

STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Gunman opens fire on joint US-Afghan force

BY PHILLIP WALTER
WELLMAN

Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — Two American service members and an Afghan soldier were killed in an apparent insider attack in Afghanistan on Saturday, military officials from both countries said Sunday.

Staff Sgts. Javier Jaguar Gutierrez, of San Antonio, Texas, and Antonio Rey Rodriguez, of Las Cruces, N.M., both 28, were the Americans killed, the Pentagon said in a statement.

Six American and three Afghan troops were also said to be injured in the attack in the Sherzad district in eastern Nangarhar province. The conditions of those injured were not specified.

A joint U.S.-Afghan force came under fire after a meeting with local leaders in the district capital, according to a statement released Sunday by Col. Sonny Leggett, a spokesman for U.S. forces in Afghanistan.

“Current reports indicate an individual in an Afghan uniform opened fire on the combined U.S. and Afghan force with a machine gun,” Leggett said. “The wounded service members are receiving medical treatment at a U.S. facility.”

The motive behind the attack wasn’t initially known and an investigation has been launched, Leggett said.

Gutierrez and Rodriguez were both assigned to 3rd Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., and both were

posthumously promoted to sergeant first class.

On Saturday, the unit said in a statement that “several” of its soldiers had been killed or injured in combat in Afghanistan on Saturday.

“The 7th Special Forces Group Headquarters is poised to support the service members and their families during this difficult time,” Col. John W. Sannes said in the statement.

The gunman who carried out the attack was killed by security forces, Nangarhar Provincial Council Member Ajmal Omar told Stars and Stripes in a telephone interview.

The shooter appears not to have been an insurgent infiltrator, The Associated Press reported, citing an unnamed Afghan defense official who described him as a soldier who

had argued with U.S. forces before opening fire.

The Taliban did not immediately comment on the incident.

“Incidents such as this fail to have negative effects on the friendship and spirit of cooperation between ANDSF and U.S. military forces,” the Afghan Defense Ministry said, using an acronym for the country’s security forces. “We will continue our fight against terrorism together.”

The U.S. deaths bring the number of American troops killed in combat in Afghanistan this year to four. Two more died in an airplane crash last month that officials have said did not appear to be caused by enemy fire.

Zubair Babakarkhail contributed to this report.

As new cases fall, virus death toll surpasses SARS

Associated Press

BEIJING — China’s virus death toll rose by 89 on Sunday to 811, passing the number of fatalities in the 2002-2003 SARS epidemic, but fewer new cases were reported in a possible sign its spread may be slowing as other nations stepped up efforts to block the disease.

Some 2,656 new coronavirus cases were reported in the 24 hours ending at midnight Saturday, most of them in the central province of Hubei, where the first patients fell sick in December. That was down by about 20% from the 3,399 new cases reported in the previous 24-hour period.

“That means the joint control mechanism of different regions and the strict prevention and control measures have worked,” a spokesman for the National

Health Commission, Mi Feng, said at a news conference.

Also Sunday, new cases were reported in Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia and Spain.

More than 360 cases have been confirmed outside mainland China.

“Dramatic reductions” in the spread should begin this month if containment works, said Dr. Ian Lipkin, director of Columbia University’s Center for Infection and Immunity. He assisted the World Health Organization and Chinese authorities during the outbreak of SARS, or severe acute respiratory syndrome.

Warmer weather will reduce the virus’s ability to spread and bring people out of enclosed spaces where it is transmitted more easily, Lipkin said in an online news conference.

However, he said, if new cases spike as people return to work after the Lunar New Year holiday, which was extended to reduce the risk of spreading the virus, then “we’ll know we’re in trouble.”

The fatality toll passed the 774 people believed to have died of SARS, another viral outbreak that originated in China. The total of 37,198 confirmed cases of the new virus vastly exceeds the 8,098 sickened by SARS.

Six more cases were reported in Japan among 3,700 passengers and crew aboard the quarantined cruise ship Diamond Princess.

South Korea reported a new case in a 73-year-old woman whose relatives visited Guangdong province in southern China, raising its total to 27.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said the family members, a 51-year-old South Korean man and a 37-year-old Chinese woman, were confirmed infected later Sunday.

Vietnam reported its 14th case. The Health Ministry said she is a 55-year-old woman in Vinh Phuc province, northwest of Hanoi, where six earlier patients were found to be infected.

Malaysia reported its 17th case. The 65-year-old woman’s son-in-law was diagnosed earlier with the virus.

Spain confirmed its second case in Mallorca, a popular vacation island in the Mediterranean. The first case was a German tourist diagnosed a week ago in the Canary Islands off northwest Africa.

Last chance in NH for struggling Dems

Associated Press

PLYMOUTH, N.H. — Bounding onto a stage at a conference center in New Hampshire, tech entrepreneur Andrew Yang beamed a smile to a cheering crowd and launched into his pitch for votes heading into Tuesday's first-in-the-nation primary.

Yang didn't mention his poor showing in Iowa, his back-of-the-pack polling in New Hampshire or the fact his campaign recently laid off an undisclosed number of people. Instead, he recalled a conversation he had in Washington in which he was told that he needed to "create a wave in other parts of the country and bring that wave crashing down on our heads in D.C."

"I said, 'Challenge accepted,'" Yang said of his decision to run for president. "Here we are, Plymouth, and you are that wave."

Yang is among a handful of candidates who are polling in the single digits as New Hampshire's primary nears. He joins Colorado Sen. Michael Bennet, former Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick, billionaire activist Tom Steyer and Hawaii Rep. Tulsi Gabbard near the bottom of most surveys. For most of them, a poor showing on Tuesday could force them to rethink their campaigns.

Only Yang and Steyer qualified for Friday's presidential debate.

Rather than dwelling on potential disappointment, these candidates are soldiering on with scores of town halls and house parties, as well as breakfasts and dinners with supporters. It's all in service to the idea

that New Hampshire voters might surprise the pundits.

Speaking on the sidelines of a University of New Hampshire event on college costs, Bennet claimed that he had spent more time in New Hampshire than any other candidate and was hoping to finish third or fourth. He was in the midst of a tour that included 50 town halls and a rally Saturday in Manchester with Democratic operative James Carville.

He also picked up an endorsement from Democratic Rep. Jared Golden of Maine, the first member of Congress to endorse Bennet in his campaign for president.

"There is the opportunity in New Hampshire, especially after such a muddled result in Iowa, to sort of start the race anew," Bennet told reporters. "It's very important, very important to do well in New Hampshire. It's vital for me."

Patrick, who entered the race late, said that a six-day, 1,000-mile bus tour demonstrated that there were plenty of undecided voters up for grabs. He reached a wider audience with a CNN town hall Thursday night, where he acknowledged that he needed "to beat expectations here."

"Almost all the people I met are still undecided, and I think what that means is that people aren't satisfied with the rest of the field," Patrick said. "I'm not surprised by that. When they hear someone who has actually delivered on an agenda that others are just talking about or that they have plans for, when they hear what it takes to

deliver those progressive outcomes, we are winning support."

For Steyer, getting his message out meant braving snow and freezing rain to greet UPS workers arriving to a Manchester warehouse Thursday. He was asked how long he would remain in the race.

"I'm going stay in the race because I think I'm going to win," he said.

Asked what he was doing to stay competitive in New Hampshire when he barely registers in polls, Steyer didn't mention New Hampshire in his answer, instead focusing on his support in other states where he's doing better.

"I don't know what that poll is, but I know in South Carolina, Nevada, that I'm doing really well," he said. "I'm going to put together the kind of diverse coalition it's going to take both to win this nomination, to represent this country and to beat Donald Trump in November."

Gabbard has devoted much of her time to campaigning in New Hampshire, but was unable to say recently exactly how many staffers she has in the state.

Her unconventional approach has the feel of an insurgent as the top tier largely skipped New Hampshire last month. She was planning scores of town halls over the weekend, but was a no-show at the UNH event Thursday.

"I don't know the punditry of all of this," Gabbard said when asked about expectations. "I'm really just focused on continuing that outreach that we've been doing."

Joe Biden faces competition for black vote in S.C.

Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Joe Biden is facing increasingly formidable competition in South Carolina, a state his campaign has long assumed was safely in his column and one that he's repeatedly described as a "firewall" in his bid for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders and billionaire activist Tom Steyer are challenging the former vice president's standing in South Carolina. The Feb. 29 primary is the first contest in the South on the 2020 election calendar and serves as an im-

portant gauge of black support.

Sanders has generated enthusiasm from younger black voters in South Carolina. That could help him avoid a repeat of his dismal showing in the 2016 primary, when African Americans overwhelmingly backed Hillary Clinton.

Steyer, meanwhile, is flooding the airwaves with millions of dollars in ads, making numerous visits and building a robust organizing staff. It appears to have paid off: His support grew significantly in a Fox News poll last month, consistent with a steady momentum of endorsements that began in

the final weeks of 2019.

Steyer is also seizing on Biden's fourth-place finish in last week's Iowa caucuses to undermine Biden's argument that he is best positioned to defeat President Donald Trump. That's important because many black voters in South Carolina have said they would back Biden because they view him as the most electable candidate in a crowded field.

Biden was on top in a January Fox News survey of South Carolina voters, and polling suggests his standing among black voters remains steady. He has compiled the most endorse-

ments from black lawmakers and other officials, and he's tied with Sanders for the most supporters among the state's Legislative Black Caucus.

But with his Iowa disappointment and the middling results expected in Tuesday's New Hampshire primary, Biden will probably need a commanding victory by the time the Democratic contest reaches South Carolina. Any shifts in voter sentiment could narrow a hoped-for win or, in a nightmare scenario, relegate him to second place, threatening the viability of his campaign.

Oregon assesses damage as flood recedes

Associated Press

SALEM, Ore. — Waters covering roads in flood-hit northeastern Oregon started to recede Saturday, allowing residents in shelters to return and assess the damage, a Red Cross official said.

Residents in the foothills of the Blue Mountains in northeast Oregon had to be airlifted from their flooded homes by helicopter and were even taken out in a front-end loader as rain and melting snow caused rivers to crest their banks. Lower-income neighborhoods in Pendleton, a town of 16,000, were hit, damaging mobile homes, authorities said.

Seventeen evacuees spent Friday night at the Red Cross shelter in the Pendleton Convention Center, and numerous

people dropped off blankets, pillows and other comfort items, said Nadine McCrindle, the Red Cross executive director for central and eastern Oregon. Another eight people stayed at a shelter in Walla Walla, Wash.

“They’ll be able to go to their homes and see what is left, if anything, and see what the damage is,” McCrindle said.

The rain had stopped on Saturday morning, but more was forecast before sunny weather came on Sunday. The National Weather Service said that flood warnings remained in effect.

On Saturday, National Guard troops, working with the Umatilla County Sheriff’s Office, used two helicopters to evacuate 21 people who were stranded by the floods.

“A total of 16 people were evacuated from the Bingham Road area. Five people were evacuated from the Mill Creek area,” the Umatilla Flood Joint Information Center said in a statement. More evacuations were planned for Sunday, the center said.

Many roads in Umatilla County were still closed because of high water or damage, the county sheriff’s office said Saturday on Facebook. On Friday, 26 people were evacuated by Umatilla County Search and Rescue, mostly from unincorporated communities east of Pendleton, with air support provided by the National Guard, the sheriff’s office said.

The Umatilla River crested just before 10 p.m. Thursday at more than 19 feet, nearly four

times the average height for that date. Rivers all around the region overran their banks.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown declared a state of emergency in Umatilla, Wallowa and Union counties Friday, allowing mobilization of the National Guard.

Further north, thousands of Puget Sound Energy customers lost power as a cold front moved through western Washington Friday evening.

Also in Washington state, flood warnings have been lifted for the Snohomish River near Monroe, Issaquah Creek and the Carbon River near Fairfax, KOMO-TV reported. Many roads, however, remain closed by landslides, flooding and fallen trees across much of King, Snohomish, Pierce, Thurston and Lewis counties.

7 family members die in Miss. house fire

Associated Press

CLINTON, Miss. — A mother and her six children died when a fire destroyed their home early Saturday in central Mississippi, authorities said.

The father was the lone survivor of the 12:30 a.m. blaze in Clinton. He tried unsuccessfully to save family members and suffered smoke inhalation, burns, cuts and bruises, city spokesman Mark Jones told The Associated Press.

Officials released a list of those killed: Brittany Presley, 33, and her children Landon Brookshire, 15; Lane Presley, 13; Lawson Presley, 12; Grayson Presley, 6; Malcom Presley, 4; and Felicity Presley, 1.

Brittany was an elementary school teacher, the Canton Public School District said in a statement on Facebook.

“Mrs. Presley was a team leader who was a good, nurturing and loving teacher who gave her all for her students. Her compassionate heart and

giving spirit will forever live on in the hearts of the countless lives she touched,” the district wrote.

The scene at the house later in the day was one of devastation. The charred remains of the single-story wood frame house partially covered with melted siding could be seen along with the remains of an SUV in the burned-out garage. Clothes, toys and furniture were strewn on the yard in the aftermath of firefighters’ fighting the blaze. Burglar bars could be seen in the windows or, in some cases, on the lawn. It was not immediately known if they had hindered escapes from the fire.

The state Fire Marshal’s Office is investigating the cause of the fire, Jones said. He said the house was built around 1951. He had no information on whether it was equipped with smoke detectors.

Same gunman implicated in attacks on NYPD officers

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A gunman walked into a police station in the Bronx and started shooting early Sunday, wounding an officer just hours after he shot a different officer in a patrol van, police said.

The same gunman was responsible for the back-to-back shootings, New York City Police Commissioner Dermot Shea said Sunday at a press conference.

“For the second time in less than 12 hours, NYPD officers have been targeted specifically,” Shea said.

Shea said that the gunman walked into the headquarters of the 41st police precinct shortly before 8 a.m., firing off bullets. A male officer was shot once in the upper left arm. That officer returned fire, but did not hit the suspect.

Shea, who described the suspect as a “coward,” said that the gunman laid down once he ran out of bullets. The suspect, whose name has not been re-

leased, was taken into custody.

He has a lengthy rap sheet and was paroled from prison in 2017 after an attempted murder conviction, Shea said.

The shooting inside the precinct headquarters came just hours after another attack in the same section of the Bronx, involving the same suspect.

Two officers narrowly escaped with their lives when a gunman fired into their patrol van just before 8:30 p.m. Saturday.

The officer at the wheel of the van was grazed in the chin and neck, but he avoided serious injury. He was expected to be released from the hospital Sunday. Shea said at a late news conference that the attack “should outrage all New Yorkers.”

Mayor Bill de Blasio, a Democrat, condemned the back-to-back attacks.

“This was an attempt to assassinate police officers. We need to use that word,” de Blasio said at the Sunday press conference.

Gunman kills, wounds dozens at Thailand mall

Associated Press

NAKHON RATCHASIMA, Thailand — A soldier angry about a land dispute went on a 16-hour shooting rampage in northeastern Thailand, killing at least 26 people and wounding dozens more.

Police and military personnel hunted the gunman overnight in a shopping mall where he had holed up and shot him dead Sunday morning. It was Thailand's biggest mass shooting carried out by a single gunman.

Officials said the soldier was angry over a financial dispute, first killing two people on a military base and then went on a far bloodier rampage Sat-

urday, shooting as he drove to the mall where shoppers fled in terror.

Authorities said Sgt. Maj. Jakrapanth Thomma was behind the attack in Nakhon Ratchasima, a hub for Thailand's relatively poorer and rural northeastern region. Much of the shooting took place at Terminal 21 Korat, an airport-themed mall filled with colorful Lego sculptures, a merry-go-round and huge replicas of landmarks from around the world.

"This incident was unprecedented in Thailand," Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha told reporters as he gave the final tally Sunday morning

after visiting the wounded in hospitals.

"I hope this is the only one and the last incident, and that it never happens again. No one wants this to happen. It could be because of this person's mental health in this particular moment," he said.

Prayuth said he was worried that people inside the mall could be accidentally hit by bullets fired by police, but added, "I have checked, that didn't happen."

Defense Ministry spokesman Kongcheep told Thai media the first person killed was the commanding officer of the 22nd Ammunition Battalion, in which the suspect also served.

He said the gunman fired at others at his base and took guns and ammunition before fleeing in an army Humvee.

City and neighborhood police officers, who asked not to be identified because they were not authorized to release information, said the man fired shots as he drove to the mall. Thai Rath television aired mall security camera footage showing a man with what appeared to be an assault rifle.

The man also posted updates to his Facebook page during the rampage. "No one can escape death," read one post. Another asked, "Should I give up?" In a later post, he wrote, "I have stopped already."

Iranian rocket fails to put satellite in orbit

Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — An Iranian rocket failed to put a satellite into orbit on Sunday, state television reported, the latest setback for a program the U.S. claims helps Tehran advance its ballistic missile program.

The launch happened at Imam Khomeini Spaceport in Iran's Semnan province, some 145 miles southeast of Iran's capital, Tehran. A Simorgh, or "Phoenix," rocket couldn't put the Zafar 1 communications satellite into orbit, however, due to a low speed, Iranian state TV

reported.

"Stage-1 and stage-2 motors of the carrier functioned properly and the satellite was successfully detached from its carrier, but at the end of its path it did not reach the required speed for being put in the orbit," Defense Ministry space program spokesman Ahmad Hosseini told state TV.

Hosseini still sought to portray the failure as a "remarkable" achievement for its space program.

In the days leading up to the launch, Iranian officials had

been promoting the mission, including the country's Information and Communications Technology Minister Mohammad Javad Azari Jahromi. His quick rise through the Islamic Republic's carefully managed political system already is generating speculation he could be a candidate for Iran's 2021 presidential campaign.

The launch comes amid heightened tensions between Iran and the U.S. since Trump unilaterally withdrew America from Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers in May 2018.

Iran since has begun breaking terms of the deal limiting its enrichment of uranium.

Meanwhile, a series of attacks across the Persian Gulf culminated with a U.S. drone strike in Baghdad killing Iran's Revolutionary Guard Gen. Qassem Soleimani and a retaliatory ballistic missile strike by Iran on Iraqi bases housing American troops earlier this month. Iran also accidentally shot down a Ukrainian commercial airliner taking off from Tehran amid the tensions, killing all 176 people on board.

Unique Ill. privacy law leads to \$500M Facebook deal

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Adam Pezen, Carlo Licata and Nimesh Patel are among millions of people who have been tagged in Facebook photos at some point in the past decade, sometimes at the suggestion of an automated tagging feature powered by facial recognition technology.

It was their Illinois addresses, though, that put the trio's names atop a lawsuit that Facebook recently agreed to settle

for \$550 million, which could lead to payouts of a couple hundred dollars to several million Illinois users of the social networking site.

The lawsuit — one of more than 400 filed against tech companies big and small in the past five years, by one law firm's count — alleges that Facebook broke Illinois' strict biometric privacy law that allows people to sue companies that fail to get consent before harvesting consumers' data, including through

facial and fingerprint scanning. Privacy advocates hail the law as the nation's strongest form of protection in the commercial use of such data, and it has survived ongoing efforts by the tech industry and other businesses to weaken it.

Attorneys who focus on privacy law predict that the Facebook settlement — if approved by a federal judge — will trigger a new round of lawsuits and make the targets of exist-

ing ones more likely to settle. Illinois' legal landscape could also shape debates over privacy protection in other states and in Congress.

Although the buying and selling of consumer data has become a multi-billion-dollar industry, Illinois' law — the Biometric Information Privacy Act — predates even Facebook's iconic "like" feature and was a reaction to a single company's flop.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man finds urn filled with ashes at Goodwill

IL PEORIA — A thrift-store find in Illinois has prompted its buyer to find the person to whom it rightfully belongs — and might not know it's even gone.

Robert Ray spotted what was labeled a figurine in a Peoria Goodwill store. Upon closer inspection, he recognized it was actually an urn, with ashes still inside, The (Peoria) Journal Star reported.

Ray said he bought the \$2.99 jar, decorated with a military-style flag and eagle, with the intention of finding the owner.

Police officers care for lost guinea pig

VT ST. JOHNSBURY — A guinea pig found on a Vermont street was taken to the local police department for safekeeping.

The furry creature was found by a pedestrian walking down Railroad Street, Cpl. George Johnson told the Caledonian Record.

Firefighter Phil Hawthorne said that if no owner comes forward, the guinea pig should become a resident of the firehouse. Det. Daniele Kostruba also volunteered to take the creature home as a pet.

'Straw Hat Bandit' gets 71-year sentence

PA PHILADELPHIA — A man dubbed the "Straw Hat Bandit" for the distinctive disguises he donned while robbing numerous banks in the Philadelphia area over a nine-year period is headed back to prison.

Richard Boyle, 60, of Plumstead, was sentenced to 71 years in prison for the most re-

cent robberies he committed.

Boyle's crimes netted him more than \$500,000 overall, much of which was laundered through his photography business, authorities have said.

Woman recants claim pet store killed dog

NJ FLEMINGTON — A woman whose dog died during a grooming at a PetSmart store in New Jersey is now apologizing for blaming the store for the death.

Danielle DiNapoli dropped off her bulldog, Scruffles for grooming at the Flemington store in 2017. Within an hour, the store called her to say the dog had died.

DiNapoli publicly blamed the store's grooming staff for the death and started a Facebook page — "Justice for Scruffles" — to publicize what had happened.

A necropsy determined that the dog's death was not related to the grooming but was caused by preexisting health issues.

Plaque marking site of slave auctions missing

VA CHARLOTTESVILLE — A plaque marking the site of slave auctions was reported missing and vandalism was found nearby in a Virginia city where a deadly white nationalist rally was held in 2017.

An employee with WVIR-TV told police that one of the two markers in Charlottesville's Court Square had been removed, and the city confirmed the disappearance.

A light pole nearby was marked with "1619," which was written with what appears to be dirt from beneath the location of the marker, a news release said. The number signifies the first year Africans were

brought to Virginia as slaves.

Eatery pays \$483,000 in wage theft case

WA SEATTLE — A venerable restaurant in Seattle's Pike Place Market has agreed to pay \$483,000 to settle wage theft allegations.

The Seattle Office of Labor Standards announced the settlement with Lowell's Restaurant.

Officials said Lowell's, which has been open in one of the city's top tourist attractions since 1957, withheld wages as well as sick and safe leave time from 186 workers, including former employees.

Man finds missing ashes at bus stop

NV LAS VEGAS — A missing box filled with the ashes of a woman was recovered in Nevada by a passerby a week after the box and other luggage were taken from a Las Vegas hotel.

Ohio brothers Dan and Colten Dalton were in Las Vegas last week with their grandmother to pick up the ashes of their mother Terra Dalton, 45, who died while vacationing in the city earlier in the month.

The family left their luggage with the bell desk at the hotel deciding to pass the time before their flight home with a walk down The Strip, they said.

The family lost the baggage tag along the walk and they returned to the hotel to discover the luggage and ashes were missing, Colton Dalton said.

Man kills another while trying to save him

MA ADAMS — A man was shot and killed in his apartment by a crossbow

bolt that a neighbor had fired at dogs who were attacking the man, authorities in Massachusetts said.

The death appears to be accidental, according to Berkshire District Attorney Andrea Harrington.

The neighbor heard a commotion and the victim shouting for help, authorities said.

He stood at the bottom of a stairwell and fired his crossbow, which he was licensed to own and used for hunting, at a dog on the landing, Harrington said at a news conference.

The bolt struck the dog with a glancing blow, went through the door and hit the man in the room where he was trying to barricade himself, she said.

Siblings charged for weed conspiracy

MO KANSAS CITY — A sister and brother were sentenced for their roles in a marijuana distribution ring that involved mailing marijuana from Colorado to Missouri.

Natalie McNeil, 34, of Lee's Summit and Tanner McNeil, 30, of Denver, were in federal court in Missouri.

Natalie McNeil was sentenced to four years and three months without parole and ordered to forfeit \$121,000 to the government. Tanner McNeil was sentenced to 2.5 years and ordered to forfeit just over \$1 million.

Tanner McNeil and Benjamin Parker, 29, of Denver, shipped the marijuana to co-conspirators in Missouri in sealed packages inside plastic protein containers, prosecutors said.

Natalie McNeil deposited cash in the bank accounts of Tanner McNeil and Parker in Missouri. The men then withdrew the money from Colorado banks.

From wire reports

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Jones retains UFC belt in disputed decision

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Jon Jones retained his title at UFC 247, beating Dominick Reyes by unanimous decision.

After the bout, opinions on the outcome were anything but unanimous.

Jones retained his light heavyweight belt Saturday night following a surprisingly strong opening by Reyes. The unanimous decision of 48-47, 48-47, 49-46 was met with scattered applause and loud boos from the crowd, as many felt the challenger had proven enough to take the title.

UFC President Dana White addressed what turned out to be a disputed decision.

"The scoring was all over the map," said White, noting that he thought Reyes had a 3-1 edge entering the final round. "My kids are terrorizing me that, 'The fix is in, how did this happen?'"

"People had it all over the place, but the reality is ... we're not judges. The judges call the fight, and that's that. As far as the judging and the reffing tonight, do I think it was perfect? I do not. We need to do some

work down here."

White said UFC can work with the Texas commission to help improve the quality of judging and officiating.

"I do feel disrespected," Reyes said. "One of the judges had it 49-46. Who are you? I might want to have a word with you. I know I won that fight."

White said he believes Reyes deserves a rematch.

Jones faced his most serious challenge in years.

"I wasn't always confident that I was winning the fight," Jones said. "I think I displayed the difference between a champion and an extraordinary contender. Something special happens when it's time for the champion to present himself, and you guys saw it tonight in the fifth round."

Jones (26-1-1) handed the fourth-ranked Reyes (12-1) his first loss, improving to 14-0 in title fights. He became the all-time leader in UFC title defenses, breaking the record previously held by Georges St-Pierre.

"I don't think he was disrespected," Jones said of Reyes. "I've got to watch the fight

though. It's hard to speak with confidence when I haven't watched the fight."

Jones was fighting for the first time since last July's win over Thiago Santos at UFC 239, his longest period between fights in more than five years.

Reyes came out on the attack in the first round, briefly knocking Jones to the ground less than two minutes into the bout. Jones bounced back in the second round, landing several strong hooks to Reyes' head.

In the third round, Reyes landed blows to Jones' head, and he drew blood early in the fourth round. Jones finished that round strong and the on-crowd became quiet and tense in anticipation of the final round.

Jones ramped up his attack in the final round, but Reyes seemed to keep enough separation from the champ to put it in the judges' hands.

Reyes, a 30-year-old from Southern California who played college football at Stony Brook, said before the fight that he expected a victory and that it would be "life-changing." Instead, he was dealt a controver-

sial loss and said he hopes to get a rematch.

"For me, this is huge validation," Reyes said. "This was my very first time going all five rounds, and it was against Jon Jones, arguably the greatest of all-time. And I put it on him. I mean, I really took it to him."

In the co-main event of UFC 247, flyweight champion Valentina Shevchenko defended her title against Katlyn Chookagian, stopping the challenger in the third round.

Shevchenko (19-3), a native of Kyrgyzstan, won her fifth bout in a row in dominant fashion over Pennsylvania-native Chookagian (13-3), who entered as the top-ranked contender for the belt.

"After the last elbow in the first round when I cut her, I knew the fight was not going to last five rounds," Shevchenko said. "I was just trying to find the best way to finish."

Earlier on the pay-per-view portion of the 12-bout event at the Toyota Center, Houston-native heavyweight Derrick Lewis (23-7) beat Ilir Latifi (15-8) via unanimous decision with a surging rally late.

NBA roundup

Raptors extend win streak to 14 games

Associated Press

TORONTO — Overcoming the absence of injured stars is becoming a regular occurrence for the Toronto Raptors.

So is winning games.

Fred VanVleet scored 10 of his 29 points in the fourth quarter, Pascal Siakam scored 20 points, including the tiebreaking free throw with 22 seconds remaining, and the Raptors extended their franchise-record winning streak to 14 by beating the Brooklyn Nets 119-118 on Saturday night.

Terence Davis scored 20 points in his first home start, Matt Thomas had a career-high 15 and Serge Ibaka added 12 as Toronto won despite playing without All-Star guard Kyle Lowry, earning their 10th consecutive home victory over the Nets. The Raptors have won 18 of 19 in the series, including six straight.

Bucks 111, Orlando 95: Giannis Antetokounmpo had 18 points, 18 rebounds and nine assists, helping NBA-best Milwaukee to a win on the road.

The Bucks won for the 13th time in 14 games, improving the league's best record to 45-7 and remaining on course to become just the third team to top 70 wins in a regular season.

Timberwolves 142, Clippers 115: Jordan McLaughlin scored a career-high 24 points and Malik Beasley added 23 in his Minnesota debut, helping the host Timberwolves stop a 13-game losing streak.

Lakers 125, Warriors 120: LeBron James had 22 points, 11 assists and eight rebounds, leading Los Angeles to a win a Golden State.

Nuggets 117, Suns 108: Jamal Murray scored 36 points and Nikola Jokic added

23 to lead Denver to a win at Phoenix.

Pelicans 124, Pacers 117: Jrue Holiday scored 14 of his 31 points in the final 2:26, including a go-ahead three-pointer, and short-handed New Orleans won at Indiana.

Mavericks 116, Hornets 100: Seth Curry scored 26 points in his return to Charlotte, and Dallas cruised to the victory.

Knicks 95, Pistons 92: Julius Randle scored 17 points, including a bank shot with 13.5 seconds left that helped New York win at Detroit for their fourth straight victory.

Kings 122, Spurs 102: Buddy Hield scored 31 points, Harrison Barnes added 25 and host Sacramento earned its third straight victory.

College basketball roundup

Moore effort: Duke stuns North Carolina

Associated Press

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. — Tre Jones got Duke to overtime, and Wendell Moore Jr. finished off North Carolina.

They did it with a pair of plays sure to live on in replays and the lore of the fierce rivalry, too.

Jones hit a jumper at the horn to force the extra period, then Moore scored on a putback of Jones' air-balled jumper as time expired in overtime to help the No. 7 Blue Devils top the Tar Heels 98-96 in a wild renewal of the longtime series Saturday night.

Duke (20-3, 10-2 Atlantic Coast Conference) rallied from 13 down in the final 4½ minutes of regulation on Jones' contested shot after he ran down a long rebound on his own intentionally missed free throw. Then the Blue Devils had to rally from five down in the final 20.9 seconds after the Tar Heels had seemingly steadied themselves after looking staggered following Jones' jumper.

No. 1 Baylor 79, Oklahoma State 70: MaCio Teague scored 24 points to lead five players in double figures for the host Bears, who stretched their winning streak to 20 games.

Teague hit six consecutive free throws in the final 14 seconds, including four after frustrated Cowboys coach Mike Boynton Jr. was assessed two consecutive technical fouls and ejected from the game.

No. 2 Gonzaga 90, St. Mary's 60: Drew Timme scored 20 points and the Bulldogs made 14 of their first 15 shots to send the Gaels to their worst home loss in 19 years.

Gonzaga (25-1, 11-0 WCC) turned the highly anticipated showdown between the fierce rivals into a laughter by taking a 20-point lead midway through the first half and never really letting up after that.

This was the first meeting between the teams since St. Mary's shocked the top-ranked Bulldogs 60-47 in the conference tournament final last March.

Jordan Ford scored 23 points for the Gaels (20-6, 7-4).

No. 3 Kansas 60, TCU 46: Udoka Azubuike had 20 points and 15 rebounds, and the visiting Jayhawks matched an NCAA record with their 31st consecutive 20-win season, beating the Horned Frogs for coach Bill Self's 700th career victory.

Azubuike had five dunks in a 13-3 run in the first half that put the Jayhawks (20-3, 9-1 Big 12) ahead to stay.

Devon Dotson added 18 points and 11 assists as Kansas joined North Carolina (1971-2001) as the only teams to win 20 games in 31 consecutive seasons.

Desmond Bane had 20 points for TCU (13-10, 4-6), which has lost five in a row. RJ Nembhard had 11 points.

No. 4 San Diego State 89, Air Force 74: KJ Feagin scored 21 points, hitting five three-pointers, and the visiting Aztecs remained the nation's lone unbeaten team.

Jordan Schakel had 18 points for San Diego State (24-0, 13-0), which is off to the nation's best season-opening run since the 2016-17 Gonzaga team began the year 29-0.

San Diego State's 13-0 conference opening is also the best start to a season in Mountain West history.

Chris Joyce scored 23 points for the Falcons (9-15, 3-9), who fell to 4-86 against ranked opponents.

No. 5 Louisville 80, Virginia 73: Steven Enoch scored 13 points, including two key free throws with 2:47 remaining, and the host Cardinals earned their 10th consecutive victory.

Louisville (21-3, 12-1 Atlantic Coast Conference) led most of the way before the Cavaliers stormed back to go ahead 70-68 on Kihei Clark's two technical free throws with 3:25 left. David Johnson's jumper tied it before Enoch's two free throws put the Cardinals ahead for good.

No. 6 Dayton 71, Saint Louis 65: Obi Toppin scored 17 points and Jalen Crutcher led a second-half rally that kept the host Flyers unbeaten atop the Atlantic 10 Conference.

Dayton (21-2, 10-0) has won 12 straight, vaulting to its highest ranking in 53 years. The Billikens (17-7, 6-5) have given the Flyers their two closest calls.

No. 8 Florida State 99, Miami 81: M.J. Walker and Patrick Williams each scored 14 points to lead the host Seminoles to the victory.

Devin Vassell had 13 points for FSU (20-3, 10-2 ACC), which connected on 13 of 26 three-point attempts.

No. 12 Seton Hall 70, No. 10 Villanova 64: Myles Powell had 19 points, Sandro Mamukelashvili scored 12 of his 17 points in the second half, and the Pirates snapped a 17-game road losing streak to the Wildcats.

Quincy McKnight added 14 points for Big East-leading Seton Hall (18-5, 10-1), which last won at Villanova on Feb. 26, 1994.

No. 11 Auburn 91, No. 18 LSU 90 (OT): J'Von McCormick hit a floater with 0.1 seconds left in overtime, lifting Auburn to the victory.

Auburn (21-2, 8-2 Southeastern Conference) rallied from a 14-point deficit in the second half and moved into a tie with LSU (17-6, 8-2) for the league lead. It's Auburn's

third overtime win in the last four games and this one took 18 three-pointers.

McCormick drove toward the basket in the final moments for the game-winner.

Oklahoma 69, No. 13 West Virginia 59: The host Sooners' Kristian Doolittle scored 27 points and played a critical role in helping overcome the Mountaineers' defensive pressure.

Though Oklahoma finished with 19 turnovers, much of West Virginia's defensive success happened late, after Oklahoma (15-8, 5-5 Big 12) had already built an 18-point lead.

Oregon State 63, No. 14 Oregon 53: Zach Reichle hit a key three-pointer down the stretch and the host Beavers overcame a 10-point deficit in the second half.

It was the third consecutive win for Oregon State in the 353rd edition of the Civil War, which is the most contested rivalry in college basketball.

No. 15 Kentucky 77, Tennessee 64: Immanuel Quickley scored 18 points, and the visiting Wildcats won for the sixth time in seven games.

Kentucky (18-5, 8-2 SEC) beat the Volunteers in Knoxville for the first time in Rick Barnes' five-season tenure as the Tennessee's coach.

Michigan 77, No. 16 Michigan State 68: Isaiah Livers scored 14 points in his return to the lineup, leading the host Wolverines.

No. 17 Iowa 96, Nebraska 72: Joe Wieskamp scored a career-high 30 points and Luka Garza added 22, helping the host Hawkeyes bounce back from their worst loss of the season.

No. 21 Creighton 94, St. John's 82: Marcus Zegarowski scored 23 points to lead six Bluejays players in double figures for the win at home.

No. 22 Penn State 83, Minnesota 77: Lamar Stevens scored a career-high 33 points, powering the host Nittany Lions to their sixth straight win.

UCLA 65, No. 23 Arizona 52: Chris Smith had 15 points, and the visiting Bruins shut down the Wildcats.

No. 24 Colorado 81, Stanford 74: McKinley Wright IV scored 21 points, and the host Buffaloes overcame a cold start and a 16-point second-half deficit on their way to the win.

Colgate 67, Navy 60: Nelly Cummings scored 18 points to lead four players in double figures and the host Raiders topped the Midshipmen.

American 72, Army 62: Sa'eed Nelson scored 23 points as the host Eagles beat the Black Knights. Stacy Beckton Jr. added a career-high 19 points.

NHL roundup

Flyers rout Caps, deny Ovechkin

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Preventing Alex Ovechkin from reaching 700 career goals was high on the Philadelphia Flyers' priority list Saturday night.

They accomplished that objective, bounced back from a bad loss and got their captain a milestone of his own in the process.

Claude Giroux recorded three points to reach 800 for his career, Sean Couturier scored twice and Brian Elliott made 25 saves to help Philadelphia blow out the first-place Washington Capitals 7-2. The Flyers held Ovechkin to two shots and kept him stuck on 698 goals in one of their best all-around games of the season.

"Just the way (Ovechkin) gets open, I think guys did a good job of making sure we knew where he was," Giroux said. "The win feels the best, especially you come to a building that's really tough to play in. I haven't been playing that great lately, it's good to be able to contribute to a team win and we have to keep it going here."

Ovechkin didn't look sharp in his latest pursuit of history, and the Flyers seemed content to take their chances with the rest of Washington's lineup. T.J. Oshie scored a first-period power-play goal, but that was the extent of the Capitals' meaningful offensive output.

"We lost every aspect of the game," seething Capitals coach Todd Reirden said. "From top to bottom, we didn't have it."

All eyes were on Ovechkin, but it was Giroux who instead reached a milestone. With assists on Couturier's first goal, Travis Konecny's 18th of the season and a late 5-on-3 power-play goal, the Flyers captain reached 800 points.

The Flyers snapped a 0-for-9 slump on the power play when Couturier scored nine seconds into their first chance of the game, and then they poured on the goals early in the second.

Michael Raffl, Couturier and James van Riemsdyk scored three times on four shots in 1:45 to break the game open.

"Good pressure, really crisp passing led to some nice goals," said Flyers defenseman Matt Niskanen, who received a standing ovation following a video tribute for his five seasons with Washington. "We took away their speed for the most part all night. Really detailed and strong effort from a lot of guys."

Lightning 3, Islanders 1: Brayden Point, Steven Stamkos and Carter Verhaeghe scored and host Tampa Bay extended its winning streak to six games with a victory over New York.

Andrei Vasilevskiy stopped 15 shots and improved to 16-0-2 in his last 18 starts as the Lightning won their ninth straight home game and improved to 18-2-1 in the last 21 games.

Derick Brassard scored for the Islanders, who lost in regulation for the first time in six games.

Penguins 3, Panthers 2: Sidney Crosby scored his 10th goal in the second period, and Pittsburgh won at Florida.

Kris Letang had a goal and an assist for the Penguins, who improved to 9-3-0 in their past 12 games. Teddy Blueger also scored, and Tristan Jarry stopped 33 shots.

The Panthers dropped to 1-3-1 since returning from the All-Star break. Mike Hoffman had a goal and an assist for Florida, and Brett Connolly also scored.

Avalanche 2, Blue Jackets 1: Nathan MacKinnon scored the tiebreaking goal with 4:34 left, Philipp Grubauer had 31 saves and Colorado won at Columbus.

Nazem Kadri scored earlier in the third to tie the game, and MacKinnon beat Elvis Merzlikins with a slap shot from the left point as Avalanche rolled to their third straight win and sixth in the last seven games.

Merzlikins lost for the first

time in the last 10 games. Columbus had an 11-game points streak and a three-game win streak snapped.

Devils 3, Kings 0: Mackenzie Blackwood stopped a penalty shot and made 37 saves in posting his second straight shutout and host New Jersey beat Los Angeles.

Nikita Gusev, Blake Coleman and Kyle Palmieri scored for the Devils, who extended their points streak to a season-high six games. They are 3-0-3 since returning from the All-Star break.

Calvin Petersen, who was recalled from Ontario of the AHL following the trade of backup goaltender Jack Campbell to Toronto, made 31 saves.

Bruins 4, Coyotes 2: Charlie Coyle scored two goals, and host Boston beat Arizona for the 16th straight time.

The NHL-leading Bruins earned their sixth consecutive win. Patrice Bergeron and Jake DeBrusk each had a power-play goal in the second period, and Coyle's second was an empty-netter that sealed it in the final minute.

Boston's last loss to Arizona came on Oct. 9, 2010.

Jets 5, Senators 2: Patrik Laine recorded a hat trick with three power-play goals to propel host Winnipeg over Ottawa.

It was Laine's eighth career hat trick and gave the Jets points in four straight games after a five-game losing streak.

Kyle Connor scored and added three assists, while Neal Pionk had one goal and two assists for Winnipeg.

Jean-Gabriel Pageau and Mikkel Boedker scored for the Senators, who are winless in their past five games.

Canadiens 2, Maple Leafs 1 (OT): Ilya Kovalchuk scored 1:43 into overtime and host Montreal rallied past Toronto.

Marco Scandella tied the score late in the third period for the Canadiens, who have won three straight and seven

of nine. Carey Price stopped 22 shots and improved to 8-2-0 in his past 10 games.

On the winner, Campbell made the initial save on Nick Suzuki, but Kovalchuk netted the rebound for his ninth goal of the season.

John Tavares scored early in the third for the Maple Leafs. Replacing injured starter Frederik Andersen (neck), Jack Campbell made 28 saves in his second game in two nights after being acquired from Los Angeles on Wednesday.

Oilers 3, Predators 2: Leon Draisaitl scored twice and host Edmonton rallied to beat Nashville.

Alex Chiasson also scored for the Oilers, who snapped a two-game losing streak.

Craig Smith and Nick Bonino scored for the Predators, who lost for the second time in six games.

Stars 3, Blues 2 (OT): Roope Hintz scored the game-winner at 2:19 of overtime and finished with two goals, leading Dallas to a win at St. Louis.

Hintz flipped in a wrist shot from the right faceoff circle for the winner and his 17th goal of the season. Jamie Benn also scored for the Stars, who improved to 10-5 in overtime.

Hurricanes 6, Golden Knights 5 (SO): Andrei Svechnikov and Justin Williams scored in the shootout, leading Carolina to a win at Vegas.

The loss spoiled the home debut of Vegas coach Peter DeBoer, who was hired Jan. 15 and coached his first seven games with the Golden Knights on the road.

Flames 6, Canucks 2: Dillon Dube had a goal and an assist for a career-high three-point night to lead Calgary to a win at Vancouver.

Milan Lucic and Derek Ryan each had a goal and assist for the Flames, who snapped a three-game skid. Matthew Tkachuk, Sean Monahan and Tobias Rieder also scored.