

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## Authorities: Coast Guardsman planned attack

*The Washington Post*

A U.S. Coast Guard lieutenant and self-identified white nationalist has been arrested after federal investigators uncovered a cache of weapons and ammunition in his Maryland home that authorities say he stockpiled to launch a widespread domestic terrorist attack targeting politicians and journalists.

Christopher Paul Hasson called for “focused violence” to “establish a white homeland” and dreamed of ways to “kill almost every last person on earth,” according to court records filed in U.S. District Court in Maryland. Although court documents do not detail a specific planned date for an attack, the government said he had been amassing supplies and weapons since 2017 at the latest, developed a spreadsheet of targets that included House

Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and searched the internet using phrases such as “best place in dc to see congress people” and “are supreme court justices protected.”

“The defendant intends to murder innocent civilians on a scale rarely seen in this country,” the government said in court documents filed this week, arguing that Hasson should stay in jail awaiting trial.

Hasson, of Silver Spring, Md., was expected to appear before a judge for a detention hearing in federal court in Greenbelt, Md., on Thursday.

Hasson was arrested on illegal weapons and drug charges on Friday, but the government says those charges are the “proverbial tip of the iceberg.” Officials with the U.S. attorney’s office in Maryland outlined in court documents Hasson’s al-

leged plans to spark chaos and destruction, describing a man obsessed with neo-fascist and neo-Nazi views.

“Please send me your violence that I may unleash it onto their heads,” Hasson wrote in a letter that prosecutors say was found in his email drafts. “Guide my hate to make a lasting impression on this world.”

A magistrate judge ordered that the Office of the Federal Public Defender represent Hasson.

Hasson has been working at the U.S. Coast Guard headquarters in Washington since 2016, according to court documents filed by prosecutors. He also served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1988 to 1993 and in the Army National Guard for about two years in the mid-’90s.

Agents with the FBI field office in Baltimore and the Coast

Guard Investigative Service arrested Hasson on Friday, FBI Baltimore spokesman Dave Fitz confirmed.

Authorities seized 15 firearms, including several long guns and rifles, and more than 1,000 rounds of ammunition from his basement apartment after executing a search warrant this month. Over the past two years, he had made nearly two dozen purchases of firearms or related equipment and made thousands of visits to websites that sell weapons or tactical gear.

Authorities said Hasson harbored extremist views for years.

“The defendant is a domestic terrorist,” the government said in court filings, “bent, on committing acts dangerous to human life that are intended to affect governmental conduct.”

## Soldier wounded in attack files suit against bomber’s employer

*Associated Press*

SAVANNAH, Ga. — A U.S. soldier grievously wounded in a suicide bombing two years ago in Afghanistan filed suit Wednesday against an American defense contractor, saying it failed to supervise the Afghan who built an explosive vest on the job using the company’s tools and parts.

The federal lawsuit by Spc. Winston Hencely, 22, accuses Fluor Corp. of allowing the Afghan national responsible for the bombing to work alone and to skip an escort off Bagram Air Base on the morning of Nov. 12, 2016.

The lawsuit claims that Fluor employed the man, but an Army investigation after the attack said that while his work was supposed to be supervised by

Fluor, he was actually employed by subcontractor Alliance Project Services Inc. a veteran-owned business in Alexandria, Va. Fluor supervisors were confused about their responsibilities, the investigation found.

About an hour after his shift ended, Ahmad Nayeb detonated his vest on the base and killed himself along with three U.S. soldiers and two Fluor employees, who were Americans. Another 16 people, including Hencely, were wounded.

“Fluor’s negligent supervision of the bomber enabled the bomber’s attack against the Army,” says the lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court in Greenville, S.C., one of Fluor’s U.S. locations.

It added that “Fluor well knew that in Afghanistan, and on American military bases in par-

ticular, suicide bombers were a constant and dire threat.”

The company was responsible for upkeep of nontactical vehicles at Bagram at the time of the attack. Nayeb worked in the vehicle yard, disposing of motor oil and other potentially hazardous automotive materials.

Hencely, of Springfield, Ga., was deployed to the U.S. base in Afghanistan as a soldier in the Army’s 1st Cavalry Division.

Soldiers were gathering for the start of a Veterans Day foot race, the lawsuit says, when Hencely noticed Nayeb and thought he looked suspicious. The soldier grabbed Nayeb, who detonated an explosive vest beneath his clothes.

An Army investigation later found that a “lack of reasonable supervision facilitated Nayeb’s ability to freely acquire most of

the components necessary for the construction of the suicide vest and the freedom of movement to complete its construction,” according to the military’s 2017 report on the bombing.

Nayeb smuggled explosive materials used in his suicide vest onto the base, the lawsuit said, and completed it during his work shifts using string and an electrical switch from the Fluor work site as well as nuts and bolts used for shrapnel.

Fluor staffers also allowed the bomber to check out a multimeter used to measure electrical currents, though the tool wasn’t needed to perform his job.

Hencely suffered serious brain injuries and shrapnel wounds to his chest from the blast.

# Allies won't stay in Syria after US leaves

*The Washington Post*

WASHINGTON — As the deadline approaches for the withdrawal of U.S. forces fighting Islamic State in Syria, America's closest European allies have turned down a Trump administration request to fill the gap with their own troops, according to U.S. and foreign officials.

Allies have "unanimously" told the United States that they "won't stay if you pull out," a senior administration official said. France and Britain are the only other countries with troops on the ground in the U.S.-led coalition battling ISIS.

Along with the United States, they have provided training, supplies, logistics and intelligence for the Syrian Democratic Forces, the Kurdish-dominated group that has done most of the

fighting. U.S., French and British forces also man heavy artillery and conduct the airstrikes that have been decisive against the militants.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said last week that he was mystified by President Donald Trump's policy. On Tuesday, British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said "there is no prospect of British forces replacing the Americans" in Syria.

European refusal to stay unless Trump reverses at least part of his troop withdrawal order is one of several factors that U.S. military officials, lawmakers and senior administration officials have said should make Trump think again.

Their concerns come as the administration has yet to reach an agreement with Turkey not to attack the SDF, which Tur-

key says is a terrorist group. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has said the Turkish military, massed at the border, is prepared to move into northeastern Syria once the Americans leave.

One of the principal requests the administration has made of the allies, including Germany, is to form an "observer" force to patrol a 20-mile-wide "safe zone" on the Syrian side of the border, separating Turkey from the Syrian Kurds.

Officials in Ankara said Turkey's defense minister, Hulusi Akar, and its military chief of staff were traveling to Washington on Thursday to discuss Syria and other regional matters with acting Defense Secretary Pat Shanahan.

The SDF has appealed for Western nations to keep a force

of up to 1,500 in northeast Syria to coordinate air support and back its efforts to hold militants and other adversaries at bay. In anticipation of the departure of about 2,000 U.S. troops, the Kurds are negotiating with Syrian President Bashar Assad and Russia, his primary foreign backer along with Iran.

Trump has long complained that his own top aides and the military were blocking his determination to exit Syria once ISIS was defeated. In December, he said that the goal had been achieved and that U.S. troops were leaving "now," after which Defense Secretary Jim Mattis resigned. Trump subsequently agreed that the departure would be "deliberate and orderly."

The military is planning a full withdrawal by the end of April.

## More troops arriving at the border this week

BY ROSE L. THAYER  
*Stars and Stripes*

AUSTIN, Texas — Active-duty servicemembers are deploying to the U.S. southern border this week to begin laying more wire barriers, officials with U.S. Army North said. They will join about 2,300 personnel deployed in Texas, Arizona and California.

This wave of deployments includes military police, engineers, command and control elements, logisticians and general purpose forces, which could comprise multiple units brought together specifically for this mission, said Col. Cathy Wilkinson, Army North spokeswoman. They will place about 140 miles of wire barriers with an estimated completion date of April 30.

Once finished, these units may be required to assist in other duties as Customs and Border Protection continues to evaluate its support requests or be sent back to their home stations to await further assignment, she said.

This mission is part of an ongoing agreement between the Defense and Homeland Security departments to use military members to assist Border Patrol.

The first agreement between the agencies sent active-duty troops to the border in late October with an expectation they would return to their home bases by mid-December.

During that time, military engineers placed about 70 miles of barriers along ports of entry.

The most recent agreement, signed Jan. 11, will keep servicemembers working with Border Patrol through Sept. 30, with engineers focusing on building barriers between ports of entry. New barriers will be concentrated primarily in California and Arizona, but also in New Mexico and Texas, Wilkinson said.

Troops will begin deploying in March for a new surveillance mission requested by Border Patrol in the new January agreement.

## Housing horrors prompt military quarters survey

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY  
AND JENNIFER SVAN  
*Stars and Stripes*

VICENZA, Italy — Military officers will be sweeping through family housing complexes throughout Europe in the next month asking residents about mold, rats, repairs and any other possible problems.

The effort to canvass residents about conditions at military-owned and military-leased housing comes after a recent investigative series by Reuters found housing provided to military families at many U.S. bases was dilapidated and dangerous, poisoning young children with lead and mold. The series showed that repeated complaints had gone unheeded.

On Feb. 15, top military officials ordered commanders to inspect all housing for which they were responsible within 30 days and to hold town hall meetings.

"We will hold our chain of command and private contrac-

tors accountable to ensure they are meeting their obligations to provide safe, high quality family housing," Army Secretary Mark T. Esper and Gen. Mark A. Milley, Army chief of staff, said in a joint statement last week.

In the Kaiserslautern area, home to the largest U.S. military community overseas, Air Force teams planned to start going door-to-door Thursday, said Col. Kevin Parker, 86th Civil Engineer Group commander. The Air Force oversees housing for all services in the Kaiserslautern Military Community.

Army officials at U.S. Army Garrison Rheinland-Pfalz have been told to conduct visits to all housing and barracks, said Stefan Alford, a spokesman.

In Vicenza, U.S. Army Garrison Italy was still working out details on visits to 800 housing units on and off base, said spokesman Jim Brooks. Army captains would be checking on conditions at 2,350 rooms in the barracks.



## US, UK ships train together on heels of trilateral exercise

BY WYATT OLSON

*Stars and Stripes*

U.S. and British ships drilled this week in the South China Sea, the third joint training since Christmas by the two naval fleets in the Western Pacific, the Navy said.

The replenishment oiler USNS Guadalupe and Royal Navy frigate HMS Montrose conducted maritime security and logistics training on Monday, the Navy said in a statement. Royal Marine commandos, Royal Navy sailors and Guadalupe crew members were involved in the exercise.

During a search-and-seizure drill, a boarding team from the Montrose embarked and secured Guadalupe, which posed in the scenario as engaged in illegal trafficking. The ships also practiced using NATO procedures for replenishment at sea. That protocol ensures that the two vessels could safely and efficiently transfer fuel while underway, the Navy said.

"This was a valuable exercise for us, keeping our integrated Royal Navy and Royal Marines boarding team sharp and ready to deliver any mission assigned to them," Cmdr. Conor O'Neill of the HMS Montrose said in

the statement.

This week's training comes only weeks after destroyer USS McCampbell and Royal Navy frigate HMS Argyll sailed together Jan. 11-16 in the South China Sea. The ships conducted communication and maneuvering drills and exchanged personnel.

For several days just before Christmas, British and U.S. ships were joined by vessels from the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force for submarine-hunting drills in the Philippine Sea. It was the first trilateral exercise of its kind in the 7th Fleet area of operations for the three navies, the Navy said.

Great Britain has stepped up its naval involvement in the South China Sea in the past year, a shift due in part to China's disputed claims of sovereignty over much of those waters and militarization of islands and coral reefs.

During a security conference in Singapore in June, British Defense Secretary Gavin Williamson told the audience that the nation would begin sending warships through Pacific waters to demonstrate its commitment to internationally recognized maritime rules in the region.

## Air Force Academy installs cameras

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Air Force Academy has installed several thousand closed-circuit TV cameras on campus over the past year to create a safer environment for cadets and to deter criminal behavior.

The cameras were mentioned by Lt. Gen. Jay Silveria, the academy's superintendent, during testimony Feb. 13 before a subcommittee hearing of the House Appropriations Committee about the military service academies. The superintendents of each military service academy testified nearly two weeks after the Pentagon released its annual report on sexual assault and harassment at the academies.

The report's anonymous scientific survey found that 747 students said they experienced unwanted sexual contact within the last year, a nearly 50 percent increase from 507 students in 2016.

During the hearing, Rep. John Carter, R-Texas, dis-

cussed how male and female cadets live in the dorms of the academies within their cadet companies and what can be done about their behavior when leaders are not there.

"How do we fix that in the military ... so, you can't lay the blame on the officer? He won't see these things happening while he's there; they will happen while he's not there," Carter said. "... There's so much (that) goes on (at) college campuses right now it's unbelievable. But yet we're holding you to a standard of honor. And how do we reach that? I don't know the answer."

Silveria said that the safety and security of cadets were his responsibility.

"So we've installed thousands of closed-circuit TV cameras throughout our dorms for safety and security," he said.

The cameras were added to the existing camera system, Meade Warthen, a spokesman for the U.S. Air Force Academy said in an emailed response. They should all be installed this year.

## Navy linguist killed in Syria to be added to NSA memorial

BY CHAD GARLAND

*Stars and Stripes*

A black granite wall inside the National Security Agency lists 176 military and civilian cryptologists — the code-makers and code-breakers that protect U.S. communications and crack adversaries' systems — who have been killed in the line of duty since World War II.

Of those, 174 have been publicly named. Only two of them are women.

Next week, Senior Chief Petty Officer Shannon Kent will become the third when her name is unveiled as the 177th entry on the National Cryptologic Memorial.

A ceremony honoring her at the spy agency's headquarters complex at Fort Meade, Md., is slated for Feb. 28 and is expected to include family members, an NSA spokesman said this week. She will be the sixth sailor and the first Navy linguist named on the wall since the Cold War.

An Arabic linguist with Fort Meade's Cryptologic Warfare Activity 66, Kent was among the four Americans and more than a dozen others killed in a suicide bombing in the Syrian town of Manbij on Jan. 16. Her death has brought attention to the work female servicemembers have been doing alongside elite front line units and has prompted changes to a Navy commissioning and waiver process that led to her deployment in lieu of attending a doctoral program.

Typically, NSA unveils newly added names in a wreath-laying ceremony at the 8-foot-tall by 12-foot-wide monument around Memorial Day weekend each year. The names of 23 servicemembers have been added to the wall since the 2001 ceremony, when NSA began a tradition of declassifying and sharing their stories. Kent's name will be the first etched into the polished stone wall since May 2015.

The wall is housed inside a secure area

not generally open to the media or the public, but a replica is displayed at the National Cryptologic Museum, located near the NSA headquarters complex at the Maryland base.

Kent was killed while doing intelligence legwork to aid larger efforts to track remnants of Islamic State, her husband, a retired Green Beret warrant officer, told Stars and Stripes. The 35-year-old mother of two and cancer survivor, who spoke seven languages and was considered a "badass" by many of her peers, spent much of her career working alongside special operations troops, family and friends have said.

Like Kent, at least four of the five Navy cryptologic technicians named on the NSA's memorial wall since 2001 — all men — were killed while supporting Navy SEALs and other elite units.

# Dems ready resolution to block declaration

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — House Democrats will file a resolution Friday aimed at blocking the national emergency declaration that President Donald Trump has issued to help finance his wall along the Southwest border, teeing up a clash over billions of dollars, immigration policy and the Constitution's separation of powers.

Though the effort seems almost certain to ultimately fall short — perhaps to a Trump veto — the votes will let Democrats take a defiant stance against Trump that is sure to please liberal voters. They will also put some Republicans from swing districts and states in a difficult spot.

Formally introducing the measure sets up a vote by the full House likely by mid-March, perhaps as soon as next week, because of a timeline spelled out by law. Initial passage by the Democratic-run House seems assured.

The measure would then move to the Republican-controlled Senate, where there may be enough GOP defections for approval. The law that spells out the rules for emergency declarations seems to require the Senate to address the issue too, but there's never been a congressional effort to block one and some procedural uncertainties remain.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif.,

seemed to predict approval, telling colleagues in a letter that her chamber will “move swiftly” to pass it and “the resolution will be referred to the Senate and then sent to the President's desk.”

Should the House and Senate initially approve the measure, Congress seems unlikely to muster the two-thirds majorities in each chamber that would be needed later to override a certain Trump veto.

Even so, Republican senators facing tough 2020 re-election fights in competitive states like Arizona, Colorado and North Carolina would have to take stances that could risk dividing the GOP's pro-Trump and more moderate voters.

## Sprawling storm hits much of US

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A sprawling storm dumped several inches of snow from the Midwest to the East Coast and deluged the South with rain Wednesday as it closed schools, snarled air travel and littered highways with crashes.

Only a few inches of snow fell along the Interstate 95 corridor from New York to Washington, but it was enough to put a scare into an area that has seen little of it this winter. Schools and government offices around the region closed early.

New Jersey's governor declared a state of emergency even though only 4 inches of snow was expected before turning to rain Wednesday night. State and local government offices in Delaware closed early, and so did local offices in Philadelphia.

Nationwide, more than 2,200 flights were canceled and more than 5,500 were delayed, according to the flight-tracking website FlightAware. The mid-Atlantic region was hit especially hard as airlines pulled flights ahead of the storm.

Farther west, snow forced Minneapolis and St. Paul schools and scores of other districts in Minnesota and Wisconsin to cancel classes as up to 10 inches of snow fell on the region.

## Police say 'Empire' actor staged attack in order to help his career

Associated Press

CHICAGO — “Empire” actor Jussie Smollett staged a racist and homophobic attack because he was unhappy about his salary and wanted to promote his career, Chicago's police superintendent said Thursday.

Before the attack, Smollett also sent a threatening letter that targeted himself to the studio in Chicago where “Empire” is shot, Superintendent Eddie Johnson said.

Smollett turned himself in and was arrested earlier Thursday to face accusations that he filed a false police report when he told authorities he was attacked in Chicago by two men who hurled racist and anti-gay slurs and looped a rope around his neck, police said.

“He took advantage of the pain and anger of racism to promote his career,” Johnson told reporters at a news conference.

“This publicity stunt was a scar that Chicago didn't earn and certainly didn't deserve,” he later added.

The FBI has been investigating the letter sent before the attack. Johnson would not say whether Smollett could face charges for that.

In less than a month, Smollett changed from being the seemingly sympathetic victim of a hate crime to being accused of fabricating the entire thing. The 36-year-old was charged Wednesday with felony disorderly conduct, a charge that could bring up to three years in prison and force the actor, who is black and gay, to pay for the cost of the investigation into his report of a Jan. 29 beating.

Johnson maintained Thursday that police treated Smollett as a victim until two brothers they had taken into custody for questioning last week admitted to helping him stage the attack. He said it was the brothers who also explained

Smollett's motive to detectives. Authorities have a check for \$3,500 that Smollett paid the brothers, he said.

Smollett, who plays a gay character on the hit Fox television show “Empire,” said he was attacked as he was walking home from a downtown Subway sandwich shop. He said the masked men beat him, made derogatory comments and yelled “This is MAGA country” — an apparent reference to President Donald Trump's campaign slogan, “Make America Great Again” — before fleeing.

In describing what police believe actually happened, Johnson made it sound as if Smollett was casting and directing a short movie.

“He probably knew he needed somebody with bulk,” he said of Smollett's decision to hire the two muscular brothers. Police have said at least one of the brothers worked on “Empire,” which follows a black family as they navigate the ups and downs of the recording industry, and Smollett's attorneys said one of the men is the actor's personal trainer.

When it came time to stage the attack, Johnson said, Smollett chose a spot that he believed would be captured by one of Chicago's many security cameras. “But, unfortunately, that particular camera wasn't pointed in that direction,” Johnson said.

The brothers, who are not considered suspects, wore gloves during the staged attack and “punched him a little bit,” Johnson said. Scratches and bruising Smollett had on his face were “most likely self-inflicted,” Johnson said.

In a statement Wednesday, attorneys Todd Pugh and Victor Henderson said Smollett “enjoys the presumption of innocence, particularly when there has been an investigation like this one where information, both true and false, has been repeatedly leaked.”



# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Cold case unit solves its oldest crime

**NH** CONCORD — New Hampshire's Cold Case Unit says it has solved its oldest crime, the shooting death 52 years ago of an auto repair shop worker, and says the man who did it later killed himself.

In September 1966, Everett Delano, 49, was shot three times in the head while working at Sanborn's Garage in Andover. The case stalled after an investigation.

The unit reopened the Delano case in 2013 after being contacted by a member of his family. Investigators discovered that fingerprints from the scene hadn't been entered into an FBI database, which wasn't fully operational in 1966.

The prints led to Thomas Cass, 67, of Orleans, Vt., who denied any knowledge of the case in 2014 but shot himself after police executed a search warrant at his home.

## House kills bill for single time zone

**ND** BISMARCK — The North Dakota House has killed a bill that would make Central time the state's official time zone. The measure failed 81-11 on Wednesday.

A dozen of North Dakota's 53 counties, all of them west of the Missouri River, are either partially or wholly within the Mountain time zone.

The idea of one time zone has been proposed in the Legislature several times over the years but has never gotten needed support.

## No more cheerleading awards for body parts

**WI** KENOSHA — A Wisconsin school district official said its high school will

no longer hand out cheerleading awards that are based on a girl's physical attributes, including largest breasts or buttocks.

The American Civil Liberties Union says an annual banquet has been held at Tremper High School in the Kenosha Unified School District that recognizes the most improved or hardest working cheerleaders, but gag awards are also given based on certain physical attributes.

District spokeswoman Tanya Ruder said these awards won't be made at future banquets.

## Police: Man stole truck to get to the airport

**OK** TULSA — Authorities allege an Oklahoma man stole a Pepsi truck as the driver was unloading soda.

Tulsa police said the driver jumped out of the back when he felt his rig move. A trail of sodas spilled out.

Police said Steven Hart told them he was trying to get to the airport after an argument with his girlfriend. The girlfriend said he was searching for her.

Police said that when they caught up to the truck stopped in traffic, Hart jumped out and started to run off. He was arrested as the rig rolled into the back of a school bus. No children were aboard.

Hart is being held on pending charges that include larceny and attempted escape from the county jail as he was being booked.

## Pot brick worth \$3K found in donation bin

**MO** SPRINGFIELD — Big Brothers Big Sisters is hoping some good can come from the cellophane-wrapped marijuana brick that was dropped in a Springfield donation bin.

The Springfield News-Leader reported that responding of-

ficers estimated the pot had a street value of \$3,000.

The discovery was made last May. It only recently became public when the charity's Ozark office highlighted it in its monthly bulletin.

Big Brothers Big Sisters' Think Big Foundation President Tyler Moles said donations of clothes and shoes are down during the winter months, so he's hoping the publicity can serve as a reminder that the charity is collecting those items.

## Kindergartener found with handgun on bus

**PA** PITTSBURGH — School officials in Pittsburgh said a kindergartener was found with a handgun on a school bus.

Pittsburgh Public Schools spokeswoman Ebony Pugh said the gun was found in the Pittsburgh Faison K-5 student's backpack Monday. Pugh said another student alerted the bus driver to the weapon, and the gun was removed. She said parents were notified.

Pugh said students will now be required to pass through school metal detectors. Previously, only adult visitors and parents were required to do so.

## Jeweler with celebrity clients is robbed

**GA** ATLANTA — Police are searching for two gunmen involved in the weekend burglary of an Atlanta jewelry store known for its celebrity clients and the manager's home.

WXIA-TV reported the armed men followed the manager of Icebox Diamonds and Watches home and forced him and his wife inside.

Cobb County police said the men tied up the manager and his wife, took keys to the jewelry store and forced the manager to provide access codes

to the store and its safes. Local media reported officials said one suspect left to rob the store while the other stayed behind and took jewelry and cash from the manager's home.

## Driver injured after exiting moving pickup

**ID** JEROME — A Burley, Idaho, woman was hospitalized after police say she fell or jumped from a moving pickup truck she was driving on Interstate 84.

KTVB-TV reported Idaho State Police responded to the crash around 12:48 a.m. Monday.

Maribel Villeda was driving east on I-84 with passenger Aguilar-Romero Cruz Lorenzo. Sergio Ramirez Cornejo, of King Hill, was behind Villeda in a Freightliner commercial vehicle pulling a trailer.

Police said Villeda got out of the pickup on the driver's side while it was still moving. Ramirez Cornejo swerved to avoid hitting her and his Freightliner struck the pickup.

## Rare owls thrive in preserve near airport

**CA** LOS ANGELES — Researchers have discovered a group of rare owls thriving in a nature preserve near Los Angeles International Airport.

The 10 burrowing owls are the most seen at LAX Dunes Preserve in 40 years, the Los Angeles Times reported.

Scientists attribute the return of the migratory owls to ongoing restoration work at the 300-acre preserve that used to be the beachfront community of Surfridge. The neighborhoods disappeared decades ago as the jet age boomed and have been reclaimed by sand, native brush and invasive weeds.

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STARS AND STRIPES®

# Top-ranked Duke falls apart vs. UNC

Associated Press

DURHAM, N.C. — Zion Williamson blew out his shoe, and then No. 8 North Carolina blew out top-ranked Duke.

Luke Maye took full advantage of a freak injury to the freshman sensation, finishing with 30 points and 15 rebounds to help the Tar Heels rout Duke 88-72 on Wednesday night.

“Obviously, you lose a national player of the year candidate,” coach Mike Krzyzewski said, “there are going to be gaps of what you have to do.”

A star-studded crowd that included former President Barack Obama, Spike Lee and Hall of Fame outfielder Ken Griffey Jr. packed into Cameron looking for another highlight-filled show from Williamson — arguably the most exciting player in college basketball. But the Atlantic Coast Conference’s second-leading scorer sprained his right knee during the Blue Devils’ opening possession.

“It was just a shock for us,” Duke forward Cameron Reddish said. “Obviously,

we’re used to playing with him, so playing without him was very difficult. We missed him today.”

Williamson grabbed the knee in pain after slipping awkwardly and falling when his left Nike shoe fell apart as he planted hard while dribbling near the free throw line. The blue rubber sole ripped loose from the white shoe from the heel to the toes along the outside edge, with Williamson’s foot coming all the way through the large gap.

Nike said in a statement that it was “concerned” and wished Williamson a speedy recovery. It said it was “working to identify the issue.”

Coach Mike Krzyzewski classified the injury as a mild sprain, but didn’t know how much time Williamson will miss.

Cameron Johnson added 26 points and Garrison Brooks had 14 for the Tar Heels (21-5, 11-2).

By winning their ninth in 10 games and beating a top-ranked team for the first time since 2013, they pulled into a first-place tie with the Blue Devils (23-3, 11-2).

RJ Barrett matched a season best with 33 points and fellow freshman Reddish added a season-high 27 for Duke — but the rest of the team combined to score just 12.

Duke looked lost without Williamson. Meanwhile, North Carolina took advantage of the Zion-sized hole in the lane, scoring 32 of its first 34 points in the paint and finishing with a 62-28 scoring advantage there. The Tar Heels never trailed, pushed their lead to 22 on Johnson’s layup with about 16 minutes left and held on.

“First, I’m thinking if he’s OK, man,” Maye said. “I don’t want to see somebody get hurt, especially a guy of that caliber, and I hope he makes a quick recovery. But when he goes down, I’m obviously trying to attack — and I was going to do that anyway. I was going to try to get inside and work inside out and just play my game and play the way I know I can play.”

Eight nights after the Blue Devils rallied from 23 down in the final 10 minutes to win at Louisville, they couldn’t come up with another comeback — especially without Williamson.

## Roundup

### San Diego State stuns No. 6 Nevada

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — With their arena packed for the first time this season, the San Diego State Aztecs rewarded the fans with another victory against Nevada, and this one’s going into the record book.

Senior guards Jeremy Hemsley and Devin Watson scored 15 points apiece for San Diego State, which shut down Jordan Caroline and stunned cold-shooting No. 6 Nevada 65-57 Wednesday night, beating the Wolf Pack for the third straight time.

Jalen McDaniels added 10 points for SDSU (17-9, 9-4 Mountain West), which snapped a 10-game winning streak by Nevada (24-2, 11-2).

It was the highest ranked team that SDSU had ever beaten.

**No. 10 Michigan State 71, Rutgers 60:** Cassius Winston scored 28 points and Xavier Tillman had a career-high 19 points and 10 rebounds to lead the host Spartans.

Michigan State (22-5, 13-3 Big Ten) moved a half-game ahead of No. 7 Michigan and No. 15 Purdue in the Big Ten standings.

**No. 11 Marquette 79, Butler 69:** Markus Howard scored 28 points and Theo John added 15 points and 11 rebounds as the host Golden Eagles pulled away in the second half.

**Florida 82, No. 13 LSU 77 (OT):** Kevaughn

Allen highlighted a 21-point performance with a pair of three-pointers late in overtime, and the visiting Gators beat a ranked team for the first time this season.

**Georgetown 85, No. 17 Villanova 73:** Jessie Govan had 21 points and 11 rebounds, Mac McClung scored 21 points as the host Hoyas snapped a nine-game losing streak to the Wildcats.

**Syracuse 69, No. 18 Louisville 49:** Elijah Hughes scored 18 points and Oshae Brissett had 16 to lead four players in double figures as the host Orange topped the Cardinals (18-9, 9-5 Atlantic Coast Conference).

**Lehigh 91, Army 81:** Lance Tejada had 20 points as the host Mountain Hawks topped the Black Knights.

Kyle Leufroy had 17 points and six assists for Lehigh (18-8, 11-4 Patriot League). Tommy Funk scored a career-high 26 points and had eight assists for Army (12-16, 7-8).

**Air Force 64, Fresno State 61:** Caleb Morris hit five three-pointers and finished with 17 points, including 14 in the second half, to help the Falcons to hold off the host Bulldogs.

Lavelle Scottie added 15 points and AJ Walker scored 12 for Air Force. The Falcons (11-15, 6-8 Mountain West Conference) were just 8-for-19 shooting from the free-throw line, but Morris and Walker combined to make 4 of 4 in the final six seconds.

### Syracuse’s Boeheim kills pedestrian

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Syracuse men’s basketball coach Jim Boeheim struck and killed a man walking on an interstate late Wednesday night as he tried to avoid hitting the man’s disabled vehicle with his, police say.

Syracuse police say 51-year-old Jorge Jimenez was in a car with three others before midnight Wednesday when their vehicle crashed into a guardrail on I-690 in Syracuse.

Boeheim struck Jimenez while trying to avoid the vehicle. Jimenez was taken to a local hospital, where he was pronounced dead, police said.

Boeheim, 74, is cooperating with the investigation.

“He stopped immediately and exited the vehicle,” said Syracuse Sgt. Matthew Malinowski.

Police said sobriety tests were administered to Boeheim and were negative for any signs of impairment. No tickets have been issued to Boeheim at this time and the investigation is continuing.

— Associated Press



# Break over: Playoff push begins

Associated Press

MIAMI — Golden State is still the favorite for a fourth title in five years.

Milwaukee, Toronto, Indiana, Boston, Philadelphia, Oklahoma City and Denver can all go ahead and cancel those mid-April vacation plans if they were foolish enough to have made them in the first place.

For LeBron James and Dwyane Wade, some work awaits.

The All-Star break ended Thursday, with about one-third of the season remaining for most clubs — and that means the playoff push now gets very serious. Nobody has officially clinched a spot yet, though it would take a highly improbable series of events for the current top teams in the Eastern and Western Conferences to miss the postseason.

“Every year is a new challenge, different circumstances,” Golden State guard Stephen Curry said. “We are motivated. We understand what’s at stake.”

James has been to the NBA Finals in each of the last eight seasons, all out of the East — four with Miami, four with Cleveland. His Los Angeles Lakers currently are 10th in the West, three games behind the Clippers for the final playoff berth.

“I hope that first off, we all get healthy,” Lakers President Magic Johnson said. “This has been one of the worst seasons I’ve ever been around Laker basketball as far as injuries are concerned. When we were healthy, we were in fourth place. Now we’re like 10th place. But when you’ve got LeBron James, anything is possible.”

The Miami Heat are part of a six-team, three-spot race in the East, and Wade is hoping for one last postseason trip out of his 16th and final season. Heat President Pat Riley said he thinks the way the Heat ended its pre-All-Star schedule — with a 2-3 road trip, though one where Miami could have won four of the games — is a good sign.

Other things to know going into the season’s final third:

## LeBron and Michael

LeBron James is finally going to pass Michael Jordan.

In scoring, at least.

While the debate will rage forever about which player is better, James will soon have scored more points than Jordan. James is 211 points shy of passing Jordan (32,292) for the No. 4 spot in NBA history. When he gets there, each of the top four spots on that list will be occupied by current or former Los Angeles Lakers — No. 1 Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (38,392), No. 2 Karl Malone (36,928), No. 3 Kobe Bryant (33,643), and James.

## Scoring and pace

Unless every team drastically changes the way it plays over the next two months — which won’t happen — the league will finish this season with its highest scoring average and fastest pace in 30

years. Teams are averaging 110.7 points and 100 possessions per game this season. That’s the best scoring number since 1984-85 (110.8 points per game) and fastest pace since 1988-89 (100.6 possessions per game).

All 30 teams are on pace to average at least 100 points per game this season. The last time every team in the league averaged 100 was 1986-87, when the NBA had 23 franchises.

## Threes are wild

The NBA is on pace to see records in three-pointers made and three-pointers attempted. If that sounds like an annual statement, it is: This will be the seventh consecutive season where both marks fall. Houston’s James Harden has a shot at the record for threes in a single season. He has 274 (which would be fifth-best for a season already), putting him on pace for 401 if he plays in all 25 of the Rockets’ remaining games. Golden State’s Stephen Curry holds the mark with 402 makes from deep in 2015-16.

## More Harden

The Houston All-Star is in the throes of a historic offensive season.

Harden’s current scoring average — 36.6 points per game — would be eighth-best all-time, and the best mark since Jordan averaged 37.1 points in 1986-87. Jordan (once), Elgin Baylor (once) and Wilt Chamberlain (five times) are the only players to finish a season with a higher average than the one Harden is toting now.

Harden leads Oklahoma City’s Paul George by 7.9 points per game in this year’s scoring race. That is an enormous number.

## Good Bucks

Already with 43 wins this season, it’s already safe to say this the best year for Milwaukee in a long time.

The Bucks won 44 games last season, and 46 in 2009-10. This will almost certainly be Milwaukee’s first 50-win year since 2000-01 (52-30), and the Bucks could flirt with their first 60-win year since 1980-81. Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer says he joined Milwaukee at the perfect time.

## Bad Knicks

David Fizdale, the very likable and highly respected first-year Knicks coach is overseeing a team that’s on pace for 16 wins — which would be the worst record in franchise history. Obviously, it’s all about the draft and free agency for the Knicks, who are in position to be major players when the NBA’s annual superstar-shopping window opens on July 1.

Phoenix is also on pace to have its worst season ever. Chicago and Cleveland probably won’t hit all-time rock bottom, but look like they’ll come close. The draft lottery is May 14, and that’s when the Knicks, Suns, Bulls and Cavaliers could declare this season’s suffering worthwhile.

# McDowell defends not aiding Logano at Daytona

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Michael McDowell was still digesting his fifth-place finish at the Daytona 500 when Joey Logano appeared at the front of his car, angrily pointing at the Ford logo.

He was questioning McDowell’s loyalty to the brand.

“He shows up pointing at the Ford emblem, pushing on the Ford, making his point ‘Hey, you are a Ford driver, why didn’t you push me?’” McDowell told The Associated Press on Tuesday. “It’s a two-way street, and if I got out of the car and started screaming at Joey for not going with me, everybody would say I was ridiculous and that I don’t belong up there and am not fast enough. God forbid I don’t push him to a win, now I’m the bad guy.”

The tension between a pair of Ford drivers is the fallout from a disappointing Daytona 500 for the blue oval brand. The manufacturer debuted its new Mustang at Daytona International Speedway. Most manufacturers align their teams to work together at Daytona and Talladega with the goal of getting one of their drivers into victory lane.

Ford fell short in the final overtime sprint to the checkered flag on Sunday, perhaps because McDowell made a lane change that separated him from Logano. Both drivers were trying to win, yet both probably needed to work together to have any chance at catching winner Denny Hamlin. Instead, Ford wound up locked out of a Joe Gibbs Racing and Toyota podium sweep. Logano finished fourth ahead of McDowell.

McDowell didn’t want to hear about brand loyalty in the aftermath of the race: “I just told him that my team doesn’t pay me to push Joey Logano to a win.”

McDowell has never won a Cup race; Logano is NASCAR’s reigning champion and a former Daytona 500 winner.

# MLB players unhappy about salaries

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Neil Walker's salary dropped from \$17.2 million to \$2 million in two years. Greg Holland was cut from \$14 million to \$2 million this season. Daniel Murphy fell from \$17.5 million to \$10 million.

While Manny Machado agreed to a pending \$300 million, 10-year contract with San Diego and Bryce Harper may top Giancarlo Stanton's record \$325 million, 13-year deal, many less-than-superstar veterans have been routed on the free agent market.

Players want change, and management could be open to negotiations for alterations to the collective bargaining agreement as part of an extension of the current deal, set to expire in December 2021.

"It's really clear there's been a redistribution of how clubs are looking at veteran players," agent Scott Boras said Wednesday. "We have a clear problem in the industry of a noncompetitive cancer. Like any patient with

a malady, we have to address it immediately. Otherwise it is going to get steadily worse."

Of the 111 announced agreements among the 164 players who exercised their free agency rights after the World Series, 36 were for minor league contracts and 26 were one-year deals for less than last year's average salary of just over \$4 million.

In all, 46 players got one-year contracts, 19 got two-year deals and seven got three-year agreements. Just three longer contracts for free agents have been announced: left-hander Patrick Corbin's \$140 million, six-year deal with Washington; outfielder A.J. Pollock's \$60 million, five-year contract with the Los Angeles Dodgers; and pitcher Nathan Eovaldi's \$68 million, four-year package with Boston.

Clubs are replacing veterans with younger players earning at or near the \$555,000 minimum who lack the roughly 2<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> years of major league service needed to be eligible for salary arbitration. In the age of analytics,

cheaper may not be better, but often it's not much worse.

"All veteran players of a certain age are being affected by this analysis, which is not just widespread but fairly consistent across most clubs," said former New York Mets general manager Sandy Alderson, now an Oakland Athletics senior adviser. "The math is the math."

Spending on big league payrolls dropped last season for the first time since 2010, an \$18 million fall to \$4.23 billion, according to figures compiled by the commissioner's office and obtained by The Associated Press. While the decrease was attributable to drug and domestic violence suspensions and a player retiring at midseason, payrolls were otherwise flat, unusual for a sport with rising revenue.

Team behavior changed following a new collective bargaining agreement, which imposed a higher luxury tax on big spenders. The New York Yankees dropped under the tax threshold last year for the first

time since 2003 and the Dodgers for the first time since 2012. Neither showed great interest in Harper or Machado.

In addition to Harper, Craig Kimbrel, Dallas Keuchel, Marwin Gonzalez, Carlos Gonzalez and Gio Gonzalez were still on the market on the eve of the exhibition opener scheduled for Thursday.

"It was nice to see Manny come off the board yesterday, but ultimately it's a lot more than one player," said reliever Andrew Miller, who left Cleveland for a \$25 million, two-year contract with St. Louis. "Even the guys that are getting deals that they're happy with, the timing of it is unique compared to what we saw in the past."

"It used to be a couple guys maybe played the long game. Now it seems like a lot of guys have no choice. The stories that we hear when guys show up to camp is that they had no offers."

## NHL roundup

### Backes' shootout goal lifts Bruins over Golden Knights

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — David Backes scored in the sixth round of a shootout to lift Boston to a 3-2 win over the Las Vegas Golden Knights on Wednesday night for the Bruins' season-high seventh straight victory.

Jake DeBrusk and Brad Marchand scored in regulation for Boston, which is 8-1-1 in its last 10 on the road — including wins in the first four games of a western trip. The Bruins' winning streak is their longest since a 12-game run in 2014.

Jaroslav Halak stopped 31 shots and has now won his last three starts, allowing just three goals along the way.

The Bruins, who are 9-0-3 in their last 12, haven't lost in regulation since a 3-2 setback to the New York Rangers on

Jan. 19. Boston improved to 11-2-2 against Pacific Division opponents and 18-4-4 versus Western Conference foes.

Reilly Smith and Nate Schmidt scored for Vegas, while Marc-Andre Fleury finished with 25 saves. Fleury has lost four in a row and seven of his last nine starts. He has allowed 19 goals in last five starts, and 28 in the nine-game span.

**Blackhawks 5, Red Wings 4 (OT):** Patrick Kane scored two goals, including the game-winner with 2:18 left in overtime, extending his point streak to 19 games and lifting Chicago to a win at Detroit.

Artem Anisimov, Brandon Saad and Alex DeBrincat scored for the Blackhawks in the first period. Chicago has won 10 of its last 12 games,

scoring 60 goals in that span.

Dylan Larkin and Andreas Athanasiou scored two goals each for the Red Wings, who rallied from a 4-1 third-period deficit to tie it.

However, Erik Gustafsson found Kane alone to the right of the net in overtime, and the Blackhawks star beat goalie Jonathan Bernier for his 38th goal of the season.

**Flames 4, Islanders 2:** Austin Czarnik and Johnny Gaudreau scored 29 seconds apart in the third period to lead host Calgary.

Mikael Backlund and Travis Hamonic also scored as the Flames won their third straight after a four-game skid. Mike Smith stopped 17 shots.

Casey Cizikas and Anders Lee scored for New York,

which had tied it earlier in the third after trailing 2-0 following one period. Thomas Greiss finished with 28 saves in the Islanders' third regulation loss in 16 games.

**Avalanche 7, Jets 1:** Nathan MacKinnon and Matt Calvert scored 11 seconds apart in the third period, Semyon Varlamov made 26 saves in another strong performance and host Colorado won two in a row for the first time since late November.

Carl Soderberg, Mikko Rantanen, Tyson Jost, Gabriel Landeskog and A.J. Greer also scored for the Avalanche. In addition, MacKinnon's power-play goal snapped an 0-for-29 dry spell on the man advantage.

The only score Varlamov allowed was to Kyle Connor with Colorado staked to a 4-0 lead.