

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## Caught in the CROSSFIRE

### Border deployment puts Mattis, military in middle of political battle

*The Washington Post*

WASHINGTON—The White House's decision to send more than 5,200 active-duty troops to the border with Mexico a week before the midterm elections has put the American military and Defense Secretary Jim Mattis squarely in the political crosshairs regarding one of the nation's most divisive issues.

Department of Defense officials have sought to characterize the operation — believed to be the largest deployment of active-duty troops to the U.S. border in a century — as routine support for the Department of Homeland Security. But the mission could jeopardize Mattis' effort to shield the military from the political divisions gripping the country as questions persist about the size and timing of the deployment and the use of active-duty troops instead of the National Guard.

In his nearly two years as defense secretary, Mattis has sought to protect the military from the sort of politicization that has rattled the FBI and the CIA since President Donald Trump took office.

The Pentagon says the large-scale deployment is necessary to harden points of entry and deter a caravan of an estimated 3,000 to 7,000 Central American migrants that is about 900 miles south of the border and making its way northward.

Representatives for Mattis did not respond to requests for comment, but other officials have rejected the notion that the scale and timing of the deployment has political motives and say a high-profile, rapid rollout could serve as a deterrent.

"We've got to be prepared for the potential arrival of a very large group," Kevin McAleenan,

commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, said at a news conference Monday. "Because of the size we want to be able to handle it effectively and safely."

Critics say the decision to deploy roughly the same number of U.S. troops serving in Iraq to the border in the days before the midterm elections far exceeds the threat at hand. The caravan is three to four weeks away from arriving, the critics note, and the deployment helps Trump focus attention on an issue ahead of the Nov. 6 vote that could energize his base.

Pentagon documents obtained by The Washington Post indicate that the military specifically wants to highlight the deployment in part to "deter or dissuade the caravan" from continuing toward the U.S.

"This is a craven political stunt by President Trump ahead of the U.S. midterm elections, and a cynical capitulation by a secretary of defense who has prided himself on improving the readiness, focus, and lethality of the U.S. armed forces and who was once known as a no-nonsense warfighter," Kelly Magsamen, a former top Pentagon official in the Obama administration and now a vice president at the liberal Center for American Progress, wrote in an op-ed for Defense One.

Mattis has said little in public about the deployment, other than to confirm Sunday that the troops would conform with all U.S. laws while serving on the border. Because U.S. law prohibits the military from domestic policing duties, the troops will be limited to helping CPB officers do their jobs.

Earlier on Sunday, Mattis described the mission as "defense support for civilian authori-

ties" and said whatever Border Patrol needed would get there, but he didn't go into detail about the rationale or the threat.

He didn't discuss the deployment at an appearance in Washington at the U.S. Institute of Peace on Tuesday.

Air Force Gen. Terrence O'Shaughnessy, head of U.S. Northern Command, which is overseeing the operation, said Tuesday that additional forces could follow the 5,239 being sent to the border. He said 2,092 National Guard forces are already broadly assigned to the mission there, operating under an April order from Trump. Texas will receive the active-duty forces first, O'Shaughnessy said, and will have about 1,800 in place within days.

O'Shaughnessy said CBP personnel will be the primary officials dealing with migrants but that U.S. servicemembers deployed to support them would be properly trained in case of any incidental interaction.

Some of the active-duty troops heading to the border will deploy with weapons, O'Shaughnessy had said a day earlier. According to the internal Pentagon documents reviewed by The Washington Post, active-duty personnel can use force to protect themselves or others around them.

The Marine Corps will deploy military police and a special-purpose task force headquarters as part of the military's mission, while the Army's 82nd Airborne Division will deploy helicopters, according to the documents. Troops will deploy with lethal and nonlethal weapons, and are authorized to use deadly force in defense of "all persons, foreign or domestic, who are faced with imminent threat of death or serious

### Migrants rest, seek transport

JUCHITAN, Mexico — Thousands of Central American migrants in a caravan that has already advanced 250 miles into Mexico hope they won't have to walk anymore, at least for a while.

Red Cross personnel on Wednesday bandaged the swollen feet of Honduran farmer Omar Lopez in the southern city of Juchitan, where the caravan was paused for the day.

"We are waiting to see if they are going to help us out with buses, to continue the trip," said Lopez, 27.

Organizers say the buses, if they do materialize, would take the estimated 4,000 migrants to Mexico City for meetings with legislators, not to the still-distant U.S. border, though some would probably continue to the border after reaching the capital.

Juchitan is 900 miles from the nearest U.S. border crossing. A second, smaller group was trailing some 250 miles back.

From The Associated Press

bodily harm, and where lesser means have failed or cannot be reasonably employed."

The military operation, dubbed Faithful Patriot, is designed to help the CBP "impede or deny illegal crossings, maintain situational awareness and apply the appropriate law enforcement response," according to the documents.

While the mission is due to conclude Dec. 15, one document suggested the active-duty presence could be curtailed "once the migrant caravan has reached a capacity that CBP can process" on its own.

# Marines in Norway soak up experience

By MARTIN EGNASH

*Stars and Stripes*

RENNEBU, Norway — A deployment to Norway to fight a mock enemy, followed by scarfing down Scandinavian hot dogs? Awesome. But did it have to happen right when Red Dead Redemption II came out?

That is a question young Marines are asking themselves this week.

More than 11,000 Marines are in Norway to participate in NATO's massive Exercise Trident Juncture, in which they are preparing to battle a fictional adversary that has invaded the country.

Some of the Marines said they are motivated to be part of the exercise in the scenic country, and especially to fight the battle in the next few days. They just wished it could have waited for the release of Red Dead Redemption II, a much-hyped, Wild West-themed video game.

"I wanted to preorder it, but I knew I was coming out here so I didn't," Cpl. Tyler Lohr, an ambulance driver, told Stars and Stripes on Wednesday. "And I have buddies messaging me about how awesome it is. A bunch of us want to play it when we get back."

However, missing the game release is a small price to pay to be part of such a giant exercise, Lohr said.

During an amphibious landing on Monday, the Marines stormed the beach near the town of Alvund with Amphibious Assault Vehicles and LAV-25s, clearing the landing area for their hovercraft to ferry in more troops and equipment.

Trident Juncture is designed to practice deploying a large allied force forward quickly in response to any foreign military intervention against a NATO member state. The exercise, which incorporates 50,000 personnel, 65 warships and 250 aircraft, is the largest NATO war game since the end of the Cold War.

All 29 allied nations are participating, along with nonmembers Sweden and Finland.

"Being here and being part of this exercise is a huge deal for all of us Marines," Lohr said. "I'm really excited for the battle."

Since the landing, the Marines have been establishing positions along the fjords and mountains of western Norway and preparing for the upcoming battle simulation.

In between the usual troop movements, the Marines are bonding with their Norwegian allies over food and cold weather training tactics.

"The relationship with us and the Norwegians is like really close. It's like we're already friends," Lohr said. "When we first

got here, they already had the hot dog and burger stand set up for us. Their burgers are some of the best I've ever had.

"And the hot dogs ... they're like ours, but the hot dog sauce is what changes it. I don't know what it is, but it's like heaven."

Lohr and his fellow Marines said the sauce looks like ranch dressing, "but it's so much better than that." Once they first tasted it, the Marines started lining up every day to put it on everything from burgers to Meals, Ready to Eat.

Capt. Joseph Koffman, the camp commandant for the Rennebu-based Camp Leatherneck, which the Norwegians nicknamed "Camp Odin," said the cold weather in Norway hasn't been too much of an issue due to their extra warming layers and tips from Norwegian soldiers.

"The cold weather is different than Camp Lejeune, but we have cold weather gear, and have gone through cold weather training with the Marines and with the Norwegians, who have been helping us deal with the elements," Koffman said. "Some of the Marines who are from the South, aren't as used to it, but me, personally, I'm from Wisconsin, and this is my element. I love the weather here, and it's a beautiful country to operate in."

The Marines plan to begin the mock assault on the city of Oppdal on Thursday.

## Ex-airman arrested after 'spambot' found on phone

By WILLIAM HOWARD

*Stars and Stripes*

A former airman accused of tampering with his supervisor's phone faces up to 10 years in federal prison for computer fraud.

Michael Weber, 22, who served with the 27th Special Operations Communications Squadron at Cannon Air Force Base, N.M., was arrested Tuesday morning by FBI agents in Alamogordo, N.M., and made his initial federal court appearance that afternoon in Albuquerque.

Weber is accused of placing a "spambot" onto a government-issued cellphone assigned to his supervisor at the air base on Jan. 16, according to offi-

cial. Spambots are computer programs designed to build mailing lists for sending unsolicited emails. They can gather email addresses from websites, newsgroups, special-interest group postings and chat room conversations.

The spambot Weber is accused of installing caused the cellphone to receive a long string of messages that damaged the phone.

Weber will remain in federal custody pending a preliminary hearing and a detention hearing scheduled for Wednesday, officials said.

The penalty for a conviction on the computer fraud offense is a maximum of 10 years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine.

## Artillery brigade near Tokyo is reactivated

By LEON COOK

*Stars and Stripes*

CAMP ZAMA, Japan — The Army has reactivated a brigade to oversee missile defense units in mainland Japan, Okinawa and Guam.

The 38th Air Defense Artillery Brigade was reactivated in a brief ceremony Wednesday at Camp Zama, headquarters of U.S. Army Japan in Kanagawa prefecture near Tokyo.

The brigade, based at Sagami General Depot, about 25 miles west of the Japanese capital, will oversee the 1st Battalion, 1st Air Defense Regiment at Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, as well as the 10th and 14th Missile Defense Batteries on main-

land Japan and a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, battery on Guam.

The unit, which will include about 115 personnel at full strength, is purely a headquarters unit, said U.S. Army Japan spokesman Kevin Krejcarek.

"It's just personnel. There won't be any missile batteries at Sagami," he told Stars and Stripes ahead of Wednesday's ceremony as protesters gathered outside Zama's main gate.

The move toward greater oversight of the region's air and missile defense units comes more than a year after North Korean test launches sent missiles through Japanese airspace.

# Funerals continue for victims in Pittsburgh

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Members of Pittsburgh's grief-stricken Jewish community endured another round of funerals Wednesday for victims of the synagogue massacre, a day after President Donald Trump encountered hundreds of protesters when he came to town to pay his respects.

Melvin Wax, 87; Irving Younger, 69; and Joyce Fienberg, 75, were laid to rest as part of a weeklong series of services for the 11 people killed in a shooting rampage at the Tree of Life synagogue Saturday. It was the deadliest attack on Jews in U.S. history.

"It can't be fixed," Robert Libman said at the funeral of Fienberg, his sister, clutching his chest as he described the pain of losing her. "My sister is dead. My sister was murdered. There was no one I know like her. Pure goodness. ... She was the most tolerant and gentle person that I've ever known."

Her sons, Anthony, of Paris, and Howard, of Vienna, Va., said she spent five years caring for their father as he battled cancer, then after his death a few years

ago, devoted more of her time and energy to Tree of Life.

"My mom would be very angry that her funeral wasn't able to be at Tree of Life, and that her friends lost Saturday couldn't be here," Howard Fienberg said.

Six people were wounded in the attack, including four police officers, two of whom remained hospitalized with gunshot wounds. Two congregants were still in the hospital, one in critical condition.

In a bit of good news, hospital officials said the two most seriously injured shooting victims are improving.

A police officer and a congregant remain in intensive care but "are doing much better now," Dr. Donald Yealy, chairman of emergency medicine at University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, said Wednesday. "I think overall the prognoses are good now. But each of them, in a varying way, will have a different trajectory and likely will require a series of ongoing care."

With Tree of Life still cordoned off as a crime scene, the man arrested in the attack, truck driver Robert Gregory Bowers, 46, remains behind bars, awaiting a

hearing Thursday on federal hate crime charges that could bring the death penalty. Authorities said he raged against Jews during the attack.

The first three funerals were held Tuesday, with thousands of mourners jamming a synagogue, a Jewish community center and a third, undisclosed site for the funerals of a beloved family doctor, a pillar of the congregation, and two intellectually disabled brothers in their 50s who were known as "the boys."

Cecil and David Rosenthal were "beautiful souls" who had "not an ounce of hate in them — something we're terribly missing today," Rabbi Jeffrey Myers, a survivor of the massacre, said at their funeral at Rodef Shalom, one of the city's oldest and largest synagogues.

The brothers were active at Tree of Life, with Cecil the more gregarious of the two, a man with a booming voice who was known as the "mayor" of the city's Squirrel Hill neighborhood.

"They were innocent like boys, not hardened like men," the Rosentals' sister, Diane Hirt, told mourners.

## President, first lady pay tribute at synagogue

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — One stone and one white rosebud for each victim.

President Donald Trump and first lady Melania Trump paid homage Tuesday to each of the 11 people slain in the worst instance of anti-Semitic violence in American history.

As the Trumps placed their tributes outside the Tree of Life synagogue, protesters nearby shouted that the president was not welcome.

The emotional, dissonant scene reflected the increasingly divided nation that Trump leads, one gripped by a week of political violence and hate and hurtling toward contentious

midterm elections that could alter the path of a presidency.

On their arrival in Pittsburgh, the Trumps entered the vestibule of the synagogue, where they lit candles for each victim before stepping outside. Shouts of "Words matter!" and "Trump, go home!" could be heard from demonstrators gathered not far from where

a gunman had opened fire on Saturday.

Rabbi Jeffrey Myers, who had been conducting services when the shots rang out, gestured at the white Star of David posted for each victim.

At each, the president placed a stone, a Jewish burial tradition, while the first lady added a flower.

## Online rants create dilemma for law enforcement

Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho — Their anger is all over social media for the whole world to see, with rants about minorities, relationships gone bad or paranoid delusions about perceived slights.

The perpetrators of mass shootings often provide a treasure trove of insight into their violent tendencies, but the information is not always seen by law enforcement until after the violence is carried out. In addition, rants and hate speech rarely factor into whether someone passes a background check to buy guns.

The massacre at a Pittsburgh synagogue, the pipe bombing attempts from last week and the Florida high school shooting this

year have underscored the dilemma of law enforcement around the country in assessing the risk of people making online rants at a time when social media has become so ubiquitous.

"We can go out on Twitter and there are loads of people saying insane stuff, but how do you know which is the one person?" said David Chipman, a retired agent of the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and now senior policy adviser for the Giffords Center. "It's always easy after the fact, to go: 'That was clear.' But clearly everyone spouting their mouth doesn't go and shoot up a synagogue."

Robert Gregory Bowers, the man accused of opening fire at a synagogue in

Pittsburgh, expressed virulently anti-Semitic views on a social media site called Gab, according to an Associated Press review of an archived version of the posts made under his name. The cover photo for his account featured a neo-Nazi symbol, and his recent posts included a photo of a fiery oven like those used in Nazi concentration camps during World War II.

Other posts referenced false conspiracy theories suggesting the Holocaust was a hoax.

It was only just before the shooting that the poster believed to be Bowers seemed to cross the line, posting: "I can't sit by and watch my people get slaughtered. Screw your optics, I'm going in."

# Lion Air crash searchers find debris, black box

Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia — The search for the crashed Lion Air plane has led to aircraft debris and passenger belongings on the seafloor but the object thought to be the fuselage is still eluding it, an Indonesian official said Wednesday as chilling video of passengers boarding the fatal flight emerged.

Search and Rescue Agency chief Muhammad Syaugi said the seafloor findings give the search team confidence they will find the body of the aircraft. The location of the airplane's "black box" flight data recorder has been identified, he said,

but strong currents prevented it from being recovered.

"We saw belongings such as life jackets, pants, clothes scattered on the seabed," Syaugi said.

"We believe the fuselage will be around there; we hope that our target can be found."

The 2-month-old Boeing 737 MAX 8 jet plunged into the Java Sea early Monday just minutes after taking off from Jakarta, killing all 189 people on board.

The disaster has reignited concerns about safety in Indonesia's fast-growing aviation industry, which was recently

removed from European Union and U.S. blacklists, and also raised doubts about the safety of Boeing's new generation 737 MAX 8 plane.

Syaugi said one of the ships with high-tech equipment being used in the search dispatched a remote-operated vehicle that recorded parts of the aircraft on the seafloor but not the 72-foot-long object detected at a depth of 105 feet that is believed to be the fuselage. He said the area is about 1,300 feet from the coordinates where the airplane lost contact.

Three other objects in separate locations were reached by

divers but turned out to be two sunken boats and a fish trap. A remote-operated vehicle was sent to the black box location "but the currents on the seabed were very strong; the ROV was carried away," Syaugi said.

Searchers have sent 57 body bags containing human remains to police identification experts who on Wednesday said they had identified their first victim, a 24-year-old woman, from a ring and a right hand.

Anguished family members have been providing samples for DNA tests, and police say results are expected within four to eight days.

## Investigators say Bulger's slaying may have mob ties

The Hartford (Conn.) Courant

HARTFORD, Conn. — Notorious crime boss James "Whitey" Bulger, who used murder, terror and corruption to build a sprawling criminal network, was beaten to death Tuesday in a federal prison in West Virginia and authorities suspect other New England mobsters may be responsible, law enforcement sources said.

Bulger had been beaten almost beyond recognition, law enforcement sources said.

Authorities who spent careers trying to stop Bulger were scrambling to learn what had happened Tuesday when news broke around noon that he was found dead at the federal, maximum security Hazleton prison at Bruceton Mills, W.Va., where he had been transferred a day earlier.

William J. Powell, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of West Virginia, confirmed Bulger, 89, and in failing health, was dead and said through a spokesman that his office would investigate the circumstances.

The U.S. Bureau of Prison said Bulger "was found unresponsive" at 8:20 a.m. and that emergency life-saving mea-

sures by prison staff were unsuccessful.

"The Federal Bureau of Investigation was notified and an investigation has been initiated," the bureau of prisons said in a statement.

One of the law enforcement sources said federal investigators have begun looking at gangsters from New England who are confined at the Hazleton prison.

There are at least two inmates from New England serving sentences at Hazleton for mob-related murder convictions. USP Hazelton is a high security facility that houses 1,270 male offenders and is part of a larger federal prison complex.

Bulger was serving a life sentence for 11 murders and dozens of other crimes.

He had been held in a high-security prison in the federal correctional complex at Coleman, Fla., but was moved because of deteriorating health and a heart condition.

Law enforcement sources said he was being considered for admission to the federal prison medical center at Springfield, Mo.

## Pakistani court acquits woman in blasphemy case

Associated Press

ISLAMABAD — Pakistan's top court on Wednesday acquitted a Christian woman who was sentenced to death under the country's controversial blasphemy law, a landmark ruling that sparked protests by hard-line Islamists and raised fears of violence.

Chief Justice Mian Saqib Nisar announced the verdict to a packed courtroom and ordered the release of Asia Bibi, who has been on death row since 2010. The Catholic mother of five has been held at an undisclosed location for security reasons and is expected to leave the country for her safety.

The verdict could set up a showdown between authorities and religious extremists, who held protests in several cities and blocked the road between Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Two Pakistani officials have already been assassinated in connection with the case, and hard-liners had threatened to target judges in case of acquittal.

The charges against Bibi date back to a hot day in 2009 when she went to get water for her

and her fellow farmworkers. Two Muslim women refused to drink from a container used by a Christian. A few days later, a mob accused her of insulting Islam's Prophet Muhammad.

The mere rumor of blasphemy can spark lynchings in Pakistan, a deeply conservative country where religious minorities have been repeatedly targeted by extremists. Instead, Bibi was arrested, tried and sentenced to death in a case that drew international attention to the blasphemy law.

Rights groups say the blasphemy law has been used to settle scores and to persecute religious minorities, and have pressed for stricter punishments for false accusations.

Religious extremists have made defending the law a central rallying cry and have attacked those who question it. Salman Taseer, the governor of Punjab province, was shot and killed by one of his guards in 2011 for defending Bibi and criticizing the misuse of the blasphemy law.

The assassin, Mumtaz Qadri, has been celebrated as a martyr by hard-liners since he was hanged for the killing.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Police: Man hid on roof after accident

**VA** STAFFORD — Authorities in Virginia said a wanted man drove into 10 vehicles before climbing onto the roof of a fast-food restaurant and hiding in an air-conditioning unit.

Citing a Stafford County Sheriff's Office release, news outlets reported deputies found a pickup hauling another pickup crashed into 10 vehicles Monday morning. Four vehicles were occupied, and four people were hospitalized with non-life-threatening injuries.

Police said the truck driver, James Edward Baumann Jr., 37, was intoxicated and fled on foot, scaled a metal pipe and climbed onto the roof of a Five Guys. He was found in the unit on the roof.

### Thermal imaging drone helps find puma

**CA** PLEASANTON — A mountain lion roaming the parking lot of a busy office complex in the eastern San Francisco Bay suburbs was tranquilized and removed with some high-tech help.

Police in Pleasanton and California Department of Fish and Wildlife officers used a drone with thermal imaging cameras to track the puma, which appears to be about a year old and healthy at about 80 pounds.

It took four tranquilizer darts to bring him down.

### Police: Teen posed as Secret Service officer

**SC** GREENVILLE — Authorities said a teenager was impersonating a Secret Service officer in South Carolina.

The Greenville County Sheriff's Office told news outlets in

a statement that the 17-year-old was arrested Sunday after spending the weekend traveling to four locations in a silver SUV with a siren and blue lights. The statement said he was flashing a badge and a handgun and was also carrying handcuffs and a radio.

The sheriff's office said the boy had gotten the police gear from a relative who is currently a law enforcement officer and was unaware he took the equipment.

The teenager was charged with four counts of impersonating a law enforcement officer.

### 'Wing Bowl' ends after 26 years

**PA** PHILADELPHIA — Philadelphia's annual decadent display of binge eating and bad behavior known as Wing Bowl is over after 26 years.

The event, hosted by a sports radio station on the Friday before the Super Bowl, drew thousands of rowdy fans to the Wells Fargo Center in the early-morning hours to kick off Super Bowl weekend.

WIP hosts Angelo Cataldi and Al Morganti announced the end of Wing Bowl on the air Tuesday morning.

Morganti originally came up with the idea as a way to get Philadelphia sports fans through another championship weekend without the home team.

### Police: Man took his dogs' pain medicine

**CT** GUILFORD — Police in Connecticut said a man charged with animal cruelty used prescription pain medication meant for his dogs on himself.

Guilford police said James Cunnington, 33, of East Haven, got prescription pain medicine from veterinary offices in Guil-

ford and along the Connecticut shoreline to treat what police call "suspicious re-occurring injuries" to his two dogs. WVIT-TV reported police say Cunnington shopped doctors to obtain drugs.

Cunnington was arrested and charged with four counts of cruelty to animals, six counts of illegally obtaining drugs and four counts of doctor shopping.

### Man helps stranger by holding her baby

**AL** SHEFFIELD — A black woman was trying to juggle a sleeping infant and a pile of paperwork at an Alabama doctor's office when a white man offered to help.

Al.com reported Monday that Natasha Crittenden Wilson photographed the moment between the two strangers and posted it online where it was viewed more than 1.3 million times. Wilson's post said the woman was trying to figure what to do when the man approached and offered to hold the baby.

Identified by family as Joe Hale, the man is seen happily cradling the baby while the woman sits nearby. The post said "racism is still VERY real in our society today BUT THIS MAN GAVE ME HOPE."

### Police recover giant inflatable colon

**KS** KANSAS CITY — Kansas City police said they have recovered a giant inflatable colon stolen in October.

The 10-foot long, 150-pound inflatable was taken from the back of a pickup in Kansas City. It is used by the Colon Cancer Coalition for education during walking and running events.

Police said the colon, valued at \$4,000, was found Monday in a vacant house in Kansas City.

The department offered no

information on how the large display was taken and moved or why it was at the house.

### Paramedic accused of hurting patients

**TN** CHATTANOOGA — A Tennessee paramedic is accused of intentionally hurting patients and then bragging about it online.

The Tennessean reported Monday that state records said Gordon Brett Stokes, 43, in 2016 intentionally had a less experienced first responder drill into a patient's bone without anesthesia.

Records say Stokes also had another first responder insert into that patient's nose a breathing tube coated in alcohol-based hand sanitizer instead of lubricant. They say he then bragged about the abuse on Facebook.

The Tennessee Board of Emergency Medical Services revoked Stokes' paramedic license last month.

### Teen makes costumes for baby superheroes

**FL** ORLANDO — The babies in the neonatal intensive care unit at a Florida hospital may not remember their first Halloween. But they'll have costumes, thanks to a 13-year-old middle schooler who made more than 100 capes featuring emblems from Batman, Wonder Woman, Superman and The Incredibles.

Rachel Maretsky told the Orlando Sentinel it's the second year she's made the capes for babies at Winnie Palmer Hospital in Orlando who she calls superheroes.

Maretsky's parents and some friends helped make the small capes, which they had to paste with hot glue in a clean space to avoid germs.

From wire reports

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STARS AND STRIPES®

# Raiders-49ers limping into prime time

Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — Jon Gruden's return to the sideline in Oakland and the prospect of a full season of Jimmy Garoppolo in San Francisco put optimism at a peak in the Bay Area heading into this NFL season.

That feeling went far beyond the partisan backers of the Raiders and 49ers and extended to the league and television network bosses who decided to put the final Battle of the Bay before the Raiders leave town for Las Vegas in 2020 on Thursday night football.

That battle has quickly turned into a Bay Area Bummer.

The game between the Raiders (1-6) and the 49ers (1-7) this week could be the worst prime-time matchup in NFL history. There have been 784 prime-time games played in the NFL on Nov. 1 or later and the .133 combined winning percentage for Oakland and San Francisco is the worst of all of them, lowering the bar set Dec. 18, 2014, when Tennessee visited Jacksonville in a battle of 2-12 teams.

"I wish the game had two 8-1 or 7-1 teams playing in

it," Gruden said. "Hopefully, someday soon you'll see a game like that, but this is still going to be fun for the fans and both teams."

Fun is not the word either team would use to describe this season, which has seen both the Raiders and 49ers blow three fourth-quarter leads, deal with several debilitating injuries, and pile up losses.

While few considered either team to be Super Bowl caliber heading into the year, there was hope both could compete for the playoffs. Now the only competition is to determine which team is worse and has the inside track at the No. 1 overall draft pick.

The Raiders' season turned sour before it even started with the decision to trade holdout star pass rusher Khalil Mack to Chicago just one week before the start of the regular season for a package of draft picks. A defense that came into the season with enough question marks if Mack did play has generated no pressure and offered little resistance to opposing offenses.

Oakland lost the first three games despite never trail-

ing for a second of the first three quarters as quarterback Derek Carr struggled to adjust to Gruden's offense and the older players Gruden signed in the offseason failed to deliver.

An overtime win in Week 4 over Cleveland provided a brief respite but the Raiders have lost three straight since, getting outscored by 54 points during that span as the season is deteriorating quickly.

Adding to the drama were reports questioning the toughness and leadership of Carr, public complaints from players about how they're being used and the trade of No. 1 receiver Amari Cooper to Dallas for a first-round pick.

Now a team that won 12 games just two years ago behind a young core of Carr, Cooper and Mack, has regressed back to where the franchise was in 2014 when the Raiders lost the first 10 games of Carr's career.

The Niners have lacked the drama of their neighbors but the results have been no better. San Francisco overcame a 1-10 start last year under first-year coach Kyle Shanahan to

win five straight to end the season after Garoppolo was inserted into the lineup following a midseason trade from New England.

Garoppolo was rewarded with a \$137.5 million contract in the offseason and the 49ers were considered an up-and-coming team worthy of five prime-time matchups.

The team was dealt a setback a week before the season when running back Jerick McKinnon, the team's top free-agent acquisition in the offseason, blew out his knee in practice.

Garoppolo then went down with a season-ending knee injury in Week 3 and the Niners haven't won since, taking a six-game losing streak into this week's contest.

"Yeah, we've been dealt a tough hand with some of the injuries we have and some of the things that we've been going through, but that doesn't mean we should be 1-7," Shanahan said. "Those games, we make a few different plays, and I'm talking one to three plays, still wouldn't feel great about our record but I'd feel better than I do now."

## Undefeated Rams make splash at deadline

Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The NFL's lone undefeated team has just made an already dominant defensive front even deeper.

The Los Angeles Rams swapped a pair of draft picks for Jaguars pass rusher Dante Fowler on Tuesday, adding the third overall pick in 2015 to a defense already stocked with Aaron Donald, Ndamukong Suh, Michael Brockers and Mark Barron for the most surprising move at the NFL trade deadline.

Denver sent wide receiver Demaryius Thomas to Houston in a deal giving the Broncos some salary cap relief, and Philadelphia gave Carson Wentz another target, picking up receiver Golden Tate from Detroit. Washington added safety Ha Ha Clinton-Dix, while Green Bay shipped Ty Montgomery to Baltimore two days after fumbling a kickoff late against the Rams.

The Rams gave up a third-round pick in 2019 and a fifth-rounder in 2020 for Fowler,

who is a free agent at the end of this season. Fowler became expendable with Yannick Ngakoue's success.

Fowler has two sacks in seven games while playing behind Ngakoue.

With the Broncos at 3-5, Denver general manager John Elway made a move to clear both some salary cap space and more playing time for some of his younger receivers. Thomas has a salary cap figure of \$15.53 million for 2019, the last year of his deal, while rookies Courtland Sutton and DaeSean Hamilton and second-year wideout Tim Patrick are much cheaper.

The Texans (5-3) have won five straight to take the lead in the AFC South and had to replace Will Fuller, who tore a knee ligament in a win over Miami last week. Houston sent a 2019 fourth-round pick to Denver with the teams swapping seventh-rounders in next year's draft.

Thomas is a nine-year veteran with 36 catches for 402 yards this season. Elway said the Texans beat out three or four other

teams for the veteran.

"It's never easy when you trade a guy that's been a household name around here for a long time and done a lot of great things, not only on the football field but also in the community, and is a good man," Elway said.

The defending Super Bowl champions Eagles (4-4) have their bye this week and could lose Tate after this season if he leaves in free agency.

Tate, 30, has 44 catches for 517 yards and three touchdowns this season and joins an offense that already has Alshon Jeffery, Nelson Agholor and Jordan Matthews and tight ends Zach Ertz and Dallas Goedert. Tate can help the Eagles be less predictable with his ability to play in the slot.

The Packers made a couple of moves, trading away Montgomery two days after his fumble kept Green Bay and Aaron Rodgers from a late chance to hand the Rams their first loss this season.

# NASCAR's Logano put all on the line

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Take a deep breath and rewatch “Days of Thunder” a couple of hundred times to put some perspective on Joey Logano’s latest dust-up with another driver.

Logano sparked a storm of controversy at Martinsville Speedway when he bumped reigning series champion Martin Truex Jr. out of the lead to claim victory. It wasn’t any old win, either; it qualified Logano for NASCAR’s championship-deciding race at the end of the season.

At this stage of the season, a victory is the golden ticket to Homestead-Miami Speedway’s winner-take-all finale. It is really that simple. There are eight drivers vying for four spots — and one was dangling in front of Truex and Logano on Sunday.

First things first: Logano maybe wasn’t expected to make the final four, not this season. His only other win was at Talladega Superspeedway and Team Penske has been overshadowed on the track by Ford partner

Stewart-Haas Racing. The regular season was so dominated by Truex, Kyle Busch and Kevin Harvick it has just been assumed the so-called “Big 3” would gobble up three of the four championship berths.

So for Logano to make it to the finale, he needed to be perfect for three races or in position to win one.

There he was at Martinsville, out front for a race-high 309 of the 500 laps, raced extraordinarily hard in the final stretch because Penske teammate Brad Keselowski was glued to his bumper. He had a door-to-door battle going with Truex for much of the final 10 laps. The racing was clean and Truex was an on-track gentleman, a sportsman worthy to be called champion, in taking the lead from Logano.

But Logano had to have that win. It was his best and perhaps only chance to qualify for the finale, and that chance came on the final lap.

He pulled a bump-and-run and figured he’d let the chips fall as they may.

The move worked and Loga-

no punched his ticket to Miami. An infuriated Truex must try again this weekend to return to the finale.

The bump was a throwback move to when drivers used their race cars as muscle, and they created racing that captivated its audience. It was the jaw-dropping, white-knuckled bumping and banging that made “Days of Thunder” a pop culture sensation and created an unrealistic expectation of NASCAR racing.

But it’s quintessential NASCAR, not all that different from what Logano did to Matt Kenseth to win a playoff race at Kansas three years ago.

In this latest instance, Logano knocked Truex out of the way, slipped past him and straightened out his wiggling car enough to cross the finish line in first. Truex’s car went sideways and Denny Hamlin stole second place from him.

The consequences were immediate. Logano was booed, Truex joined the jeering from pit road and the crew chiefs exchanged angry words.

Truex vowed to prevent Lo-

gano from stealing his crown: “He may have won the battle, but he ain’t winning the damn war.”

Logano car owner Roger Penske wasn’t pleased to learn Truex called the bump-and-run a “cheap shot” and he was unusually feisty in his rebuttal.

“He’s a racer and should know better than to say that,” Penske said. “That’s as clean a shot as you can have in a race like this. We want to go to Miami. Joey ran a great race. As far as I’m concerned, that’s just a comment that I don’t think we deserve. We’ll race him day after day.”

Everything was on the line for Logano and he’d have been lambasted for not trying something — anything, really — to try to win. The second-guessing if he’d tried nothing would have lasted the entire third round of the playoffs or until he won a race. If Logano wasn’t going to put it all on the line, then what’s the point of even getting into the race car each week?

If more drivers raced the way Logano did on that lap, people might start watching again.

## Top 4 in first CFP rankings mirror those in AP poll

Associated Press

If you don’t like the first College Football Playoff selection committee rankings, don’t worry. Saturday’s slate of huge games guarantees major changes are coming next week.

Alabama, Clemson, LSU and Notre Dame were the top four teams in the initial CFP rankings Tuesday night.

After meeting for a day and a half at a hotel outside Dallas, the 13-member selection committee released the first of its five weekly top 25s before the four-team field is set for the semifinals on Dec. 2.

Michigan was fifth, followed by Georgia and Oklahoma. Washington State was eighth, the highest-ranked Pac-12 team. Kentucky was ninth.

Of course, the final rankings are the only ones that matter, but the playoff picture will be reshaped this weekend. Four games matching top-20 teams are on tap Saturday, including Alabama at LSU and Georgia at Kentucky.

West Virginia, 13th in the CFP, is at Texas, which is 17th. Michigan hosts Penn State, which came in at 14.

The first four teams were no surprise. The same teams are Nos. 1-4 in the latest Associated Press poll, except with Notre Dame third and LSU fourth.

Oregon athletic director Rob Mullens, who is in his first season as committee chairman, said LSU’s FBS-leading six victories against teams with winning records gave the Tigers the edge over undefeated Notre

Dame. The Irish play at Northwestern (5-3) on Saturday.

### History lesson

If form holds, two of the top four teams in the first CFP rankings of the season will go on to play in the national semifinals.

Coaches began downplaying the significance of the rankings even before they were revealed on national television.

“I didn’t even know that was tonight. I didn’t realize that was going on,” Georgia coach Kirby Smart told reporters. “But I should have talked to my team about that. I didn’t bring it up to them. So who knows what they’ll be thinking tonight.”

Ranking teams is a time-honored tradition in college

football, going back to first Associated Press poll in 1936. But what, if anything, can be learned from the first four years of CFP rankings?

Of the 16 teams the committee ranked in the top four of its initial rankings from 2014-17, half made the playoff. No team ranked third in the first CFP rankings has ever made the playoff.

The very first committee rankings, in 2014, had just one eventual playoff team. They included three teams from the Southeastern Conference along with Florida State.

That year, the committee first showed its willingness to rank a team that had lost a game ahead of an unbeaten team, like it did Tuesday with LSU and Notre Dame.

## NBA roundup

## Tempers flare as Thunder top Clippers

Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — Russell Westbrook and Patrick Beverley aren't done yet with their long-running feud.

Westbrook scored 32 points and had another run-in with Beverley during the Oklahoma City Thunder's 128-110 victory over the Los Angeles Clippers on Tuesday night.

The Thunder outscored the Clippers 39-10 in the third quarter, and Westbrook and Beverley provided the only drama in the fourth. Beverley dove at a dribbling Westbrook and made contact just above Westbrook's left knee, and both were issued technicals after jawing in front of the benches. Police officers stepped onto the court to help keep the teams separated. Upon review, Beverley's foul was ruled a flagrant 1.

There's plenty of history between the two. Westbrook tore the lateral meniscus in his

right knee during the playoffs in 2013 when Beverley, then playing for the Houston Rockets, lunged for the ball as Westbrook prepared to call timeout. Westbrook missed the rest of the playoffs and part of the next season. In March 2014, the first time the two played again, Beverley swiped the ball away from Westbrook after a timeout and drew a technical, and Beverley and Westbrook had to be separated.

Westbrook has had a history of knee problems. He had a procedure on his right knee that cost him the preseason and the first two games of the regular season.

He didn't directly address Beverley's action on Tuesday.

"I have no comment on it," Westbrook said. "I just know that we won."

Beverley felt like he did nothing wrong, and said his reputation plays a role in the calls he

gets.

"I feel like I went for a loose ball," he said. "I don't know. I don't know. I went for a loose ball and the ref looked at it on tape and felt like it was a flagrant, and I've got to accept it."

**Cavaliers 136, Hawks 114:** Rodney Hood scored a season-high 26 points, Cedi Osman added 20 and their team ended its six-game losing streak to start the season, beating visiting Atlanta in the first game since Cleveland coach Tyronn Lue was fired.

**Raptors 129, 76ers 112:** Kawhi Leonard scored 31 points, Pascal Siakam had 15 points and a career-high 15 rebounds, and host Toronto bounced back from its first loss of the season by handing Philadelphia its 12th consecutive defeat north of the border.

**Trail Blazers 104, Rockets 85:** Damian Lillard and Jusuf Nurkic scored 22 points each,

and Portland never trailed in a trouncing of struggling host Houston.

**Celtics 108, Pistons 105:** Kyrie Irving scored a season-high 31 points, Marcus Morris had 15 points and nine rebounds and host Boston handed Detroit back-to-back losses after a 4-0 start.

**Hornets 125, Heat 113:** Tony Parker had 24 points and 11 assists to lead a big night from the bench, leading host Charlotte past Miami.

**Kings 107, Magic 99:** Buddy Hield finished with 25 points and 11 rebounds, and Sacramento beat host Orlando and extended its winning streak to four games.

**Grizzlies 107, Wizards 95:** Garrett Temple scored 20 points, Marc Gasol and Mike Conley added 19 apiece and host Memphis sent Washington to its fourth straight loss.

## NHL roundup

## Eberle scores twice as Islanders beat Pens

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Jordan Eberle scored twice in the second period to help the New York Islanders pull away from the Pittsburgh Penguins for a 6-3 victory Tuesday night.

The Penguins held a ceremony before the game to honor the victims of Saturday's shooting inside a synagogue in the Pittsburgh neighborhood of Squirrel Hill. It included an 11-second moment of silence in memory of the 11 people slain.

Eberle scored his second and third goals for the Islanders, who swept a three-game road trip. Brock Nelson scored his sixth of the season and fifth goal in five games, while Tom Kuhnhackl, who won two Stanley Cups in Pittsburgh, scored his first as an Islander. Andrew Ladd and Matt Martin also scored for New York, which has won four of six after starting the season 2-3.

The Islanders are playing eight of their first 11 games on the road for the first time

in team history.

Robin Lehner stopped 23 of 25 shots, but he left the game after the second period. Thomas Greiss stopped 12 shots. No reason was immediately given for the change.

**Bruins 3, Hurricanes 2:** Brad Marchand scored the tying and go-ahead goals and visiting Boston continued its dominance of Carolina.

**Red Wings 5, Blue Jackets 3:** Tyler Bertuzzi scored the go-ahead goal late in the third period and Jimmy Howard had 34 saves for visiting Detroit.

**Flames 2, Sabres 1 (OT):** Matthew Tkachuk scored with 55.3 seconds left in the third period, Johnny Gaudreau followed with an overtime goal and visiting Calgary rallied past Buffalo.

**Lightning 8, Devils 3:** Brayden Point had a career-high five points with a goal and four assists, defenseman Braydon Coburn scored twice, and host Tampa Bay rallied from an early two-goal deficit.

Steven Stamkos got his 350th career goal

and added two assists for Tampa Bay.

**Stars 4, Canadiens 1:** Devin Shore had a goal and two assists and Ben Bishop stopped 34 shots for visiting Dallas.

**Predators 4, Golden Knights 1:** Ryan Hartman scored twice in a 57-second span and Juuse Saros made 23 saves to lead host Nashville past Vegas.

**Wild 4, Oilers 3:** Mikael Granlund scored with 5:48 left, Eric Staal had a goal and two assists, and visiting Minnesota beat Edmonton.

**Flyers 3, Ducks 2:** Philadelphia's Nolan Patrick scored 21 seconds after a late tying goal by host Anaheim's Pontus Aberg.

**Rangers 4, Sharks 2 (SO):** Kevin Shattenkirk scored the lone goal in the shootout and Henrik Lundqvist made 31 saves to help visiting New York complete a season sweep of San Jose.

**Coyotes 5, Senators 1:** Derek Stepan scored a short-handed goal from his own blue line in host Arizona's three-goal first period and Antti Raanta stopped 25 shots.