

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Final days for last Marine Prowler squadron

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The last Marine EA-6B Prowler squadron will be deactivated in a ceremony Friday, marking the end of the aircraft's service, the Marine Corps announced.

The last squadron, Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron 2, Marine Aircraft Group 14, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing, is located at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, about 45 miles outside of Jacksonville, N.C. The squad-

ron has only two Prowlers left, according to the Marine Corps. The EA-6B Prowler is a tactical jamming aircraft for the Navy and Marine Corps that began its service in 1971, according to Northrop Grumman's website. The aircraft was first deployed to Southeast Asia in 1972.

During its 42 years of service, the Marine Corps' Prowlers have collectively flown more than 260,000 hours, according to the service. During the last four decades, it has deployed more than 70 times in support of major combat operations in-

cluding Desert Shield, Decisive Endeavor, Iraqi Freedom, and recently with Inherent Resolve and Freedom's Sentinel.

The Marine's F-35B Lightning II was designed to replace the EA-6B Prowler, as well as the F/A-18 Hornet and AV-8B Harrier.

The squadron traces its origins to the Korean War, when it was originally Marine Composite Reconnaissance Squadron 2, and then designated to Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron 2 in 1975, according to the Marine Corps. In 1977,

the squadron was the first in the Marine Corps to transition from the EA-6A Electric Intruder to the Prowler.

The phase out of the Prowlers' service began in May 2016 with Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Training Squadron 1 and the EA-6B Fleet Replacement Squadron deactivating, according to the Marine Corps. Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron 4 was deactivated in June 2017 and Squadron 3 was deactivated in May 2018.

## Illnesses mount for military families battling tainted water

By CLAUDIA GRISALES  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Birth defects. Stage IV cancer. Thyroid disease.

This is a sample of the wide array of illnesses reported in recent years by families battling contaminated water at military bases.

Some members of those families have said the health conditions were caused by a toxic chemical used in firefighting foam that found its way into water supplies at military bases throughout the country.

A comprehensive accounting of the families impacted has yet to be seen, but they have increasingly spoken out at legislative hearings and through activist groups such as Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit Environmental Working Group. On Wednesday, four families accompanied the group in the audience of a House panel, and were recognized repeatedly by lawmakers.

Last year, the then-administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, Scott Pruitt, called the matter a "national

emergency."

Today, federal and military leaders are only in the beginning stages of halting its impact, members of a House Oversight and Reform Committee subpanel said Wednesday during a hearing.

"These Americans are just a small fraction of Americans across our country who have been affected by the toxicity of these chemicals by simply drinking water," said Rep. Harley Rouda, D-Calif., chairman of the committee's environment subpanel. "The question is a sense of urgency ... for their families, a sense of urgency for those who have yet to be impacted by our failure to move quickly in addressing this issue."

The hearing Wednesday was the first for the subpanel under new leadership, and a reminder that the widespread concerns of per- and polyfluoroalkyl, or PFAS, contamination could come under closer scrutiny by the Democrat-led House. PFAS are also known as "forever chemicals" because of their ability to accumulate.

One year ago, Margaret Sulli-

van, deputy assistant secretary of defense for environment, testified before a congressional panel that there were 401 military installations that could have dangerous levels of PFAS in their water supplies.

"We should all be angry that those who are willing to pay the ultimate price for our country have to worry about exposure to toxic chemicals," Rouda said.

Rep. Dan Kildee, D-Mich., testified the Defense Department has yet to request additional funds to address the PFAS contamination and has only acted at 32 of the sites to clean up contamination — less than 10 percent.

"Clearly more has to be done and there must be greater urgency," he said.

Among those steps, new PFAS chemicals must no longer be put into the environment, even as it's still being used in training exercises at airports and other locations. Congress must also do more work to fully understand the scope of the problem, Kildee said.

"Finally, and more importantly, we need to take care of those veterans and families that

have already been exposed to those PFAS chemicals, helping them get the health care and resources that they certainly deserve," he said.

Sullivan said Wednesday that the discovery of PFAS at military installations triggered action plans to address the concerns. With the discovery, DOD moved to test whether the levels of PFAS were above the EPA's recommended levels. It also moved to work with water supply companies to ensure that levels were addressed. In cases where concerns have remained, alternate supplies have been provided such as bottled water.

"DOD is taking actions to reduce the risks," Sullivan said. "By the end of the summer, that summer of 2016, no one on a military base was drinking water above" the EPA's recommended levels.

However, lawmakers said there's still health issues to address for people already exposed to the contamination who have yet to show symptoms.

Dave Ross, an EPA assistant administrator, said new work is underway to address the contamination concerns.

# Sex assault victims advocacy group launched

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE  
*Stars and Stripes*

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Two women have joined together to help victims of sexual assault in the military find justice in a system they say often regards victims as an afterthought.

Survivors United is a sexual-assault victims advocacy group that offers a one-stop shop of resources at [www.survivorsunited1.com](http://www.survivorsunited1.com). At the site, visitors can find information and links to other sites for help reporting a sexual assault and coping with its aftermath.

Adrian Perry, a Marine Corps spouse, and Kylisha Boyd, a civilian, are the group's co-founders. Survivors United is a start-up organization, but both women said they have the backing of others.

"You just have no clue where to begin or what to do next,"

Perry said, referring to the aftermath of a sexual assault. "We strive to be the organization that is in the trenches with the survivor, fighting with them, so that they can be heard, whatever they choose to do."

The website offers instructions for each individual and situation, whether as an active-duty servicemember, National Guard and Reserve, transitioning servicemember or civilian. The site has information on the difference between confidentially reporting a crime and an investigation undertaken by a military command.

It provides legal statutes and rights as far as seeking prosecution inside or out of the military system; information on obtaining special victims' counsel; how to file a Freedom of Information Act request for pertinent case files; how to report reprisal; resources and

treatment options.

It also provides forms and information on how to contact members of Congress if a victim feels his or her case has been swept under the rug.

Perry's role as a survivors' advocate took root in summer 2016, when her daughter, age 6 at the time, told her family that Daniel Wilson, a Marine Corps colonel, had touched her inappropriately.

Wilson was convicted by a court-martial in September 2017 of sexual abuse of a child as well as six counts of conduct unbecoming an officer and absence without leave. He was sentenced to 5½ years in prison.

From the start, Perry said, her family became entangled in a bureaucratic web of military law enforcement and judicial proceedings where nobody seemed to fully comprehend

their rights or available options. The process itself seemed disproportionately callous and unfair toward victims, she said.

Perry wanted to make sure that no other family had to go through a similar situation, so she teamed with Boyd and launched Survivors United in February.

"You're not always made aware of all of your rights," she said. "Our main goal is to be able to provide people with knowledge and empower survivors so that they can move forward and figure out the way ahead after an assault like this."

Boyd said she was sexually assaulted by a U.S. servicemember in Virginia in 2016. Navigating the military justice system was an eye-opening experience that led her to advocacy, she said.

## Marine detained after incident at embassy in Japan

BY JAMES BOLINGER  
*Stars and Stripes*

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION IWAKUNI, Japan — An Iwakuni-based Marine was held by Tokyo Metropolitan Police after attempting to "scale a fence" near the German Embassy in Tokyo's Roppongi district, base officials confirmed Wednesday morning.

The unidentified female corporal — assigned to Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 — was placed in protective custody at about 2 a.m. Friday, Marine Aircraft Group 12 spokesman Capt. Marco Valenzuela told Stars and Stripes on Wednesday morning.

She was not arrested and has returned to MCAS Iwakuni, he said.

The Marine was on a trip sponsored by the base and attempted the climb after a night of drinking, according to a report Tuesday by the online news site Tokyo Reporter. No injuries or damages resulted from the incident, and the Marine Corps has not filed charges, Valenzuela said.

## Sailor sentenced to 5 years for attempted rape of child

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS  
*Stars and Stripes*

A Japan-based sailor was sentenced to five years in prison after being convicted in a court-martial last week of charges stemming from the attempted sexual abuse of two children, according to court documents.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Allen J. Jewell, an operations specialist assigned to Fleet Activities Okinawa, was found guilty Friday of attempted rape of a child; attempted sexual abuse of a child through a lewd act; attempted sexual abuse of a child through indecent communication; bringing discredit to the armed forces; and indecent language.

Jewell went to an apartment Sept. 12 to commit a sexual act on a girl he believed was 8 years old, according to court documents. He arranged the meeting through someone he believed was the girl's mother, and from Sept. 10 through Sept. 12 sent that person explicit text messages about his sexual plans for the child.

From Sept. 9-12, Jewell also texted graphic sexual messages to a person he believed was a different child younger than 16 years old, according to the charge sheet. The messages suggested Jewell believed the person was underage, saying that the two "would have to keep a low profile [because] of your age," according to court documents.

The court documents did not reveal with whom Jewell was communicating in either case, but Naval Criminal Investigative Services agents have played such roles in the past.

Jewell will receive credit against his sentence for 170 days spent in the brig prior to his conviction. In addition to his confinement, his rate has been reduced to E-1, he will be dismissed from the Navy with a dishonorable discharge and forfeit all pay and allowances for five years, according to court documents.

It was unclear Wednesday where Jewell will serve his sentence. He must register as a sex offender once released from prison, according to court documents.

# Bases brace as DOD mulls funding redirects

By ROSE L. THAYER

*Stars and Stripes*

AUSTIN, Texas — Shift work, shrinking workspace and multiple workers sharing one desk — these are just a few ways that military personnel are dealing with overcrowding at the National Air and Space Intelligence Center at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio.

A new facility designed to accommodate the increasing workforce at the center, which has grown 87 percent since 2000, is just one of hundreds of military construction projects at risk of a delay because funding could be diverted to build a wall along the U.S. border with Mexico.

The long list of projects includes many appropriated in fiscal year 2019 that have not been started. It spans the globe and includes everything from new schools and child development centers to housing updates to the facilities needed for day-to-day operations.

Since President Donald Trump declared illegal immigration from Central America a national emergency on Feb. 15 and ordered the Defense Department to use \$3.6 billion from its military construction budget to build the wall, speculation has mounted about which projects could be siphoned.

The Defense Department has stated criteria to determine which projects are affected, said Mark Cancian, a senior adviser with the Washington think tank Center for Strategic and International Studies. The most protected projects have an operational impact, such as a hangar or motor pool for a new piece of equipment, followed by those related to health and safety, he said.

After congressional hearings on the housing problems at some military bases, acting Defense Secretary Pat Shanahan said no dollars will be taken from those projects. He is expected to endorse the president's national emergency and present to Congress a list of projects that he's willing to delay as early as this week, *The Associated Press* reported.

The Pentagon has said it will backfill any delayed projects in the fiscal 2020 budget, but whether Congress is willing to go along with that is unclear, Cancian said.

"Many members may be very angry that they have to, in effect, fund the same project twice and that they're indirectly funding the wall," he said. "The military will point out that the failure to fund these projects have no effect on the wall, it will just hurt the military."

The intelligence center in Ohio was authorized in fiscal 2019 for \$182 million but

funded \$61 million so far, said Michelle Martz, spokesperson for the center.

It's in the design phase and officials plan to award a construction contract this year and move in to the 255,000-square-foot facility by 2023. The additional funding would need to be added to future budgets.

With 4,000 workers and a budget of more than \$450 million, NASIC is charged with identifying air, space, missile and cyber threats to enable a military response. It is also responsible for informing decisions on weapons systems acquisition and shaping national defense policy.

Rep. Mike Turner, R-Ohio, whose district includes the NASIC project, was one of a handful of lawmakers to express concern and called the idea of taking these predetermined construction dollars a "dangerous precedent."

Rep. Roger Williams, R-Texas, also said there have been "real concerns about money being taken away from much-needed barracks and facility renovations at Fort Hood."

The Texas installation has \$61 million in reconstruction money on the table for the renovation of five barracks buildings. Until renovations are complete, soldiers are being asked to crowd into the remaining living spaces.

## N. Korea said to be rebuilding rocket site structures

*Associated Press*

SEOUL, South Korea—North Korea is restoring facilities at a long-range rocket launch site that it dismantled last year as part of disarmament steps, according to foreign experts and a South Korean lawmaker who was briefed by Seoul's spy service.

The finding follows a high-stakes nuclear summit last week between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and U.S. President Donald Trump that ended without any agreement.

South Korea's National Intelligence Service provided the assessment about the North's Tongchang-ri launch site to lawmakers during a private briefing Tuesday. North Korea didn't immediately respond in its state media.

An article from 38 North, a website specializing in North Korea studies, cited commercial satellite imagery as indi-

cating that efforts to rebuild some structures at the site started sometime between Feb. 16 and March 2.

Dismantling parts of its long-range rocket launch facility was among several steps the North took last year when it entered nuclear talks with the United States and South Korea. North Korea has carried out satellite launches at the site in recent years, resulting in U.N. sanctions over expert claims that they were disguised tests of banned missile technology.

It wasn't immediately clear how the report might affect nuclear diplomacy. The Trump-Kim summit fell apart because of differences over how much sanction relief North Korea could win in return for closing its aging main nuclear complex. The U.S. and North Korea accused each other of causing the summit breakdown, but both sides left the door open for future negotiations.

Trump said Kim told him that North Korea would continue to suspend nuclear and missile tests while negotiations are underway, and South Korea and the U.S. announced Sunday that they are eliminating massive springtime military drills and replacing them with smaller exercises in an effort to support the talks.

One of the South Korean lawmakers who attended the intelligence briefing said Wednesday that NIS director Suh Hoon said the structures being restored at the launch site include roofs and building doors.

He quoted Suh as saying that the move could be preparation to restart long-range rocket launches if nuclear diplomacy completely collapses, or could be an attempt to add structures that could be dramatically blown up in a show of denuclearization commitment when U.S. inspectors visit if negotiations with Washington go well.

The 38 North report published Tuesday said the rail-mounted processing building, which is where space launch vehicles are worked on before they're moved to the launch pad, is being reassembled. It said two support cranes can be seen at the building, and walls have been erected and a new roof added.

At the engine test stand, the website said it appears that the engine support structure is being reassembled. It said new roofs have been installed on the fuel and oxidizer buildings.

The report was written by Jack Liu and Jenny Town.

Beyond Parallel, a website run by the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank, issued a similar assessment of the Tongchang-ri site. It said satellite imagery taken Saturday, two days after the failed summit, showed North Korea "is pursuing a rapid rebuilding" of the rocket site.

# Alabama twister kills 10 from single family

Associated Press

BEAUREGARD, Ala. — Cousins Cordarrly Jones and Demetria Jones have a hard time counting all the relatives they lost to a monster tornado that wiped out a rural community in Alabama.

Their grandparents, Jimmy Jones, 89, and Mary Louise Jones, 83, were killed in their home on a two-lane road where most everyone shares family ties. The couple's son Emmanuel Jones, 53, an uncle to the cousins, is gone too.

Also dead, they said, were seven cousins by both blood and marriage: Eric Jamal Stenson, 38; Florel Tate Stenson; 63; Henry Lewis Stenson; 65; James Henry Tate, 86; Tresia Robinson, 62; Raymond Robinson Jr., 63; and Maggie Delight Robinson, 57.

Stunned by the loss of 10 relatives and worried about still more who are hospitalized with serious injuries, the cousins stood Tuesday amid the wreckage of a row of family homes in tiny Bearegard, near the Georgia state line.

With windspeed as high as 170 mph, the deadliest U.S. tornado in nearly six years rolled

mobile homes across fields and caused even brick homes to collapse into unrecognizable heaps. At least 23 people were killed Sunday, some of them children. The full scale of the loss came into focus with the release of the names of the dead. The youngest victim was 6, the oldest 89.

It was the deadliest tornado to hit the U.S. since May 2013, when an EF5 twister killed 24 people in Moore, Okla.

The enormous twister apparently churned for about 70 miles, crossing the state line and ending in neighboring Georgia, the National Weather Service said. Government teams that surveyed Sunday's damage confirmed there was an outbreak of at least 20 twisters in Florida, Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina.

On Tuesday, the search for bodies, pets and belongings continued in and around Bearegard amid the din of beeping heavy machinery and whining chain saws.

Sheriff Jay Jones said the list of the missing shrunk from dozens to just seven or eight.

# Israel remarks show Democrats' divisions

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Back in January, the Democrats welcomed their brash young newcomers to Congress with smiles and hugs. That was before the new colleagues dragged the party's simmering divisions over Israel out in the open.

Provocative comments from Rep. Ilhan Omar, of Minnesota, have thrust the Democrats into an uncomfortable debate over Israel policy a few weeks before a high-profile conference at which senior Democrats typically make a show of support for the Jewish state. Increasingly, the rift appears as much generational as ideological, with newly elected Democrats showing less deference to the party line.

Omar became the flash point after she suggested last week that Israel's supporters are pushing U.S. lawmakers to take a pledge of "allegiance to a foreign country." It's at least the third time she has forced older, pro-Israel Democrats who run the House into awkward territory over U.S.-Israeli policy.

Republicans have been happy to stoke the furor, with President Donald Trump calling Omar's remarks "a dark day for Israel" and posting a

photo of himself in Jerusalem. Inside the Democratic family, meanwhile, leaders are in a bind, torn between a need to admonish Omar and their desire to defend one of the first Muslim women elected to Congress.

This time Omar is not apologizing. And this time pro-Israel Democrats led by Speaker Nancy Pelosi are not just warning her about the dangers of Jewish tropes. They're expected to offer a resolution condemning anti-Semitism on the House floor. Although no vote on the resolution is yet scheduled, Democrats said it could come as soon as Thursday.

Pelosi and Majority Leader Steny Hoyer announced in a meeting of leading Democrats late Tuesday that the text will be updated to include anti-Muslim bias, according to a senior Democratic aide who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the private meeting.

In a poll by the Pew Research Center in January of last year, 46 percent of Americans said they sympathized more with Israel and 16 percent with the Palestinians in their Middle East discord.

# Possibility of mudslides prompts Calif. evacuation orders

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A storm soaking California on Wednesday could trigger mudslides in wildfire burn areas where thousands of residents are under evacuation orders, authorities warned.

Up to 4 inches of rain was expected along the Central Coast, and amounts could be higher in areas where thunderstorms develop, the National Weather Service said.

The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office ordered 3,000 residents to evacuate hillside neighborhoods scarred by fires — including parts of Montecito hit by a disastrous debris flow just over a year ago. Officials didn't say how many people heeded the order.

Many customers pumping gas at Monte-

cito's Village Service Station on Tuesday said they're not leaving, according to Ray Dunham, who works there.

"Nobody's going into panic mode," he said. "They think the threat is way over-exaggerated."

Sheriff Bill Brown told a news conference earlier this week that the system is expected to be more intense than the last several storms. A map published by the county Office of Emergency Management indicates that much of Montecito is at risk.

"We do not take these evacuation orders lightly, and while we do know this is very inconvenient, if you are in an evacuation area, please know there is a high risk to life and property," Brown said.

A January 2018 debris flow from the

Thomas fire scar destroyed or damaged hundreds of Montecito structures, killed 21 people and left two others missing.

The weather service issued a flash-flood watch through Wednesday for all burn areas in Santa Barbara, Ventura and Los Angeles counties.

To the north, heavy snowfall and high winds are predicted for the Sierra Nevada, where a series of blizzards has dumped mountains of snow.

The wettest winter in years has nearly eliminated drought conditions in the state. While frequently disrupting travel, the storms contributed a big part of the state's water supply — the Sierra snowpack that melts and runs off into reservoirs during spring and summer.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Authorities investigate \$17K theft of copper

**WV** SPENCER — Authorities in West Virginia are trying to find out who took thousands of dollars' worth of copper from an American Electric Power facility.

Roane County Sheriff Todd Cole told WSAZ-TV in Huntington that someone got into the property in the Amma community by cutting a hole in the fence. Cole said a roll of copper valued at about \$17,000 is missing.

No suspect information has been released. The sheriff's office said anyone with information should call 304-927-3410.

### Footprints in snow lead to theft suspect

**NJ** HACKENSACK — Police in New Jersey said footprints in the snow led them from a crashed stolen car to the man suspected of stealing it.

Hackensack Police Capt. Peter Busciglio said the 23-year-old suspect was arrested on motor vehicle theft and resisting arrest charges Saturday. NorthJersey.com reported the victim told police he had left his car running with the keys in the ignition when it was stolen.

Authorities said the victim got into a company car and pursued the suspect until he crashed and fled on foot. Responding officers tracked down the suspect by following his footprints in the snow.

The suspect has been released on a summons and no court date has been scheduled.

### Jet slides off runway in landing during storm

**ME** PRESQUE ISLE — Officials said a pilot

and four passengers suffered minor injuries when a United Express regional jet slid off a runway during a northern Maine snowstorm.

An official said the pilot aborted the first landing attempt and requested runway lights be turned on due to low visibility before the second attempt at 11:30 a.m. Monday. The 50-seat Embraer 145 came to rest on the east side of Presque Isle Regional Airport's runway with damage to its nose cone and landing gear.

The CommutAir-operated flight from Newark, N.J., had 28 passengers and three crewmembers. A city spokeswoman said the injured were treated and released.

### Officer praised for saving baby at theater

**CT** NORTH HAVEN — A Connecticut police officer is being praised for saving the life of a baby at a movie theater.

The North Haven Police Department said Detective Michael Harton was working at a theater in the city Saturday night when a woman rushed out with a newborn baby who wasn't breathing.

Police said Harton took the baby and revived it using life-saving measures.

North Haven police said Harton is a "super hero."

It is unclear what caused the baby to stop breathing.

### 'Competition' emerges over college application

**UT** SALT LAKE CITY — Politicians and schools are playfully competing for a Louisiana girl's college enrollment after she mistakenly applied to the wrong community college over the weekend.

Kaitlynn Lovelady mistakenly applied to Salt Lake Com-

munity College in Utah instead of South Louisiana Community College when trying to enroll in a summer class. Both use the same acronym, SLCC.

Her Twitter post about the mistake led to a back and forth between the lieutenant governors of Utah and Louisiana over which state is better.

A Utah businessperson is offering to pay for the student's flight to Salt Lake City. Lovelady says she will take up the offer in April.

Salt Lake Community College offered to reimburse Lovelady the \$40 application fee if she decided on the other school instead.

### Firefighting gear to be sent to sister city

**VA** CHARLOTTESVILLE — Charlottesville is sending surplus firefighting gear to its sister city in Ghana.

The Daily Progress reported that this summer, two city firefighters will also go to Winneba to help with a community risk assessment that will be used to develop programs to improve fire safety.

The equipment bound for West Africa includes helmets, fire suits, gloves and boots. Charlottesville fire officials said the region has high fire losses.

Fire Chief Andrew Baxter said the department is "excited" about developing a relationship with firefighters in Winneba and improving safety in both communities.

### Coroner running out of space for bodies

**ID** BOISE — The morgue in Idaho's biggest county is running out of space to hold bodies.

The Idaho Statesman report-

ed the Ada County Coroner's office is at capacity with 15 to 18 bodies most days, some of them stored on cots and smaller folding tables until the remains are released to area funeral homes. Sometimes the coroner's office is forced to put two bodies on one table until more space opens up.

Ada County Coroner Dotti Owens said that last year the office took in 727 bodies — marking a 74 percent increase from seven years ago. She said the problem will only worsen as Idaho's population continues to grow.

Owens said that along with population growth, drug overdoses, suicides and an increasing number of unclaimed bodies are contributing to the crowding.

### Molotov cocktails thrown at auto shop

**FL** ORLANDO — A man in Florida is accused of throwing Molotov cocktails at his impounded car.

The Orlando Sentinel reported that Ayub Mule Abdulrahman, 27, arrived at Almake Auto Shop on Saturday to pay the towing fee for his Nissan Altima. Authorities said Abdulrahman was no longer there when the property's owner arrived.

An arrest affidavit says the tow lot owner was told a car in his lot was on fire. The Orange County Sheriff's Office said the owner identified Abdulrahman as the man throwing Molotov cocktails at the car through video surveillance.

The owner put out the fire and no one was injured. Abdulrahman was arrested and charged with arson and manufacturing and transporting a firebomb.

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STARS AND STRIPES®

# Stars shine, but Sabres, Oilers struggle

Associated Press

BUFFALO, N.Y. — While keeping open the possibility of a late playoff push, Edmonton Oilers captain Connor McDavid acknowledged how much losing has worn on him this year. In Buffalo, Sabres captain Jack Eichel grew irritated when asked about his team's inability to win consecutive games in nearly three months.

"I don't have an answer for you right now," Eichel said following a 5-2 loss at Toronto on Saturday, a day after beating Pittsburgh.

What's becoming abundantly clear since McDavid and Eichel were selected with the top two picks in the 2015 draft is it takes more than the arrival of a so-called "once-in-a-generation" star to transform a losing team into a contender.

"It's a team sport. Things don't get fixed with one player," Sabres forward Kyle Okposo said before a 4-3 loss to the Oilers on Monday night. "They can certainly help. But it's a collective effort."

The game against Edmonton was an example of Okposo's viewpoint. Eichel scored twice, including his career high-matching 25th, but the Sabres squandered a 3-1 second-period lead.

McDavid and Eichel are the faces of their respective franchises based on both production and salary. The 22-year-old McDavid is in the first season of an eight-year, \$100 million contract, and the 22-year-old Eichel is in the first season of an eight-year, \$80 million deal.

Their respective teams have barely made a dent in the standings, with both entering the final month of the season in jeopardy of missing the playoffs.

The comparisons are striking.

The Oilers have advanced to the playoffs just once with McDavid, in 2016-17, when they were knocked out in the second round by San Jose. Buffalo is in the midst of a franchise-worst seven-year playoff drought, and finished last overall twice with Eichel.

Both teams also have changed GMs and coaches since 2015. The Oilers fired general manager Peter Chiarelli and coach Todd McLellan in separate moves this season. The Sabres dismissed GM Tim Murray and coach Dan Bylsma in April 2017.

It doesn't come close to the expectations right after the 2015 draft in Florida, where the Canadian-born McDavid was picked first and the American Eichel second, to the delight of each team's respective fan base.

As much as McDavid and Eichel dislike the comparisons to each other, they're in agreement in saying how unfair the expectations were.

"I don't think that's possible at all," McDavid said of one player changing a franchise's trajectory. "I don't think in this league, where it's so competitive each and every night, that one guy can change it."

McDavid has won two scoring titles and was the league's MVP in 2017.

Overall, McDavid's 348

points (120 goals, 228 assists) in 271 games are third among NHL players since 2015-16. Eichel has 249 points (98 goals, 151 assists) in 272 games, and ranks 29th over the same span following Monday's game.

Inconsistency has all but scuttled the Sabres' playoff chances this season.

In going 13-22-6 since a 10-game winning streak in November, they've gone from briefly sitting atop the Eastern Conference standings to 11th, and nine points out of contention.

It's a slide during which Buffalo has failed to win consecutive games since Dec. 11-13. Eichel has been among the few constants. His worst point drought lasted five games.

"It's a team game and you need everyone pulling in the same direction," said Eichel, who has a career-best 72 points this season. "It's the best league in the world. You can't expect it to be easy. And I think we all expected it to be hard, and I think it has been."

## NHL roundup

# Kucherov powers league-leading Lightning past Jets

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Nikita Kucherov tied the Lightning's single-season points record with a pair of assists to lead Tampa Bay to a 5-2 victory against the Winnipeg Jets on Tuesday night.

Kucherov's two points give him 108 on the season to tie the single-season mark set by Vincent Lecavalier in the 2006-07 season when he finished with 52 goals and 58 assists.

The league-leading Lightning improved to 14-1-2 in the past 17 games.

Steven Stamkos scored his 34th goal of the season and 382nd of his career and is one shy of tying Lecavalier's career franchise record.

Brayden Point, Adam Erne and Yanni Gourde also scored

for Tampa Bay.

Andrei Vasilevskiy finished with 30 saves for his 10th consecutive victory and improved to 11-0-2 in his past 13 starts.

Blake Wheeler and Jacob Trouba scored for Winnipeg, which fell to 2-3 in the past five games.

Connor Hellebuyck, who briefly left the game after taking Kucherov's slap shot off the mask, allowed four goals on 36 shots. Laurent Brossoit allowed one goal on the two shots he faced in 3:16 of ice time.

Kucherov tied the mark with a secondary assist on Stamkos' power-play goal.

**Penguins 3, Panthers 2 (OT):** Jake Guentzel scored on a breakaway 2:44 into overtime to lift host Pittsburgh past

Florida.

**Islanders 5, Senators 4 (SO):** Jordan Eberle and Mathew Barzal scored in the shootout and host New York gave coach Barry Trotz his 800th win.

**Blue Jackets 2, Devils 1 (SO):** Cam Atkinson and Artemi Panarin scored in the shootout and Sergei Bobrovsky stopped both New Jersey attempts to give visiting Columbus the win.

**Bruins 4, Hurricanes 3 (SO):** David Krejci scored 1:46 into overtime, and host Boston ended Carolina's five-game winning streak.

**Ducks 3, Coyotes 1:** Adam Henrique and Troy Terry scored power-play goals in the third period and visiting Anaheim ended Arizona's NHL-

long six-game winning streak.

**Predators 5, Wild 4 (SO):** Ryan Johansen scored the lone goal in a shootout and host Nashville got its second win against Minnesota in three nights.

**Avalanche 4, Red Wings 3 (OT):** Nathan MacKinnon scored 2:29 into overtime and also had an assist to help host Colorado rally past skidding Detroit.

**Stars 1, Rangers 0:** Ben Bishop made 28 saves in his 28th career shutout, John Klingberg scored a second-period goal and host Dallas beat New York.

**Canadiens 3, Kings 1:** Carey Price tied Jacques Plante for most career wins by a Montreal goalie, making 26 saves in a victory over host Los Angeles.

# Santa Anita closes after 21st horse death

Associated Press

ARCADIA, Calif. — Santa Anita has canceled racing indefinitely to re-examine its dirt surface after the deaths of 21 horses in the last two months.

Tim Ritvo, chief operating officer of The Stronach Group, which owns Santa Anita, told The Associated Press on Tuesday that racing won't be held this weekend, when two major races were scheduled: the San Felipe for 3-year-old Kentucky Derby hopefuls and the Santa Anita Handicap for older horses.

Ritvo wouldn't speculate on when training and racing would resume. After this weekend, races were to be run again starting March 14 at the storied racetrack that will host the Breeders' Cup world championships for a record 10th time this fall.

"In whole, we feel confident in the track and we're just being very proactive," Ritvo said. "We want to do all the testing that needs to be done. When we believe we're in good shape, we'll start to train over it again."

The Daily Racing Form first reported the cancellation.

The latest fatality occurred during training on Tuesday, when a 4-year-old filly got injured and was euthanized.

"Obviously, one horse is too many," Ritvo said. "The recent rash is just horrible. We need to definitely take a step back and

evaluate everything."

Santa Anita received 11½ inches of rain and had unusually cold temperatures in February, but it's unclear whether track conditions played a role in any of the fatalities.

The National Weather Service was forecasting 1 to 2 inches of rain in Los Angeles County starting overnight Tuesday and into Wednesday.

"We think that (rain) could definitely contribute even though our experts are telling us not," Ritvo said. "The tracks out here are built not for weather like that."

Ritvo said officials are "a little bit concerned" with the latest impending storm and how the dirt surface can change from muddy to fast in a short time.

Besides re-examining the dirt track, Ritvo said all racing protocols would be looked at.

"We won't rush it," he said. "Everybody takes a deep breath."

Ritvo was uncertain whether the San Felipe and Santa Anita Handicap would be rescheduled.

"Those are huge races," he said. "We hope so."

Seven deaths have occurred during races on the dirt oval at Santa Anita since the track's winter meet began on Dec. 26. Five have occurred on the turf course and nine came during training on dirt. The highest-profile horse to be euthanized was Battle of Midway, winner

of the 2017 Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile. The 5-year-old bay also finished third in the 2017 Kentucky Derby for Hall of Fame trainer Jerry Hollendorfer. The horse suffered injuries during a workout on Feb. 23.

Last week, Santa Anita was closed for two days while the dirt surface underwent extensive testing and was declared fit for racing.

Hall of Fame trainer Ron McAnally said 4-year-old filly Lets Light the Way "took a bad step or something" on Tuesday.

He said the injury was a shattered sesamoid in her right front leg. Sesamoid bones provide anchor points for the two branches of the suspensory ligament. The bones are under stress each time a horse takes a step. Lets Light the Way was X-rayed and later euthanized.

"I think the weather has a lot to do with it," said McAnally, whose wife, Debbie, owned the filly.

"Santa Anita has been a wonderful track, and they've done all kinds of tests," McAnally said. "I don't know what else they could do. It's a fluky thing."

Also Tuesday, Vyjack was pulled up after completing a five-furlong workout, according to trainer Phil D'Amato. The graded stakes-winning 9-year-old gelding was taken off the track in a van. But D'Amato told the Daily Racing Form that

Vyjack "took a couple of funny steps" and was OK.

The number of deaths has drawn both concern and criticism. A handful of animal-rights activists gathered outside Santa Anita's main gate on Sunday, carrying signs and shouting.

"The first and most important thing is the health and welfare of the horses and jockeys," Ritvo said.

In 2017, 20 deaths occurred among a total of 8,463 starts over a span of 122 racing days at Santa Anita, according to the most recent figures compiled by The Jockey Club.

There were 1.61 deaths per 1,000 starts in the U.S. in 2017, according to the most recent figures from the Equine Injury Database, compiled by The Jockey Club. That was a slight increase in the rate of fatal injury compared with 2016, when there were 1.54 deaths per 1,000 starts.

The deaths were more frequent on dirt surfaces (1.74 per 1,000 starts) than on turf (1.36).

Santa Anita was closed for two days last week while the dirt surface was tested.

Mick Peterson, a soil and safety expert brought in from the University of Kentucky, proclaimed the track "100 percent ready" to resume racing.

Since Peterson's comments, two horses have died, including McAnally's filly.

## MLB takes note of Harper's fishing for Trout

Associated Press

CLEARWATER, Fla. — Now pitching for the Philadelphia Phillies, Bryce Harper.

The new Phillies slugger has again lobbied for superstar Mike Trout to join the franchise in 2021, a possible violation of Major League Baseball's tampering rule.

Trout, a two-time AL MVP with the Los Angeles Angels, grew up near Philadelphia, attended the Phillies victory parade in 2008 as a 17-year-old and has season tickets for the Eagles. The 27-year-old outfielder is set to become a free agent after

the 2020 season.

"If you don't think I'm gonna call Mike Trout to come to Philly in 2020, you're crazy," Harper told SportsRadio 94WIP in Philadelphia on Tuesday.

The Phillies gave Harper a 13-year contract last week, the largest deal in baseball history at \$330 million. Harper told team owner John Middleton he's willing to help the team recruit free agents and sell them on playing for a winner in Philadelphia.

Fishing for Trout, sort of.

"For me, I can be able to talk to Trout, or whoever it is, big-name free agent or who-

ever wants to come to Philly or is thinking about coming to Philly, I can say 'Hey, this is the place to be. This is where the fans are great, ownership understands it, our manager is awesome,'" Harper said. "I can really put that faith in myself in being able to say we are able to go about it the right way, we are the Philadelphia Phillies and we want whoever wants to come to Philly."

Harper made his first pitch for Trout on Saturday.

"We are aware of the situation and have been in contact with both clubs," MLB said in a statement Wednesday.

## NBA roundup

## Hayward, Boston wallop Golden State

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — DeMarcus Cousins lost his cool and the Golden State Warriors lost at home in embarrassing fashion once again.

Gordon Hayward scored 30 points off the bench, Kyrie Irving had 19 points and 11 assists, and the Boston Celtics ran away from the Warriors early on the way to a 128-95 win Tuesday night in a game that turned testy with the two-time defending champions down big.

Cousins and Terry Rozier received double technicals with 8:44 to play. Cousins was called for his fifth foul on a charge drawn by Aron Baynes, then the fiery Warriors center stood over Baynes in clear frustration. Jayson Tatum bumped Cousins with his right arm and Cousins pushed back with some force, then Rozier entered the

fray and he and Cousins traded shoves.

“It was silly. It was nothing, absolutely nothing,” Cousins said without elaborating.

Boogie’s moment summed up an ugly evening of basketball by his team — and fans seeing their final season in the East Bay made a mad dash for the Oracle Arena exits in the closing minutes. It was the Warriors’ fifth home defeat by 20 or more points.

“I’d love to have some magic potion and say we can come out and play with better energy and better discipline and kind of rectify it, but we’ve got to, at some point, stop talking about it and figure it out,” Stephen Curry said.

Curry provided a bright spot with 23 points and four three-pointers on a night Splash Brother Klay Thompson sat out with soreness in his right knee.

**Rockets 107, Raptors**

**95:** James Harden scored 35 points, Gerald Green had 11 of his 18 in the fourth quarter and visiting Houston beat Toronto.

Eric Gordon and Austin Rivers each scored 13 points as the Rockets won their sixth straight, matching a season high.

**76ers 114, Magic 106:** JJ Redick hit six three-pointers and scored 26 points to break out of a slump and lead host Philadelphia over Orlando.

Redick was 5-for-6 from three-point range in the first half (7-for-10 overall) and paced an offense that shot 64 percent in the half and led 70-64. He had been seriously slumping — going 23-for-81 overall over his last seven games and hitting 15 threes. Redick had his first 20-point game since Feb. 10 against the Lakers.

**Pacers 105, Bulls 96:** Bojan Bogdanovic scored 27 points, Darren Collison added 22 and

host Indiana beat Chicago.

Indiana was looking to build momentum heading into a crucial 11-game stretch during which the Pacers will play Oklahoma City and Denver twice each and visit Milwaukee, Golden State and Boston.

**Grizzlies 120, Trail Blazers 111:** Mike Conley scored 19 of his career-high 40 points in the fourth quarter as host Memphis used a late rally to beat Portland.

Conley made six of his seven shots in the fourth as Memphis erased a nine-point Portland lead in the final quarter.

**Timberwolves 131, Thunder 120:** Karl-Anthony Towns had 41 points and 14 rebounds as host Minnesota spoiled Paul George’s return to the Oklahoma City lineup.

Towns has 182 points over his last five games, the best five-game stretch in team history.

## College basketball roundup

## Barrett helps No. 4 Duke avoid upset by Wake Forest

Associated Press

DURHAM, N.C. — No. 4 Duke again didn’t have Zion Williamson. The Blue Devils also didn’t have their best version of Cameron Reddish — and for a few uneasy minutes also were without Tre Jones.

The Blue Devils did have RJ Barrett, and that — plus a fortunate bounce on the final shot — was just enough to beat Wake Forest.

Barrett scored 28 points and Duke held on to beat the Demon Deacons 71-70 on Tuesday night after Chaundee Brown’s jumper rimmed out at the buzzer.

“When they got the last shot, we were just wishing for it to fall out,” Jones said. “They’d been getting a lot of rolls, so I feel like we had to get one as

well.”

Jones added 13 points for a sluggish Duke team missing Williamson for a fourth straight game with a sprained right knee. Coach Mike Krzyzewski said he hopes Williamson will be healthy enough to play in next week’s ACC Tournament.

The Blue Devils (26-4, 14-3) overcame 41-percent shooting and a 16-for-26 showing from the free-throw line to win their 10th straight in the in-state series.

**No. 3 North Carolina 79, Boston College 66:** Luke Maye had 17 points and a career-high 20 rebounds to lead the visiting Tar Heels over the Eagles and preserve their hopes for a regular-season conference title.

**No. 5 Tennessee 71, Mississippi State 54:** Admiral Schofield scored 18 points in

his final home game, and the Volunteers notched their 26th straight home victory.

**No. 6 Kentucky 80, Mississippi 76:** Keldon Johnson scored 22 points and Tyler Herro added 20 to send the Wildcats past the host Rebels.

**No. 9 Michigan State 91, Nebraska 76:** Kenny Goins scored 21 of his career-high 24 points in the first half and Matt McQuaid had a career-best 22, leading the host Spartans past the Cornhuskers.

**Minnesota 73, No. 11 Purdue 69:** Amir Coffey matched his career high with 32 points, making two free throws with 2.5 seconds left to seal the host Golden Gophers’ victory over the Boilermakers.

**No. 14 Florida State 73, No. 15 Virginia Tech 64 (OT):** M.J. Walker scored nine of his

11 points after halftime, including a critical three-pointer in overtime, and the host Seminoles rallied from a 14-point halftime deficit.

**Oklahoma 81, No. 13 Kansas 68:** Kristian Doolittle had 24 points and 11 rebounds and the host Sooners ended the Jayhawks’ run of Big 12 regular-season titles at 14 years.

**No. 17 Nevada 90, Air Force 79:** Jazz Johnson scored a career-high 27 points and hit seven of his team’s 13 shots from three-point range in leading the visiting Wolf Pack past the Falcons.

**No. 19 Buffalo 82, Ohio 79:** Jeremy Harris scored 20 points as the visiting Bulls locked up the Mid-American Conference regular-season title and a top seed in the conference tournament.