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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Singapore: McCain turned to crash

BY DIANNA CAHN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A deadly collision between the U.S. Navy destroyer USS John S. McCain and a commercial oil tanker in the Singapore Strait in August was caused by a sudden turn to port by the McCain that sent it into the path of the tanker, an investigation by the Singapore government has found.

Once that turn was made, the Alnic tanker did not take adequate steps to avoid the collision, said a report released Wednesday by the Singapore Transportation Ministry's Transport Safety Investigation Bureau.

Ten U.S. sailors aboard the McCain were killed in the collision.

The Singapore investigation said that the McCain's "sudden turn to Port was due to a series of missteps that took place after a transfer of propulsion and steering control, which led to confusion as to which station had steering control, and an unintentional reduction of the Port engine throttle." That reduction increased the rate of the McCain's turn, the investigation found.

It also found that the McCain crew "lacked the requisite" training or familiarity with the steering control system to properly handle the transfer of propulsion and steering control.

The Singapore findings aligned with a Navy investigation in October that revealed a loss of "situation awareness" at the McCain controls ahead of the collision. That occurred when the commander noticed that the watchstander steering the ship was "having difficulty maintaining course while also adjusting the throttles for speed control," so he divided the duties with another sailor, ultimately leading to confusion on the bridge, the Navy report found.

Retention rates of female submariners on par with males

Associated Press

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — When the U.S. Navy sought the first female sailors to serve on submarines, Suraya Mattocks raised her hand because she had always thought it would be a cool job, not because she wanted to blaze a trail. She did anyway.

It has been eight years since the Navy lifted its ban on women in submarines. The chaos and disruption some predicted largely haven't materialized. Women like Mattocks are focused on doing their jobs well. Their retention rates are, to some surprise to the Navy, on par with those of men, according to records obtained by The Associated Press.

They want to be seen simply as "submariners," not "female submariners."

"That'll be a great day when it's not so new that everyone wants to talk about it," Mattocks, a petty officer first class, told the AP in a rare interview. "Females on my crew, they really and truly just want to be seen as submariners. That's it."

The Navy began bringing female officers aboard submarines in 2010; enlisted female sailors followed five years later.

By now, the first 19 female officers have decided whether to sign contracts to go back to sea as department heads, which keeps them on the career path for submarine officers, or have chosen different paths. Five women signed. Fourteen women have left the military, soon will leave the military or are serving elsewhere in the Navy, according to records requested by the AP.

That's a retention rate of 26 percent for the first female officers, just shy of the roughly 27 percent of male officers selected for submarine service in 2010 who signed department head contracts. The Navy had been looking for at least 15 percent for women.

Nine more female officers were picked for submarine service in 2010, but with the intention they would return to jobs in the supply departments on surface ships or ashore — normal career paths.

"You always want higher" numbers, said Adm. John Richardson, the chief of naval operations, but he is encouraged by the initial results and the growing number of female officer candidates who want to be submariners.

"I think if there was a sense it was not doing well, we wouldn't have those types of num-

bers," he said.

Richardson led the submarine force at the beginning of the integration, from late 2010 to 2012. At that time, some submarine veterans, wives of submariners and active-duty members were calling the change a mistake. The living quarters were too tight, there was little privacy and romantic relationships could develop, they feared.

Many now say that the transition went smoothly, with one major exception. Male sailors were prosecuted in 2015 for secretly videotaping female officers and trainees as they undressed on the USS Wyoming.

"They did court-martial the perpetrators. It wasn't laughed off, and that's a good thing," said retired Navy Capt. Lory Manning, director of government relations for the Service Women's Action Network. "I don't think, in general, it dampens the effort."

To address privacy, the Navy is retrofitting subs with extra doors and designated washrooms. Future subs will be built with the height, reach and strength of women in mind.

Mattocks is on the USS Michigan, a sub that splits its time between Washington state and Guam. In some cases, sailors have organically changed their behavior to accommodate changing times.

Some accustomed to sleeping in their underwear now don robes or sweats to go to the bathroom, for instance, in case they encounter another gender in the hall.

"That goes for both sides. It's not that all females have to wear this and males can do whatever they want," Mattocks said. "It's just little things like that, having both genders in a small space. You figure out things you never would've thought of before."

One-fifth of submarine crews are integrated. It will take until about 2026 before a woman could be in command of a U.S. Navy submarine.

Mattocks, 34, a yeoman from Dover, N.H., soon will retire from the Navy. She said she probably would have chosen to stay in the submarine force if it weren't so late in her naval career. She joined the Navy after graduating from high school and plans to retire when she hits 20 years of service.

"I found something I love, something new in the Navy that I love," she said. "I wouldn't have gotten bored with it."

US, Japanese sailors join drills off Guam

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — American and Japanese sailors are taking part in realistic drills off Guam that aim to improve their combat abilities on land, in the air and at sea.

This year's MultiSail, which started Thursday and continues through March 14, will focus on tracking and defeating submarines, surface warfare and live-fire drills, Capt. John Duffy, Destroyer Squadron 15 commander, said in a Navy statement.

The USS Antietam, USS Curtis Wilbur, USS Benfold, USS Mustin and the JS Fuyuzuki, along with other submarine and special units, are taking part in the realistic training. It's designed to "demonstrate the

inherent flexibility" of the combined forces and their "wide range of capabilities" from maritime security operations to complex anti-submarine and air-defense drills, the statement said.

Duffy said the practice helps boost the countries' abilities to work together, especially in conflict situations.

"We have designed MultiSail to exercise how we detect, locate, track and engage simulated units at sea, in the air, on land and underwater with our Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force allies to help us increase our interoperability in a range of mission areas," he said.

Tokyo protested to Beijing in January after a submarine presumed to be Chinese was detected in Japan's contiguous zone around Okinawa and the disputed Senkaku Islands.

Japanese Vice Foreign Minister Shinsuke Sugiyama expressed "great concern" over the issue and urged China not to do it again.

A JMSDF spokesman said MultiSail 2018's focus on submarines is a "great opportunity for Japan and the U.S. to practice cooperating in anti-submarine warfare," but they do not conduct exercises with a particular country in mind. Rather, MultiSail readies them to be able to respond to any circumstance.

"We have been taking all possible measures by conducting monitoring and information gathering activities at all times," the spokesman said.

Cmdr. Kazuteru Hirano, of the JS Fuyuzuki, said the exercise gives the JMSDF an opportunity to increase its tactical capabilities and "strengthen our interoperability with our U.S.

Navy allies."

"The Japan-U.S. alliance is stronger than it has ever been, and it is growing stronger," he said.

MultiSail began in 2004 as a pre-deployment training operation but has grown into a "bilateral exercise testing some of the latest equipment, tactics and procedures," the Navy said.

The destroyer USS Fitzgerald participated in last year's training, about three months before it collided with a cargo ship on June 17, killing seven of its sailors.

The USS Barry, USS Stetham, USS McCampbell, JS Ikazuchi and JS Hatakaze also participated last year. The USS Mustin is the only ship from MultiSail 2017 to join this year's iteration.

Report: Marine agency fostered toxic environment

USA Today

WASHINGTON — A Marine colonel who investigated a sexual harassment claim at a troubled program inside the Corps' Quantico, Va., headquarters was later counseled for allegedly harassing the wife of the unit's chaplain, referring to her as "eye candy."

A Marine inspector general's report in 2015 called out a toxic work environment at the Marine and Family Programs Division at Quantico. The report says the program struggled with complaints of sexual harassment, racial bias and bad management, including a secret settlement reached with one official to get her to leave quietly from the base known as the "Crossroads of the Marine Corps." The Marines have not released the report, but USA Today obtained a copy.

Two civilian employees renewed complaints dating to 2013 about an officer they said made overt sexual overtures to them at the base. The women

maintained in interviews and documents that the Marine Corps did not take their complaints seriously.

The investigation into the troubled Marine and Family Programs Division, which includes the Corps' sexual assault prevention and response program, showed that Col. Ernest Ackiss was appointed in 2013 to investigate one of several allegations of sexual harassment against the Marine officer. Ackiss found the complaint about inappropriate texts from the officer failed to "meet the threshold of the definition of sexual harassment."

Two years later, Ackiss was himself the subject of an investigation into harassment. The division's chaplain, a Navy lieutenant commander, told the inspector general that his wife was the subject of inappropriate comments. She worked directly for Ackiss. "The Col. called his spouse 'eye candy,'" according to the report.

Ackiss' superiors investi-

gated the chaplain's complaint and "counseled" Ackiss, the report says. Ackiss, who has retired, could not be reached for comment.

The Marine Corps stands by Ackiss' original investigation, Maj. Garron Garn, a Marine spokesman, said in a statement.

"There is no indication the Marine Corps was aware of any allegations of sexual harassment at the time he was appointed to conduct the investigation," Garn said.

Scott Jensen, who retired in 2016 as the colonel in charge of Marine sexual assault prevention programs, said Ackiss' behavior amounts to the fox guarding the hen house and called on the Marines to reopen the investigation into the women's claims.

"How can someone make a sound judgment on one case and then demonstrate he doesn't have the judgment to avoid the behavior himself?" said Jensen, CEO of Protect our Defenders, an advocacy group for military

victims of sexual assault. "Justice wasn't served. If they are truly interested in seeing justice, they would take the time to reinvestigate."

Rep. Jackie Speier, D-Calif., a member of the Armed Services Committee, questioned Gen. Glenn Walters, assistant commandant of the Marines, on the women's cases, and he promised to review them.

The complaint Ackiss investigated was one of several claims made by Traci Sharpe and Sherry Yetter. They maintained that the officer, Maj. David Cheek, harassed them, including showing them an erection through his clothing. Cheek denied the allegations, and Marine Corps' investigations did not substantiate their accusations.

An investigation was launched to look into complaints about discrimination, harassment and cronyism, among other concerns. The investigation concluded there was no evidence of waste, fraud, abuse or senior leader misconduct.

F-35 program faces crucial year of tests

By CLAUDIA GRISALES
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The F-35 program, the Pentagon's most expensive weapon program ever, will face a series of critical tests this year.

After 17 years of costly development and engineering efforts, the program will enter into an operational test period this fall.

For the first time, the Marine Corps this week deployed a detachment of F-35B Lightning IIs aboard the USS Wasp, a Navy amphibious assault ship.

"We are on track for another productive and challenging year," Vice Adm. Mathias Winter, director of the F-35 joint program office, said Wednesday during a congressional hearing. "It will be a year of growth and transition."

Last year, the Department of Defense requested 70 F-35s. Pending a request this year, the department aims to see another 77 of the fighter jets. By 2023, the services are planning to see the addition of 99 F-35s each year.

The F-35 will complete its baseline development program by May of this year and then enter an operational test period phase in September, said Rep. Mike Turner, R-Ohio, a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee.

This comes after the F-35 program completed developmental weapons testing, and the deliveries of F-35s to U.S. and foreign military services.

"Last year marked several notable accomplishments for the F-35 program," said Turner, chairman of the House Armed Services subpanel on tactical air

and land forces. "But the F-35 program continues to face challenges ahead."

The program, which has been marked by extreme cost overruns, a series of restructuring efforts and audits to draw down spending, has finally seen procurement costs for F-35s steadily declining in recent years, he said. In 2017, Turner's subcommittee included a provision in the National Defense Authorization Act that requires the Government Accountability Office to review the F-35 program's continued costs and provide recommendations to address affordability issues.

A GAO report in September noted the F-35 program is facing challenges involving repairs, shortages of spare parts and delays in development of a related computer and network-based

Autonomic Logistics Information System, also known as ALIS, Turner said.

In the past months, the F-35 program has made strides addressing the concerns, but much work lies ahead, military leaders and lawmakers agreed Wednesday.

Among those, said Rep. Niki Tsongas, D-Mass., a ranking member of the subpanel, is the development of new, related software technology that could lead to more financial headaches.

"The F-35 program has come a long way," Tsongas said. However, "the last 17 years of F-35 software development have seen dramatic cost increase and delays. How this new effort will somehow defy this unfortunate history remains an open question."

Navy starts under-ice sub exercise off Alaska

Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — The U.S. Navy has begun five weeks of submarine training and testing off Alaska's northern coast that will include breaching the massive underwater vessels through Arctic sea ice.

The exercises, which also include the collection of scientific data, are dubbed Ice Exercise 2018, or ICEX18, and are scheduled every other year.

Rear Adm. James Pitts, commander of the Undersea Warfare Development Center, said in an announcement that the Navy builds experience with every ICEX.

"We are constantly testing new tactics, techniques and procedures under the ice and this exercise allows us to do so on a

larger scale and alongside our U.K., joint and academic partners," he said.

Two U.S. submarines and one British submarine will participate. The cost is estimated at \$8.3 million, said Navy spokesman Corey Barker, but final figures for travel, contracts and other expenses will not be known until after the exercise.

The Navy will set up a temporary camp on ice in the Beaufort Sea about 150 to 175 miles north of Prudhoe Bay, Alaska. Barker said gear for the camp started coming in over the weekend by air drop.

The camp will have portable tents that can house and support more than 50 people and will serve as a temporary command center for under-ice navigation, torpedo exercises and research.

The Navy named the camp Ice Camp Skate in honor of the USS Skate, the first submarine to surface through open water surrounded by ice in 1958 and the first submarine to surface through ice at the North Pole in March 1959.

The U.S. submarines participating are the Seawolf-class fast attack submarine USS Connecticut from Bangor, Wash., and the Los Angeles-class fast attack submarine USS Hartford from Groton, Conn.

The British Royal Navy's Trafalgar-class submarine HMS Trenchant also will be on hand. The vessels will conduct multiple Arctic transits, a North Pole surfacing, scientific data collection and other training, the Navy said.

Bodies of ISIS fighters still litter Mosul's Old City

Associated Press

IRBIL, Iraq — Dozens of bodies of reputed Islamic State fighters continue to litter a neighborhood in Mosul's Old City some eight months after Iraq declared victory over the extremists there.

Local authorities lack the resources to dispose of the bodies

that lie in the Mosul neighborhood where ISIS fighters made their last stand against Iraqi forces in the summer of 2017, according to the Nineveh governor's office.

An Associated Press journalist saw the bodies Wednesday.

Mosul lacks the equipment and money needed to pay sala-

ries to teams of workers, according to Qusey Assaf, the Nineveh governor's assistant for reconstruction affairs.

"Look, I'm telling you, this is wrong," said Faris Abdulrazzaq Dhannoon, a senior local official, referring to the bodies left unburied for months.

Dhannoon said there were

many more ISIS fighters than civilians in the Old City neighborhood where the decaying bodies now lie.

"There were few civilians in the area because Daesh had evacuated them from this area and taken their houses," he said, using an Arabic acronym for ISIS.

Second big storm hits Northeast

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The Northeast is digging out after the second powerful nor'easter in less than a week left some areas with more than 2 feet of snow, hundreds of thousands without power, schools closed and travel a mess.

Some places saw more than 2 feet of snow by late Wednesday, and many communities woke up Thursday to a foot or more of snow covering their cars.

The late winter storm left more than 800,000 customers without power in the Northeast — counting some who have been without electricity since last Friday's destructive nor'easter.

Montville, N.J., got more than 26 inches from Wednesday's nor'easter. North Adams, Mass., registered 24 inches, and Sloatsburg, N.Y., got 26 inches.

Major cities along the Interstate 95 corridor saw much less. Philadelphia International Airport recorded about 6 inches, while New York City's Central

Park saw less than 3 inches.

The storm made traveling treacherous. Thousands of flights across the region were canceled.

It was not much better on the ground. Members of the Northeastern University women's basketball team pushed their bus back on course after it was stuck in the snow outside a practice facility in Philadelphia. The Huskies were in the city to compete in the 2018 CAA Women's Basketball Tournament. The team posted a video of the feat on its Twitter account.

Amtrak suspended service between New York City and Boston until at least 10 a.m. Thursday. New York City's Metro-North commuter railroad suspended service on lines connecting the city to its northern suburbs and Connecticut because of downed trees.

It was not immediately known when service would be restored.

There were multiple storm-related delays on Massachu-

setts Bay Transportation Authority's commuter rail, light rail and bus lines, and authorities were investigating after a train with more than 100 passengers on board derailed in Wilmington, Mass. The low-speed derailment was under investigation to determine if it was weather-related.

In New Hampshire, Interstate 95 in Portsmouth was closed in both directions because of downed power lines.

"It's kind of awful," said New York University student Alessa Raiford, who put two layers of clothing onto a pug named Jengo before taking him for a walk in slushy, sloppy Manhattan, where rain gave way to wet snow in the afternoon. "I'd rather that it be full-on snowing than rain and slush. It just makes it difficult."

The storm was not as severe as the nor'easter that toppled trees, flooded coastal communities and caused more than 2 million power outages from Virginia to Maine last Friday.

Miss. tests new limit on abortion

Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. — For decades, the U.S. Supreme Court has been telling states that they can't ban abortions before a fetus can survive outside the womb on its own.

But states continue to try to restrict abortion before viability. One of the most recent is Mississippi, where lawmakers are on the brink of approving a measure that would ban most abortions after 15 weeks.

House Bill 1510 passed the Mississippi Senate on Tuesday and is one House vote away from the desk of a governor who is eager to sign it.

The owner of Mississippi's only abortion clinic has said she'll sue if the bill goes into law — a move lawmakers not only know to expect but seem to be encouraging in hopes of eventually getting the nation's highest court to revisit its rulings and to allow states to begin restricting abortion earlier in pregnancy.

"It seems like a pretty simple bill designed to test the viability line that the Supreme Court has drawn," said David Forte, a law professor at Ohio's Cleveland State University.

A number of states, including Mississippi, already have tiptoed up to the viability line with 20-week bans, although the U.S. Senate earlier this year rejected such a ban nationwide when supporters couldn't reach a 60-vote supermajority to act.

An appeals court in 2015 struck down efforts in North Dakota to ban most abortions after six weeks, when a fetus develops a detectable heartbeat, and in Arkansas after 12 weeks. Abortion-rights supporters are dubious that the outcome in Mississippi would be any different.

"The Supreme Court has said and resaid again and again that states cannot prohibit women from obtaining abortions prior to viability, which is what a 15-week ban would do," said Hillary Schneller, staff attorney for the Center for Reproductive Rights. The New York-based group advocates for free access to abortion.

Women's Day marked around world

Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — In Manila, they decried the president as a violator of women's rights. In Seoul, the surging #MeToo movement took to the streets. In India, where endemic violence against women has only recently become part of the public conversation, they marched toward Parliament loudly demanding their rights.

It was International Women's Day on Thursday, and as the day began in Asia thousands of women ensured it could not go unnoticed.

Hundreds of activists in pink and purple shirts protested in downtown Manila against Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, calling him among the worst violators of women's rights in Asia. Protest leaders sang and danced in a boisterous rally in Plaza Miranda, handing

red and white roses to mothers, sisters and widows of drug suspects slain under Duterte's crackdown on illegal drugs.

Embattled Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi urged women to build peaceful democracies using their strength in politics, economics and social issues. In Europe, protesters in Spain got an early start, launching a 24-hour strike and calling on women to stop working, whether at offices or at home.

In Afghanistan, hundreds of women, who would have been afraid to leave their homes during Taliban rule, gathered in the capital, Kabul, to commemorate the day — and to remind their leaders that plenty of work remains to be done to give Afghan women a voice, to ensure their education and to protect them from increasing violence.

And in China, students at Tsinghua University used the

occasion to make light of a proposed constitutional amendment to scrap term limits for the country's president.

One banner joked that a boyfriend's term should also have no limits, while another said, "A country cannot exist without a constitution, as we cannot exist without you!"

China's ceremonial legislature is poised to pass a constitutional amendment to allow President Xi Jinping to rule indefinitely. Photos of the students' banners, like other content about the proposed amendment, were quickly censored on social media.

Hundreds of South Koreans, many wearing black and holding black #MeToo signs, rallied in central Seoul. They called for sex offenders to be brought to justice and for action on issues including the gender pay gap.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Gas pump stolen at Route 66 landmark

OK MIAMI — Authorities are searching for an 8-foot-tall red gas pump stolen from outside a Route 66 landmark in northeast Oklahoma.

Police in Miami said the pump was one of three that were bolted into concrete outside the Marathon Gas Station. Bolts securing the other two pumps were also removed but the pumps were not taken and are now in storage.

The restored station was built in 1929 along the route and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

The pump is not original to the building, but is nearly 100 years old and worth about \$5,000.

Container from ship contains sulfuric acid

NC NAGS HEAD — The U.S. Coast Guard said one of the containers lost from a cargo ship in rough seas off North Carolina's Outer Banks contained almost 6,000 pounds of sulfuric acid, but an official said it poses little threat to the environment.

The Virginian-Pilot of Norfolk reported Coast Guard spokesman Ronald Hodges cited the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in saying the environmental danger is minimal because sulfuric acid dissolves in saltwater.

Founding papers of AA to go up for auction

CA LOS ANGELES — The founding document of Alcoholics Anonymous is heading back to the auction block.

A court dispute over the ownership of the original 1939 man-

uscript outlining the group's 12-step recovery program has been settled.

The 161-page manuscript is filled with handwritten notes and scribbles from the founding fathers of AA.

Profiles in History announced Wednesday that the new auction is scheduled to start May 5, and the document is expected to fetch between \$2 million and \$3 million.

Details of the settlement were not released, but the organization has waived its right to the document.

Museum: Painting was not stolen by Nazis

RI PROVIDENCE — The Rhode Island School of Design is denying the claim that a painting by Pablo Picasso at the museum was stolen by the Nazis from a Jewish art collector's mansion in occupied France.

The Providence Journal reported RISD said research has shown that while Picasso's "Seated Woman with a Book" was in Alphonse Kann's mansion, the painting was never looted by the Nazis.

The museum said it bought the painting for \$1,600 in 1951 from a gallery that had dealt with Kann and his estate on other artwork.

Volunteer firefighters charged with arson

CT SHELTON — Two prominent volunteer firefighters were charged with arson in connection with a blaze outside their firehouse in Connecticut.

Police said surveillance video captured Gregory Bomba, 45, a former fire captain, and William Tortora, 57, the brother of a fire marshal, setting boxes on fire in the bed of a pickup truck

outside the Echo Hose Co. firehouse in Shelton in February.

As the flames began to grow, police said, Tortora got into the truck and drove away until the burning boxes flew off.

Both men are facing charges of arson, reckless endangerment and criminal mischief.

Bobcat released after Thanksgiving travel

VA NEW KENT — Three months after a bobcat unintentionally embarked on a 60-mile commute in Virginia, she's been released back into the wild.

The Richmond Times-Dispatch cited an update from the Wildlife Center of Virginia, which said Patient #17-2688 was released in New Kent County on March 2.

The adult bobcat suffered minor injuries last Thanksgiving when a woman traveling from Gloucester County to Virginia Commonwealth University found it stuck in her car grill.

The cat was released at an appropriate habitat not far from where she was initially struck.

Workers charged with giving kids sleep aid

IL DES PLAINES — Police in suburban Chicago said three day care workers are charged with giving children gummy bears containing the sleep aid melatonin.

Des Plaines police said that officers were called to Kiddie Junction last week. Police said the children were given the melatonin "in an effort to calm them down before nap time." Authorities said parents hadn't given permission for their children to receive the melatonin.

Three workers face charges of endangering the life or health of a child and battery, including Ashley Helfenbein,

25, of Chicago; Jessica Heyse, 19, of Des Plaines; and Kristen Lauletta, 32, of Niles. They are due in court April 4.

NYC's tree sweaters to stay in place

NY NEW YORK — The New York City Parks Department said a cluster of trees in a Manhattan neighborhood can keep their crocheted sweaters.

The Parks Department said it reversed a prior decision to remove the trees' sweaters after residents of the West Village neighborhood told The New York Post that the colorful threads on about two dozen neighborhood trees increased business and foot traffic.

Local business owner Holly Boardman installed the sweaters last Thanksgiving.

Speed cameras issue 12,000 tickets

RI PROVIDENCE — A Rhode Island court was flooded with people contesting tickets after a new school zone speed camera program resulted in 12,000 tickets in 33 days.

WPRI-TV reported more than 2,600 tickets were on the docket Monday at Providence Municipal Court, which usually has about 300 people on the daily docket. The courtroom holds 90 people.

The station reported that the city issued 12,193 tickets between Jan. 16 and Feb. 22 from five new speed cameras.

The tickets are \$95 each and can be issued when a vehicle is caught traveling at least 11 miles per hour over the posted speed limit at certain times.

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Late collapse has Oklahoma on brink

Associated Press

After being ranked in the top five earlier this season, Arizona State and Oklahoma suddenly find their NCAA Tournament hopes in question.

Both teams continued their late-season collapses Tuesday by losing early in their respective conference tournaments. Arizona State fell 97-85 to Colorado in the Pac-12 Tournament at Las Vegas, while Oklahoma lost 71-60 to Oklahoma State in the Big 12 Tournament at Kansas City.

Oklahoma (18-13) has lost eight of its last 10 games. Arizona State (20-11) has dropped five of its last six.

"I didn't expect to be in that position," Oklahoma guard Trae Young said. "I obviously expected us to keep winning and hopefully have a chance to get a 1 seed or 2 seed or up in that range. But our body of work speaks for itself, and I think we have a good shot of getting in just because of our résumé and all of that. We'll have to see. Hopefully, we'll get in."

Oklahoma seems in better shape than Arizona State.

Both teams finished below .500 in their conference schedules, but the Big 12 is stronger than the Pac-12. Oklahoma entered Wednesday's action 36th in the RPI,

while Arizona State was 58th. Oklahoma has an impressive six Quadrant 1 wins, while Arizona State has three.

Quadrant 1 wins are defined as victories in home games against teams with RPIs in the top 30, neutral-court wins against teams in the top 50 or road wins against teams in the top 75.

Arizona State won its first 12 games and was ranked third in late December, matching its highest ranking in school history. The Sun Devils were the last remaining unbeaten Division I team after a sizzling start that included a road win at No. 9 Kansas and a neutral-site victory over No. 3 Xavier.

"I believe we're in the NCAA Tournament," Arizona State coach Bobby Hurley said. "Now, there is going to be debate about that and with good reason because we didn't finish the season the way I'd hoped. But, again, we lost some close ones, some games that could have gone either way."

Oklahoma was one of the biggest stories in college basketball during the early part of the season due to the emergence of Young, the NCAA Division I leader in points and assists per game.

The Sooners were ranked fourth in mid-January. Now they have to wait and learn their fate Sunday.

On the rise

Oklahoma State: The team that swept its regular-season series with Kansas gave its NCAA credentials another boost with its victory over Oklahoma. The Cowboys (19-13) still could have more work to do.

Texas: The Longhorns (19-13) avoided a potentially crushing loss by gutting out a 68-64 victory over Iowa State in the Big 12 Tournament. Marquette's another bubble team that barely avoided a devastating loss, as it edged DePaul 72-69 in the Big East Tournament. Marquette faced No. 2 Villanova on Thursday.

Louisville: The Cardinals entered the ACC Tournament squarely on the bubble and made quite a statement Wednesday with an 82-74 victory over Florida State. Louisville (20-12) can erase all doubt by knocking off top-ranked Virginia in the quarterfinals.

Notre Dame: Notre Dame was ranked in the top five earlier this season. The Irish struggled when Bonzie Colson missed 15 games with a broken bone in his left foot, but he's back now and helped Notre Dame (20-13) rally from a 21-point, second-half deficit in a 71-65 ACC Tournament victory over Virginia Tech.

Conference tournament roundup

Bucknell wins 2nd straight Patriot League tourney

Associated Press

LEWISBURG, Pa. — There was no dramatic comeback this time. Just a steady, overpowering performance that propelled Bucknell to its second straight Patriot League Tournament championship.

Stephen Brown scored 22 points and reserve Nate Sestina added as Bucknell won the Patriot League title with an 83-54 victory over Colgate on Wednesday night.

The top-seeded Bison (25-9) head to the NCAA Tournament for the eighth time in program history and sixth time as the Patriot League representative. Four of those six titles have come in the last eight years.

The second-seeded Raiders (19-13) lost to Bucknell for the third time this season.

The second matchup, on Feb. 12 at Bucknell, saw the Bison make an amazing comeback from eight down in the final 21 seconds.

The Bison finish the season with a 15-1 record at home. They have won 18 of 19 entering the NCAA Tournament.

Brown, who made five three-pointers, was named tournament MVP. Bucknell shot 46 percent from beyond the arc (13-for-28).

Notre Dame 71, Virginia Tech 65: At New York, Bonzie Colson banked in a go-ahead, three-point heave that barely beat the shot clock with two minutes remaining, and Notre Dame rallied from 21 down in the second half to stun Virginia Tech 71-65 on Wednesday night at the Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament.

Matt Farrell scored 22 points for the 10th-seeded Fighting Irish (20-13), who overcame a dreadful start in extending their late push to reach the NCAA Tournament.

UNLV 97, Air Force 90: Shakur Juiston scored 21 points and his three-point play in overtime started the winning surge that led eighth-seeded UNLV to a 97-90 win over ninth-seeded Air Force in the opening game of the Mountain West Conference Tournament on Wednesday in Las Vegas.

Juston's three-point play at the 3:21 mark of overtime made it 82-81 and the the Runnin' Rebels went on to a 12-0 run that included Juiston's dunk and seven more free throws in eight attempts. The Falcons missed eight straight shots and a pair of free throws.

Brandon McCoy led UNLV (20-12), which had lost five straight, with 23 points and 12 rebounds. Jovan Mooring had 17 points, six rebounds and six assists and Jordan Johnson had 10 points and 12 assists.

Lavelle Scottie topped the Falcons (12-19) with 23 points, Jacob Vann had 20, Caleb Morris 17 and Frank Toohey 11.

Louisville 82, Florida State 74: At New York, Quentin Snider scored 19 points, Ray Spalding had 18 and Louisville built a huge lead before knocking off Florida State.

Deng Adel added 15 points and eight rebounds for the ninth-seeded Cardinals (20-12), who won for the first time in ACC postseason play and advanced to face top-ranked Virginia on Thursday.

Six years later, Ichiro back in Seattle

Associated Press

PEORIA, Ariz. — Ichiro Suzuki's wish was granted. He is back in the familiar white and blue jersey of the Seattle Mariners.

"Even in the offseason when I would go back to Japan, I always came back to Seattle. This was my home ... has always been my home," the 44-year-old outfielder said through a translator Wednesday after finalizing a \$750,000, one-year contract. "Somewhere deep inside, I wanted to return and wear this uniform again."

Almost six years away, Suzuki returned to help patch an

injury-depleted outfield on the team he played for from 2001-12. The 10-time All-Star can earn an additional \$1.25 million in performance bonuses based on plate appearances: \$200,000 each for 150 and each additional 50 through 350, and \$250,000 for 400.

Suzuki earned the 2001 AL Rookie of the Year and MVP with the Mariners and won a pair of AL batting titles. He was traded to the New York Yankees midway through 2012, played parts of three seasons with the Yankees, then spent three seasons with Miami.

He has a .312 average and 3,080 hits, not including the

1,278 hits he amassed in nine seasons in Japan. Suzuki appeared in 136 games last year for the Miami Marlins and hit .255 with a .318 on-base percentage.

"I still have things that I want to do, and I want to accomplish," Suzuki said. "I'm really thinking about this year and what the Seattle Mariners need, what I can do to help. Everything that I've gained, everything that I've done in my career, I want to just give it all right here in Seattle."

Mariners general manager Jerry Dipoto said discussions about Suzuki's return intensified about a week ago, when the

club's injury situation became a greater concern.

"It did not take very long to put a deal together that brought Ichiro back home," Dipoto said, adding that Suzuki's presence will help a young outfield and veteran Dee Gordon, who is playing center field for the first time.

Projected left fielder Ben Gamel is sidelined for at least a month with a strained oblique muscle, right fielder Mitch Haniger is dealing with a hand injury that has limited his activity for a couple of weeks, and Guillermo Heredia is still in the final stages of recovery from offseason shoulder surgery.

NFL briefs

Seahawks trade 3-time Pro Bowl DE Bennett to Eagles

Associated Press

The Super Bowl champion Philadelphia Eagles bolstered their formidable pass rush with another top-level defensive lineman.

The Eagles acquired three-time Pro Bowl defensive end Michael Bennett from the Seattle Seahawks on Wednesday, three people familiar with the trade told The Associated Press. The deal won't be officially announced until the NFL's league year opens next Wednesday. The people spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to release the trade information.

Seattle gets wide receiver Marcus Johnson and a fifth-round pick, while Philadelphia also receives a seventh-round pick.

Bennett had 8½ sacks last season and 54 in his nine-year career. The 32-year-old Bennett has three years remaining on his contract, with a base salary of just \$1.65 million in 2018. That number jumps to \$6 million in 2019 and \$7.5 million in 2020.

The Eagles will have to make roster moves to accommodate

Bennett because they already are over the salary cap. Defensive end Vinny Curry is a likely candidate to be traded or released. Curry started 19 games this season, including playoffs, had three sacks and has three years left on a five-year, \$47 million deal.

Bennett joins a deep front unit that includes Fletcher Cox, Brandon Graham, Derek Barnett, Chris Long and Tim Jernigan. He probably won't face double-teaming as much and could thrive in defensive coordinator Jim Schwartz's aggressive system.

The outspoken Bennett has been heavily involved in social activism and fits in nicely in Philadelphia's locker room with Long and safety Malcolm Jenkins, who are leaders in those areas.

Seattle could be moving on from another defensive star. Cornerback Richard Sherman also is on the trading block.

Johnson has five catches for 45 yards in 10 career games.

In other NFL news:

■ The Los Angeles Rams have agreed to trade linebacker Alec Ogletree to the New York Giants for two draft picks, a

person with knowledge of the deal told The Associated Press.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity Wednesday because NFL trades can't be announced until March 14. ESPN first reported the deal.

Los Angeles gets the Giants' fourth-round and sixth-round picks in the 2018 draft. The NFC West champion Rams also will send a seventh-round pick in 2019 to the Giants along with Ogletree, their defensive captain and last season's leading tackler.

■ A person familiar with the settlement tells The Associated Press that Jerry Jones has agreed to pay the NFL more than \$2 million in legal fees resulting from two disputes the Dallas Cowboys owner had with the league.

The amount to be paid was resolved Wednesday. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the NFL did not announce details.

Commissioner Roger Goodell held an appeal hearing with Jones on Monday. That came a few days after Goodell assessed the financial penalties for Jones' lawsuit to overturn the suspension of Cowboys star

running back Ezekiel Elliott, and for a lawsuit Jones threatened to stop Goodell's newly approved contract.

■ The Dallas Cowboys have released defensive end Benson Mayowa in a move that saves \$2.8 million against the salary cap as the team tries to absorb a big raise for 2017 team sacks leader DeMarcus Lawrence.

Mayowa led the team with six sacks in 2016, his first season after signing an offer sheet that Oakland declined to match. But the 26-year-old had just one sack last season.

■ Jarvis Landry is now under contract with the Miami Dolphins, easing the path to a potential trade.

The three-time Pro Bowl receiver signed his \$16 million, one-year franchise tag Thursday, a person familiar with the situation said. The person confirmed the signing to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the Dolphins hadn't announced it.

The Dolphins have been shopping Landry, and the procedural move allows them to trade him as early as next Wednesday, when the NFL's new year begins.

NBA roundup

Harden, Rockets get 17th straight win

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — James Harden scored 26 points and the Houston Rockets beat the Milwaukee Bucks 110-99 on Wednesday night for their 17th straight victory.

The Rockets passed the Boston Celtics for the longest winning streak this season. Houston hasn't lost since Jan. 26 at New Orleans.

"We find ways to win," Harden said. "It's not going to be the same way every game."

The latest victory came on the second of a tough back-to-back stretch of road games that started at Oklahoma City. No wonder the Rockets looked sluggish at times.

"With a win streak like this you are doing a lot of things the right way," said Eric Gordon, who scored 18 points and had two momentum-swinging three-pointers in the third quarter. "We still play for each other. We knew this was going to be a tough road trip."

Gordon scored 18 points for Houston and had two momentum-swinging three-pointers in the third quarter. Chris Paul had 16 points and 11 assists.

Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 30 points for Milwaukee.

Raptors 121, Pistons 119 (OT): DeMar DeRozan scored 42 points, then fed Fred VanVleet for the tiebreaking jumper from the left corner with 1.1 seconds remaining in overtime to lift Toronto past host Detroit.

The Raptors became the first NBA team to clinch a playoff berth this season.

Pelicans 114, Kings 101: Anthony Davis scored 17 points before rolling his left ankle and leaving in the third quarter, and New Orleans beat host Sacramento to match a franchise record with its 10th straight win.

Davis went down battling for a rebound. He winced and grabbed at his ankle but remained in the game briefly.

He left late in the third quarter and did not return. X-rays were negative.

Cavaliers 113, Nuggets 108: LeBron James scored 39 points, including nine down the stretch, and dished out 10 assists as visiting Cleveland beat Denver after squandering a 16-point lead. James made one off-balanced shot after another in the waning minutes to turn back the Nuggets, who didn't take their first lead of the game until 8:35 remaining on a driving layup by Mason Plumlee.

Jeff Green gave Cleveland the lead for good with a three-pointer on a play set up by James after he tapped a loose ball out to him.

Jazz 104, Pacers 84: Rudy Gobert had 23 points and 14 rebounds, and Donovan Mitchell added 20 points and six assists in visiting Utah's win over Indiana.

The Jazz improved to 15-2 over their last 17 games. Ricky Rubio had 18 points and seven assists for Utah, and reserve

Jae Crowder added 16 points.

Lakers 108, Magic 107: Brook Lopez scored 27 points and hit two free throws with 0.6 seconds to play, and host Los Angeles blew a nine-point lead in the final 90 seconds before rallying back to beat Orlando.

The game ended with a curious officiating decision. When the Magic inbounded the ball at midcourt after Lopez's free throws, the Staples Center clock apparently started before anyone had touched the ball. But after video review, the officials ruled the teams must have a jump ball at center court, effectively preventing the Magic from getting a final chance to win.

Bulls 119, Grizzlies 110: Lauri Markkanen scored 22 points, Zach LaVine and Kris Dunn added 21 apiece and Chicago handed visiting Memphis its 15th straight loss.

Memphis' Dillon Brooks scored 20 of his 29 points in the fourth quarter.

NHL roundup

Penguins move into 1st place in Metropolitan

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Sidney Crosby's continued dominance of the Flyers helped the two-time defending Stanley Cup champion Penguins move back into first place.

Conor Sheary scored two goals, Crosby had three assists and Pittsburgh surged into the top spot in the Metropolitan Division with a 5-2 victory over the Flyers on Wednesday night.

Phil Kessel, Jamie Oleksiak and Evgeni Malkin also scored for the Penguins, who have won three straight. Pittsburgh (39-25-4, 82 points) moved one point ahead of idle Washington and three in front of third-place Philadelphia.

Crosby continued to haunt the Flyers, upping his total to 91 points in 62 career games against Pittsburgh's intrastate rival.

"Everybody gets up for it," Crosby said of the rivalry. "It brings out the best in everybody."

Crosby's third assist gave him 1,100 career points.

"His line was dynamic," Penguins coach Mike Sullivan said.

Sheary began the game on the fourth line, but played alongside Crosby for parts of the night — and benefited greatly. Crosby assisted on both goals to help Sheary break out of a slump, as he entered without a

goal in 15 straight contests.

"He goes to tough areas and plays bigger than he is," Crosby said of the 5-foot-8 Sheary.

"Thrilled for Conor," Sullivan said. "Essentially what I told him is, 'Nothing lasts forever.'"

Travis Konecny and Jakub Voracek had goals for the Flyers, who lost their fourth in a row.

"We didn't play a complete game 5-on-5," Philadelphia coach Dave Hakstol said. "We made some mistakes."

The teams combined for six goals in an electrifying second period.

Flames 5, Sabres 1: Sam Bennett and Mark Jankowski scored three minutes apart in

the first period and visiting Calgary snapped a four-game skid.

Calgary improved to 1-3-1 in its last five games to gain ground in the tightly contested Western Conference playoff race. With 76 points, the Flames jumped into 10th place, a point ahead of idle St. Louis, and within one of Los Angeles and Colorado.

Coyotes 2, Canucks 1: Derek Stepan scored with 58 seconds left in the third period, leading visiting Arizona over Vancouver.

Clayton Keller assisted on the winning goal and also scored in the first period for the Coyotes, who are 8-2-1 in their last 11 games.