became widely known.

Details of Areu's arrest were not released, but prosecutors said she had been evading authorities since June, including spending time in Mexico. She was being held without bond Friday at the county jail.

Search off for snorkeler missing after shark seen

HI HONOLULU — The search for a Washington state woman whose husband couldn't find her after spotting a shark while they were snorkeling in Hawaii was called off Friday.

The woman's husband and

others reported spotting a large shark about 50 yards from shore at Keawakapu Point in south Maui on Thursday, according to the state Department of Land and Natural Resources.

The couple had been snorkeling when he saw a shark swim by but could not see his wife. The shark swam by several times before the man returned to shore and reporting his wife missing, the department said.

Rescuers searched from the water and from the sky until nightfall Thursday and resumed the search at daybreak.

After what was believed to be a Tiger shark was spotted, officials put up shark warning signs. The signs were removed after a survey of the area didn't show that the 10-to-12-foot-long shark was still in the area.

The department said it doesn't release the names of people involved in shark encounters.

Students disciplined for offensive, racial chants

KS TOPEKA — Several students at a Kansas high school have been disciplined for their behavior during a high school basketball game after a coach accused them of making offensive chants toward his team.

Topeka High School Coach Geo Lyons said his team was subjected to "racial slurs, threats and disgusting taunts" by students from Valley Center High School at a game on Dec. 3. He also said Valley Center students taunted his team with a naked Black baby doll.

The principals of the two schools said in a joint statement Friday that a review of game footage and interviews with

game attendees resulted in "several" students being disciplined, but federal law prevents them from saying how many students or the type of discipline.

The controversy received widespread publicity on Tuesday. The next day, Valley Center closed its schools, saying the district had received a deluge of online threats. Classes resumed on Thursday with an increased law enforcement presence.

Pants sold from 1857 raise questions on Levi's

NV RENO — Pulled from a sunken trunk at an 1857 shipwreck off the coast of North Carolina, work pants that auction officials described as the oldest known pair of jeans in the world have sold for \$114,000.

The white, heavy-duty miner's pants with a five-button fly were among 270 Gold Rush-era artifacts that sold for a total of nearly \$1 million in Reno last weekend, according to Holabird Western American Collections.

There's disagreement about whether the pricey pants have any ties to the father of modern-day blue jeans, Levi Strauss, as they predate by 16 years the first pair officially manufactured by his San Francisco-based Levi Strauss & Co. in 1873. Some have said historical evidence suggests there are links to Strauss, who was a wealthy wholesaler of dry goods at the time, and the pants could be a very early version of what would become the iconic jeans.

But the company's historian and archive director, Tracey Panek, said any claims about their origin are "speculation."

— From wire reports

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Eagles clinch playoffs with win over Giants

Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — Nailing down a playoff berth was first thing on the Philadelphia Eagles' wish list for the season. They want more and, with the league's best record and the way they continue to blow out opponents, who's going to stop them?

Jalen Hurts threw for two touchdowns and ran for another as the Eagles clinched their second straight playoff berth and fifth in six years with a 48-22 win over the fading New York Giants on Sunday.

"We got way bigger goals than this one," Eagles coach Nick Sirianni said without referring to the NFC East title, the top playoff seed or the Super Bowl. "On to the next one. It's nice to get this win here because this is a good football team. It's nice to come out here and play well on the road."

Hurts improved his MVP credentials by throwing for 217

yards and hitting DaVonta Smith on a 41-yard fourth-down TD strike and A.J. Brown on a 33-yarder as the Eagles (12-1) scored on their first three possessions. The third-year quarterback also ran for 77 yards, highlighted by a 10-yard TD run late in the third quarter.

Hurts became the first QB in NFL history to rush for at least 10 touchdowns in consecutive seasons. Like most of the Eagles' players, he said he is just hoping to improve from week to week.

"The most simple thing we've done is to try and grow and execute," said Hurts, who was 21-for-31 passing. "It's good that we prepared in a way that we've been able to execute at a high level. We just want to continue to do that. That's the name of the game."

Miles Sanders ran for 144 yards, scored on runs of 3 and 40 yards and hit the 1,000-yard mark for the season (1,068) as the Eagles handed the Giants

their worst loss under first-year coach Brian Daboll. Jake Elliott kicked two field goals and the defense finished with seven sacks, including three by Brandon Graham.

"We're not done yet," Graham said. "I feel great, just us reaching our goals: making the playoffs, postseason. We've got so much more game and ball to go. We've got to make sure we finish like we want to. A great first step."

Daniel Jones and Tyrod Taylor threw touchdown passes for the Giants (7-5-1). They have one win in their last six games (1-4-1) and their hopes of their first playoff berth since 2016 are slipping with four games remaining.

Daboll said his team has to learn from this game and move on quickly.

"I think that's something that we've stressed since day one: There's no room for excuses. There are a bunch of explana-

tions. We got beat. They outcoached us. They outplayed us," Daboll said. "And we got to get ready to go soon; the season's winding down here, and we got an important one on Sunday."

The Eagles, who have the league's second-ranked defense and third-ranked offense, dominated from the start. They sacked Jones twice on the opening series and Hurts then took over, driving them 84 and 91 yards for touchdowns.

The Giants' third possession had a comical conclusion. Jamie Gillan lost the ball as he went to punt. The ball bounced and he kicked it 15 yards to the Eagles 42. It was an illegal kick and the Giants were penalized 10 yards with a loss of down. Hurts hit a wide-open Brown for a 21-0 lead on the next play.

Hurts, Sanders and Brown have each scored 10 touchdowns for the Eagles, who have scored at least 30 points in each of the last three weeks.

Cowboys score late to avoid major upset against Texans

Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — Dak Prescott stood on his own goal line with a second chance, moments after throwing an interception that had given the hapless Houston Texans a great chance to finish off a shocker.

The star Cowboys quarterback delivered, turning what had been quite the clunker against the team with the NFL's worst record into his 18th career late-game comeback.

Prescott directed a 98-yard drive to Ezekiel Elliott's short touchdown run with 41 seconds remaining, and Dallas avoided a major upset with a 27-23 victory Sunday.

Houston (1-11-1) appeared in position to end a seven-game losing streak after Tremon Smith's second interception of the game put the Texans at the Dallas 4-yard line, up by three points with 5:47 to go.

The Cowboys (10-3) stiffened against a makeshift Texans offense, stuffing backup quarterback Jeff Driskel on a fourth-down run after running back Rex Burkhead was upended for a loss on the previous play from the 1.

"I think everyone knew the game wasn't

over," linebacker Micah Parsons said. "We have to fight, just get through it. I was just happy we were able to get that stop."

Starting at his 2, Prescott immediately completed a 21-yard pass to Dalton Schultz. The pair hooked up twice more, the latter an 18-yarder to put Dallas at the Houston 4.

After Michael Gallup's attempted TD catch was barely broken up, Elliott scored on third down from the 2 to cap the 11-play drive.

"We got to love these moments," Prescott said. "Who cares what's happened these last 58 minutes of this game? We've got two minutes to go get a win."

Tony Pollard scored twice for Dallas, which was a 16½-point favorite, according to FanDuel Sportsbook. The fourth consecutive victory kept the Cowboys two games behind NFL-leading Philadelphia in the NFC East.

Prescott was 6-for-6 for 79 yards on the go-ahead drive after completing just 20 of 33 with two interceptions before that.

"We can sit here and talk about all the things that didn't go right," Dallas coach Mike McCarthy said. "And I get it. But at the end of the day, you have to go win the game in

the fourth quarter."

After going back to Davis Mills as the starter following a two-game benching, the Texans threw in a wrinkle by having him share snaps with Driskel, who offered a hybrid wildcat/throwing role that included his first TD pass since 2020.

Kyle Allen, the replacement for Mills the previous two games, was inactive, and Mills did his part to help a Houston offense that was more efficient than normal.

Houston's Chris Moore had career highs with 10 catches for 124 yards, but was stopped a yard short of the goal line on a second-down grab on the possession that started at the Dallas 4.

Mills, who was 16-for-21 for 175 yards, was on the field after the Texans gave up the lead, with 41 seconds and no timeouts. His Hail Mary from near midfield was intercepted in the end zone by Israel Mukuamu with 3 seconds left.

"I liked what happened today," Houston coach Lovie Smith said. "We used the best options we had. We have to figure out how to finish."

Navy's Niumatalolo let go after 15 seasons as coach

Associated Press

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Ken Niumatalolo set the bar high for what a military academy could still accomplish in major college football.

The past three seasons at Navy weren't up to that standard.

Niumatalolo is out after 15 seasons at the helm. The academy announced Sunday that he would not return — a day after the Midshipmen lost to Army in double overtime and finished 4-8 for the second straight year. Niumatalolo is the winningest coach in school history at 109-83, but Navy hasn't finished above .500 since 2019.

"Our sincerest gratitude to Coach Ken for what has been a distinguished and impactful

legacy at the Naval Academy," athletic director Chet Gladchuk said in a statement. "Navy football flourished for many years under his leadership. He will forever be remembered for the influence he has had on the lives of those who played for him."

Defensive coordinator Brian Newberry was named interim coach.

Niumatalolo was hired by Navy before the 2008 season. In the Midshipmen's first two years in the American Athletic Conference, Niumatalolo led the team to a share of an AAC West Division title in 2015 and won the AAC West title outright in 2016. Navy also shared the West title in 2019.

The Midshipmen have gone

11-23 in the last three seasons and have had one winning season in five years. Navy is a combined 4-10 against the other academies in the last seven years.

"The Naval Academy will now move forward with continued high ambitions and embrace a new era of reaffirmed expectations for Navy football and our midshipmen," Gladchuk said.

Navy played in 10 bowl games under Niumatalolo. He's the only coach in the Army-Navy rivalry to begin his career with eight straight wins in the series. He also is the only coach in Navy history to win four consecutive bowl games, and he tied a program record by beating Notre Dame three times in his tenure.

Texas coach is charged with assault

Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — Texas men's basketball coach Chris Beard was arrested early Monday on a felony family violence charge, according to Travis County Jail records.

The county Sheriff's Office said the 49-year-old Beard was arrested by Austin police and booked at 4:18 a.m. on a charge of assault on a family or household member in which their breath was impeded, or choking, in common terms.

The charge is a third-degree felony in Texas, with a possible punishment of two to 10 years in prison. The jail records showed Beard had not yet posted bond as of Monday morning and did not indicate when he would be making an initial court appearance. No attorney for him was listed.

"The university is aware of the situation regarding Chris Beard. We are continuing to gather information and monitoring the legal process," the school said in a statement.

The Longhorns (7-1), ranked No. 7 in the latest AP poll, hosted Rice on Monday night.

Beard is in his second season of a seven-year guaranteed contract that pays him more than \$5 million per year. Before coming to Texas, he Texas Tech to the 2019 NCAA Tournament championship game.

Beard's contract includes a provision under which he can be fired for cause for conduct the administration reasonably determines reflects poorly on the coach, program or school. That includes being charged with a felony.

Texas freshman guard Arterio Morris also faces a misdemeanor family violence charge stemming from a June arrest after an incident with a former girlfriend and faces a Wednesday court hearing in Denton County near Dallas.

AFC-leading Bills handle elements, Jets

Associated Press

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — Greg Rousseau and the Buffalo Bills didn't want to let down Von Miller.

On Sunday, they collectively filled the absence of their star pass rusher by not letting up on Mike White and the New York Jets.

With Josh Allen and the Bills offense having difficulty finding its footing on a slick field, the defense combined for four sacks, forced two turnovers and clinched a 20-12 win by having White turn the ball over on downs by throwing four straight incompletions — the last batted down by A.J. Epenesa.

"We knew we've got to step up," said Rousseau, who had two sacks and forced a fumble in the same week the Bills learned Miller would miss the remainder of the season after having surgery to repair a torn right knee ligament.

"But Von is still with us. He's still paying attention," Rousseau added. "So I mean, we're doing it for him. We're doing it for us."

The Bills were so relentless in getting after White that the Jets quarterback was sidelined twice. He missed one snap after being hit by Ed Oliver. White then missed a series while being evaluated for rib injuries after being struck by Matt Milano.

White returned each time and finished the game before boarding an ambulance for a trip to the hospital for what coach Robert Saleh said was for precautionary reasons.

The Bills never trailed in a game during which Allen threw a 24-yard touchdown pass to Dawson Knox in the closing minute of the second quarter and then scored on a 5-yard run on Buffalo's first possession of the third quarter.

The AFC-leading Bills (10-3)

won their fourth straight since a two-game skid, which included a 20-17 loss at the Jets. Buffalo has won at least 10 of its first 13 games for the seventh time in franchise history.

"We made a statement that Von is one of our brothers and with or without him we're going to try to get the job done," said safety Damar Hamlin, who forced Michael Carter to fumble by punching the ball loose to end a Jets scoring drive at Buffalo's 28 with 5:34 left in regulation.

The Jets (7-6) have lost four of six in a slump that has made their playoff chances shaky. New York, which hasn't qualified for the postseason since 2010, entered the week as the AFC's seventh seed, a win ahead of New England and the Los Angeles Chargers. But the Jets fell out of playoff position with the Chargers' 23-17 victory over Miami.

Embiid scores 53 as 76ers rout Hornets

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Joel Embiid had 53 points and 11 rebounds, leading the Philadelphia 76ers to a 131-113 win over the Charlotte Hornets on Sunday night.

With the home crowd serenading him with MVP chants, Embiid became the first player in the NBA this season to post two 50-plus point performances, adding Sunday's performance to a league-best 59-point effort on Nov. 13 against Utah.

"The ball just found me," Embiid said. "I thought we moved the ball well all night and the ball just found me."

Embiid became the third player in Sixers history to have multiple 50-point games in the same season, joining Allen Iverson (2000-01 and 2004-05) and Wilt Chamberlain (1965-66 and 1967-68). It is also the 30th game

in Embiid's career with 40 points and 10 rebounds. The only other player in franchise history to accomplish that feat was Chamberlain.

"We won," Embiid said. "It's good to do that when you win. ... I'm just happy that I'm contributing when we are winning."

Charlotte was led by Kelly Oubre Jr. and Terry Rozier, who each scored 29 points. The Hornets have lost five straight games.

"We had good intent tonight," Hornets coach Steve Clifford said. "The first six or seven minutes of the game, we had good defense. Our transition defense was a problem tonight and we have to fix that. Besides Joel, that was the story of the first half. But we did a lot of good things."

Hawks 123, Bulls 122 (OT): A.J. Griffin hit a 6-footer on an

alley-oop pass at the overtime buzzer and host Atlanta beat Chicago to snap a three-game losing streak.

DeMar DeRozan made three free throws with 0.5 seconds remaining in overtime to finish with 33 points and give the Bulls the lead.

But Griffin took the alley-oop pass from Jalen Johnson on the sideline and scored on a turnaround jumper.

Lakers 124, Pistons 117: LeBron James scored 35 points, Anthony Davis had 34 points and 15 rebounds and visiting Los Angeles beat Detroit to end a three-game losing streak.

Davis also had seven assists as the Lakers overcame 38 points from Bojan Bogdanovic. Lonnie Walker IV added 18 points for Los Angeles and Russell Westbrook had 11 points and nine assists.

Rockets 97, Bucks 92: Jalen Green had 30 points and seven rebounds, Kevin Porter Jr. added 18 points and seven assists and host Houston beat Milwaukee to extend its home winning streak to four games.

Houston was coached by assistant coach John Lucas with head coach Stephen Silas away from the team following the death of his father (and longtime NBA player and coach) Paul Silas.

Knicks 112, Kings 99: Julius Randle and RJ Barrett each scored 27 points, and host New York beat Sacramento to extend its winning streak to a season-high four games.

Magic 111, Raptors 99: Franz Wagner scored 23 points, Paolo Banchero added 20 points and 12 rebounds and host Orlando beat Toronto for its third straight victory.

Rantanen completes hat trick in OT, Avs top Blues

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Mikko Rantanen scored in the final seconds of regulation and the first minute of overtime to complete his fifth career hat trick and give the Colorado Avalanche a 3-2 win over the St. Louis Blues on Sunday.

"We're missing a lot of guys, a lot of veteran guys, especially up front," Rantanen said. "I try to do my best, and even little bit more, in this situation. We need a lot to win games, and tonight was one of those."

Rantanen's second goal of the game came with nine seconds left in regulation, forcing the extra period. He sealed the comeback win 29 seconds into overtime. Pavel Francouz made 30 saves and the Avalanche snapped a five-game winless streak.

"I liked our competitiveness all night," Avalanche coach Jared Bednar said. "It wasn't the perfect game from us by any stretch, but I did like the way we competed, the way we stuck with it. I think everyone was emotionally invested in the game."

Vladimir Tarasenko and Brandon Saad scored for the Blues, losers of eight of their last 10 games. Jordan Binnington stopped 28 of 31 shots for the Blues, who had allowed four goals in nine straight games.

"That's the way it goes sometimes when things aren't going well," Blues coach Craig Berube said. "It's a good point. I thought we did a lot of good things."

Bruins 3, Golden Knights 1: Jake DeBrusk scored 2:11 into the third period to put visiting Boston ahead for good in a win over Vegas in a matchup of division leaders.

Charlie Coyle and Patrice Bergeron also scored for Boston and Linus Ullmark stopped 30 shots to improve to 16-1.

The Bruins, who lead the Atlantic Division, split the season series with the Pacific-leading Knights and improved to 11-1-1 against Western Conference teams.

Kraken 5, Panthers 2: Andre Burakovsky scored the go-ahead goal midway through the second period and visiting Seattle snapped a three-game losing streak in Florida.

Matty Beniers, Jordan Eberle, Daniel Sprong and Yanni Gourde also scored for Seattle.

Eric Staal and Chris Tierney scored for the Panthers, who have lost two straight and three of four. Sergei Bobrovsky had 27 saves while starting for the second straight night with Spencer Knight out due to illness.

Blue Jackets 6, Kings 5 (OT): Johnny

Gaudreau scored 40 seconds into overtime and host Columbus won its second straight game.

Jack Roslovic had two goals and two assists, Patrik Laine had a goal and two assists, and Boone Jenner and rookie Kirill Marchenko also scored for the Blue Jackets. Gaudreau and Vladislav Gavrikov each had two assists, and Elvis Merzilikins stopped 33 shots.

Anze Kopitar scored twice, and Blake Lizotte, Jaret Anderson-Dolan and Adrian Kemp also had goals for the Kings, who earned a point after rallying from two two-goal deficits. Jonathan Quick finished with 20 saves.

Coyotes 5, Flyers 4 (OT): Clayton Keller capped his first career hat trick with a goal with 22.4 seconds remaining in overtime to give host Arizona a win over Philadelphia.

Keller skated in from the left side and beat Carter Hart to the glove side as the Coyotes won their second straight home game after returning from a 14-game, 33-day road trip. Keller has a seven-game point streak.

Capitals 5, Jets 2: Lars Eller scored one of visiting Washington's four second-period goals in his 900th career game in a win over Winnipeg.