

## Marines help track possible Baltic sabotage

By JOHN VANDIVER  
*Stars and Stripes*

STUTTGART, Germany — A contingent of U.S. Marines has deployed to coastal Finland to assist a NATO operation aimed at tracking down potential saboteurs in the Baltic Sea.

About 40 Marines carrying small drones and other surveillance equipment are boosting observation efforts, the Stuttgart-based Marine Forces Europe and Africa said in a statement.

“The Marine Corps’ ability to

be an expeditionary and agile force, with expertise in littoral environments, makes us a logical partner for this type of enhanced vigilance activity,” the Marines said Friday.

The 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion team, which deployed from Camp Lejeune, N.C., is operating alongside a Finnish brigade, the Corps said.

In January, NATO launched the Baltic Sentry mission, which was prompted by a series of suspected sabotage incidents that resulted in damage

to undersea energy and communication cables.

The alliance-led effort incorporates naval surveillance drones, warships, submarines and aircraft to identify and track ships.

A so-called shadow fleet of Russian ships, made up of old oil tankers with opaque ownership to circumvent international sanctions, is suspected of causing at least some of the damage.

Cables that have been sabotaged in recent months include

lines connecting Estonia and Finland, Lithuania and Sweden, and Germany and Finland.

Undersea vulnerabilities have been a long-standing concern for the U.S. military and NATO. Submerged cables secure 95% of global internet traffic and enable an estimated \$10 trillion worth of financial transactions daily, according to NATO.

Law enforcement investigations into the various Baltic Sea incidents are underway.

## Navy makes male, female sole choices for gender

By SHANNON RENFROE  
*Stars and Stripes*

Navy personnel will no longer see questions about gender identity when they fill out forms, and single-sex spaces on ships and bases can now be designated only as male or female.

Those changes are part of new guidance the service issued this week in response to an executive order requiring federal agencies to adopt a binary definition of sex.

A Navy memo dated Tuesday states that the United States recognizes two sexes, which “are not changeable.” It notes the Defense Department’s intention to halt references to what is dubbed gender ideology.

The Navy will review policies for “intimate spaces” at its facilities, aboard ships and elsewhere to make sure that they are designated by sex rather than gender.

Intimate spaces include bathrooms and single sailors’ living quarters on base and in ship berthing.

In addition, paperwork requiring identification of the person’s sex will have only male and female as the available choices.

All statements, forms, communications and messages that “promote or otherwise inculcate gender ideology” will be re-

moved or go out of circulation.

It’s unclear how many current service members identify as transgender or non-binary. About 0.4% said they were transgender and an additional 1.2% said their sex at birth didn’t match their gender identity in a 2021 workplace and gender relations survey by the government Office of People Analytics.

The agency said the survey of about 98,000 active duty and reservist service members was weighted to be generalized to the full population of the force, which numbered about 2.1 million at the time.

The Navy directive follows President Donald Trump’s Jan. 20 executive order titled “Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government.”

In another order issued Jan. 27, Trump said “expressing a false ‘gender identity’ divergent from an individual’s sex cannot satisfy the rigorous standards necessary for military service.”

The chief of naval operations and the commandant of the Marine Corps have 30 days to implement the directive across the fleet, with a follow-up deadline of 90 days.

The Navy’s directive follows a broader shift across the military, with the Air Force and Army also moving to eliminate gender identity policies in compliance

with Trump’s orders.

The Air Force put out its own memo Feb. 4 outlining its implementation plan, which includes reviewing and potentially terminating programs that promote or reinforce gender ideology.

Similarly, the Army issued guidance Feb. 13 directing a review of all programs and materials to ensure compliance with the new policy.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth has been outspoken in his opposition to diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives in the military.

Earlier this month, a dozen diversity-related cadet clubs at the U.S. Military Academy were disbanded in accordance with the Defense Department removal of programs considered to fall under DEI.

The Department of Defense Education Activity, which serves approximately 67,000 students across 161 schools at military installations worldwide, has also been instructed to follow the executive orders.

Library books and learning materials regarding race, gender and sexuality have been sidelined pending review. Groups such as the European Parent Teacher Student Association have called on Congress and the Pentagon to help clarify rules in line with the orders.

# Hegseth tours Gitmo as effect of holding migrants questioned

BY CAITLYN BURCHETT  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Democratic lawmakers are questioning the long-term damage detaining migrants at Guantanamo Bay will have on U.S. military resources as Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth toured and touted the mission unfolding at the naval base in Cuba.

During Hegseth's visit to Guantanamo on Tuesday, he said the base is the front line of the war against America's southern border. He toured prison facilities, received a briefing on migrant detention operations and met with service members.

"The protection of the United States' sovereign territory is [the Defense Department's] mission, and we've moved swiftly to implement the commander in chief's [executive order] on border security," Hegseth said in a post on X.

Earlier this month, the Defense Department deployed about 1,000 troops to Naval Base Guantanamo Bay with plans to detain up to 30,000 migrants there.

But the plan, ordered Jan. 29 by President Donald Trump, risks long-term damage to the readiness and reputation of the armed forces, according to a letter signed Monday by Democratic Sens. Jon Ossoff of Georgia, Chris Coons of Delaware, Brian Schatz of Hawaii and Chris Van Hollen of Maryland.

The letter, addressed to Hegseth, was released Tuesday as he visited Guantanamo.

"This open-ended mass de-

tention effort on a U.S. military facility risks costing [the Defense Department] hundreds of millions of unbudgeted dollars — if not billions — and thousands of man-hours, which cannot be regained," the senators wrote in the letter.

The senators asked for the estimated cost of the Defense Department's support to the Department of Homeland Security and when the department would be reimbursed for those costs.

Some of the 1,000 troops deployed to Guantanamo have been tasked with setting up tents to serve as migrant holding places. Others are providing logistics, supporting troops with food, housing and shower facilities.

Sailors from the destroyer the USS Thomas Hudner are also supporting migrant operations. Previously, the USS St. Louis, a littoral combat ship, moored at the base to help set up tents.

The Coast Guard has been shuttling migrants to expulsion hubs where Air Force C-17 and C-130 cargo planes await to transport them from the United States. At least 15 flights to Guantanamo have been conducted by U.S. Transportation Command, which is responsible for providing the military flights.

The C-17 costs an estimated \$28,000 per flight hour compared to \$8,577 per flight hour for a civilian aircraft, according to senators Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., and Mazie Hirono, D-Hawaii, who penned a similar letter and sent it to Hegseth on Feb. 13.

## Navy to renovate, build more child care facilities

BY CAITLYN BURCHETT  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The Navy plans to update or build child care facilities, such as classrooms and playrooms, to accommodate another 3,000 children in the next five years after years of struggling to meet the needs of military families.

Construction projects are already underway to build new centers or upgrade existing facilities to accommodate 978 additional children at four military bases, including: Naval Base Kitsap, Wash.; Naval Base Point Loma, Calif.; Naval Support Activity Hampton Roads, Va.; and Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, Va.

Another 12 projects are scheduled in the next five years that will make child care available for another 2,000 children. These include four projects in the San Diego area, four projects in Hampton Roads, Va., two at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, one project at

Naval Weapons Station China Lake, Calif., and one project supporting the Navy Yard in Washington, D.C.

The projects are part of a \$51.7 million investment from the Navy to offer child care services to thousands of military families.

There are about 2,500 children on the service-wide waitlist to enroll in a Navy child development center — down from 5,000 children in 2023. Child development centers are for kids younger than 5 years old, and school-age care centers are for kids 6 to 12 years old, the service said.

"The Navy is committed to improving quality of service, and a significant part of that is child care. Readiness suffers when sailors and their families lack dependable, high-quality child care," said Vice Adm. Scott Gray, commander of Navy Installations Command, which oversees the service's child and youth program.

## US sub stops in Australia during Chinese transit

BY SETH ROBSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

The Virginia-class USS Minnesota has arrived in Western Australia, marking the first of several planned visits by U.S. submarines this year, Australia's Defence Department said Wednesday.

The nuclear-powered fast-attack vessel began its routine port call Tuesday at HMAS Stirling, near Perth, as regional maritime activity draws increased scrutiny.

The visit coincides with the movement of a Chinese naval flotilla in waters off Southern Australia. The task force —

comprising the Jiangkai-class frigate Hengyang, the Renhai-class cruiser Zunyi and the Fuchi-class replenishment vessel Weishanhu — was reportedly moving west, south of Tasmania, within Australia's exclusive economic zone, New Zealand public radio station RNZ reported Wednesday.

The flotilla, which conducted live-fire drills last week in the Tasman Sea between Australia and New Zealand, appears "designed to be provocative," Andrew Shearer, director-general of Australia's Office of National Intelligence, told a parliamentary committee Monday.

# Trump sets stage for large-scale layoffs

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Federal agencies must develop plans to eliminate employee positions, according to a memo distributed by President Donald Trump's administration that sets in motion what could become a sweeping realignment of American government.

The memo expands the Republican president's effort to downsize the federal workforce, which he has described as bloated and an impediment to his agenda.

Thousands of probationary employees have already been fired, and now his administration is turning its attention to career officials with civil service protection.

Agencies are directed to sub-

mit by March 13 their plans for what is known as a reduction in force, which would not only lay off employees but eliminate the position altogether.

The result could be extensive changes in how government functions.

"The federal government is costly, inefficient, and deeply in debt," said the memo from Russell Vought, director of the White House's Office of Management and Budget, and Charles Ezell, acting director of the Office of Personnel Management, which functions as a human resources agency. "At the same time, it is not producing results for the American public."

Trump foreshadowed this goal in an executive order that

he signed with Elon Musk, the billionaire entrepreneur who is advising Trump on overhauling the government.

The order said agency leaders "shall promptly undertake preparations to initiate large-scale reductions in force," or RIF.

Some departments have already begun this process.

The General Services Administration, which handles federal real estate, told employees on Monday that a reduction in force was underway and they would do "everything in our power to make your departure fair and dignified."

The memo came as Trump prepared for the first Cabinet meeting of his second term. He planned to include Musk, who

oversees the so-called Department of Government Efficiency, known as DOGE.

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters that "all of the Cabinet secretaries take the advice and direction of DOGE."

"They'll be providing updates on their efforts, and they'll also be providing updates on what they're doing at their agencies in terms of policies and implementing the promises that the president made on the campaign trail," Leavitt said.

Musk has caused turmoil within the federal workforce, most recently by demanding that employees justify their jobs or risk getting fired.

OPM later said that the edict was voluntary.

## Judge gives Trump two days to release foreign aid

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A federal judge on Tuesday gave the Trump administration less than two days to release billions of dollars in U.S. foreign aid, saying the administration had given no indication of complying with his nearly two-week-old court order to ease its funding freeze.

The lawsuit was filed by nonprofit organizations over the cutoff of foreign assistance through the U.S. Agency for International Development and State Department, which followed a Jan. 20 executive order by President Donald Trump targeting what he portrayed as wasteful programs that do not correspond to his foreign policy goals.

Nonprofit groups and businesses that receive federal money for work abroad said the freeze breaks federal law and has shut down funding for even the most urgent life-saving programs abroad.

Those USAID and State partners say the administration has stiffed them on hundreds of millions of dollars in money already owed, forcing them to lay off tens of thousands of staffers and pushing some organizations toward financial ruin.

U.S. District Judge Amir H. Ali on Feb. 13 had ordered the administration at least temporarily to get funding flowing again, including to make good on its bills.

Despite the order, USAID staffers and the businesses and nonprofit groups say they know of no payments that have gotten through.

"I'm not sure why I can't get a straight answer from you on this: Are you aware of an unfreezing of the disbursement of funds for those contracts and agreements that were frozen before Feb. 13," the judge asked Indraneel Sur, the lawyer for the government.

"I'm not in a position to answer that," Sur said.

## Over 1M federal workers responded to Musk email

Bloomberg News

WASHINGTON — White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said that more than one million federal workers replied to an Elon Musk-led directive asking for bullet points to justify their positions and work productivity.

"I can announce that we've had more than one million workers who have chosen to participate in this very simple task of, again, sending five bullet points to your direct supervisor or manager," Leavitt told reporters Tuesday.

Musk's email demand, which had a deadline of Monday at midnight, sparked confusion across Washington, with many agencies, including the Pentagon, State Department and Department of Homeland Security, directing their employees to ignore the directive. The one million figure suggests that fewer than half of the roughly 2.4 million civilian federal workers responded to the email.

Musk said that workers who didn't reply to the message would be considered to have resigned, but guidance from the White House said that all personnel decisions are up to agencies.

On Tuesday, Leavitt clarified that each department would make decisions about hiring and firing.

"For some of the agencies that you've seen who have said, 'please don't send these emails,' it's in their best interest for that specific agency, and the president supports that," Leavitt said.

Musk doubled down on his demand for workers to reply to his email late Monday, saying that he would give them a second opportunity to comply. Those who failed to do so would have their jobs terminated, he said.

Leavitt said that agency heads would determine "best practices" regarding responses to the message.



# Ukraine, US to sign deal for key minerals

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said Wednesday that Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelenskyy will visit the White House on Friday to sign a long-sought minerals deal that will closely tie the two countries together for years to come.

Trump made the announcement at the start of the first Cabinet meeting of his second term, hailing the deal as “a very big agreement.”

The Republican president has long complained that the United States has spent too much taxpayer money to support Ukraine in the war with Russia that began when the Kremlin invaded three years ago. Trump has framed the emerging deal that would give the U.S. access to Ukraine’s deposits of rare earth minerals — used in the aerospace, defense and nuclear industries — as a chance for

Kyiv to pay back the U.S. for aid already sent for the war effort under Democratic President Joe Biden.

“The previous administration put us in a very bad position, but we’ve been able to make a deal where we’re going to get the money back and a lot of money in the future,” Trump said.

Zelenskyy said in a news conference early Wednesday in Kyiv that a framework of an economic deal had been reached, but that it did not yet include U.S. security guarantees, which his country sees as vital. The full agreement could hinge on the upcoming talks in Washington.

The framework is a preliminary step toward a comprehensive package that will be subject to ratification by the Ukrainian parliament, Zelenskyy said.

Ukraine needs to know first where the U.S. stands on its con-

tinued military support, Zelenskyy said. He said he expected a wide-ranging conversation with Trump.

The economic agreement “may be part of future security guarantees, but I want to understand the broader vision. What awaits Ukraine?” Zelenskyy said.

But Trump, in announcing the meeting, was noncommittal about any coming American security guarantees.

“I’m not going to make security guarantees ... very much,” Trump said. “We’re going to have Europe do that.”

He said a U.S. presence working on mineral extraction would amount to “automatic security because nobody’s going to be messing around with our people when we’re there.”

“It’s a great deal for Ukraine too, because they get us over there and we’re going to be working

over there,” Trump said. “We will be on the land.”

Trump also said Ukraine “could forget about” joining NATO, the Western military alliance, and he hopes to soon speak face to face with Russian President Vladimir Putin about reaching an agreement to end the war in Ukraine that began when Moscow invaded in February 2022.

The Republican president declined to detail what concessions he would ask the two sides to make, but he underscored his administration’s position that Ukraine’s aspiration to join NATO is not tenable.

“NATO, you can forget about it,” Trump said. “I think that’s probably the reason the whole thing started.”

Trump let Ukraine know that he wanted something in return for tens of billions of dollars in U.S. help for Ukraine.

## Trump creates registry for immigrants in US illegally

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration is creating a registry for all people who are in the United States illegally, and those who don’t self-report could face fines or prosecution, immigration officials announced Tuesday.

Everyone who is in the U.S. illegally must register, give fingerprints and provide an address, the Department of Homeland Security said in a statement.

It cited a section of the Immigration and Nationality Act as justification for the registration process, which would apply to anyone 14 and older.

The announcement comes as the administration seeks to make good on campaign promises to carry out mass deportations of people in the country illegally and seal the border to future asylum-seekers.

“An alien’s failure to register is a crime that could result in a fine, imprisonment, or both,” the statement said. “For decades, this law has been ignored — not anymore.”

In one of his 10 inauguration day executive orders related to immigration, President Donald Trump initially outlined plans for creating a registry and required that Homeland Security “immediately announce and publicize information about the legal obligation of all previously unregistered aliens in the United States to comply.”

It was not immediately clear how many people living in the country illegally would voluntarily come forward and give the federal government information about who they are and where they’re living. But failure to register would be considered a crime.

## Some fired FDA staffers are asked to come back

The Washington Post

After several thousand probationary workers across the nation’s health department were fired, the government has asked some to return to their jobs regulating the nation’s food supply, providing help for 9/11 responders and reviewing medical devices, according to nearly a dozen federal workers and others familiar with the matter, as well as emails obtained by The Washington Post.

“We are so grateful to still have you working for the FDA and serving the American public!” one of the emails stated.

Patient advocacy groups had decried the firings, saying they would erode the country’s standing as a global health leader, and well-funded lobbying groups rushed to save some slots that were in part funded by the private sector, not taxpayer dollars. The rehiring is the

latest wrinkle in the chaotic rollout of President Donald Trump’s effort to shrink and weaken the federal government via Elon Musk’s DOGE Service.

It is unclear how many employees across the Department of Health and Human Services were asked to return to their jobs, but many work at the Food and Drug Administration, and some at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Starting Friday, some FDA staff received calls telling them they could come back to their jobs Monday, followed by emails confirming that their terminations had been rescinded. Rehires include some FDA employees charged with regulating the nation’s food supply, according to an FDA staffer and another person familiar with the matter who spoke on the condition of anonymity to detail private conversations.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Woman pleads guilty in plot to sell Graceland

**TN** MEMPHIS — A Missouri woman pleaded guilty Tuesday to a federal charge accusing her of concocting a brazen plot to defraud Elvis Presley's family by trying to auction off his Graceland mansion and property before a judge halted the mysterious foreclosure sale.

During a hearing in front of a Memphis federal judge, Lisa Jeanine Findley pleaded guilty to a charge of mail fraud related to the scheme.

She previously pleaded not guilty to the two-count indictment, which also includes a count of aggravated identity theft that will now be dropped.

Findley will be sentenced on June 19. She would have faced up to 20 years if convicted, but she is expected to receive less than that under the plea deal.

### Asteroid no longer a threat to Earth

**FL** CAPE CANAVERAL — Scientists have finally given the all-clear to Earth from a newly discovered asteroid.

After two months of observations, scientists have almost fully ruled out any threat from the asteroid 2024 YR4, NASA and the European Space Agency said Tuesday.

At one point, the odds of a strike in 2032 were as high as about 3% and topped the world's asteroid-risk lists.

ESA has since lowered the odds to 0.001%. NASA had it down to 0.0027%—meaning the asteroid will safely pass Earth

in 2032 and there's no threat of impact for the next century.

But there's still a 1.7% chance that asteroid could hit the moon on Dec. 22, 2032, according to NASA.

### Pilots U-turn flight over possible smoke in cockpit

**GA** ATLANTA — A Delta Air Lines flight returned to the Atlanta airport soon after taking off Monday when crew members reported a smoky haze inside the cockpit, according to federal officials.

Delta Flight 876 to Columbia, S.C., returned safely to Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport on Monday morning "after the crew reported possible smoke in the flightdeck," the Federal Aviation Administration said in a statement.

The FAA said it's investigating the incident, which came after a Delta plane flipped over last week while crash landing in Toronto, injuring 21 people.

And on Saturday, another Delta flight returned to Los Angeles after departing for Sydney, Australia, when smoke was detected in the galley, according to the airline.

### Family traumatized by SWAT raid of wrong home

**CO** DENVER — Kirsty Shelton was at home preparing lunch and watching television with her daughters and their grandmother when they were startled by loud banging on their apartment door by a SWAT team looking for a man who lived across the hall.

Shelton's mother told them they had the wrong apartment but, according to a lawsuit filed Tuesday against the Denver officers, she and her daughter

were ordered outside at gunpoint.

When the officers then entered the apartment, they encountered two girls, ages 5 and 6, in their bedroom.

According to the body camera footage of the June 2023 incident, an officer told them they could play there and that he would get their grandmother, but the girls began to scream.

Police then put the family, including another adult who had just gotten out of the shower, into a locked police car for about an hour and took over their apartment as they continued to search for the suspect, according to the lawsuit.

It says police knew the man they were looking for lived in apartment 307, not 306 where the Shelton family lived, and that the numbers were clearly marked. It claims police didn't admit to making a mistake but instead denied the raid ever happened.

### Judge tells court: Wife's fatal shooting an accident

**CA** SANTA ANA — A Southern California judge charged with the murder of his wife took the stand Monday to testify in his own defense, telling the courtroom he accidentally shot her with the gun he carried in an ankle holster.

Orange County Superior Court Judge Jeffrey Ferguson, 74, told a packed courtroom that he and his wife, Sheryl, had been arguing about the lack of gratitude she felt his adult son from a prior marriage showed about financial support the couple had provided. Ferguson, who has pleaded not guilty, said he never intended to kill her.

"It was an accident," he said.

Prosecutors said Ferguson had been drinking and the couple arguing when they went out to dinner on Aug. 3, 2023, to a Mexican restaurant with their adult son, Phillip. Prosecutor Seton Hunt said the arguing continued at home until Sheryl Ferguson chided her husband to point a real gun at her, after which he did and pulled the trigger.

### Nurses OK contracts, end over 6 weeks of strike

**OR** PORTLAND — Nurses at Providence's eight Oregon hospitals approved new contracts on Monday after over six weeks of strike, ending what the state nurses union has described as the largest health care strike in state history.

Providence and hospital nurses represented by the Oregon Nurses Association union reached the tentative agreement last week, after the nurses rejected a previous proposal. The changes under the second, approved deal include more retroactive pay for nurses whose contracts expired before December 2024.

Most of the 5,000 on strike were nurses, but dozens of doctors at a Portland hospital and at six women's health clinics also participated. The strike, which began Jan. 10, came after more than a year of negotiations failed to produce an agreement over wages, benefits and staffing levels.

The hospital doctors at Providence St. Vincent in Portland and providers at the women's health clinics ratified their new contracts earlier this month.

— From wire reports

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# Taurasi retires after 20 seasons in WNBA

Associated Press

PHOENIX—Diana Taurasi is retiring after 20 seasons, ending one of the greatest careers in women's basketball history.

The WNBA's career scoring leader and a three-time league champion, Taurasi announced her retirement Tuesday in an interview with Time magazine. The Phoenix Mercury—the only WNBA team she played for—also confirmed her decision.

"Mentally and physically, I'm just full," Taurasi told Time. "That's probably the best way I can describe it. I'm full and I'm happy."

With her taut hair bun and supreme confidence, Taurasi inspired a generation of players while racking up records and championships.

Taurasi led UConn to three straight national titles from 2001-04 and kept on winning after the

Mercury selected her with the No. 1 overall pick of the 2004 WNBA draft.

"It's hard to put into words, it really is, what this means. When someone's defined the game, when someone's had such an impact on so many people and so many places. You can't define it with a quote," UConn coach Geno Auriemma said. "It's a life that is a novel, it's a movie, it's a miniseries, it's a saga. It's the life of an extraordinary person who, I think, had as much to do with changing women's basketball as anyone who's ever played the game."

The 42-year-old won her sixth Olympic gold medal at the Paris Games and finishes her WNBA career with 10,646 points, nearly 3,000 more than second-place Tina Charles.

"I thank Diana for everything that she has brought to the

WNBA — her passion, her charisma and, most of all, her relentless dedication to the game," WNBA Commissioner Cathy Engelbert said in a statement. "She leaves a lasting legacy and the future of the WNBA is in a great position because of her impact, that will be felt for generations to come."

In addition to her three WNBA championships with Phoenix, Taurasi won six Euroleague championships while playing year-round most of her career. She was the 2009 WNBA MVP and is one of four players to earn WNBA Finals MVP honors more than once (2009, 2014).

"Diana is the greatest to have ever played the game. I've been a fan of her my entire life, she is the ultimate leader and teammate," Mercury owner Mat Ishbia said in a statement. "She's had an incredible impact on our franchise,

our community and the game of basketball. Her name is synonymous with the Phoenix Mercury and she will forever be part of our family."

Taurasi made the all-WNBA first team 10 times and was on the first or second team a record 14 times. She's also an 11-time WNBA All-Star, four-time USA Basketball female athlete of the year and was the 2004 WNBA rookie of the year.

"In my opinion, what the greats have in common is, they transcend the sport and become synonymous with the sport," Auriemma said. "For as long as people talk about college basketball, WNBA basketball, Olympic basketball, Diana is the greatest winner in the history of basketball, period. I've had the pleasure of being around her for a lot of those moments, and she's the greatest teammate I've ever coached."

## Lakers win as Doncic faces Mavs for first time since trade

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Luka Doncic had 19 points, 15 rebounds and 12 assists in his first game against the Dallas Mavericks since they traded him to the Lakers, leading Los Angeles to a 107-99 victory Tuesday night.

Doncic secured his first triple-double with the Lakers on an emotional night for the Slovenian superstar, who was blindsided by the seismic trade sending him to Los Angeles for Anthony Davis three weeks ago.

Doncic warmly greeted his former teammates, but also took a few portentous looks at the Mavericks' bench during the night. He struggled with his shot, going 6 of 17, but capped a superb playmaking performance with an assist to LeBron James for a clinching layup with 32 seconds left.

James helped his new teammate by scoring 16 of his 27 points in the fourth quarter while the Lakers held on for their third straight win and 13th in 16 games.

Kyrie Irving scored 35 points and Klay Thompson added 22 for Dallas.

**Warriors 128, Hornets 92:** Stephen Curry and Draymond Green scored 15 points each and host Golden State Warriors joined an elite group with its 3,000th franchise victory by beating Charlotte.

Only four other NBA teams — the Los Angeles Lakers, Boston Celtics, New York Knicks and Philadelphia 76ers — have reached the milestone.

Buddy Hield scored 16 points off the bench to lead the Warriors, who have won four in a row and six of their last seven games to move into the eighth spot of the Western Conference.

**Celtics 111, Raptors 101:** Jaylen Brown scored 24 points, Derrick White had 22 and visiting Boston extended its winning streak to six games by beating Toronto.

Payton Pritchard scored 20 points and Jayson Tatum had 19 points and 11 assists as the Celtics improved to 24-6 on the road.

RJ Barrett scored 22 points and Scottie Barnes had 21, but the Raptors lost for the seventh time in their past nine. Grady Dick scored 12 points and Immanuel Quickley added 10.

**Cavaliers 122, Magic 82:** Ty Jerome scored 20 points in 21 minutes, and visiting Cleveland routed Orlando for its eighth consecutive win.

Max Strus, Evan Mobley and De'Andre Hunter each scored 17 points. Strus made five 3-pointers, helping the Cavaliers go 19 for 32 from beyond the arc.

**Rockets 100, Bucks 97:** Jalen Green had 25 points and Alperen Sengun added 23 to lead host Houston to a win over Milwaukee in a game where Amen Thompson was ejected for a hard foul on Giannis Antetokounmpo.

The game was tied at 95-all when Sengun made 1 of 2 free throws to put the Rockets on top. He made two more free throws with 30 seconds left to make it 98-95.

**Grizzlies 151, Suns 148 (OT):** Ja Morant had 29 points and eight assists, his final one a feed to Jaylen Wells for a dunk with 9.1 seconds left in overtime, and host Memphis closed the extra period with a 7-0 run to beat Phoenix.

Jaren Jackson Jr. scored 28 points before fouling out in the fourth quarter. Desmond Bane had 25 points and nine assists as Memphis moved into a tie for second place in the Western Conference with idle Denver.

**Pelicans 109, Spurs 103:** Trey Murphy III scored 24 points, Zion Williamson added 18 and host New Orleans completed a two-game home game sweep of San Antonio.

Yves Missi had 10 points and 11 rebounds, and newly acquired Kelly Olynyk had 12 rebounds, after pulling down 15 rebounds in a 114-96 victory over the Spurs on Sunday night.



# Georgia overcomes No. 3 Florida's rally

Associated Press

ATHENS, Ga. — Georgia guard Blue Cain sank a go-ahead 3-pointer with 47 seconds remaining after No. 3 Florida took its first lead, and the Bulldogs beat the Gators.

Georgia fans stormed the court but only after allowing officials and Florida players to leave.

The Gators, who trailed by 26 points in the first half, rallied from a 78-67 deficit with the 13-0 run to lead 80-78. Cain's 3-pointer ended the run.

The Bulldogs (17-11, 5-10 Southeastern Conference) boosted their hopes for their first NCAA Tournament berth since 2015. Georgia ended Florida's 12-game winning streak in series and gave coach Mike White his first win against his former team. White had been 0-6 against the Gators.

Will Richard scored a career-high 30 points for Florida (24-4, 11-4).

Silas Demary Jr. led the Bulldogs with 21 points. Asa Newell had 15.

The public address announcer made repeated requests in the final minute for fans to wait 90 seconds after the game and give the Gators and officials time to leave the court. The message, delivered during late timeouts, included the addendum that fans then would be welcome to celebrate on the court.

Georgia fans obliged repeated requests.

Players and team officials celebrated on the court for about a minute while fans began filling the aisles, waiting for the go-ahead to rush onto the court. Then, just as the public address announcer promised, the fans were then given full access to rush onto the court.

**No. 2 Duke 97, Miami 60:** Kon Knueppel scored 20 points, Cooper Flagg and Isaiah Evans each added 16 and the visiting Blue Devils rolled past the Hurricanes.

Flagg, the likely No. 1 pick in the NBA draft, added six assists and five rebounds for Duke (25-3, 16-1 Atlantic Coast Conference).

The Blue Devils led by 15 at the half, and Knueppel scored eight points in a 16-2 burst by Duke early in the second half to push the lead to 65-36.

Lynn Kidd scored 17 points and Jilil Bethea had 13 for Miami (6-22, 2-15), which was without guard Matthew Cleveland. The Hurricanes have lost four games by 35 or more points this season, after having four such losses from 1987 through 2024.

**No. 5 Tennessee 65, LSU 59:** Zakai Zeigler scored 17 points, Felix Okpara added 15 and the visiting Volunteers defeated the Tigers.

Chaz Lanier added 14 points and a season-high nine rebounds for Tennessee (23-5, 10-5 Southeastern Conference), which struggled offensively in the first half but built a 15-point lead on Cade Phillips' free throw with 3:24 left.

**No. 6 Alabama 111, Mississippi State 73:** Chris Youngblood scored a season-best 27 points and the host Crimson Tide made nearly half of its 45 attempts from 3-point range in a win over the Bulldogs.

Mark Sears had 21 points and 10 assists for Alabama (23-5, 12-3 Southeastern Conference), which set a season high for 3s by going 22-for-45 from long range (49%).

Youngblood was 7-for-11 beyond the arc.

Mississippi State (19-9, 7-8) was led by Josh Hubbard, who had 21 points on 8-for-22 shooting.

**Oklahoma State 74, No. 9 Iowa State 68:** Abou Ousmane scored 25 points and the host Cowboys upset the Cyclones.

Arturo Dean had 14 points and Bryce Thompson added 11 for Oklahoma State (14-14, 6-11 Big 12). A crowd that grew as the game progressed celebrated by storming the court.

The Cowboys had no previous

wins over AP Top 25 teams this season under first-year coach Steve Lutz. Oklahoma State lost its previous two games against ranked opponents Texas Tech and Kansas by a combined 70 points.

Josh Jefferson scored 17 points and Nate Heise added 13 for Iowa State (21-7, 11-6).

The Cyclones made just one field goal in the first five minutes, and the Cowboys rolled to a 40-26 halftime lead behind 12 points from Ousmane.

**No. 11 Wisconsin 88, Washington 62:** John Blackwell had 24 points and 10 rebounds as the host Badgers rolled to a victory over the Huskies.

John Tonje added 13 points for Wisconsin (22-6, 12-5 Big Ten). Steven Cowl and Xavier Amos had 12 points apiece.

Great Osobor scored 11 for the Huskies (13-15, 4-13), who have lost three straight and 11 of 14.

The Badgers made 10 of their first 16 shots to open the second half, going in front 64-42 on Amos' layup.

**No. 14 Missouri 101, South Carolina 71:** Caleb Grill scored 22 points, and Anthony Robinson II scored 14 points and matched his career high of eight assists to help the Tigers rout the Gamecocks.

Mark Mitchell and Tony Perkins each scored 13 points for Missouri (21-7, 10-5 Southeastern Conference) which had six players score in double figures for the second time this season.

The Tigers have won four of their last five games, and are 18-1 at home this season.

**No. 19 Louisville 71, Virginia Tech 66:** Chucky Hepburn scored 15 points to lead the visiting Cardinals to a victory over the Hokies.

Hepburn connected on just 5 of 12 from the floor, but hit all four of his free-throw attempts and added six assists for Louisville (22-6, 15-2 Atlantic Coast Conference), which won its sixth straight and for the 16th time in 17 games.

Brandon Rechsteiner led Virginia Tech (12-16, 7-10) with 18 points.

James Scott and Terrence Edwards Jr. each finished with 13 points for Louisville, which forced 22 turnovers.

**No. 21 Marquette 82, Providence 52:** Ben Gold scored a career-high 17 points to help the host Golden Eagles beat the Friars.

Kam Jones had 17 points and seven assists for Marquette (21-7, 12-5 Big East), which set a season high with 41 3-point attempts, making 17. Stevie Mitchell added 14 points.

**Gonzaga 95, Santa Clara 76:** Graham Ike scored 24 points on 11-for-13 shooting and Ryan Nemphard recorded a double-double and the visiting Bulldogs used the second half to pull away from the Broncos.

Khalif Battle scored 21 points, Nemphard scored 12 and distributed a career-high 15 assists and Nolan Hickman scored 11 for Gonzaga (22-8, 13-4 WCC) which has won six of its last seven.

**San Diego State 73, New Mexico 63:** Nicholas Boyd scored 17 points as the host Aztecs beat the Lobos in a key Mountain West matchup.

Boyd added seven rebounds and six assists for San Diego State (19-7, 12-5), which boosted its hopes to get off the bubble and earn an NCAA bid.

New Mexico (22-6, 14-3) was led by Donovan Dent, who posted 26 points and seven assists. Jovan Milicevic added 16 points for the Lobos, who fell into a tie for first place with Utah State.

**VCU 78, Richmond 60:** Max Shulga scored 16 points and Joe Bamisile scored 13 points and added eight rebounds as the Rams beat the Spiders for their seventh straight victory.

Shulga was 3-for-3 from 3-point range for VCU (23-5, 13-2 Atlantic 10 Conference), and Phillip Russell shot 3-for-7 from beyond the arc to finish with 11 points.

# Leafs rally from 3 down, win in OT

Associated Press

BOSTON — Mitch Marner scored his second goal of the game in the final minute of overtime, and the Toronto Maple Leafs overcame a three-goal deficit to beat the Boston Bruins 5-4 on Tuesday night.

With goalie Anthony Stolarz pulled for an extra skater, Pontus Holberg scored the tying goal for the Maple Leafs out of a scramble with 46 seconds left in regulation. David Pastrnak's second goal had given Boston a 4-3 edge.

Pastrnak scored on a breakaway on the game's opening shift to extend his career-best point streak to 15 games. The Bruins opened a 3-0 lead on Morgan Geekie's power-play goal midway into the second period.

Morgan Reilly and Nicholas Robertson also scored for Toronto. The Maple Leafs won for the sixth time in seven games.

**Flames 3, Capitals 1:** Matt Coronato scored to help Calgary beat host Washington and move into a playoff spot despite Alex Ovechkin getting one step closer to breaking Wayne Gretzky's career goals record.

Ovechkin beat Dan Vladar five minutes into the third period for his 883rd goal and move 12 back of passing Gretzky's mark of 894. It was also his 30th goal of the season, reaching that milestone for the 19th time in his 20 seasons.

That came with the Capitals trailing 2-0, and they could not get any closer. Logan Thompson stopped 22 of the 25 shots he faced. The top team in the Eastern Conference lost in regulation in Washington for the first time since Nov. 23, ending a 16-game home point streak.

Martin Pospisil and Jonathan Huberdeau also scored and Vladar made 26 saves for Calgary, which has won two in a row coming out of the league's 4 Nations Face-Off break to leapfrog Pacific Division-rival Vancouver

for the second and final wild card in the West.

**Flyers 6, Penguins 1:** Bobby Brink had a goal and three assists for a career-high four points as Philadelphia beat visiting Pittsburgh.

Noah Cates had two goals and an assist in Philadelphia's third consecutive win. Tyson Foerster had a goal and two assists, and Owen Tippett and Rasmus Ristolainen also scored.

Brink and Cates scored 10 seconds apart late in the second period, lifting Philadelphia to a 5-1 lead.

Philip Tomasino scored for the Penguins in their fourth consecutive loss.

**Sabres 3, Ducks 2:** Henri Jokiharju scored 9:31 into the third period to give Buffalo a win against visiting Anaheim.

JJ Peterka and Alex Tuch also scored and Dylan Cozens had three assists for Buffalo. Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen made 16 saves for the Sabres, who have won six of their past seven games.

Mason McTavish and Leo Carlsson scored power-play goals while Lukas Dostal made 32 saves for the Ducks, whose five-game point streak was snapped.

The Ducks led 2-0 after two periods, but Peterka scored 1:56 into the third on a one-timer to cut the lead to 2-1, and Tuch followed at 5:34 by putting a puck off of Dostal and in.

Jokiharju, who starred for Finland in the 4 Nations Face-Off, scored his second goal in as many games to complete the comeback.

**Canadiens 4, Hurricanes 0:** Nick Suzuki and Patrik Laine each had a goal and two assists, as host Montreal beat Carolina.

Juraj Slafkovsky and Lane Hutson also scored for Montreal, and Sam Montembeault made 20 saves for his fourth shutout of the season and fifth of his career.

Frederik Andersen finished

with 14 saves for the Hurricanes.

Slafkovsky opened the scoring at 8:05 of the first period after deflecting a shot from the point. Laine's deflection with 2:23 left in the opening period made it 2-0.

Montreal continued to set the tempo, forcing four consecutive Carolina penalties. Suzuki converted on the fourth when left alone in the slot, firing a wrist shot over Andersen's glove midway through the second.

**Blue Jackets 6, Stars 4:** Kirill Marchenko scored twice and Columbus beat visiting Dallas to stay in the hunt for an Eastern Conference wild-card spot.

Jason Robertson had a goal and an assist for Dallas, which had won three in a row. Jamie Benn, Roope Hintz and Mavrik Bourque each scored, and Mikael Granlund had two assists. Jake Oettinger stopped 23 shots.

**Lightning 4, Oilers 1:** Nikita Kucherov had two assists and streaking Tampa Bay beat Leon Draisaitl and host Edmonton.

The Lightning won their sixth straight and improved to 7-0-1 in their past eight games.

Brandon Hagel, Nick Paul, Mikey Eyssimont and Victor Hedman scored for Tampa Bay, and Andrei Vasilevskiy made 23 saves.

Draisaitl scored his NHL-best 43rd goal for the Oilers, who have lost four consecutive games. Stuart Skinner stopped 33 shots.

**Rangers 5, Islanders 1:** Jonny Brodzinski scored twice, Urho Vaakanainen had a goal and two assists and New York beat the crosstown-rival Islanders.

J.T. Miller and Matt Rempe also scored for the Rangers, who won their second straight. Igor Shesterkin finished with 36 saves.

Alexander Romanov scored for the Islanders, who have lost four straight after winning eight of nine.

Ilya Sorokin gave up five goals on 11 shots through two periods.

Jakub Skarek came on to start the third period and stopped all seven shots he faced.

Rangers defensemen Adam Fox and K'Andre Miller left the game and did not return.

**Blues 7, Kraken 2:** Zack Bolduc scored twice and St. Louis beat visiting Seattle.

Cam Fowler and Oskar Sundqvist each had a goal and two assists for the Blues, who won their fifth straight against the Kraken. Robert Thomas and Jake Neighbours each had a goal and an assist, and Jordan Kyrou also scored.

Thomas has four goals and seven assists during a seven-game point streak. Neighbours snapped a 10-game scoring drought.

Jordan Binnington made 26 saves to improve to 4-0-1 in his past five games.

**Panthers 4, Predators 1:** Justin Sourdif scored his first NHL goal as Florida won at Nashville.

Sam Bennett had a goal, assist and fight for a Gordie Howe hat trick, and Gustav Forsling and Mackie Samoskevich also scored to help the Panthers win for the third time in four games. Spencer Knight made 18 saves and Aleksander Barkov had two assists.

**Red Wings 3, Wild 2:** Simon Edvinsson pinged a slap shot off the far post for his second goal of the game with 8:25 remaining to finish a rally by Detroit at Minnesota.

Cam Talbot made 22 saves for the Wings, who are 9-1-2 in their past 12 games and have won a season-best five straight road games.

**Utah 2, Blackhawks 1:** Lawson Crouse scored the tiebreaking goal on a backhand with 7:48 left as host Utah rallied past Chicago.

Clayton Keller also scored and Karel Vejmelka finished with 21 saves to help Utah get its fifth win in seven games, including its third straight at home for the first time.