

Congress passes short-term funding bill

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congress passed another short-term spending measure Thursday that would keep one set of federal agencies operating through March 8 and another set through March 22, avoiding a shutdown for parts of the federal government that would otherwise kick in Saturday. The bill now goes to President Joe Biden to be signed into law.

The short-term extension is the fourth in recent months, and many lawmakers expect it to be the last for the current fiscal year. House Speaker Mike Johnson said negotiators had completed six of the annual spending bills that fund federal agencies and had “almost final agreement on the others.”

“We’ll get the job done,” Johnson said as he exited a closed-door meeting with Republican colleagues.

The House acted first Thursday. The vote to approve the extension was 320-99. It easily cleared the two-thirds majority needed for passage. Democrats overwhelmingly voted to avert a partial shutdown. But the vote was much more divided with Republicans, 113 in support and 97 against. The

Senate then took up the bill and approved it during an evening vote of 77-13.

“When we pass this bill, we will have, thank God, avoided a shutdown with all its harmful effects on the American people,” Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said moments before the vote.

Biden called Thursday night’s vote “good news for the American people” but added, “I want to be clear: This is a short-term fix — not a long-term solution.”

Next week, the House and Senate are expected to take up a package of six spending bills and get them to the president before March 8. Then, lawmakers would work to fund the rest of the government by the new March 22 deadline.

At the end of the process, Congress is expected to have approved more than \$1.6 trillion in spending for the fiscal year that began Oct. 1. That amount is roughly in line with that of the previous fiscal year and is what former Speaker Kevin McCarthy negotiated with the White House last year before eight disgruntled Republican lawmakers joined with Democrats a few months later and voted to oust him from the position.

Some of the House’s most conservative members wanted deeper cuts for non-defense programs than that agreement allowed through its spending caps. They also sought an array of policy changes that Democrats opposed. They were hoping the prospect of a shutdown could leverage more concessions.

“Last I checked, the Republicans actually have a majority in the House of Representatives, but you wouldn’t know it if you looked at our checkbook because we are all too willing to continue the policy choices of Joe Biden and the spending levels of Nancy Pelosi,” said Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-Fla.

But Rep. Chuck Fleischmann, R-Tenn., countered before the vote that shutdowns are damaging and encouraged lawmakers to vote for the short-term extension.

“I want the American people to know, Mr. Speaker, that this negotiation has been difficult, but to close the government down at a time like this would hurt people who should not be hurt,” Fleischmann said.

The split within the GOP conference on spending and their tiny House majority bogged down the efforts to get the bills passed on a timely basis.

Texas still battling 2nd-largest wildfire in US history

The Dallas Morning News

PAMPA, Texas — Wildfires continued to engulf the Texas Panhandle and parts of Oklahoma on Friday as officials were concerned warming temperatures and growing winds may elevate fire conditions going into the weekend.

The Smokehouse Creek fire, which ignited Monday, has burnt through more than 1 million acres becoming the largest wildfire in state history.

The fire — which grew in size after merging with a smaller 687 Reamer fire is among the largest in the Lower 48 since record-keeping began in the 1980s. The West Odessa Volun-

teer Fire Department noted on Facebook that the fire is the second largest in U.S. history.

Two deaths have been reported as of Thursday. Joyce Blankenship, 83, was killed in her home in Stinnett, her family said. Cindy Owens died of injuries she suffered in the fires near Pampa, according to a GoFundMe.

Officials haven’t declared a cause for the cluster of blazes, but the region has experienced unseasonably warm temperatures, dry conditions and gusty winds.

Gov. Greg Abbott was scheduled to speak with other state and local officials Friday after-

noon in Borger.

Abbott issued a disaster declaration for 60 counties Tuesday and directed the Texas Division of Emergency Management to deploy additional state emergency resources the following day.

Evacuations were ordered for nearly a dozen towns. Some of those orders were lifted or reduced to voluntary evacuations with checkpoints.

A few fires were still burning across the Panhandle, according to the latest updates from the Texas A&M Forest Service:

■ The Smokehouse Creek fire in Hutchinson County is an estimated 1,075,000 acres and

5% contained.

■ The Windy Deuce fire in Moore County is roughly 142,000 acres and 55% contained.

■ The Grapevine Creek fire in Gray County was about 30,000 acres and 60% contained.

■ The Magenta Fire in Oldham County is estimated to be 3,300 acres and 85% contained.

Crews hoped to make progress on containing the fires Wednesday and Thursday as conditions were more favorable to suppressing the flames. Snow and sleet helped spread moisture into areas that needed it the most and were hard for firefighters to reach.

Senators allow sale of F-16s to Turkey

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. senators declined on Thursday to block the sale of F-16s to Turkey, despite voicing deep disdain for Turkey's conduct as an ally. They were upholding an unofficial bargain that Turks would get the fighter jets if they stopped blocking Sweden's accession to NATO.

"A deal's a deal," said Idaho Sen. Jim Risch, the ranking Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

"Call it quid pro quo," Kentucky Republican Sen. Rand Paul, who introduced the resolution to try to block the sale, told fellow senators. "That sounds better than extortion."

The Senate voted 13 to 79 to reject Paul's proposal.

Along with the Democratic

committee chairman, Sen. Ben Cardin of Maryland, Risch took the Senate floor before the vote to acknowledge some of the many U.S. objections to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government: its human rights record, its attacks on U.S. allies in Syria, its backing for offensives by Azerbaijan on an ethnic Armenian enclave and Turkey's ties with Russia on military deals and other matters.

Nevertheless, the Republican and Democratic senior foreign policy leaders argued that adding Sweden to NATO was too important to the overall strategic interests of the Western military alliance and to the U.S. to allow fellow NATO member Turkey to spoil it.

Sweden, and Finland, sought to join NATO in the wake of Rus-

sia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine. The United States and the majority of other NATO allies supported the accession, saying the two countries' militaries, industries and locations near or bordering Russia would strengthen the alliance. Finland joined NATO last year, after Erdogan lifted initial objections to that country as well.

Erdogan's objections to Sweden included it offering refuge to Turkish critics in exile. But Erdogan also publicly linked his objections to hopes of overcoming U.S. reluctance to sell him new models of the fighter jet.

"I'm not here to defend Turkey or the other things that they do," Risch said. "What I am here to do is defend the importance of NATO."

Paul argued before the vote

that continuing to withhold the advanced fighter jets was the best leverage the U.S. had to try to influence Turkey's behavior as an ally.

"What will Turkey do next time they want something?" he asked.

The State Department notified Congress of its approval of the \$23 billion F-16 sale to Turkey in January, along with a companion \$8.6 billion sale of advanced F-35 fighter jets to Greece.

The State Department agreement came just hours after Turkey deposited its "instrument of ratification" for Sweden's accession to NATO with Washington, which is the repository for alliance documents, and after several key members of Congress lifted their objections.

Leak suspect Jack Teixeira expected to plead guilty

Boston Herald

BOSTON — The former Massachusetts Air National Guardsman charged with leaking military secrets to members of an online gaming community intends to plead guilty.

"The defendant respectfully requests that the Court schedule this matter for a Rule 11 hearing on March 4, 2024, the date currently set for the Pretrial Conference," reads the motion filed in the case of Jack Teixeira on Thursday.

A Rule 11 hearing in federal law is a change of plea hearing. Teixeira had previously pleaded not guilty to the six counts of willful retention and transmission of national defense information. There was no further information available Thursday.

Teixeira, 22, was arrested last April on multiple counts of unauthorized retention and transmission of national defense information and unauthorized re-

moval and retention of classified documents or material. A federal grand jury indicted him on the charges, which carry a possible 15-year prison sentence, last June.

U.S. District Court Magistrate Judge David H. Hennessy ordered him detained ahead of trial and maintained that order despite a flurry of appeals from defense attorneys.

Prosecutors accuse Teixeira of abusing his security clearance as a Massachusetts Air National Guardsman to share more than 40 images of classified documents largely regarding the war in Ukraine to the roughly 50 members of a Discord server he led. A "server" is what the gaming-dominated social media platform calls individual groups or forums.

Specifically, Teixeira is accused of sharing information on Russia's war in Ukraine, including troop movements, as well as

other topics on a server he led called "Thug Shaker Central" that had about 50 members.

Teixeira had joined the Air National Guard in September 2019, according to charging documents, and served on a base at Otis Air National Guard Base on Cape Cod as an IT specialist — a job officially called a "cyber defense operations journeyman." He rose to the E-3 rank in May 2022.

This role allowed him to see documents he wasn't otherwise privy to — especially after he was granted Top Secret clearance with access to Sensitive Compartmented Information, in 2021, following a required eight- to 15-month approval process, according to the U.S. General Services Administration. Prosecutors allege he first began typing out information he had found but then, in January 2023, began posting photos of materials stamped SECRET

and TOP SECRET.

"I know that to acquire his security clearance, Teixeira would have signed a lifetime binding non-disclosure agreement in which he would have had to acknowledge that the unauthorized disclosure of protected information could result in criminal charges," an FBI agent wrote in an affidavit in support of the initial arrest and charges.

The leaked documents had a nearly instant effect, according to multiple reports, including U.S. intelligence analysis of Taiwan's air defenses that show it could be vulnerable to an attack by China.

And it had quick ramifications for the military. Just days after Teixeira's arrest, the Pentagon said it was revoking access to sensitive information for many members and doing an overhaul on its information policies.

Doctor blames gunfire for 80% of wounds in convey incident

Associated Press

RAFAH, Gaza Strip — The head of a Gaza City hospital that treated some of those wounded in the bloodshed surrounding an aid convoy said Friday that more than 80% had been struck by gunfire, suggesting there had been heavy shooting by Israeli troops.

Israel said many of the dead were trampled in a stampede linked to the chaos and that its troops fired at some in the crowd who they believed moved toward them in a threatening way.

At least 112 Palestinians were killed and more than 750 others were injured Thursday, according to health officials, when witnesses said nearby Israeli troops opened fire as huge crowds raced to pull goods off

an aid convoy.

Dr. Mohammed Salha, the acting director of Al-Awda Hospital, said 176 wounded were brought to the facility, of whom 142 had suffered gunshot wounds.

The other 34 showed injuries from a stampede.

He couldn't address the cause of death of those killed, because the bodies were taken to government-run hospitals to be counted. Officials at the other hospitals couldn't immediately be reached concerning the dead and other wounded.

The bloodshed underscored how chaos amid Israel's almost 5-month-old offensive has crippled the effort to bring aid to Gaza's 2.3 million Palestinians, a quarter of whom the U.N. says face starvation.

The U.N. and other aid groups have been pleading for safe corridors for aid convoys, saying it has become nearly impossible to deliver supplies in most of Gaza because of the difficulty of coordinating with the Israeli military, ongoing hostilities and the breakdown of public order, including crowds of desperate people who overwhelm aid convoys.

Thursday's convoy wasn't organized by the U.N. Instead, it appeared to have been monitored by the Israeli military, which said its troops were on hand to secure it to ensure it reached northern Gaza.

The ensuing shooting and bloodshed raise questions over whether Israel will be able to keep order if it goes through with its postwar plans for Gaza.

Putin foe Navalny buried

Associated Press

Under a heavy police presence, thousands of people bade farewell Friday to opposition leader Alexei Navalny at his funeral in Moscow after his still-unexplained death two weeks ago in an Arctic penal colony.

Navalny was buried at a cemetery in the snowy southeastern outskirts of the capital after a short Russian Orthodox ceremony, with vast crowds waiting outside the church and then streaming to the fresh grave of President Vladimir Putin's fiercest critic with flowers and anti-government chants.

Although riot police set up barricades at both the church and cemetery, no detentions were reported.

Navalny's widow, Yulia, who was not seen at the funeral, thanked him for "26 years of absolute happiness."

The service followed a battle with authorities over the release of his body. His team said several Moscow churches refused to hold the funeral for the man who crusaded against official corruption and organized massive protests.

Many Western leaders blamed the death on the Russian leader, an accusation the Kremlin angrily rejected.

Navalny's team eventually got permission from the Church of the Icon of the Mother of God Soothe My Sorrows, which was surrounded by crowd-control barriers.

As his coffin was removed from the hearse and taken inside the church, the crowd waiting outside broke into respectful applause and then chanted: "Navalny! Navalny!"

Some also shouted, "You weren't afraid, neither are we!" and later "No to war!" "Russia without Putin!" and "Russia will be free!"

On Rio Grande, Biden and Trump try to use immigration to election advantage

Associated Press

BROWNSVILLE, Texas — On the banks of the Rio Grande but 300 miles apart, President Joe Biden and Republican challenger Donald Trump on Thursday surveyed the U.S.-Mexico border and tussled from a distance over who is to blame for the nation's broken immigration system and how to fix it.

Immigration has emerged as a central issue in the 2024 presidential campaign, which is widely expected to be a Biden-Trump rematch, and each man is seeking to use the border problems to his own political advantage.

Biden sought to spotlight the necessity of a bipartisan border security bill that was tanked by Republicans on Trump's orders, and flat-out asked the Re-

publican front-runner to join him in supporting a congressional push for more funding and tighter restrictions.

"Here's what I would say to Mr. Trump," Biden said. "Instead of playing politics with the issue, join me, or I'll join you in telling the Congress to pass this bill. You know and I know it's the toughest, most efficient, most effective border security bill this country's ever seen."

In Brownsville, the president walked along the Rio Grande and received a lengthy briefing from Homeland Security officials, who spoke bluntly about what they needed to do their jobs effectively — in short, more money to hire more officers along the border and for use across the asylum process to help clear out massive backlogs.

Trump blamed Biden. He traveled to Eagle Pass, roughly 325 miles northwest of Brownsville, in the corridor that's currently seeing the largest number of migrant crossings.

He met with Republican Gov. Greg Abbott and Texas National Guard soldiers who have commandeered a local park and put up razor wire fencing at the river's edge to keep migrants from crossing illegally. The park has become a Republican symbol of defiance against the federal government.

Trump brought up the killing of a 22-year-old nursing student in Georgia recently. The suspect is a Venezuelan migrant.

"Crooked Joe has the blood of countless innocent victims," Trump said. "It's so many stories to tell, so many horrible stories."

Arguments over Willis' removal begin

Associated Press

ATLANTA — After several days of extraordinary testimony, the judge in the Georgia election interference case against former President Donald Trump was set to hear arguments Friday over whether Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis should be removed from the prosecution over a romantic relationship.

Lawyers for Trump and other defendants in the election case argue Willis' romance with a special prosecutor she hired creates a conflict of interest. They say Willis paid outside lawyer Nathan Wade large sums for his work and improperly benefited when he paid for vacations for the two of them.

Willis and Wade have acknowledged the relationship, which they said ended last summer, but they have argued it does not create any sort of conflict and has no bearing on the case. The pair said they didn't begin dating until the spring of 2022, after Wade was hired, and that they split travel expenses.

Since the relationship was revealed in early January, the subject dominating the

court's time and the public's attention has not been the crimes prosecutors allege Trump and his allies committed while trying to overturn the election but rather the intimate details of Willis and Wade's relationship.

The hearings have at times wandered into surreal territory: Atlanta's mayor watching from the gallery as a former Georgia governor testified, Willis' father talking about keeping stashes of cash around the house and details of romantic getaways.

Willis' removal would throw the most sprawling of the four criminal cases against Trump into question as the former president seeks a return to the White House. But it wouldn't necessarily mean the charges against him and others would be dropped.

Fulton County Superior Court Judge Scott McAfee heard details of Willis and Wade's personal lives and conflicting accounts of when they started dating, but it remains unclear whether he will find the relationship caused a conflict of interest that merits removing the prosecutors from the case.

At a hearing preceding testimony, McAfee noted that under the law, "disqualification can occur if evidence is produced demonstrating an actual conflict or the appearance of one." He said he wanted testimony to explore "whether a relationship existed, whether that relationship was romantic or non-romantic in nature, when it formed and whether it continues."

Those questions were only relevant "in combination with the question of the existence and extent of any personal benefit conveyed as a result of the relationship," McAfee said.

Georgia State University law professor Anthony Michael Kreis, who has followed the case closely, said a lot will depend on which standard McAfee uses: an actual conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict.

"The standard I think that's applicable is an actual conflict of interest where the evidence produced shows that Fani Willis profited off the investigation and the charging decisions that she brought against the 2020 election interference defendants," he said.

Hobbled US lander falls silent after week on moon

Associated Press

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — The first U.S. spacecraft to land on the moon since the Apollo astronauts fell silent Thursday, a week after breaking a leg at touchdown and tipping over near the lunar south pole.

Intuitive Machines' lander, Odysseus, lasted longer than the company anticipated after it ended up on its side with hobbled solar power and communication.

The end came as flight controllers received one last photo from Odysseus and commanded its computer and power systems to stand by. That way, the lander can wake up in another two to three weeks — if it survives the bitterly cold lunar night. Intuitive Machines spokesman Josh Marshall said these final steps drained the lander's batteries and put Odys-

seus "down for a long nap."

"Good night, Odie. We hope to hear from you again," the company said via X, formerly Twitter.

Before losing power, Odysseus sent back what Intuitive Machines called "a fitting farewell transmission." Taken just before touchdown, the picture shows the bottom of the lander on the moon's pockmarked surface, with a tiny crescent Earth and a small sun in the background. The lander was originally intended to last about a week on the moon.

Houston-based Intuitive Machines became the first private business to land a spacecraft on the moon without crashing when Odysseus touched down Feb. 22. Only five countries had achieved that since the 1960s, including Japan, which made a sideways landing last month.

Drug decriminalization in Oregon faces rollback

The Washington Post

Oregon lawmakers appear poised to roll back the state's drug decriminalization measure, which was hailed as a pioneering approach to addiction but faces intense backlash as communities grapple with surges in fentanyl use and overdoses.

The Oregon House of Representatives on Thursday voted 51-7 to again make possession of a minor amount of drugs a misdemeanor. Passed with overwhelming bipartisan support, the bill moves to the Oregon Senate before it could head to the desk of Gov. Tina Kotek (D), who has suggested she may sign the legislation.

Oregon's troubled implementation of Measure 110 has elicited intense debates over drug policy, public safety and justice — and sowed divisions among community members, activists and

political leaders in a state controlled by Democrats. The tension over Measure 110, approved by voters more than three years ago, reflects wider, politically charged questions about what role law enforcement and courts should play in the nation's drug crisis.

"Unfortunately, in the history of drug policy, Oregon's Measure 110 will go down in the lessons learned — rather than the lasting innovations — category," said Brandon del Pozo, a Brown University drug policy researcher who spent more than two decades as a police officer.

Backed by the reform organization Drug Policy Alliance, Measure 110 was lauded as an innovative public health approach and a rejection of the failed war on drugs that for decades disproportionately sent people of color to prison.

Shohei Ohtani stuns Dodgers with marriage announcement

Associated Press

GLENDAL, Ariz. — Shohei Ohtani stunned the Los Angeles Dodgers — and many around the world — with his marriage announcement on Thursday, so manager Dave Roberts said any gift the team gives the two-time MVP would be like most of the money in his contract: deferred.

“I’m very happy for him and his bride,” Roberts said, smiling. “As far as wedding gifts, we got surprised and didn’t have much time to think about it. I’m sure it’s en route.”

Ohtani, the two-way Japanese star, revealed on Instagram early Thursday that he was married. Much of the relationship remains shrouded in mystery.

“She is a Japanese woman,” Ohtani said through an inter-

preter. “I don’t really feel comfortable talking about when I got married exactly, but she’s a normal Japanese woman.”

Ohtani only gave a few more tidbits about the relationship during a short interview on Thursday, saying he had known his new bride for three or four years.

The 29-year-old Ohtani is Japan’s biggest celebrity. There has been curiosity about his personal life, which he has always kept private. His focus and his image has always been 100%-baseball focused and free of scandals and tabloid news.

“I felt like it was good timing because it was before the season,” Ohtani said. “I didn’t really want any distractions once the season started. I would have liked to announce it ear-

lier, but there were some paperwork issues that (delayed) the whole process.”

Ohtani moved from the Los Angeles Angels to the Dodgers in December on a record \$700 million, 10-year contract that calls for \$680 million to be paid from 2034-43.

Ohtani said his marriage didn’t affect how he treated free agency.

“She has a great understanding of my profession, and she’s willing to be wherever I wanted to play and ultimately it was my decision,” Ohtani said.

The post on Instagram included a photo of his dog “Dekopin,” whom Ohtani also calls “Decoy.”

He wrote: “We hope the two of us — and one animal — will work together.”

Phillies are scrapping \$1 hot dogs

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — For more than a quarter-century, Phillies fans considered dollar hot dog night among the best ballpark promotions — but the team has now decided it was the worst.

Those dog days of April are going, going, gone.

The Phillies officially ended the popular promotion Thursday and replaced dollar dogs on select dates with a 2-for-1 deal at two April games at Citizens Bank Park.

A statement from the team said the change was made “based on the organization’s on-going commitment to provide a positive experience for all fans in attendance.”

Armed with projectile frankfurters, some unruly Phillies fans began chucking their favorite Hatfield meat during a game last year, and the dogs soared like cans of corn throughout the stands and onto the field. The demand for the discount dogs also led to clogged lanes on the concourse, and the cramped spaces led to security and safety concerns.

An April 11 game last season turned into a Philly food fight when fans tossed their ballpark franks in several sections, leading to multiple ejections.

“It wasn’t just the throwing,” said John Weber, senior vice president, Phillies ticket operations and projects. “It’s the concourse, the crowds of everybody being at the same X amount of stands. But obviously, you know, the throwing was a little bit of a tipping point.”

Ramey, Kim each shoot bogey-free 64s, grab early lead at Cognizant Classic

Associated Press

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. — Chad Ramey’s first two trips to PGA National as a professional were largely forgettable. He might have a chance to change that this week.

Ramey shot a bogey-free round of 7-under 64 on Thursday in the opening round of the Cognizant Classic in the Palm Beaches, tying S.H. Kim for the 18-hole lead. Kim had an eagle and five birdies, including one on the finishing hole, to pull into the tie atop the leaderboard.

A group of five players — Cameron Young, Ryan Moore, Chesson Hadley, Austin Eckroat and Andrew Novak — all played in the morning wave and finished one stroke back with 6-under rounds of 65. Also at 65: David Skinnis, who played in the afternoon and missed an 11-foot birdie putt on his final hole that would have given him a share of the lead.

Ramey’s past appearances in the event — then known as the Honda Classic — were quick and unremarkable. He missed

the cut at PGA National by 10 shots in 2022, missed it by just one stroke last year and failed to shoot a round in the 60s either time. But conditions were perfect when he teed off early Thursday; a course known to often have whipping winds had barely a breeze for much of his round.

“I got a good break this morning with there not being any wind,” Ramey said. “I fully expect the rest of the week the wind to blow. I’ve never been here and it not blow.”

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Iowa's Clark declares for WNBA draft

Associated Press

Iowa star Caitlin Clark, who is on the verge of becoming the all-time NCAA scoring leader in college basketball, announced Thursday she will leave the Hawkeyes after this season and enter the WNBA draft.

"While this season is far from over and we have a lot more goals to achieve, it will be my last one at Iowa," Clark wrote on social media.

Clark has become the focal point of women's basketball, with her flashy play and 3-point shot, often from the mid-court logo. Many players would be benched for shooting from so far out, but Clark has the green

light from her coach and has delivered while also finding her teammates and hitting the boards.

The guard, with one more year of eligibility, became the all-time leading women's scorer in major college basketball by scoring 33 points to pass Lynette Woodard and post her 17th career triple-double in a 108-60 victory over Minnesota on Wednesday night.

In her announcement, she thanked her teammates, coaches and the thousands of fans who have packed arenas across the country to watch her and the sixth-ranked Hawkeyes.

Those fans were chanting

"One more year! One more year!" while Clark was being interviewed on the court Wednesday, when she also broke the NCAA single-season record with eight 3-pointers for a total of 156.

She has 3,650 career points. Woodard had 3,649 points for Kansas from 1977-81, before the NCAA sanctioned the sport. Earlier this month, Clark broke Kelsey Plum's NCAA scoring record (3,527 points).

Next up is the overall NCAA scoring record of Pete Maravich, who has 17 more than her.

Clark is expected to be the top pick in the draft on April 15.

The Indiana Fever, who have

the first pick, indicated on social media shortly after Clark's announcement that they intend to select her.

"We're just simply reminding you that there are only 46 days until the 2024 WNBA Draft," the team posted after dropping a link to its game tickets and a conspicuous "No. 1."

The Fever had the first pick in last year's draft as well. They selected Aliyah Boston out of South Carolina. The forward is averaging 14.5 points and 8.4 rebounds per game.

Clark's final regular-season home game should be one of the priciest tickets in women's college basketball history.

No. 17 Notre Dame defeats No. 5 Virginia Tech 71-58

Associated Press

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — Freshman Hannah Hidalgo had 23 points and 12 rebounds to help No. 17 Notre Dame beat fifth-ranked Virginia Tech 71-58 on Thursday night.

Virginia Tech (23-5, 14-3 ACC) had its 10-game winning streak snapped, but ended up claiming its first ACC regular-season championship outright as No. 12 North Carolina State defeated No. 19 Syracuse 75-71 in overtime on Thursday. The Hokies won the ACC Tournament crown last season and reached the Final Four.

There was plenty at stake entering the game for both teams as they jockey for post-season advantages. The Hokies were ranked No. 5 in the NCAA reveal earlier in the night. Notre Dame (22-6, 12-5) is just outside of the Top 16 and a chance to host first- and second-round games.

No. 7 Southern California 95, Arizona 93 (2 OT): Kayla Padilla hit a tying 3-pointer in the closing seconds of regulation and made another key 3 in the second overtime, lifting vis-

iting Southern California over Arizona.

The Wildcats (16-13, 8-9 Pac-12) were blown out by USC less than a month ago, but used a big run to take a 10-point lead early in the fourth quarter.

The Trojans (22-5, 12-5) fought back despite star freshman sensation JuJu Watkins fouling out, scoring five points in the final 16 seconds to force overtime. Kaitlyn Davis hit a jumper after an offensive rebound and Padilla hit a tying 3-pointer with 7.6 seconds left after two more offensive boards.

Neither team could take control until Padilla hit a corner 3 to put USC up 92-89 in the second overtime. Helena Pueyo made two free throws with 6.3 seconds left as the Wildcats cut it to 94-93 and Rayah Marshall hit 1 of 2 free throws.

Arizona's Jada Williams had a good look at the buzzer, but her 3 clanged off the back of the rim.

No. 12 North Carolina State 75, No. 19 Syracuse 71 (OT): Saniya Rivers scored 22 points, including the clinching free throws with 10.9 seconds left in

overtime, and host North Carolina State defeated Syracuse in the extra period.

The win gave the Wolfpack a shot at the No. 2 seed in the ACC tournament next week and handed Virginia Tech the outright title. The Orange are assured a top four seed, which means a double-bye in the tournament.

Syracuse finishes the regular season at 13-5, a half-game ahead of the Wolfpack, who have the tiebreaker. The Wolfpack get the second seed with a win over Wake Forest on Sunday.

Mimi Collins had 15 points for the Wolfpack (24-5), now 7-2 in Top 25 games, and River Baldwin had 13 points and 13 rebounds.

Dyaisha Fair scored 21 points for Syracuse (23-6), which was going for a school record for wins in the regular season but has now lost eight straight in the series.

No. 1 South Carolina 98, Arkansas 61: Ashlyn Watkins had 21 points and 11 rebounds to lead South Carolina to a road win over Arkansas.

South Carolina (28-0, 15-0 Southeastern Conference) stayed unbeaten with just one game to play in the regular season. The Gamecocks have beaten all but three opponents this season by double figures. They have lost just once — in the Final Four last year to Iowa — in the past 358 days.

South Carolina took control in the second quarter, starting the period on a 14-0 run to build its lead to 17 points. Arkansas (18-12, 6-9) was wholly ineffective offensively, missing its first eight shots from the floor in the quarter, seven of which came from 3-point range, and committing five turnovers in those 10 minutes.

No. 4 Stanford 67, No. 11 Oregon State 63: Cameron Brink had a career-high 23 rebounds and 25 points as Stanford claimed the Pac-12 regular-season title with a victory over Oregon State.

Brink, a 6-foot-4 senior forward, also had four assists and a blocked shot as the Cardinal (25-4, 14-3) beat Oregon State (22-6, 11-6) for the 14th straight time.

Curry, Warriors defeat Knicks, 110-99

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Stephen Curry had 31 points and 11 rebounds, bouncing back from a scoreless first half in his last game with a double-double by the midpoint of this one, and the Golden State Warriors beat the New York Knicks 110-99 on Thursday night.

Jonathan Kuminga added 25 points for the Warriors, who extended their road winning streak to seven games, their longest since winning 11 in a row in the 2018-19 season.

The Warriors raced to a 14-0 lead and never trailed, though they were never in control for very long.

Curry was 0 for 7 in the first half of a victory in Washington on Tuesday, the first time he's been scoreless through two quarters since Nov. 23, 2012. This time he had a 3-pointer to open the scoring and had 17 points and 10 rebounds by the break, the second time in his career he's had a double-double in the first half.

He finished with eight 3-pointers, while Klay Thompson added 16 points. Jalen Brunson scored 27 points for the Knicks.

Lakers 134, Wizards 131 (OT): Anthony Davis had 40

points and scored the Lakers' final basket in overtime, and host Los Angeles extended Washington's losing streak to 13.

LeBron James scored 31 points and hit a key 3-pointer in OT for the Lakers, who never managed to pull away from a struggling opponent during their ninth victory in 12 games. James is now nine points shy of becoming the first player in NBA history to score 40,000.

Jordan Poole scored a season-high 34 points and Marvin Bagley III added a season-high 23 for the Wizards.

Nuggets 103, Heat 97: Michael Porter Jr. had 30 points to help pick up the scoring load after Jamal Murray left because of a sprained ankle, and host Denver staved off Miami's fourth-quarter rally.

Porter was 12 of 23 from the floor, including four 3-pointers, and had 11 rebounds to help the Nuggets improve to 5-0 since the All-Star break.

Up 16 in the fourth quarter, Denver saw Miami trim it to 99-97 after a floating bank shot by Jimmy Butler with 11 seconds remaining. Nikola Jokic made two free throws to seal it in a game where the Nuggets never trailed. Jokic finished with 18

points, 11 rebounds and seven assists, ending a streak of four triple-doubles.

Bam Adebayo had 22 points for Miami.

Suns 110, Rockets 105: Devin Booker scored 35 points, Kevin Durant added 24 and host Phoenix held off Houston to open a two-game series.

Booker scored 20 in the first quarter to help give the Suns an 18-point lead they would never relinquish. Jalen Green led Houston with 34 points.

Phoenix has won seven of its past 10 — and nine in a row at home — as it tries to stay in the top six of the Western Conference playoff race and avoid the play-in tournament.

Spurs 132, Thunder 118: Victor Wembanyama had 28 points and 12 rebounds, Devin Vassell also scored 28 points and host San Antonio snapped a five-game skid.

Wembanyama punctuated back-to-back 3-pointers in the final 3½ minutes with a blocked shot he captured in his hand on Chet Holmgren's 3-point attempt.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander had 31 points for Oklahoma City.

Bucks 111, Hornets 99: Giannis Antetokounmpo had 24

points and 10 rebounds and visiting Milwaukee beat Charlotte to finish a home-and-home set and sweep the season series.

Malik Beasley added 19 points — hitting five 3-pointers — and Bobby Portis had 14 points and 10 rebounds. The Bucks shot 16 of 39 from beyond the arc to give coach Doc Rivers his first four-game winning streak with the team.

Brandon Miller led the Hornets with 21 points.

Magic 115, Jazz 107: Jalen Suggs hit three 3-pointers in the final three minutes and finished with 15 points in host Orlando's victory over Utah.

Paolo Banchero, back in the lineup after missing two games due to the flu, had 29 points and nine rebounds for the Magic.

John Collins, Keyonte George and Collin Sexton each scored 19 points for Utah.

Nets 124, Hawks 97: Cam Johnson scored a season high 29 points, hitting a season-high seven 3-pointers in 11 attempts, to help host Brooklyn beat Atlanta to open a two-game series.

Fighting for the last play-in spot in the Eastern Conference, the teams meet again Saturday.

Dejounte Murray led Atlanta with 28 points.

Washington State rallies to beat Southern California

Associated Press

PULLMAN, Wash. — Isaiah Watts and Andrej Jakimovski scored 18 points each and Myles Rice added 16 to help No. 19 Washington State rally past Southern California, 75-72, on Thursday night.

The Cougars (22-7, 13-5 Pac-12) trailed by 12 points late in the first half and didn't take their first lead until 2:35 remained on a 3-pointer from Watts, his fifth of the game.

USC freshman Isaiah Collier scored 24 points, but missed a critical free throw with 23 sec-

onds left that would have cut Washington State's lead to two points.

Jaylen Wells then missed two free throws on the other end for Washington State and USC (11-17, 5-12) had one last chance to try and force overtime, but Bogie Ellis and Kobe Johnson missed 3-point attempts in the final seconds.

No. 17 Saint Mary's 83, Pepperdine 57: Augustas Marciulionis had 17 points and 11 assists, Luke Barrett added 14 points and Saint Mary's beat Pepperdine to win the West

Coast Conference regular-season championship.

The Gaels (24-6, 15-0) extended the nation's longest winning streak to 16 games in wrapping up their first outright regular-season championship since 2012. Saint Mary's has one game left — at home against No. 23 Gonzaga on Saturday — to try to run the table in the conference.

The Gaels had a 22-2 run to lead 49-25 late in the first half.

Jevon Porter led Pepperdine (12-19, 5-11) with 22 points.

No. 23 Gonzaga 86, San Francisco 68: Graham Ike

scored 26 points and Gonzaga beat San Francisco to clinch a bye into the semifinals of the West Coast Conference Tournament.

The Bulldogs (23-6, 13-2) won their 29th straight game against the Dons (22-8, 11-4) to wrap up the No. 2 seed in the conference tournament behind No. 17 Saint Mary's. The top two teams get byes to the semifinals, meaning Gonzaga will need to win only two games in Las Vegas to win the conference tournament and earn an automatic bid into the NCAA Tournament.

Matthews scores in Maple Leafs' win

Associated Press

TORONTO — Auston Matthews scored his NHL-leading 53rd goal and the Toronto Maple Leafs topped Arizona 4-2 on Thursday night to send the Coyotes to their 14th straight loss.

Matthew Knies had a goal and an assist, Tyler Bertuzzi also scored and William Nylander added an empty-netter to go with two assists for Toronto, which had its seven-game winning streak stopped Tuesday by Vegas. Joseph Woll made 30 saves in his return from a high ankle sprain that sidelined him 35 games.

Alex Kerfoot and Logan Cooley scored for Arizona, which dropped to 0-12-2 since its last victory on Jan. 22. Connor Ingram stopped 22 shots.

Stars 4, Jets 1: Stars rookie Logan Stankoven scored for the third time in his four NHL games, Joe Pavelski had a goal and an assist, and host Dallas beat Winnipeg to take over the top spot in the Central Division.

Pavelski and Stankoven scored 96 seconds apart late in a three-goal first period for the Stars, who had won only once in their previous seven games. Jason Robertson got them started with his 20th goal, which was assisted by Pavelski. Roope Hintz added a late empty-net goal and had an assist.

All-Star Jake Oettinger had 25 saves for his 100th win in 177 career regular-season games.

Vladislav Namestnikov had a power-play goal for the Jets.

Islanders 5, Red Wings 3: Mathew Barzal had a tiebreaking goal with 6:02 left in the third period, Brock Nelson scored twice and visiting New York ended Detroit's six-game winning streak.

Detroit pulled Alex Lyon to add an extra skater and Pierre Engvall took advantage, sealing the victory with an empty-net goal — the Islanders' first of the season — in the final minute.

Casey Cizikas scored in the first period and Nelson's second goal broke a tie early in the third period. Ilya Sorokin finished with 23 saves for the Islanders.

Olli Maatta matched a career high with two goals, and Patrick Kane had the other goal for Detroit.

Bruins 5, Golden Knights 4: Mason Lohrei scored the winning goal on the power play with less than five minutes to play, Morgan Geekie had his first NHL hat trick, and host Boston snapped a three-game losing streak.

Lohrei fired a one-timer from inside the right circle and the Bruins held on after surrendering leads of 3-0 and 4-2.

Jesper Boqvist also scored for Boston. David Pastrnak had two assists to help the Bruins complete a season sweep of the defending Stanley Cup champions. Jeremy Swayman had 32 saves.

Paul Cotter, Alex Pietrangelo, Michael Amadio and Chandler Stephenson scored for the Golden Knights and Adin Hill finished with 27 saves.

Predators 6, Wild 1: Roman Josi had a goal and two assists and host Nashville extended its winning streak to seven games with a victory over Minnesota.

Yakov Trenin, Cole Smith, Filip Forsberg, Ryan O'Reilly and Ryan McDonagh also scored, and Juuse Saros made 33 saves for the Predators. Gustav Nyquist and Colton Sissons each had two assists.

Connor Dewar scored and Filip Gustavsson made 25 saves for Minnesota.

Sabres 3, Lightning 2 (OT): Rasmus Dahlin scored a power-play goal in overtime and Buffalo rallied to beat Tampa Bay.

With Nikita Kucherov off for hooking, Dahlin scored from in-close 1:42 into overtime.

Alex Tuch and Tage Thompson also scored for the Sabres. Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen stopped 21 shots.

Brayden Point and Mitchell Chaffee scored for the Lightning. Andrei Vasilevskiy made 20 saves, and NHL points leader Kucherov had an assist to give him 104 this season.

Panthers 4, Canadiens 3 (SO): Sam Reinhart scored twice and became the fourth player in Florida franchise history to reach 40 goals as the Panthers beat Montreal in a shootout.

In the shootout, Reinhart failed to score for Florida, and Montreal's Jesse Ylonen and Nick Suzuki failed to convert before the Panthers closed out the win with scores by Aleksander Barkov and Anton Lundell.

Barkov also scored in regulation for the Panthers and Anthony Stolarz made 28 saves for Florida (40-16-4), which is tied with the Boston Bruins (35-12-14) for the most points in the league at 84.

Suzuki, Juraj Slafkovsky and Alex Newhook scored in regulation for the Canadiens, and Cole Caufield connected in the shootout. Samuel Montembeault made 32 saves.

Hurricanes 4, Blue Jackets 2: Teuvo Teravainen scored the game's first goal less than a minute into the second period, Spencer Martin stopped 20 shots against his former team and visiting Carolina rolled.

Sebastian Aho, Brady Skjei and Seth Jarvis also scored for the Hurricanes.

Alexander Nylander had a goal and assist, his first points with Columbus. Cole Sillinger also scored, and Daniil Tarasov made 28 saves for the Blue Jackets.

Avalanche 5, Blackhawks 0: Zach Parise had two goals and an assist and visiting Colorado beat lowly Chicago.

Colorado star Nathan MacKinnon had a goal and an assist, giving him 100 points in 61 games this season. Ross Colton and Devon Toews also scored, and Justus Annunen made 24

saves in his first career shutout in nine NHL appearances.

Last-place Chicago dropped its fifth consecutive game and is now 5-20-4 in its past 29 games. Petr Mrazek made 29 saves.

Kraken 2, Penguins 0: Philipp Grubauer made 33 saves and posted his first shutout of the season, Oliver Bjorkstrand and Alex Wennberg scored and Seattle beat Pittsburgh.

Grubauer was terrific for the second straight game and recorded his 21st career regular-season shutout. The Kraken have won three of their past four and have points in six of their past seven games.

Tristan Jarry made 26 saves for the Penguins.

Kings 5, Canucks 1: Drew Doughty and Kevin Fiala each had a goal and two assists and visiting Los Angeles snapped a two-game skid.

Anze Kopitar and Trevor Moore both had a goal and an assist for the Kings. Rookie Brandt Clarke scored his second career goal, and Quinton Byfield had two assists. Cam Talbot stopped 22 shots.

Brock Boeser scored on the power play for Vancouver, which has lost two in a row and six of its past seven (1-5-1) but continues to lead the Western Conference.

Ducks 6, Sharks 4: Adam Henrique had a goal and two assists, Frank Vatrano scored his team-leading 27th goal and visiting Anaheim beat San Jose to snap a three-game skid.

Leo Carlsson, Brett Leason, Alex Killorn and Isac Lundestrom also scored for the Ducks, who have beaten the Sharks in three of four meetings this season.

With the game tied late in the second, Vatrano and Henrique scored power-play goals 66 seconds apart.

Anthony Duclair scored twice for the Sharks, who also got goals from Mike Hoffman and William Ecklund.